



# world revolution

## The future of humanity lies not in the ballot box, but in the class struggle!

Wars, terrorism, pandemics, climate change, insecurity, famine... Not a day goes by without a new catastrophe, without a new massacre. Every region of the world, even within the most powerful countries, is affected by this immense global chaos. The bourgeoisie has no solution to the historic crisis of its system; it can only drag humanity along in its mad race of war and destruction. In addition to the tragedy of the increasingly bloody war conflicts they are fuelling and fanning around the world, the major powers are themselves affected by increasingly brutal political upheavals.

### The US presidential election at the heart of global chaos

In this respect, the situation in the United States is emblematic: while Trump is a caricature of egocentricity and irresponsibility, openly promoting his petty clique interests to the detriment of those of national capital, the entire American bourgeoisie, including its most 'responsible' fractions, is affected by an epidemic of every man for himself with the result that the various parties of the ruling class are less and less able to cooperate. The attempted assassination of the Republican candidate and the way in which Joe Biden, the doddering President, clung desperately to his candidacy, seriously compromising the victory of his camp, are striking symbols of this tendency towards disintegration and chaos within the very state apparatus that is supposed to guarantee a semblance of cohesion in society.

The inability of the dominant factions of the American bourgeoisie to disqualify Trump, despite numerous judicial and financial attempts, has only served to exacerbate tensions between the different political camps, with the vengeful spirit of Trump supporters intensifying and the deafening media hype surrounding the 'danger' that Trump and his clique represent for 'American democracy'. Since the storming of the Capitol in 2020, Trumpists have been denouncing the 'injustice' of the judicial treatment meted out to the 'peaceful demonstration of patriots' frustrated by the 'stolen victory' of the Democratic 'usurpers'. Each side is now burning red-hot, especially since Biden's forced resignation. And despite fears of an implosion of the Democratic camp, Kamala Harris has been the subject of massive support, which has enabled her to rapidly go toe-to-toe with Trump in the polls. The unpredictable nature of the final result is accentuating the violence of the confrontations and the difficulties in controlling the electoral game.

As a result, the institutions of the American state are being badly shaken by a major destabilisation which, given the United States' place in the global imperialist arena, cannot remain without consequences for the whole planet. The outcome of this confrontation between the Democrats and the Republicans continues to worry all the chancelleries, which no longer know which way to

turn. The election is also a source of deep concern about the course of military conflicts, particularly in Ukraine and the Middle East.

But beyond the immediate results in November, the level of tension within the bourgeoisie of the American superpower will not improve and can only further destabilise relations between all the imperialist powers on the planet.

### The rise of populism undermines the 'old continent'

While the political situation in the United States has a major impact on every continent, it is far from an isolated case. On the contrary, it is a continuation of the global populist wave, a pure product of the decomposition of the capitalist system.

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## War in Ukraine and the Middle East: Two expressions of the horror and irrational madness of capitalism!

### Introduction 2nd October 2024

Since this article was written, recent events, and in particular developments in the Middle East, clearly confirm the article's prediction that we are seeing the growing escalation of the war between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon. The war has already expanded to Yemen with Israeli strikes against Houthi-held ports and to Syria with an attack on Damascus. Israel's offensive against Hezbollah, which began with an ultra-sophisticated, and yet entirely barbaric operation concocted by Mossad in the heart of Beirut, simultaneously detonating nearly 500 pirated telephone pagers and walkie-talkie bombs, has been followed by intense aerial bombardment of the Lebanese capital, killing hundreds of people, including many children, injuring more than 1,800 civilians by 26 September, and forcing up to a million people to flee their homes. Reports indicate that a hundred thousand of these have been seeking refuge in Syria, which already contains numerous refugee camps where basic supplies are virtually non-existent.

On September 27, another coup for the Israeli state: the killing of Hezbollah's supreme leader, Hassan Nasrallah. These and other blows against Hezbollah clearly benefit the Netanyahu regime, which can boast of definite 'victories' in contrast to the deadly quagmire in Gaza. Meanwhile, an Israeli ground offensive in southern Lebanon has already begun, with commando raids on Hezbollah bases, backed up by air power. The Israeli offensive has deprived Hezbollah of a considerable part of its current leadership, but it is a complete illusion to think that you can eliminate terrorism by wiping out a few commanders. The war in

Lebanon will not have a quick and easy outcome for Israel, as it already discovered in 2006.

Hezbollah has vowed revenge and continues to call for the destruction of the State of Israel, while Tehran in turn launches a rain of ballistic missiles on Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in retaliation, which will once again provoke an escalation in Israel's response. The two sides are using the current focus on the forthcoming American elections, their uncertain outcome and the proximity of this deadline, to intensify their provocative policies, turning a deaf ear to the injunctions of both the United States and the European Union who have called for an immediate ceasefire. The local powers are clearly rushing pell-mell into an escalating and irrational military situation that threatens to set the whole region on fire. At the same time, the conflict is revealing the contradictory stance of the US, which continues to pour weapons into Israel and supplies intelligence to some of its attacks, for example the Israeli raid on Yemen. Washington has an interest in the weakening of Iran and its allies in the region - which would also be a blow against Russia, since Iran is one of its main arms suppliers. Both the US and Britain have played a direct role in Israel's response to Iran's missile attack (intelligence and anti-missile fire from the US Mediterranean fleet). But at the same time, Washington does not want the whole situation to spiral out of control; and Netanyahu's growing defiance of US appeals is a further sign of the diminution of America's authority on a global scale.

To a lesser degree, but just as significantly, the war between Russia and Ukraine is becoming entrenched and bogged down. Zelensky has recently

made a speech at the UN in an attempt to convince the 'international community' to support Ukraine more effectively, hypocritically presenting a 'plan for peace', when in fact he is admitting in a barely disguised way that it is a question of putting pressure on Moscow in order to 'force Russia to make peace' under the new conditions imposed by Ukraine. This only provoked a virulent reaction from Putin, who declared that 'he would never accept peace under duress' and reaffirmed that Moscow's conditions for a cease-fire were always the same: recognition of the regions conquered by Russia at the start of the war, and ruling out Ukraine's adherence to NATO. These terms are in turn totally unacceptable to Kiev. Moreover, Britain has dispatched long-distance Storm Shadow

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# In memory of our comrade Enrique

It is with deep regret that we inform our sympathisers and readers of the death, at the age of 74, of our comrade Enrique. His unexpected death has put a sudden end to more than 50 years of dedication and contribution to the struggle of the world proletariat. His comrades and friends have certainly suffered a very painful blow. For our organisation and for the whole of the tradition and presence of the Communist Left, it is a considerable loss that we will all have to face together.

Recalling the militant career of a comrade like Enrique evokes for all of us who knew him on a personal and political level thousands of memories of his enthusiasm, his solidarity and comradeship. His sense of humour was infectious, not that disbelieving cynicism so common among so-called “intellectuals” and “critics”, but the energy and vitality of someone who encourages people to fight, to give the best of themselves in the struggle for the liberation of humanity. This was a comrade for whom, as Marx said, “my ideal of happiness is to fight”. For this reason, he was patient and understanding in discussions, knowing how to understand the concerns of those who disagreed with what he defended. But he was also firm in his arguments. It was, as he said, his way of being honest in a fight for clarification that benefits the whole working class. And although he had an enormous theoretical and creative capacity for writing articles and contributions to discussions, Enrique was not what you would call a “theoretician”. He participated enthusiastically in sales interventions, leafleting, demonstrations, rallies, etc. He was part of a generation educated to occupy the posts of the democratic state and to take over from Franco’s old fogs, from which Felipe González, Guerra, Albers, etc. emerged. And he had more than enough intellectual, political and personal qualities to have “made a career” in the state as others did; but from the beginning he took the side of the working class in its fight against the bourgeois state for the perspective of communism.

Enrique was one of many young workers driven into the workers’ struggle by the numerous strikes in Spain in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which were in fact the expression of the international resurgence of the class struggle that put an end to the counter-revolution after World War II. This was one of the first reasons for Enrique’s break with the tangle of leftist groups of all stripes that abounded in that period. While the latter presented the workers’ struggles in Asturias, Vigo, Pamplona, Bajo Llobregat, Vitoria, etc. as expressions of the “anti-Franco” struggle and wanted to divert them towards the conquest of “democracy”, Enrique understood that they were an indivisible part of a movement of struggles (May 68, Italian Hot Autumn, Cordobazo in Argentina, Poland 70, ...) that confronted the capitalist state in both its “dictatorial” and “democratic” and even “socialist” versions. This internationalist perspective of the class struggle was one of the sources of the enthusiasm that accompanied Enrique all his life. While a large majority of the workers’ militants of the 1970s ended up demoralised and frustrated by this misrepresentation of the workers’ struggle as a “struggle for liberties”, Enrique saw his conviction in the struggle of the world proletariat strengthened. He was an émigré in France, and nothing was more stimulating for him than to go and take part in struggles anywhere in the world (as he had recently had the opportunity to do in the summer of anger in Britain) or to take part in discussions on five continents with comrades who were coming to take part in the historic and international struggle of the working class. He always showed an energy which impressed the younger ones, and this came from his confidence and conviction in the historical perspective of the struggle of the proletariat, the struggle for communism.

Because of this true and consistent internationalism, Enrique ended up breaking with organisations which, with an apparently more radical discourse than that of the “reformists”, advocated that the proletariat should take sides in the inter-imperialist conflicts which at that time took the form of so-called “national liberation” struggles. As is the case today, for example, with Gaza, the leftists of the time called for workers to support the guerril-

las in Vietnam, or in Latin America, etc. But this false “internationalism” was the exact opposite of what revolutionaries had always advocated in the face of the First and Second World Wars. It was the search for this continuity of true internationalism that led Enrique to seek out the historical tradition of the Communist Left.

The same was true for the task of denouncing the trade unions as organs of the capitalist state. Transcending the disgust produced by trade union sabotage of struggles all over the world, the alternative was not to become disillusioned in the working class or to disavow its struggles against exploitation, but to reappropriate the contributions of the Communist Left (Italian, German-Dutch and then French) to defend the self-organisation of struggles, the workers’ assemblies, the embryos of the Workers’ Councils.

It was this search for continuity with revolutionary positions that led Enrique to make contact with *Révolution Internationale*<sup>1</sup> in France in October 1974, after having found in a bookshop in the city of Montpellier (where he worked) the publication *Acción Proletaria*<sup>2</sup>; Enrique always said that he was surprised by the speed with which RI responded to his correspondence and came to discuss with him. From that moment on, a rigorous and patient process of discussion took place which led to the constitution of the Spanish section of the ICC in 1976, with a group of young elements also emerging from the struggles. Enrique

1. *Révolution Internationale* was the group in France that pushed for the formation of the ICC (which was formed in 1975) after the regroupment of several organisations such as *World Revolution* in Britain, *Internationalisme* in Belgium or *Revoluzione Internazionale* in Italy.

2. *Acción Proletaria* was - before 1974 - the publication of a group in Barcelona which RI had contacted and which initially moved towards the positions of the Communist Left. The group edited the first two issues of the publication and ended up dispersing under the weight of nationalism and leftism. After that, *AP* continued to be published in Toulouse and militants of *Révolution Internationale* smuggled it clandestinely into Spain (still under Francoism); from 1976 with the formation of a section of the ICC in Spain, the ICC took over its publication.

worked hard to bring these comrades together and stimulate their militant conviction in the international revolution; but he was also able to count on the support and orientation of an international and centralised revolutionary organisation, which transmitted and gave continuity to the historical struggle of the Communist Left. Enrique, who had had to make an initial part of this militant journey almost alone, insisted again and again on taking advantage of this “treasure”, of this continuity represented by the International Communist Current. He himself became an active and persevering factor in this transmission of the revolutionary legacy.

With the honesty and critical capacity (including self-criticism) that always characterised him, Enrique recognised that this question of the vanguard organisation was one of those that he found difficult to assimilate. The underestimation and even rejection of the necessity and function of the organisation of revolutionaries was relatively common at that time in the milieu of young people in search of a political orientation, given the “display of strength” that a very young proletariat had shown in the great struggles of the 1960s and 1970s, and which made the activity of revolutionary organisations seem “superfluous”. It was also understandable because of the traumatic experiences of the betrayal of the “Socialist”, “Communist”, Trotskyist, etc. parties, which had left a trail of trauma and mistrust in the working class, and also because of the demoralising action of the alienated militancy in the leftism of the 1970s and 1980s. Enrique in particular acknowledged having been influenced by anarchism<sup>3</sup> and at university he took part in a situationist group. Within the ICC itself, the underestimation of the need for organisation was expressed in councilist tendencies, for which Enrique himself was initially a spokesman, and more dangerously in the refusal to fight such tendencies, in a centrism towards councilism. The fight against these tendencies was decisive in Enrique’s evolution on the organisational

3. In the 1970s, anarchism had an important weight in Spain. To give an example, on July 2, 1977, 300,000 people came to Montjuïc for a meeting of Federica Montseny.

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## Humanity’s future lies not in the ballot, but in class struggle!

tem, in which we are seeing the triumph of the most retrograde, divisive and irrational bourgeois conceptions. The rise of populism in Europe was largely confirmed during the European elections, accelerating the process of destabilisation of the ‘old continent’, which can only increase in the future.

But the populist wave is only the most spectacular form of a much wider process of disintegration and growing chaos within the European bourgeoisie. In France, the dissolution of the National Assembly has led to an increasingly uncontrollable political situation. The forced marriage of the Franco-German couple is floundering and Chancellor Scholz is himself politically weakened by the strong AfD push, particularly in the east of the country. In Great Britain, the Conservative party has collapsed and Farage’s populist Reform party has made an unprecedented electoral breakthrough, while the riots led by far-right groups are giving rise to counter-demonstrations that reflect a situation that is also increasingly polarised and chaotic. The destabilisation and weakening of European states are already beginning to have an impact on the global situation, particularly on the Ukrainian front and in Eastern Europe, or in the inextricable chaos of sub-Saharan Africa.

### Bourgeois democracy against the working class

The working class is faced with capitalism’s deepening economic crisis, unemployment, job insecurity, budget cuts and untamed inflation. In this context of serious economic deterioration, in the face of imperialist tensions and confrontations on all fronts, governments are obliged to increase their already colossal military spending, which can only deepen debts and increase budget cuts

and attacks.

Faced with austerity, the proletariat has already begun to respond all over the world, as was the case in the vast struggles in Britain from June 2022 to spring 2023, during the movement in France against pension reform in 2023 or during the strikes in the United States in the civil service in California or in the car industry in 2023. Even today, there are still many mobilisations: strikes by railway workers in Canada over the summer, massive strikes at Samsung in South Korea, the threat of massive walkouts in the automotive and aviation sectors in the United States...

The feeling of belonging to the same class, victim of the same attacks and having to fight united and in solidarity, is gradually beginning to develop. But this break with the past, after decades of stagnation, is still marked by weaknesses and unanswered questions. How can we escape the corporatism in which the unions are trapping us? How can we fight so that we are not powerless? What kind of society do we want?

But the decomposition of bourgeois society and the destabilisation of the bourgeoisie’s political apparatuses are currently no advantage to the struggle of the working class. The bourgeoisie seeks to use all the phenomena and miasmas of decomposition, to exploit them ideologically and turn them against the proletariat. It is already doing this on a massive scale with the wars, trying to push proletarians to choose one imperialist camp against another, as we saw with the conflict in Ukraine, but above all with the war in Gaza, with pro-Palestinian demonstrations designed to divert disgust at the massacres onto the terrain of nationalism. It is also doing this with the rise of populism and the destabilisation of its political apparatus through a vast propaganda campaign in

question. He did not let himself be carried away by frustration or a feeling of disillusionment, but strove to understand the indispensable necessity of revolutionary organisation and gave himself body and soul to the defence of organisation, which is inseparable from the relentless struggle against opportunism, against the pressure of the ideology of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the working class.

Enrique was always a patient polemicist, capable of explaining the origin of the confusions and errors that expressed that ideological influence alien to the proletariat and at the same time of pointing out the theoretical and political contributions of the workers’ movement that helped to overcome them. This spirit of permanent combat was another of his contributions, reacting to every error, every misunderstanding, going to their roots, drawing lessons for the future. What he always revolted against, energetically and intransigently, was the contamination of political debates by hypocrisy, duplicity, slander, slanderousness and manoeuvring, in other words, by the behaviour and morals of the enemy class, the bourgeoisie. There too Enrique was always a bulwark for the defence of the dignity of the proletariat.

The militant trajectory of our comrade Enrique, all his contribution, all that militant passion, all that energy and capacity for work deployed throughout more than 50 years of consistent struggle for the world revolution are not only characteristic manifestations of Enrique’s personality. They correspond to the revolutionary nature of the class he so generously served. *Bilan*, the publication of the Italian Communist Left in the 1930s, which sought to distance itself from all forms of personalisation, advocated that “each militant should recognise himself in the organisation and in turn the organisation should recognise itself in each militant”. Enrique represented the essence of the ICC like few others. We will always miss you comrade and we will strive to live up to your example. Let us continue your fight!

ICC, June 2024.

favour of bourgeois democracy.

The left-wing parties of the bourgeoisie are particularly effective in this area, constantly calling for populism to be blocked at the ballot box, for ‘democratic’ institutions to be revitalised against the ‘rise of fascism’, and promising wonders once in power. In France, this is the case of the New Popular Front, which is up in arms over President Macron’s refusal to appoint its candidate Lucie Castets to the Matignon and is denouncing this ‘denial of democracy’. A section of the left around La France Insoumise and the ecologists also organised a ‘riposte’ on 7 September to occupy the streets and prevent the working class from fighting against the economic attacks and the threat of capitalist barbarism. In the United States, Kamala Harris, with her more ‘empathetic’ approach<sup>4</sup> is effectively hunting in Trump’s territory and managing to win over a large female audience and a young electorate. This relaunch of the ideological campaign in favour of democracy, which is proving relatively successful, also attempts to divert the proletariat from the struggle.

The working class must reject out of hand these ideological campaigns which aim to reduce it to impotence and to the defence of the bourgeois ‘democratic’ state and the nationalist straitjacket. It must be wary of this ideology and above all of its anti-fascist versions, such as those deployed in Great Britain on the occasion of the far-right riots, during demonstrations in which the false radicalism of the leftists, especially the Trotskyists, was on full display. They are always inclined to distort marxism and the history of the workers’ movement in order to better drag the proletariat onto the terrain of the bourgeoisie, to support for “just wars” or “voting for change”. **WH, 8 September 2024**

# No end to austerity with the new Labour government

Today, almost two months after the landslide victory for Keir Starmer and the Labour party, it seems more clear than ever that the promises from the electoral campaign - "change begins now" and "an end to austerity - have disappeared, as different ministers announce new cuts in public spending for the coming autumn. Last week, when Keir Starmer was interviewed by the BBC, he was clear that Labour MPs have to back the plan to cut the winter allowances for pensioners, except the poorest ones, and several of them were suspended for voting against the decision to maintain the two-child cap for child benefits. This is a clear example of the policy this government is planning, for the population in general and especially for the working class. When the new Chancellor Rachel Reeves found a "black hole" amounting to £22 billion in the budget of the "irresponsible" Tories (the same argument that Cameron and Osborne used in 2010 when they took over from Gordon Brown and Labour) this is just a way of hiding the real, chronic problems of the British economy. Today, the new PM is clear: Keir Starmer said there is a need to be "honest with people about the choices that we face", that he defended a choice he "didn't want", adding: "Things will get worse before they get better." And he adds: "There is a Budget coming in October, and it's going to be painful. We have no other choice, given the situation that we're in."

But things will not get better. If we look back to before the pandemic and the cost of living crisis, the cuts made since 2010 have meant a brutal decrease in real wages for the working class over more than a decade:

*"When it comes to poverty, the failure of incomes to keep pace with wages is not just the result of the cost-of-living crisis — it's also due to cuts to welfare payments and caps on public sector wages that were a central part of the cuts made since 2010. Before 2020, the UK had experienced the longest stagnation in wages since the Napoleonic Wars. Rising inflation exacerbated this challenge by eroding incomes further. We now have the highest rates of absolute poverty in thirty years, including a quarter of children living in absolute poverty. The Institute for Fiscal Studies has warned both parties that balancing the books by the end of the next parliament is likely to require an astonishing £20 billion worth of cuts per year".<sup>1</sup>*

Despite the wishful thinking expressed by some Labour politicians during the election campaign ("Read my lips: no austerity under Labour", etc.) the Labour government is forced to launch further attacks. Some of the comments from political journalists speak for themselves:

*"The new government insists it is ending austerity. It isn't. Few of the changes this country requires can be achieved while adhering to the 'tough spending rules' the new government has imposed on itself. As the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) pointed out in June, Labour's plans mean that public services are 'likely to be seriously squeezed, facing real-terms cuts'. Similarly, the Resolution Foundation has warned that, with current spending projections, the government will need to make £19bn of annual cuts by 2028-29. However you dress it up, this is austerity".<sup>2</sup>*

## A long history of attacks on the working class

We only need to go back around thirty years to see that the years of Tony Blair, whom Starmer is referring to as an inspiration, were not as glorious as the bourgeois present them: during the Blair era, the years of "Cool Britannia", were not so "cool" for the working class. The Blair government systematically attacked working class living standards: demands for increased productivity, decreasing unemployment benefits and pensions weighed hard on the entire class<sup>3</sup>. Before that, at the end of the seventies, the Labour government introduced the wage limits in the public sector that sparked off the "Winter of Discontent" of

1. "The Labour Party Is Committing Itself to Austerity", *Jacobin*, 31, 5.24

2. "Labour can end austerity at a stroke — by taxing the rich and taxing them hard", *The Guardian*, 14.7.24

3. See for example 'Blair's legacy: A trusty servant of capitalism', *World Revolution* 304

1978-79.

We could give further examples of how Labour governments have administered austerity, from the Atlee government after the Second World War, to Wilson in the 1960s. The truth is that a Labour government is a better choice for the bourgeoisie when it comes to driving through unpopular decisions. The fact that Labour came to power this summer was first of all the result of widespread anger with the Tory government, and above all of the bourgeoisie's need to stabilise its political game faced with populist vandalism.

## No change for the working class

The recent pay rises to key sectors like railways,

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missiles to Ukraine, and seems to have changed its stance on allowing them to be used against targets inside Russia. If the US, Germany and others in the west give the green light to their use in Russia, this would constitute yet another step towards the abyss. In response, Putin has changed the protocol for the use of nuclear weapons, which now allows their 'asymmetric' use in the case of a threat to crucial installations on Russian soil, even by a non-nuclear power. As a result of all this, the prospect of reopening negotiations between the two main protagonists in the conflict is once again being buried. On the ground, on the other hand, the fighting and mutual destruction are not only intensifying but once again threatening to take an even more menacing turn with the resumption of bombing raids around the nuclear reactors at the Zaporizhzhya power station, while each side blames the other for playing with fire.

These wars show that when it comes to playing with fire, the entire ruling class of this barbaric system is guilty as charged. 2/10/24

This summer, murderous tensions in Ukraine and the Middle East escalated in a destructive spiral whose outcome could not be clearer: nothing profitable will ever come out of these wars for any of the belligerents.

## A never-ending escalation of war

The Russian army's advances in Eastern Ukraine have been met by new incursions, this time directly onto Russian soil, by the Ukrainian army in the Kursk region. A further step has been taken, threatening the population and the world with an extension of the conflict and an even deadlier confrontation. All the belligerents are caught up in an extremely dangerous spiral: Zelensky, for example, is just waiting to be able to strike Russia more deeply thanks to the European and American missiles he is receiving. And this only fuels the Kremlin's murderous headlong rush, with the strikes in Poltava adding 55 deaths to the endless list of victims.

For its part, Belarus is still a force that could play an active part in the conflict: with the Ukrainian raid on Kursk, this possibility has increased. On the common border between Belarus and Ukraine, the Lukashenko government has stationed a third of its army, and its June military exercises were a reminder that it has Russian nuclear weapons on its territory.

The same risk of extending the vicious cycle of war is present in Poland, which has once again expressed its concern by keeping its troops on alert. Although NATO, of which Poland is a member, has officially refused to send troops, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk spoke at the end of March of a "pre-war era".

In the Middle East, the daily ignominy in Gaza has been compounded by the Israeli army's offensive in the West Bank and its intervention in southern Lebanon against Hezbollah targets, in a totally irrational forward flight. The provocative assassination of the head of Hamas in Teheran has only led to his replacement by a new leader who is

education and health, which have been awarded by the Labour government, in an attempt to "clear the ground" before the October Budget and the announcement of what is already called "hard but necessary cuts". But the austerity measures and cuts in the public sector planned by the new Labour government will certainly provoke new outbursts of combativity. Even today there are still many disputes simmering or breaking out, from university workers in Hull to teachers in London, from bus drivers in Scotland to workers in supermarkets. More importantly though, the breakthrough in the class struggle that began in Britain in the summer of 2022 was the product of many years of attacks and a growing aware-

ness and determination that "enough is enough". It began a whole new phase in the class struggle which goes much deeper than a random pay rise or strike threat.

No matter how much Sir Keir points to his working class background, the "responsibility" and the "stability" they are endeavouring to impose shows that the Labour government is currently the most suited instrument for launching further attacks on the working class. Workers should have no illusions about that. **Edvin, 15 September, 2024**

even more extremist and bloodthirsty, and has lit another fuse in the regional powder keg. All this, of course, has given Iran and its allies new pretexts for getting even more involved in the conflict, stepping up their crimes and provocations.

While the hypocritical 'ceasefire' talks were being held in Doha in mid-August, the massacres and destruction continued unabated. Netanyahu never ceases to torpedo any attempt at a diplomatic opening, the better to accentuate his scorched-earth policy, piling up corpses in an attempt to save his skin. Each side has done nothing but increase the carnage in order to influence the negotiations.

Netanyahu and Hamas, Putin and Zelensky, and the imperialist powers that actively support them - all these imperialist vultures are caught up in an unstoppable logic of endless and increasingly destructive confrontations. This only confirms that the war spiral of capitalism in full decomposition has lost all economic rationality and is tending to escape the control of its direct protagonists and all the imperialist powers involved.

## Accelerating decomposition exacerbates conflicts

These conflicts illustrate the enormous weight of the decomposition of the capitalist system, the irreversible acceleration of which is increasingly threatening to destroy humanity: through their duration, through the political impasse they reveal, through their irrationality and their scorched-earth logic. If world war is not on the agenda, because of the generalised domination of every man for himself, the instability of alliances which now characterise international relations, the intensification and progressive extension of conflicts can only lead in the long term to ever more destruction and chaos.

The non-existence of imperialist blocs ready for world war (as were the Western bloc and the Eastern bloc during the Cold War) ultimately generates even more instability: as there is no longer a common enemy or bloc discipline, each faction now acts for its own objectives, which leads them more easily to confrontation in a struggle of each against all, hindering the action of others and making it increasingly difficult to control their policies.

It is because of this tendency that the United States, while maintaining its support for NATO, sees its own factions fighting over policy, both in Ukraine and in Gaza. While the Biden administration proposed maintaining aid to its allies, the Republicans sought to limit it, in Congress initially freezing \$60 billion in support for Ukraine and \$14 billion for Israel, before finally giving in and agreeing to release them. These fractures are accentuating the United States' difficulty in imposing its hegemony on the world. It is losing more and more control over its policies and its authority over the protagonists in conflicts.

And it is in this context that the growing polarisation between the two great powers, China and the United States, is adding fuel to the fire. While the prospect of a full-scale war between these two powers is out of the question for the time being,

tensions are constant and the risk of a regional confrontation over Taiwan is only increasing. China is continuing its military exercises near and around the island, continuing and stepping up its military provocations in the China Sea, albeit cautiously, and increasing its intimidation, particularly of the Philippines and Japan. The United States, very concerned, is raising its voice and reaffirming its support for its threatened allies, while also stepping up its provocations. The situation is becoming increasingly uncontrollable and unpredictable. The risk of new conflagrations is constantly increasing.

## Proletarians remain the main victims

Proletarians are always the hardest hit, whether directly in the conflict zones or away from the frontlines as a result of the attacks linked to the war economy. In war zones, they are the victims of bombardments, suffer restrictions and have to endure terror, horrors and massacres. When they are not being exploited in factories, mines or offices, the bourgeoisie uses them as cannon fodder. In Ukraine, the government recruits any man between the ages of 25 and 60 at its own discretion, either directly by abduction or with the lure of a higher salary than that of a civilian job. In addition to compulsory enlistment, the bourgeoisie takes advantage of the workers' miserable conditions to pay for their blood and their lives. All this was only possible thanks to intense nationalist propaganda, vast ideological campaigns and state-planned conditioning: "War is methodical, organised, gigantic murder. In order to get normal men to carry out systematic murder, it is necessary [...] to produce an appropriate intoxication. This has always been the usual method used by belligerents. The bestiality of thought and feeling must correspond to the bestiality of practice; it must prepare and accompany it".<sup>1</sup> This is why the working class in Ukraine, Russia and the Middle East is currently unable to react, and will find it very difficult to do so in the face of the "intoxication" to which it is being subjected.

It is true that Netanyahu's government is increasingly unpopular, and the news of the latest Hamas killing of Israeli hostages has provoked huge demonstrations, as more and more Israelis recognise that the government's stated aim of freeing the hostages and destroying Hamas are mutually contradictory. But the demonstrations, even when they demand a ceasefire, remain within the bounds of nationalism and bourgeois democracy and contain no momentum towards a proletarian response to the war.

The proletariat of the Western countries, through its experience of class struggle, particularly the sophisticated traps imposed by bourgeois domination, remains the principal antidote to the destructive spiral. Through his struggles against the effects of the war economy, both budget cuts and galloping inflation, it is laying the foundations for his future assaults on capitalism.

**Tatlin/WH, 5 September 2024**

1. Rosa Luxemburg, *The Crisis of Social Democracy* (1915).

# Faced with racism, bourgeois democracy is a dead end!

Following the deaths by stabbing of three children in Southport on 29 July, far right elements used social media networks to exploit the situation. By peddling false information and rumours, they took immediate advantage of this terrible crime, not unsurprisingly singling out migrants as the scapegoats. Racist attacks escalated rapidly in the UK between 30 July and 5 August, targeting the places housing asylum seekers and immigration lawyers, mosques, and shops belonging to immigrants.

The riots were widespread, taking place in more than 35 locations, including towns and cities in Northern Ireland. While there was the clear ideological influence of the English Defence League (now officially disbanded) the demos were not centrally organised, but rather emerged through existing far-right internet networks. They were the worst riots since 2011 and revealed the deep divisions within British society.

This wave of racist attacks is not an isolated case. In recent years, anti-migrant rhetoric and hate crimes have become increasingly prevalent in the UK. Such eruptions have also become a world-wide phenomenon. Brutal attacks on migrants and refugees by mobs made up mostly of the most socially disadvantaged sections of the population are now occurring in many countries around the world, from Chile to Kyrgyzstan and from Sweden to India.

## Some striking examples:

- In Chemnitz, Germany, on 26 and 27 August 2018, two days of violent far-right demonstrations degenerated into the pursuit of people believed to be migrants. An angry mob of 8,000 people waving German flags, and some performing Nazi salutes, made its way through the streets, hunting in packs, attacking dark-skinned by-standers and inciting other individuals to join in the action. This attack, in response to the fatal stabbing of a German man by a Syrian immigrant, expressed a resurgence of hatred and the pogrom spirit.

- In Turkey, 30 June 2024 marked the start of three nights of hatred and racist attacks against Syrian refugees and their properties. In Kayseri, the initial resentment turned into a pogrom, burning down refugee homes, vandalising and burning vehicles, looting and damaging shops, all accompanied by anti-refugee slogans. In the days that followed, the attacks spread to other towns, where Syrians were once again terrorised. In Antalya, a 17-year-old Syrian was killed and two of his friends were seriously injured. The motive for these attacks was completely fabricated.

- In September 2019, immigrants inside South Africa were brutally attacked and their properties destroyed by local citizens in various towns and provinces across the country. The attacks began in the form of a demonstration with chants demanding that foreigners return to where they came from. During the demonstration, the mobs began looting property, destroying and setting fire to businesses owned by African immigrants. They also attacked those who tried to protect or prevent the looting or destruction of their shops. As a result of these attacks, twelve African migrants were killed and thousands injured.

## The fruit of years of campaigning against migrants

The escalation of attacks on migrants, Arabs and black people is not happening in isolation: they are the result of years of racist policies and language peddled by politicians from parties on both the right and the left. The ruling class has always played the racist card when it suited them. But populists and the far right are always the most virulent and brutal mouthpieces of anti-migrant rhetoric, portraying the “other” as a threat to the well-being of the indigenous population. The deep-seated hatred they fuel against them finds ever more fertile ground in a capitalist society rotting on its feet.

In this distorted view of the world, migrants are responsible for the suffering of everyone else. This scapegoating implies an act of dehumanisation, in which far-right and populist discourse presents refugees as an alien species. Marine Le Pen of Rassemblement National, for example, has compared the influx of refugees into Europe to the

invasion of barbarians. Laurence Fox, of the Reclaim Party<sup>1</sup> suggested that Muslims are invaders. Jarosław Kaczyński, leader of Poland’s Law and Justice party, warned that migrants could bring all sorts of pests. Donald Trump has said that most immigrants from Mexico are rapists, drug dealers and criminals.

The bourgeoisie also uses riots to legitimise the expansion and reinforcement of its repressive apparatus. The head of the Police Federation (the unions for police officers) in the UK used the riots to call for more powers to be given to the police. In the aftermath of the riots, the UK government announced policing measures to combat the far right, including the creation of a “standing army” of specialist police officers who could be rapidly deployed to areas of widespread far-right rioting and violence. But as we said in an earlier article “No to divide and rule! Our only defence is the class struggle!”<sup>2</sup>, the strengthening measures of repression will inevitably see them used against the future struggles of the working class.

## A global migration crisis

This growth of the anti-immigrant rhetoric is linked to the increasing number of displaced people fleeing to the safer regions of the world, as well as the incapacity of the national bourgeoisies to organise their reception and integration into the country of arrival. But it is also important to note that the state is finding it increasingly difficult to counteract the every man for himself mentality in society, the fragmentation and profound erosion of social cohesion. In such conditions, discontent expresses itself often more easily through indiscriminate violence, serving as an outlet for the inhabitants in the regions most affected by the phenomena of decomposition.

Alongside all this is the general indignation aroused by the inhumane treatment of migrants, which leads to mobilisations aimed at addressing

1. The Reclaim Party is a right-wing populist party in the UK that was launched by former actor Laurence Fox in 2020.

2. See [en.internationalism.org](http://en.internationalism.org).

the problem: demonstrations that denounce the government’s and political parties’ racist policies, actions by minorities to defend migrants’ homes or blockades to prevent the expulsion of migrants. However, certain sections of the bourgeoisie will still try to turn this indignation into a defence of bourgeois democracy, pointing to the alleged threat by far-right or fascist organisations.

## The danger of anti-fascist ideology

The label “fascist”, applied to organisations which call for, and in some cases conduct racist attacks, is intended to mobilise the population, including workers, against the threat the far-right organisations represent to democracy. Faced with the so-called fascist threat, political parties from the moderate right to the extreme left often work together to mobilise the population behind the bourgeois state.

Such a manoeuvre was carried out at the beginning of 2024 during demonstrations in Germany in reaction to the Alternative für Deutschland and the Identitarian Movement, which had discussed a plan for the mass deportation of asylum seekers. When called upon by an alliance of civil rights movements, trade unions and political parties to mobilise, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets in protest, actively supported by most left-wing organisations over three consecutive weekends against what German Chancellor Olaf Scholz had described as “an attack on our democracy”.

These mobilisations against racism remain at the level of partial or “single issue” struggles, which “manifest themselves primordially at the super-structural level, their demands focusing on subjects that do not question the foundations of capitalist society, even if they may point the finger of blame at capitalism”.<sup>3</sup>

When the question is not openly one of a demand for democratic rights, the political forces of the ruling class will do everything they can to prevent workers from making the crucial link between the

3. Report on the international class struggle to the 24th ICC Congress, *International Review* 167

# Riots in Bangladesh: The uprising paved the way for another bourgeois regime

On 5 August 2024, dozens of students applauded on the roof of the residence of the fugitive Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina. They were celebrating the victory of the struggle that had lasted five weeks, claimed 439 lives and finally toppled the current government. But what kind of ‘victory’ was it really? Was it a victory for the proletariat or the bourgeoisie? The Trotskyist group Revolutionary Communist International (RCI, formerly the International Marxist Tendency) bluntly asserted that a revolution had taken place in Bangladesh and that the demonstrations had reached the point where they could “denounce the sham of bourgeois ‘democracy’, convene a congress of revolutionary committees and seize power in the name of the revolutionary masses [and] that a Soviet Bangladesh would be the order of the day if that were the case”<sup>1</sup>.

Bangladesh’s economy has been in trouble for several years now. The international economic crisis has had a major impact on the country due to the extreme rise in food and fuel prices. Inflation reached almost 9.86% in early 2024, one of the highest rates in decades. The country is on the brink of a financial crisis due to an alarming level of bank failures in the private sector. Since May 2020, the national currency, the taka, has lost 10% of its value against the US dollar. Public debt has soared from 30% of GDP in 2012 to 40% of GDP in 2022. External debt will exceed one hundred billion dollars by the end of 2023. Unemployment affects nearly 9.5% of the 73 million working population...

1. “What the Bangladeshi Revolution teaches us”, [marxist.ca](http://marxist.ca)

## A society rotting on its feet

In 2023, Bangladesh was ranked among the ten most corrupt countries in the world. Corruption is pervasive at all levels of Bangladeshi society, and businesses are subject to costly and unnecessary licensing and permit requirements. Irregular payments and bribes are frequently exchanged to obtain favourable court rulings. The Corporate Anti-Corruption Portal ranked the Bangladeshi police among the least reliable in the world. People are threatened and/or arrested by the police for the sole purpose of extortion.

For years, the Awami League, Sheikh Hasina’s ‘socialist’ party, in collaboration with the police, has wielded power on the streets through extortion, illegal toll collection, ‘mediation’ for access to services, not to mention intimidation of political opponents and journalists. The gangster-like practices of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BSL), the student wing of the Awami League, are notorious. Between 2009 and 2018, its members killed 129 people and injured thousands. During this year’s protests, they were widely hated for their ruthless behaviour, particularly towards women. For years, they have been able to commit these crimes with impunity, thanks to their close links with the police and the Awami League.

Sheikh Hasina’s government, which took office in 2009, quickly turned into an autocratic regime. Over the past decade, it has established its exclusive grip on the country’s key institutions, including the bureaucracy, security agencies, electoral authorities and the judiciary. Sheikh Hasina’s government has systematically silenced the other bourgeois fractions. Before the 2024 elections, the government arrested more than 8,000 leaders and supporters of the

struggle against racism and all forms of segregation or exploitation (against women, gays, etc.) and the historic struggle of the working class. The aim is always to divert the issue back onto the terrain of democratic rights and the dangerous illusion that the bourgeois state can provide an answer to all these criminal outrages. Contrary to what groups of the bourgeois left claim, the anti-racist struggle can never be the beginning of a struggle against the capitalist system.

Democracy is only one expression of the dictatorship of capital. The fight for democracy does not solve the problem of racism in society and only leads to the continuation of capitalist exploitation and domination. But the bourgeoisie takes every opportunity to divert the working class away from the struggle on its own terrain and into a dead end. This is a deliberate manoeuvre, as was the case with the mobilisations at the beginning of the year in Germany, to divert the workers from the class struggle, which is the only terrain where real solidarity with the wretched of the earth can be expressed.

The working class in Britain has a rich history; it was at the origin of the international workers’ movement and fought for the international unity of all workers, whatever their origin.

- On 31 December 1862, thousands of workers gathered in Manchester and were the first to express their sympathy for the northern states of the United States and to call on President Lincoln to abolish slavery.

- In 2022-2023, workers of all colours, religions and ethnicities fought together to defend their living conditions against the ‘cost of living’ crisis.

- In August this year, when almost 20% of NHS staff is already of non-British origin, there were expressions of solidarity with immigrant health workers, who are the most vulnerable in carrying out their duties.

It is struggles like these that hold the key to overcoming racism and all the other poisonous divisions in society. **Dennis, 5 September 2024**

opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). But the suppression of the voices of political opposition, the media, trade unions, etc. has made the foundations of the political regime very unstable. The complete stifling of ‘public debate’, even in Parliament, has contributed to the further erosion of the foundations of the political game and ultimately to the total loss of all political control. By 2024, Sheikh Hasina no longer faced a mere loyal opposition. Most sections of the bourgeoisie had become her fiercest enemies, ready to put her in prison for the rest of her life and even to demand her death.

## The failure of the fight against unemployment

The demonstrations took place against a backdrop of massive youth unemployment. And the country has no unemployment insurance system, so jobseekers receive no benefits and consequently live in extreme poverty. This context has made the quota system, which reserves 30% of civil service jobs for descendants of the ‘freedom fighters’ of the 1971 war of independence, a source of anger and frustration for all those facing unemployment.

Protests against the quota system are nothing new. But for all these years, the protests have remained confined to the universities, entirely focused on the quota system. The narrowness of the students’ demands for a “fair” distribution of new civil service jobs could not provide a basis for extending the movement to the entire working class, including the unemployed who were not in education.

**Continued on page 5**

# For an Appeal of the Communist Left to the working class against the international campaign to mobilise for bourgeois democracy

## Covering letter

International Communist Current to:

- Internationalist Communist Tendency
- PCI (*Programma Comunista*)
- PCI (*Il Comunista*)
- PCI (*Il Partito Comunista*)
- Istituto Onorato Damen
- Internationalist Voice

+ Internationalist Communist Perspective, Korea

30th August 2024

Dear comrades,

We attach a proposed appeal of the Communist Left against the huge international campaign today in defence of democracy against populism and the extreme right. All the Communist Left groups today, despite their mutual differences, come from a political tradition that has uniquely rejected the false governmental choices that the bourgeoisie uses to hide its permanent dictatorship and to derail the working class from its own terrain of struggle. It is therefore vital that these groups make a joint statement today as the strongest possible reference point for the real political interests and struggle of the proletariat and a clear alternative to the hypocritical lies of the enemy class.

Please respond rapidly to this letter and proposal. Note that the formulations of the proposed appeal can be discussed and changed within the framework of its main premise.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Communist greetings

The ICC

## Continued from page 4

The students ignored the importance of formulating unifying demands in order to extend the struggle to workers facing the same spectre of unemployment. And in 2024, the students' demands were no different: instead of trying to extend the struggle to workers, on the basis of workers' demands, they found themselves once again trapped in violent clashes with the police and political gangs.

Even when staff, lecturers and other workers at 35 universities went on strike on 1 July 2024 against the new universal pension scheme, the students didn't even seek support from the 50,000 university workers on strike. The strike lasted two weeks but, remarkably, was virtually ignored by the students.

## A so-called 'revolution' for the sole benefit of the bourgeoisie

The students and a section of the population organised a massive demonstration which turned into an uprising that openly challenged the regime. Finally, on 5 August 2024, Sheikh Hasina signed her resignation in the presence of military leaders and handed power over to the army. The change of regime, described as a 'revolution', was in reality a behind-the-scenes military coup d'état in which the demonstrators served as civilian back-up and as a mass of manoeuvre.

The leftists quoted above claim that the students were able to "denounce the sham of bourgeois 'democracy'". While the government's brutal response to the movement showed that an elected democratic government had become an open dictatorship, it replaced it with the barely more subtle dictatorship of another bourgeois faction! And the student organisations are calling for new, more 'democratic' bourgeois elections. That's all there is to it!

The question of unemployment has been exploited as a means of settling scores between bourgeois cliques, all the more easily because the demand for 'equitable' sharing of jobs in the public service for students alone does not constitute a favourable terrain of struggle for the working class. On the contrary, it's a trap, that of corporatist confine-

## Proposed Appeal

# Appeal of the Communist Left to the working class against the international campaign to mobilise for bourgeois democracy

## For the implacable struggle of the working class against the despotism of the capitalist class

## Against the poisonous choices in the fraud of bourgeois democracy

Over the last few months the world's mass media - which is owned, controlled and dictated to by the capitalist class - has been preoccupied by the election carnival taking place in France, then Britain, throughout the rest of the world such as in Venezuela, Iran and India, and now more and more in the United States.

The overriding theme of the propaganda about the election carnivals has been the defence of the democratic governmental facade of capitalist rule. A facade designed to hide the reality of imperialist war, the pauperisation of the working class, the destruction of the environment, the persecution of refugees. It is the democratic fig leaf that obscures the dictatorship of capital whichever of its different parties - right, left, or center - come to political power in the bourgeois state.

The working class is being asked to make the false choice between one or other capitalist government, this or that party or leader, and, more and more today, to opt between those who pretend to abide by the established democratic protocols of the bourgeois state and those who, like the populist right, treat these procedures with an open, rather than the concealed, contempt of the liberal democratic parties.

However, instead of on one day every few years choosing who is to 'represent' and repress them, the working class must decide on the defence of its own class interests over wages and conditions and look to achieving its own political power - objectives that the hue and cry over democracy is designed to derail and make appear impossible.

Whatever the election results, in these and other countries, the same capitalist dictatorship of mili-

## Continued from page 8

# Prague Action Week: Some lessons, and some replies to slander

question". All these arguments are offered in order to show that the positions of the communist left were incompatible with participation in the Anti-War Congress. We can't answer all these arguments here, but one or two points certainly need to be made, since they reveal the depths of ignorance (or deliberate distortion) in Tridni Valka's article: first, the critique of the social democratic idea of the mass party was developed in the first instance by none other than the Bolsheviks from 1903 onwards<sup>9</sup>; in Russia in 1918 it was precisely opposition to the Brest-Litovsk Treaty that gave rise to the Left Communist fraction in the Russian party (although it's true that later on some left commu-

9. See for example "1903-4: the birth of Bolshevism", *International Review* 116

ment. The 'revolutionary masses' existed only in the imagination of the leftists.

Like the 4.5 million textile workers who went on strike last year, the workers' struggle against the effects of the economic crisis remains the only real prospect. Because the only class capable of giving a political perspective to the struggle against the effects of the capitalist crisis is the working class. But we should be under no illusions: the working class in Bangladesh is too inexperienced to resist, on its own, the traps set for it by the dominant class, with its left-wing parties and its trade unions. It is through the international struggle of the proletariat, particularly in the oldest bastions of the working class in Europe, that the workers in Bangladesh will find the path to an authentic revolutionary struggle. **Dennis, 10 September 2024**

tarism and poverty will remain and worsen. In Britain, to take one example, where the centre left Labour Party has just replaced a populist influenced Tory government, the new prime minister lost no time in reinforcing the British bourgeoisie's involvement in the war between Russia and Ukraine and maintaining and sharpening the existing cuts in the social wage of the working class in order to help pay for such imperialist ventures.

Who are the political forces which actually defend the real interests of the working class against the increasing attacks coming from the capitalist class? Not the inheritors of the Social Democratic parties who sold their souls to the bourgeoisie in the First World War, and along with the trade unions mobilised the working class for the multi-million slaughter of the trenches. Nor the remaining apologists for the Stalinist 'Communist' regime which sacrificed tens of millions of workers for the imperialist interests of the Russian nation in the Second World War. Nor Trotskyism or the official Anarchist current, which, despite a few exceptions, provided critical support for one or other side in that imperialist carnage. Today the descendants of the latter political forces are lining up, in a 'critical' way behind liberal and left-wing bourgeois democracy against the populist right to help demobilise the working class.

Only the Communist Left, presently few in number, has remained true to the independent struggle of the working class over the past hundred years. In the workers' revolutionary wave of 1917-23 the political current led by Amadeo Bordiga, which dominated the Italian Communist Party at the time, rejected the false choice between the fascist and anti-fascist parties which had jointly worked to violently crush the revolutionary upsurge of the working class. In his text "The Democratic Principle" of 1922, Bordiga exposed the nature of the democratic myth in the service of capitalist exploitation and murder.

nists, notably the Italian Fraction, argued - correctly in our view - against the position of "revolutionary war" which the Left Communists offered as an alternative to signing the Treaty); and as for the argument that today's groups of the communist left all continue to defend the Third International's position on the colonial question....we can refer Tridni Valka to any number of articles on our website arguing the exact opposite.

- Finally, they want to definitively exclude the ICC from the proletarian camp. Why? Because we asserted that the group which has most strongly influenced Tridni Valka, the Groupe Communiste Internationaliste, ended up flirting with terrorism and that TV have never clarified what differences they had with the GCI. TV's response: "it's very likely that the Czech (and other) State security services will delight in this kind of 'revelation' and 'information' about our group's alleged links 'with terrorism'. Thank you to the stoolies of the ICC, that would do better to rename itself ICC-B, with a B for 'Bolshevik' but above all for 'Betrayer'! Fucking SNITCHES!!!"

On the contrary: the ICC long ago assumed its political responsibility by denouncing the GCI's claims to be the *nec plus ultra* of internationalism by charting their increasingly grotesque support for terrorist actions and organisations as expressions of the proletariat: beginning with the Popular Revolutionary Bloc in El Salvador and the Shining Path in Peru, and culminating in seeing a proletarian resistance in the atrocities of Al Qaida<sup>10</sup>. Such

10. "How the Groupe Communiste Internationaliste spits on proletarian internationalism", ICC Online; "What is the GCI (Internationalist Communist Group) good for?" *International Review* 124

In the 1930s the Communist Left denounced both the left and right, fascist and anti-fascist factions of the bourgeoisie as the latter prepared the imperialist bloodbath to come. When the Second World War did come it was therefore only this current which was able to hold to an internationalist position, calling for the turning of the imperialist war into civil war by the working class against the whole of the capitalist class in every nation. The Communist Left refused the ghoulsh choice between the democratic or fascist mass carnage, between the atrocities of Auschwitz or of Hiroshima.

That's why, today, in the face of the renewed campaigns of these false choices of capitalist regimes to make the working class line up with either liberal democracy or right wing populism, between fascism and anti-fascism, the different expressions of the Communist Left, whatever their other political differences, have decided to make a common appeal to the working class:

- DOWN WITH THE FRAUD OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY THAT HIDES THE DICTATORSHIP OF CAPITAL AND ITS IMPERIALIST MILITARISM!

- AGAINST THE AUSTERITY OF CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST, FOR THE STRUGGLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS TO DEFEND ITS LIVING STANDARDS,

- FOR THE REVOLUTION OF THE WORKING CLASS TO DISPOSSESS THE BOURGEOISIE OF POLITICAL POWER, EXPROPRIATE THE CAPITALIST CLASS AND END THE FRATRICIDAL CONFLICTS IMPOSED ON THE PROLETARIAT BY COMPETING NATION STATES.

political positions clearly expose all genuine revolutionary organisations to repression by the state security services, who will use it to make an equation between internationalism and Islamic terrorism. In addition, we have shown another facet of the GCI's capacity to do the work of the police: their threats of violence against our comrades in Mexico, some of whom had already been physically attacked by Mexican Maoists<sup>11</sup>.

If Tridni Valka had any sense of responsibility towards the need to defend the internationalist camp, they would have publicly distanced themselves from GCI's aberrations.

We have not said our last words on the lessons of the Prague event, nor on other attempts to develop an internationalist response to war, but we could not avoid answering these attacks. By presenting the tradition of the communist left as nothing but an obstacle to the effort to bring together today's modest internationalist forces, the authors of these attacks reveal that is they that are opposed to this effort. In future articles we aim to respond to the CWO's balance-sheet of the conference and to take up some of the key issues posed by the conference. That means, in particular, going deeper into why we insist that only the real movement of the working class can oppose imperialist war, why only the overthrow of capitalism can put an end to the mounting spiral of war and destruction, and why the activist approaches favoured by the majority of groups taking part in the Action Week can only lead to an impasse. **Amos**

11. "Solidarity with our threatened militants", *World Revolution* 282

# The left wing of capital cannot save this dying system

At the end of July, we organised an online international public meeting to discuss the subject: “The elections in America, in Britain and in France: the left of capital cannot save this dying system”. In our different public meetings, discussions with contacts, in correspondence and e-mails, we have noted the concern expressed by the growing evidence of the rise of populism, as seen in the European elections, particularly in France and Germany, or in the electoral boost provided by the attack on Trump in the United States. It was therefore important to stimulate debate on this phenomenon in order to understand its meaning and to combat the ideological exploitation of it by the bourgeoisie. We have already published several articles presenting our analysis of the phenomenon of populism and denouncing the ideological campaigns used by the world bourgeoisie to turn the effects of populism, the effects of its own putrefaction, against the working class. The aim of our discussions is to make sure that at doubts about our analyses, criticisms and suggestions can be expressed, to enable debate with the aim of achieving maximum clarity. The response to our analysis was very positive, with the participation of comrades in the meeting from different countries, speaking different languages (the ICC organised and provided translations of interventions into English, French, Spanish and Italian). In short, a lively international debate developed on one of the many problems facing the world working class and it demonstrated the validity of our initiative.

In our presentation we proposed three axes linked to the questions raised by our contacts:

1. What does the rise of populism reflect?
2. What impact does the rise of populism have on the working class, especially with the democratic campaigns which the left of capital is calling on us to join
3. What responsibilities does it entail for revolutionaries?

## The importance of the question of populism

The debate focused mainly on the first two points. At the beginning of the discussion, several interventions tended to see populism as a “deliberate manoeuvre”, a sort of “premeditated strategy of the bourgeoisie as a whole to inflict an ideological defeat on the working class”. The interventions of other comrades and those of the ICC did not share this point of view and sought to promote clarification through various arguments: “Even if the rise of populism is not a strategy planned by the bourgeoisie, this does not mean that the ruling class is not capable of using the effects of its own decay and decomposition against the proletariat”.

The rise of populism does not express the ability of the bourgeoisie to steer society towards its “organic solution to capitalist decadence”, i.e. to trigger a world war. A new generalised imperialist carnage, like the First and Second World Wars, is not possible today because of the reality of every man for himself, because of the impossibility for the bourgeoisie to guarantee a minimal discipline allowing the formation of imperialist blocs to take place. The exacerbation of the ‘every man for himself’ testifies to the fact that the bourgeoisie is on the contrary tending to lose political control over its own system, which is spiralling out of control in a dynamic where the scourge of militarism is accompanied by localised wars which are spreading and becoming more and more irrational. All of the competing protagonists lose out, demonstrating their inability to limit a growing ecological disaster of which they are fully aware, but which they are incapable of combating because it would call into question the essence of capitalism: the thirst for profit. Even in the countries where the bourgeoisies are the most ‘responsible’ and the most experienced, their various political factions are increasingly divided and the growing influence of populism only proposes political programmes that are unworkable or unfavourable to national capital as a whole. Brexit is a glaring example, as is the vulnerability of populist factions to the influence of a rival imperialist power, Putin’s Russia: or the vulnerability of these factions, the AfD in Germany, the RN in France and to a lesser extent

amongst Trump’s supporters.

That populism is a mishmash of bourgeois values is undeniable. That’s why high-profile capitalists shamelessly support it (like Elon Musk or Trump, for example). But this has not prevented Trump from becoming head of state and being handicapped in representing all sections of the bourgeoisie. And this is true in many countries. Consequently, the efforts to contain it are not a mere ‘theatrical’ game played by the other bourgeois factions to deceive the proletariat. The security cordon put in place in Germany, the rise to power of Macron in the 2017, the presidential elections or the meteoric rise of Harris in the United States, demonstrate precisely that the bourgeoisie fears the lack of losing control over its political apparatus in particular because of the danger that populism represents: an obstacle to the effective defence of the interests of national capital.

Some comrades expressed doubts pointing out that many workers vote for populist parties. But, what was made clear was that the electoral terrain is not one in which the proletariat can express itself as a class. With elections, we see atomised individuals, mystified and alone, confronted by the dismal future offered by capitalist society, and in many cases susceptible to the ‘simplistic and distorted’ explanations of populist politicians, who make immigrants the scapegoats, the so-called “beneficiaries” of the exploitative state’s measly hand-outs and the main cause of poverty, insecurity, unemployment and substandard housing.

## Readers contribution

# New Popular Front: new instrument against the working class

We are publishing below an extract from the contribution of a comrade who took part in the international public meeting organised by the ICC in July. First of all, we would like to pay tribute to the very serious approach and the combative spirit of comrade C., who is seeking to draw some initial conclusions from the debates by expressing the arguments that have strengthened and changed her point of view, by further enriching the discussion. In this, comrade C. is fully, and with great responsibility, part of a proletarian debate, the aim of which is to clarify the historical aims and means of the proletariat’s struggle<sup>1</sup>.

In the part of her contribution which we publish below, the comrade demonstrates her concern for political clarity by drawing on the historical method of marxism to explain the difference between the Popular Front of 1936 and the New Popular Front of 2024. She thus shows not only the bourgeois nature of these two left-wing coalitions in a different context, but also all the democratic mystification that lies behind the evocation of Léon Blum by the left today. EG, 5 September 2024

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I’d like to comment on this afternoon’s public meeting on the elections. First of all I’d like to thank you for holding this discussion. I had a feeling that we wouldn’t have time to cover all the topics on the agenda, which is a shame, but the discussion was very interesting all the same. The international nature of the meeting, with comrades from many different countries offering different perspectives was very enriching, and I hope that despite the problems and difficulties of holding meetings in multiple languages, that the ICC will be able to organise other meetings of this type. (...)

The second point I’d like to raise, and which unfortunately I wasn’t able to address during the discussion, is the role of the Popular Fronts, and in particular the ICT’s analysis of them<sup>2</sup>. I didn’t have the opportunity to go into the ICT’s position in depth, so I can only refer to what comrade P. said, i.e. that the ICT draws a parallel between

1. We have also published other contributions about this meeting on our website ‘Thoughts on the discussion on populism at the ICC’s international online public meeting in July’

2. The Internationalist Communist Tendency is an organisation of the Communist Left

But if this is a mystifying and dangerous distortion, the one supported by the “democratic” and left fractions of capital is even more so, when they call for our support as the only way to stop populism even when they are the products of the same system.

In reality, what we are witnessing today is a growing discrediting of these traditional formations of the bourgeoisie, precisely because their governments cannot stop the course towards crisis, barbarism and war that capitalism has in store for us, since they are its sinister agents and defenders.

## Left-wing parties, bulwarks of capitalism

While not everything necessary to complete the argument could be developed in the course of the discussion, a debate also emerged in which an attempt was made to distinguish the meaning of current populism from the fascism or Stalinism of the 1930s, when the latter were the result of a defeat of the proletariat which had occurred earlier and in which the forces of the left of capital had played a decisive role. The current rise of populism, on the other hand, is not at all situated in a context of counter-revolution, i.e. the ideological and physical defeat of the proletariat. In trying to imitate and exploit this tragic past, that of coming to power of Léon Blum and the Popular Front, to piggyback on the image of “victory” conveyed since then by bourgeois propaganda, the New

Popular Front in France is nothing more than a ridiculous farce every bit as bourgeois as the Popular Front of the 1930s in France or Spain. But that doesn’t make it harmless. Quite the contrary!

This alliance, created in a hurry, remains dangerous because of its democratic propaganda in support of the bourgeois state. The Popular Front was made up of the very forces capable of enlisting and disciplining the population, particularly the proletariat, in order to drag it into the imperialist world war. Today, even if it is experiencing great difficulties and weaknesses, the proletariat is far from defeated.

This is one of the questions that should lead to a more in-depth discussion: how can class consciousness develop within the proletariat? What interests set it against capitalist society? What is the perspective of the class struggle? And in all this, what is the responsibility of revolutionaries?

We believe that we have assumed our responsibility by organising this international debate which has been fruitful and dynamic in terms of participation. We intend to continue by organising more meetings and more trips to extend this reflection, which we are convinced exists not only among our more direct contacts but also more widely within the proletariat. ICC, September 9, 2024.

the New Popular Front and Léon Blum’s Popular Front in 1936. The ICT says that the role of the Popular Fronts is to drag the working class into the spiral of imperialist world war. This is a fallacious and empty parallel, but hardly surprising when one leaves aside the framework of decomposition. Unfortunately, the subject has not been developed very much, and on rereading the discussion I note that there have been very few contributions on the subject.

To understand how the situation differs, we need to compare the current situation with that of 1936 and the election of the Popular Front. In 1936, the working class had just suffered a major defeat. This defeat left the bourgeoisie free to pursue and impose all its ambitions, which ultimately led to the massacre of the Second World War. At that time, the Popular Front was the manifestation of the weakness and defeat of the proletariat, which had no choice but to fall in behind the bourgeoisie and allow itself to be embraced by all the bourgeois ideologies such as anti-fascism.

Today, the situation is radically different: the proletariat has not recently suffered a defeat, on the contrary, it is beginning to recover from its previous defeat and from the period of counter-revolution, as shown by the international movements of the last few years, which are on a far greater scale than those of previous decades. As we saw earlier, while populism is a threat to the bourgeoisie, it also has the advantage of being used to mobilise the working class in parliament. In this sense, the left has placed itself in the vanguard of the defence of democracy, presenting itself as the only alternative to populism. But even so, after decades of deception, lies and attacks as soon as it comes to power, the left remains relatively discredited.

That’s why, in an attempt to convince and mobilise, it is presenting an increasingly unrealistic programme. I’m thinking, for example, of the €1,600 minimum wage presented by the New Popular Front in France. Another clue is the lack of unity within the NPF. Unlike the Popular Front of the 1930s, as soon as it came to power the NPF was already in the process of dissolving because of its heterogeneity and political incoherence. These few elements clearly show that the situation is not comparable to that of the 1930s, and that by drawing such a parallel, the ICT can only

be totally mistaken in its analysis.

As for the left, it is my opinion that appealing to the memory of the Popular Front in the current context, when it is incapable of even mobilising and winning the approval of the workers, is a serious mistake for it, and that it risks costing it dearly in the long term by being a major factor in undermining its credibility [...]. C.

## International Review 172

**Faced with chaos and barbarism, the responsibility of revolutionaries  
Democratic campaigns against working class consciousness**

**Faced with the rising tide of populism  
The capitalist left can’t save a dying system**

**Ukraine, Middle-East, Philippines, Taiwan, Africa, the deepening and extension of wars reflect the growing impasse of capitalism**

**More than a century of conflict in Israel/Palestine**

**Prague Action Week, activism is a barrier to political clarification**

**2 years on from the Joint Statement of the Communist Left on the war in Ukraine**

**Manifesto of the Communist Left to the workers of Europe, June 1944**

**The struggle against imperialist war can only be waged with the positions of the Communist Left**

**How the bourgeoisie organises itself  
This Crisis is going to be the most serious in the whole period of decadence**

**Critique of the so-called “Communisers”, part iv**

# A discussion on the necessity and possibility of communism

## ICC Introduction

Following an online ICC discussion meeting on the question of communism, two close sympathisers combined forces to produce this account of the meeting, which we think clearly draws out its principal themes and conclusions.

Recently, a few comrades close to the ICC met with the organisation to discuss some of the most fundamental questions for revolutionaries regarding the real possibility of and material necessity for communism. The 'basic' nature of the topic is all the more reason for its continued conscious discussion by those approaching militancy. Comrades old and young and from across the world participated with real militant intent, showing the universal importance of these questions for the proletariat and its revolutionaries. Such fraternal and rich international discussions are the lifeblood of the revolutionary minority, and in a period where revolutionaries remain generally isolated and small in number they provide vital opportunities for political clarification.

The discussion was divided into three points:

1. Why is communism possible and necessary?
2. What are common doubts and objections?
3. What could a future classless society look like?

## Communism is possible and necessary

Communism as an idea has existed throughout almost the entire history of class society, with descriptions of an ideal society free from oppression and inequality evident from as far back as ancient Greece. However, it is only today that communism becomes a real possibility.

The entire history of class society represents only a tiny fraction of humanity's history. For several million years early hominins and eventually modern humans lived in what Marx called 'primitive communism'. It was only with the development of agriculture and the adoption of a sedentary lifestyle that productive surpluses led to the growth of the division of labour and property and the emergence of the first class societies.

In the subsequent millennia, various systems of exploitation have come and gone, brought into being each time by the victory of a class born in the previous society. Historically, this class was always a property-owning, exploiter class whose revolutionary goal could only be the establishment of a new system of exploitation. As such, in the ancient world, it was not the exploited slaves - incapable at this point of calling into question the system of private property itself - but the rural nobility which represented the future. Likewise, under feudalism, it was the urban bourgeoisie which held the next society within itself as a revolutionary class.

Though this bourgeoisie - today the ruling class - does all they can to deny it, capitalism has a history of its own and is no less transient than these past systems of exploitation. From its inception in late medieval Europe to the beginning of the 20th century, global expansion was the order of the day for capitalism. The explosion of World War in 1914 was an imperialist carve-up which showed that the period of capitalism's ascendancy was over. The world was united in a global system - meaning bourgeois wars could no longer have any expansive and thus progressive role - and the development of the productive forces was such that production for need and not profit was a real possibility. The proletariat too became a global class, one whose interests are its own class interests and not those of capitalist society.

Whereas in past societies communism could be no more than a vague dream, capitalism has today laid the material basis for its establishment, making it not only a real possibility but the only possible alternative to the barbarity of capitalism which increasingly threatens the very survival of humanity. This clear understanding of what makes communism possible and necessary today delineates marxism from anarchists who claim it was always a possibility dependent on the agitation of individuals.

## Doubts and rejections

Against the most frequently encountered rejections of communism - that it is impossible to come about because of the greed inherent in 'human nature'; that in a moneyless society there would be no incentive to work or innovate, or that communist revolution could only lead to the societies of the old USSR or today's China - comrades affirmed some of the fundamentals of the marxist perspective: that human behaviour is learned and socially reproduced and thus not based in a human nature which remains constant no matter the historic period; and that humans are no more inherently greedy or power hungry than they are in need of the threat of starvation as a motivator to work or innovate.

Participants agreed on another point brought up in the discussion: that the once dominant ideological campaign presenting the collapse of the USSR as the 'death of communism' and 'the end of history' does not hold nearly as much weight for today's youth as it did 30 years ago. The 'victory of capitalism' did not inaugurate an era of peace and prosperity but only a new phase of capitalism's death spiral, characterised by increasingly chaotic and unpredictable imperialist conflicts, a worsening ecological crisis and ever-increasing attacks on the working class. Today, many young people are quite aware of the threats posed to the very existence of humanity.

While the discussion of these common rebukes of communism is important - revolutionaries should always be prepared to clearly present their ideas - it is only through the struggle of the working class that the necessity for revolution and real possibility of communism can be demonstrated.

## What might a classless society look like?

During this concluding section of the discussion, comrades warned against falling into the trap of preparing 'cookbooks for the future' and thus forgetting that communism is first and foremost the culmination of the struggle of the proletariat and the necessary alternative to the future of ecological and military destruction offered us by the bourgeoisie. However, it is possible to use the methods revolutionaries, including Marx and Engels, employed in the past to sketch some brief outlines of what life could be.

All participants agreed that many blights which today may seem all-encompassing and insurmountable would disappear in the absence of the class society in which they developed and from which they draw their fundamental life force: racism, patriarchy, homophobia, trans-phobia would certainly all be consigned to history. Likewise, nations, states and the wars between them would cease to exist in a society without classes.

In place of these will be established a society of production for human need - not exchange. Labour will emerge as life's prime want in a society free from the division of labour and private property which forces workers into decades of drudgery in exclusive and highly specific disciplines. In contrast to the anarchy of capitalist production and its absurdities from the point of view of the survival of humanity, the products of this labour would no longer, as Marx put it, appear as an alien force over the producers but would be fully controlled on a global scale by all of humanity and oriented towards the fulfilment of human need.

Furthermore, the geographical organisation of humanity, today dictated by the needs of class society, will appear entirely different under communism, leading to the demise of the opposition between town and country. Today's megacities of 20 million and more can only give way to more sustainable population distributions. This, along with a transformed relationship between humans and animals, and an application of modern scientific medical advances unhindered by decadent capitalism, could well consign the massive pandemics of class society to the past.

But communism will not be a utopia: humanity will still face many difficult questions. The current spiralling ecological crisis, for instance, will surely shape how we live for centuries or millennia to come. On top of this, the bourgeoisie will no

ICC international online public meeting,  
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doubt employ all its military capacity to preserve its rotten society. Revolutionary war against such an enemy can only result in catastrophic destruction, but such catastrophic destruction is today capitalism's way of life. Thus, while these questions would surely be some of the first faced by a victorious proletariat, it is only that proletariat and the classless future for which it fights which has the capacity to pose real solutions.

There are clearly many aspects of these questions which could not be covered in a single discussion. However, this only shows once again the importance of revolutionaries continuing to devote time to such topics. **L and N, June 2024**

# Prague Action Week: Some lessons, and some replies to slander

One of the first signs of a reawakening of the working class following the betrayal of its organisations and the first year of slaughter in the 1914-18 imperialist war was the conference held in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, in September 1915, which brought together a small number of internationalists from different countries. The conference was a forum in which many different views about the war were put forward – the majority of them tending towards pacifism, with only a minority on the left defending an openly revolutionary opposition to the war. But those on the left at Zimmerwald continued to push for clarification in this and subsequent conferences; and this work – combined with the revival of the class struggle on a more general level, culminating in the revolutionary outbreaks in Russia and Germany – was to give birth to a new world-wide political party based on clearly revolutionary positions – the Communist International founded in 1919<sup>1</sup>.

Today we are still far from the formation of such a party, above all because the working class still has a long road ahead of it before it can once again pose the question of revolution. But, faced with a world system that is lurching towards self-destruction, faced with the intensification and proliferation of imperialist wars, we are seeing small signs of a re-emerging consciousness about the need for an international and internationalist response to capitalist war. As we said in our previous article about the Prague “Action Week”<sup>2</sup>, the gathering in Prague was one such sign – no less heterogeneous and confused than the initial Zimmerwald conference, and much more disorganised, but a sign nonetheless.

For ourselves, an organisation which traces its origins in the communist left of the 1920s, and prior to that, of the Zimmerwald Left around the Bolsheviks and other groupings, it was necessary to be present as far as possible at the Prague event in order to defend a certain number of political principles and organisational methods:

- Against the prevailing disorganisation which turned parts of the “Action Week” into an active fiasco, the necessity for organised and open debate around definite agendas and aiming at clear outcomes. This means that meetings must be chaired, that notes should be taken, that conclusions are drawn, and so on.

1. See for example “Zimmerwald (1915-1917): From war to revolution”, *International Review* 44

2. “Prague “Action Week”: Activism is a barrier to political clarification”, *International Review* 172

- Against the immediatist urge to talk only about “what can we do right now”, the necessity to discuss in a broader historical framework in order to understand the nature of the current wars, the balance of forces between the two major classes, and the perspective for future massive class movements.

- Against the idea of “exemplary”, substitutionist actions by small groups with the aim of sabotaging the war efforts of different states, the necessity to recognise that it is only the massive mobilisation of the working class that can constitute a real opposition to imperialist war; and that, in the first instance, such movements are more likely to emerge from the struggle against the impact of the economic crisis (exacerbated, of course, by the growth of a war economy) than from direct mass action against war.

- In order to put forward such views, it has been necessary to oppose the intended exclusion from the proceedings of the groups of the communist left by the elements behind the organisation of the Action Week. We will return to this question below.

In our first article, which aimed to give an account of the chaotic outcome of the Action Week, and to suggest some of the underlying reasons for this, we also pointed to the constructive role played by the groups of the communist left, but also some other elements, in trying to build an organised framework for serious debate (what has been termed the “Self-Organised Assembly”). The ICC delegation supported this initiative but we had no illusions about the difficulties faced by this new formation, and even less illusions about the possibilities that there would be some kind of organised follow-up to the event – as a first step, the organisation of a website which could serve as a forum for debates that were not able to be developed in Prague. It now seems that even this minimal hope has come to nothing and that it will be necessary to start from scratch in order to define the parameters and possibilities of future gatherings.

## Other balance sheets of the event

Since the Prague week ended, there have been very few attempts to describe what happened, still less to draw the political lessons from this evident failure. The Anarchist Communist Network has written a short account<sup>3</sup>, but it seems to focus

3. See “Prague Congress Interim Report” and “Prague

mainly on the problems caused by the division among Czech anarchists between “Ukraine defencists” and those seeking an internationalist position on the war. This was certainly one element in the disorganisation of the event but, as we argued in our first article, it is necessary to go much deeper than this – at the very least, into the activist approach that still dominates the anarchists who are opposed to the war on an internationalist basis.<sup>4</sup>

To our knowledge, the most words expended have been by those who are the most hostile to the groups of the communist left. First, a group from Germany which focuses on solidarity with prisoners<sup>5</sup> This group only attended at the end of the first day of the Self-Organised Assembly and part of the second, before heading for the official conference<sup>6</sup> which they tell us hosted some interesting discussions while telling us nothing at all about what was discussed. But they are very definite about who they blame for sabotaging the Action Week:

*“We didn’t realise it at that moment, but it was already clear that in the already chaotic situation groups were trying to blow up the meeting from the inside in addition to the attacks by NATO anarchists, where other conflicts between groups were being fought out at the time. First and foremost left-wing communist groups”.*

So instead of trying to offer ways out of the chaotic situation bequeathed by the official organisers, the communist left groups were only there to make it worse!

## The deformations and slanders of Tridni Valka

The most “substantial” account of what happened is provided by the Czech group Tridni Valka, who most people believed were involved in the organisation of the Action Week – and with good reason, since their website hosted all the

Congress Report Part 2” on AnarCom Network

4. The Communist Workers Organisation have also written a short report, but we want to respond to this in a separate article. “Internationalist Initiatives Against War and Capitalism”, *Revolutionary Perspectives* 24

5. Das Treffen in Prag, der Beginn von einer Katastrophe, *Soligruppe für Gefangene*

6. That is to say, the non-public “Anti-War Congress” convened by the original Organising Committee, which excluded the groups of the communist left. This meeting gave rise to short common statement which can be found here: <https://anarcomuk.uk/2024/06/15/declaration-of-revolutionary-internationalists/>

7. <https://libcom.org/article/aw2024-report-prague>  
8. <https://www.autistici.org/tridnivalka/aw2024-demonstration-against-capitalist-wars-and-capitalist-peace/>

Continued on page 5

## 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 stratified 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.

announcements about it<sup>7</sup>. But what is most substantial about this article is the numerous deformations and slanders it contains. In our view, this article has three main aims:

- They want to hide their own responsibility for the fiasco by blaming it on what they portray as a completely separate “Organising Committee” whose composition remains a mystery to this day. Tridni Valka claims it was in favour only of the non-public Anti-War Congress at the end of the week and thought that the organisers lacked the resources to handle an entire week of events. They are particularly critical of the “anti-war demonstration” planned for the Friday of the week, which the previous day had been rejected as meaningless and a threat to security by all the elements who pronounced in favour of boycotting the demo in favour of continuing the political debate (i.e. holding the Self-Organised Assembly). And yet the announcement calling people to march in the demo can still be found on Tridni Valka’s website<sup>8</sup>. This confusion is the inevitable result of a political conception which avoids or rejects a clear political demarcation between different organisations and thus makes it impossible to make out which group or committee is responsible for what decision, a situation which can only spread confusion and distrust.

- They aim to justify their policy of excluding the communist left from the Congress, first by mounting a terminological argument about the “Communist Left” label, then by throwing in a number of historical examples which accuse the existing groups of the communist left of trying to build a “mass party” on the Bolshevik model; assert that all groups of the communist left argue in favour of the Bolsheviks’ signing of the Brest Litovsk treaty in 1918 (“a real stab in the back for proletarians in Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary, a ‘betrayal’ some would say!”); denounce the Zimmerwald conference and the Zimmerwald Left, to which the communist left also refers, as nought but a bunch of pacifists, and even claim that “the so-called ‘Left Communism’ defends (more or less, depending on the shades favoured by each of these organizations) the position of the Third International on the colonial

7. <https://libcom.org/article/aw2024-report-prague>

8. <https://www.autistici.org/tridnivalka/aw2024-demonstration-against-capitalist-wars-and-capitalist-peace/>

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## 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*.