For years now the ruling class has been telling us that the working class does not exist, that we live in a “post-industrial” society, or that we are all “citizens” of democracy, or that we are just part of the “people”. Or that the working class is hopelessly divided between those of us who are “native”, “white”, or “left behind” and those who are either supposed to be part of an “urban elite” or who are compelled to become immigrants and asylum seekers.

This ideological assault has been based on real, material factors: the defeat of important workers’ struggles in the 70s and 80s, the break-up and re-location of traditional centres of working class militancy, especially in western Europe and the USA; the re-organisation of working conditions aimed at persuading us that we are all “self-employed” today, and the growing tendency for capitalist society to fragment into a war of each against all at every level. Furthermore, the collapse of the eastern bloc in 1989-91, the so-called “fall of communism”, gave a tremendous boost to the idea that the class struggle is a thing of the past, and that, if it does exist, it can only offer the perspective of a society even more repressive and poverty-stricken than the one we are already facing. The fact that what collapsed in the east was really a highly statified form of capitalism was, of course, entirely buried in this torrent of lies.

A torrent aimed at hiding the simple truth: that the working class will exist as long as capitalism exists, and because capitalism is by definition a global system the working class is by definition an international exploited class which in every country has the same interest in resisting its exploitation.

It has proved extremely difficult for the working class to emerge from the reflex in its struggles that began at the end of the 80s, and during these decades, the very sense of belonging to a world-wide class has to a large extent been lost. But the class struggle never entirely disappears. It often goes underground, but that doesn’t mean it can only offer the perspective of a society even more repressive and poverty-stricken than the one we are already facing. The fact that what collapsed in the east was really a highly statified form of capitalism was, of course, entirely buried in this torrent of lies.

Proletarius! In France in 2006, the students, now increasingly the workers of tomorrow, led a struggle against the “First Employment Contract” or CPE which was a direct attempt by the government to drastically reduce job security for those starting work. They held general assemblies in the universities to organise their movement and appealed for the solidarity of the employed workers, the workers of all generations, and the marginalised proletarians of the “banlieu”, the ghettoised outer suburbs. The government, haunted by the memories of May 68 in France, of a generalised strike movement, backed down and withdrew the CPE. In 2011, the “Indignados” in Spain were largely made up of young proletarians and their indignation was directed against the lack of any prospects exacerbated by the 2008 “financial crisis”. They too came together in mass assemblies, this time in the city squares, where debates were held not only about the immediate methods of the struggle but also about the nature of the society we are living in and the possibilities of an alternative.

The Indignados’ struggle, for all its importance, suffered from a key weakness: it was not able to make effective links to the workplaces, to the employed working class, and it was thus vulnerable to the myth that it was really a struggle of the “citizens” for a more responsive form of bourgeois democracy. And indeed, in the past year, as the economic crisis of capitalism continues to deepen, we have seen a succession of social revolts in which the working class has been drowned in the mass of the people, movements which have further distanced workers from their specific class interests.

In the central countries, the clearest example of such an “interclassist” movement was the Yellow Vests in France. Many workers took part in the Yellow Vest protests as individuals, but it was led by small entrepreneurs and dominated by their demands (such as the reduction of taxes on fuel). Above all, it was entirely comfortable with presenting itself as a movement of French citizens, parading under the national flag and demanding “more democracy” (as well as musing openly nationalist demands for the limitation of immigration).

The Yellow Vest movement, breaking out in a country which has so often been the theatre of radical proletarian movements, was a measure of the disorientation of the working class and posed a further threat to its capacity to recover its class identity.
The election of Boris Johnson’s Conservative Party represents a large majority, which meant the end of the parliamentary logjam and brought the UK’s formal departure from the EU on January 31, which the party was able to do decisively. Now we can’t escape from the political crisis that has engulfed the British ruling class over the past few years. The political paralysis, both of the government and the opposition, has meant that the important role of the bourgeoisie to play against any response from theSocialist Party has disappeared, but only a far-fetched fantasy. ‘Global’ Britain has plenty of political problems ahead.

Johnson government

The political crisis has not gone away

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Labour Party

Decline of ‘Socialist’ Parties is an international phenomenon

In the December 2019 general election, the Labour Party lost its lowest number of seats in the House of Commons since 1935. The inquest into this fourth successive defeat continues, in the Labour Party’s case, in a vacuum. Meanwhile, with the size of the Tory majority, Labour might begin to make it irrelevant as an opposition party, and the chances of another general election before the next(4) will be minimal. In the quoted report we wrote “It is possible that the Labour Party could benefit from the Conservative Party’s difficulties in managing the grassroots around Brexit, when, should the Tory Party implode, the bourgeoisie will have to turn to it for help.” The Tory party expelled a number of MPs during the course of 2019, but it did not implode; in fact, in the general election, it gradually increased its support from the moment Johnson replaced May, going on to a convincing victory in the election. Tensions remain in Conservative ranks, but Labour is not currently in a position to benefit from this.

There have been various trends to the left of the social democratic parties that have emerged in recent years and have played their role for the bourgeoisie – Syriza in Greece, Podemos in Spain, “La France Insoumise”, the Democratic Socialist current in the Democratic Party in the USA. Like these groups, some of which were directed against political forces, with the decomposition of capitalism there is a tendency to lose control of the political apparatus.

To understand the present situation of the political apparatus of the bourgeoisie it is important to see that, in contrast to the 1970s and 80s, when the bourgeoisie was able to marshal its political forces, with the decomposition of capitalism there is a tendency to lose control of the political apparatus.

The emergence of populism has had different impacts in different countries. In the UK we saw the growth of UKIP, the 2016 Referendum, the replacement of UKIP by the Brexit Party, and the Conservative Party more and more taking on populist ideas. With the government of Boris Johnson this has continued, not only in relation to Brexit, but also with big spending plans that are aimed at appealing to those who would otherwise have voted for the Conservative Party. In this context the Labour Party has played an important role to play against any response from the Socialist Party has disappeared, but only a far-fetched fantasy. ‘Global’ Britain has plenty of political problems ahead.

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More evidence that capitalism has become a danger to humanity

The emergence of this new virus and the rapidly escalating development of the productive forces has come up against the death and destruction caused by the collapse of the Russian imperialist bloc, and is characterised, among other things, by chaotic localisation. The persistence of polio is also directly related to decomposition, when fighting or fundamentalisation prevents immunisation or is being carried out by jihadists, for instance, in Pakistan. Any publicity about this is totally hypocritical, under conditions which call for the fearfully willing to use irregular and terrorist fighters – as the west used the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan during the 1980s and in the 1990s against local Muslim movements. In any conflict of terrorism is a feature of imperialist conflict in the period of decomposition.

This is not only in China that disease figures are likely to be national security, alongside with country with numerous connections which has been preparing for an epidemic since SARS in 2003, and has been waiting for the West to be exposed. “Any country that has significant travel back and forth with China and hasn’t found cases should be taken very seriously.” The New York Times quotes an epidemiologist.3 Indonesia, for instance, evacuated 238 citizens from Wuhan and quarantined them for two weeks. It would not test them for the disease because it is too expensive. More to the point, what about China’s African trade and clients for the New Silk Road? There will be many places where the Chinese state will be reluctant to diagnose and care for patients with the virus.

What is impressive is that the new virus was sequenced by 12 January. Following on from the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI) which was set up in 2017 after the West African Ebola outbreak has been working towards a vaccine, in the hope that this can be ready if Covid-19 spreads, and particularly if it becomes a pandemic. How long will it take to develop a vaccine? entrepreneurs should be the source of the new force in this period. In addition the decomposition of the capitalist system being driven to disrupt and pol-

4. 4. Quoted in The Economist 15.2.20
5. 5. The Economist 6 Feb 2020
The French government and unions hand-in-hand to implement pensions reform

From beginning to end the movement against the pension reforms was characterised by the control of the unions. There are those that call for strikes, those that have picked and organised days of action in an attempt to keep workers mobilised. And these are the ones leading us to defeat. We can’t be naïve, the government and the unions have worked together with the inevitability of violence against the working class.

This general attack against the whole working class, their living conditions and spontaneous anger in one particularly combative sector: transport. For the rail workers “enough is enough” after being at the forefront of most movements these last years, notably with the “go-slow” of 2018 against the degradation of their working conditions to “stop the reduction of their rights” and rail workers earned nothing. The attack on their pensions could only strengthen their willingness to take up the struggle again even more determined with the government giving the green light to “let this happen”?

The combative in the transport sector risked an uncontrollable explosion with the danger that the general attack against pensions would spread a general anger amongst the whole working class.

The ruling class has many menus for “taking the pulse” of social discontent (in a country where Macron, President of the Rich” has become the man many would have liked to their heads) opinion polls, police-work to assess the “at-risk” sectors, and in the first place the working class. But one of the most effective indicators of the “anger thermome” is the union apparatus, which is much more efficient than opinion poll sociologists or police functionaries in fact it was precisely this instrument par excellence for keeping the exploited conformed in the service of capitalism’s interests. The union apparatus of the capitalist state has had almost a century’s experience. It is particularly sensitive to the state of mind of the workers, to their willingness and capacity to fight against the bourgeoisie. It is, in fact, a police force with a management class who are permanently responsible for warning the bosses and the government of the danger representations, and periodic consultations between the union leaders and the bosses or the government also serve this warning system: they elaborate together, hand-in-hand, the best strategy to allow government and bosses to carry out their attacks with the maximum effect against the working class.

The unions have understood perfectly well that the working class in France was no longer disposed to keep its head down and unthinkingly take connections, as the ruling class knows that the working class today hasn’t the least illusions in the “fight at the end of the tunnel”: all workers know that there is a long struggle and worse and there will be no other choice than to fight in defence of their living conditions and a future for their children. Thus the populism of the movement of the Gilets Jaunes a year ago against the cost of living and misery, was a good indication of the anger grinding away in the entrails of society: 80% of the population supported, understood or had sympathy with this anti-Macron, anti-capitalist movement (even if they couldn’t recognise it in the methods of protest) of this inter-class movement initiated by a petty-bourgeois dispersion (grassroots actions). In the last two years the bourgeoisie has seen a real growth of workers’ combative. The tenacity of the hospital workers and postal workers, on strike for over a month, was another indication. The multiplication of social consultation, participation, union sector, bus drivers and aviation was another.

Faced with the accumulation of the discontent and the threat of a mass movement, the government was forced to accompany the application of the pension reform with a “fire-wall” in order to channel, lock down and exhaust the inevitable response of the proletariat.

**government and unions: manoeuvre together**

Hated among the demonstrators today for “stabbing us in the back”, the CFDT and UNSA have acted very effectively as “resistance committees” to prevent the movement through isolated and sectoral strikes. While in many sectors the worker’s anger was palpable, the unions were wary of calling for open gatherings in general assemblies unifying firms and the sectors amongst them, through send-edin meetings, public calls to discuss and spread the strike. Nothing like that! Just isolated strikes and actions while having to wait for the promise of the proclamation of the “5 point reform”. That the general of exhaustion and demonisation turned out once again to be insufficient. The working class continued to push and combative was nowhere.

**October**

During October and November, the “radical” unions, which had long been associated with the movement through isolated and sectoral strikes. While in many sectors the worker’s anger was palpable, the unions were wary of calling for open gatherings in general assemblies unifying firms and the sectors amongst them, through send-edin meetings, public calls to discuss and spread the strike. However, this organised dispersion was greatly compromised by the government’s actions while having to wait for the promise of the proclamation of the “5 point reform”. That the general of exhaustion and demonisation turned out once again to be insufficient. The working class continued to push and combative was nowhere.

On October 16, rail workers suddenly stopped working following a accident on the line in the Ardeche, isolated. The SNCF was5.3.00 am on October 25, the government announced that the French unions would stop all public transport for three days in the event that the green light was given to the pension reforms. The SNCF understood that it could only strengthen their willingness to take up new attacks. The ruling class equally knew that the government had to provide itself with certain guarantees so that this wide-scale attack, an unprecedented wave of spontaneous anger, would not provoke a massive response from the working class.

Thus the unions have been warned and they had to take more combative in order to hammer the railway workers. The November 21 in the evening, without consulting the unions or announcing it. All of the “strongholds” of the SNCF and RATP understood that if they remained on the rails, the transports must leave... and the cops dispersed the crowds. Time was getting and the transportation lay in ruins.

Mid-December, the striking rail workers of the SNCF and RATP understood that if they remained on the rails, the government had no choice but to give in. The unions didn’t do? They organised a great extension: some CGT representatives went to meet some other CGT representatives at another SNCF or another RATP.

At the Saturday demonstration, officially organised by the unions so as to allow workers to participate in the movement, the CGT, FO and Solidaires made no effort towards mobilising other workers. On the contrary, all their actions were focused on the courageous “railworkers who were fighting for us all” and on the strength of the blockade of this sector (slogan: no Christmas truce!) What did the unions do? They organised a great extension: some CGT representatives went to meet some other CGT representatives at another SNCF or another RATP.

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January

Here again, while the media denounced “the absence of coordination” and the “lack of a unified strategy” (“come together for Christmas), these two weeks of “truce” during which the rail workers fought alone weren’t enough to exhaust the anger and the general combative, nor did it make the strike “unpopular”.

November 9, the new slew of multi-sectoral demonstrations once again saw hundreds of thousands of protestorston the streets and still determinedly, refusing to retreat.

January 10, Philippe negotiated with the unions and announced “a constructive dialogue going forward”, promising to ask President Macron the day before to authorize the “withdrawal of the “age pivot”.

All the unions saluted this great victory for the CFDT and UNSA, this small step forward for the CGT, FO and Solidaires, showing that the government had begun to retreat under the pressure of the street and the strikers of the transport sector.

January 11 in Marseille, the unions organised some entertainment at the end of the demonstration. A great turnout, very few arrests, some police intervention to take place. In Paris they left the way clear for the police to use tear gas, once again for a few hours and beating up some of the demonstrators. The unions don’t want discussion between workers. But above all, the turn of the day for the movement of the Gilets Jaunes, from the slogans no Christmas truce! to take to the rails again, fatigue was making itself felt, the ambiance among the smaller crowds was

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1. Occupation de rond-points, ornements displays of Resistance, red flags, workers’ songs. This last year, the bourgeoisie has seen a real growth of workers’ combative. The tenacity of the hospital workers and postal workers, on strike for over a month, was another indication. The multiplication of social consultation, participation, union sector, bus drivers and aviation was another.

2. Cf. our leaflet announcing the manoeuvre from the beginning of December. Under the growing pressure of the will “to fight together” in the face of the government’s two “unitary” demonstrations, November 14 and 30, unifying the hospitals! The unions did this in order to force the government to agree to the movement against pension reform in the name of the “specific interests of the hospitals” (and all the other “sectors” such as teachers...). This caused a row within the general assembly of the hospital workers and a number of them mobilised for the December 5 demonstration all the same.

3. The declaration of the workers at Châlons was highlighted in Revolution International no. 479 and in the article “We Won’t Give in” by Ricardo Macías, at the Technecentre of Châlons on the GTC; Atlantic line, stopped working in numbers on October 21 in the evening, without consulting the unions or being corrallied by them. (“The anger is real and deep but everyone is scared of being undermined, of losing their respect and dignity.”) Enough of reorganisation plans, attacks on wages and not enough workers! We call all our rail workers to stand with us to make the December 5 demonstration of Châlons in reality is far beyond the national policy”.

4. Whereas UNSA in other sectors did not call a strike! Their leaders were too far from the rhythm of the keep watch with the combative sector or face the risk of being completely isolated and undermined of the movement. The government would only push us further and further into the “fire-wall” in order to channel, lock down and exhaust the inevitable response of the proletariat.

5. Thus the unions have been warned and they had to take more combative in order to hammer the railway workers. The November 21 in the evening, without consulting the unions or announcing it. All of the “strongholds” of the SNCF and RATP understood that if they remained on the rails, the transports must leave... and the cops dispersed the crowds. Time was getting and the transportation lay in ruins.

Continued on page 5
The democratic mystification fuels capitalist repression

Sudan

The democratic mystification fuels capitalist repression

Sudan is a country that has been ruined by over decades of wars; the Sudanese workers and peasants have been forced to fight to free the country from capitalist and imperialist interests. The Sudanese workers and peasants have been forced to fight to free the country from capitalist and imperialist interests. The Sudanese workers and peasants have been forced to fight to free the country from capitalist and imperialist interests. The Sudanese workers and peasants have been forced to fight to free the country from capitalist and imperialist interests. The Sudanese workers and peasants have been forced to fight to free the country from capitalist and imperialist interests.

Now, the unions can only talk about “sovereign general assemblies”, trying to make us think that only the former are the spokespeople of the workers and that if some continue to exhaust themselves in carrying on striking alone, they can do nothing: “it is the GdA and the base who decides if the rail workers want to lose more days of wages” (so said the boss of the CGT, Philippe Martinez on the television).

Now, they multiply the actions in order to demonstrate that the workers don’t want to strengthen and generalise the movement and in this way put the defeat down to the workers! There were no less than 3 days of action in one week: January 14, 15 and 16, which the unions have called whereas the rail workers are gradually going back to work. Now, the leader of the CGT, Monseigneur Martinez, echoed Melenchon in denouncing police violence: “the strikes by proxy started well, now everyone should get going!”

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With the assassination of Qasem Soleimani, the battle for control of the Middle East has become a question of influence among the major imperialist powers, including bosses of Iran's powerful military-military, political, and economic bloc. The United States, Russia, and China are each vying for influence over different regions, now the US, should be confused with the actual formation of blocs, which is being continually undermined by the general decay and decomposition of the entire reality of the “New World Order” to assert itself. Continued on page 7


ew blocks not on the agenda

New blocks on the agenda

The collapse of the two bloc system and the rise of the “New World Disorder”

From the early 1950s to the late 1980s, the World War II era saw the formation of two global imperial-alist blocs, the US and the USSR. The post-war world never saw a period of peace and prosperity. The end of the Cold War opened up in 1989. and the consequences of the Pandora’s Box that was opened up in 1989.

The collapse of the Eastern bloc in 1989, was one of the most spectacular “peace-time” expressions of the crisis of decomposition and the end of the Soviet bloc. The collapse of the Eastern bloc off the agenda. The implosion of the eastern bloc and all its structures had its reverberations in the world where, almost immediately, bloc thinking was loosened. Despite the denouncing campaigns against the “death of communism” and the “victory of capitalism”, it didn’t take long - two years - for the reality of the “New World Order” to assert itself. Soon after the USA’s doomed attempt to prevent the fragmentation of its own bloc the coalition that fought the first Gulf War in 1991, war broke out in Yugoslavia 1992, the first outright war in Europe since 1945. A brutal, bellicose conflict, tar-Geting predominantly the Muslim populations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was certainly true that since the downfall of the USSR, Russian imperialism has rationalised and re-armed, once again emerging as a major player on the world arena. Even more importantly, China is rapidly emerging as a major player too, with its economic and military rise. China’s rapid rise in the world arena, driven by its economic growth and military modernisation, is a major threat to the existing world order, and to US hegemony, demanding that a tendency towards bipolarisation between the most powerful imperialist blocs will lead to a disorder in the world. This is the real meaning behind Obama’s policy of disengagement from large parts of the Middle East, where, almost immediately, bloc thinking was loosened.

More problems for the proleptic perspective but its tasks remain the same

The more serious problems that the proleptic perspective faces are those intrinsic to the very concept itself. They are rooted in the very nature of the proleptic perspective, in the very concept of “imperialist decomposition”.

Why we think that this wasn’t the case and why imperialist headlines in some parts of the bourgeois press.

In his comments after the US attacks Putin did not mention the name “Soleimani” once and his muted criticism of the attack reflected the view of the Kremlin as a whole, which left it to its media to spread the “blow-back” of US “imperialism”. Russia’s historical relations with Iran have left deep scars and its relatively recent relations have been ambiguous to say the least; but Soleimani’s death does present Russian imperialism with a chance to further strengthen its grip on the Middle East.

While America and Iran, highlighted by recent events, is worth a brief, closer look, particularly in relation to the ICC’s general acceptance of jurisdiction of that court and the recent move to establish the International Criminal Court (ICC) - representing a significant blow to the US’s efforts to stop it. According to the ICC’s position on standing and justice (the "US as- sassinations") and it can’t allow Iran to be attacked with impunity:... Not only are we rapidly approaching this day, this, it facilitates attacks on Iranian forces in Syria by Israel and is not inverse to attacking Iranian posi- tions in Syria using its own forces. The overload of US troops; and while this may have pleased the Russians the driving force behind it was Iranian imperialism. Trump declared himself the victor over Iran when the Iraqi forces were responsible for the defeat of ISIS (along with US logistics, Russian air-power and Kurdish ground troops) it was a victory for US imperialism. In the battle against ISIS, US and Iranian high commands worked very closely together, with Iran sometimes calling in US air support. For a while, the Shi’ite Turkmen in Iraq, saw combined air and ground attacks involving both forces in what was seen as a joint front against the US. Trump had been responsible for the major victory for the US/Iranian coalition. In this respect, Soleimani could also lean on the Russians and the Kurds with some pressure; once again, this shows the relative independence of Iranian imperial- ism.

The Hit

Taken from the “extreme end of the spectrum of possible US responses to continuing Iranian aggression, the hit against Iran/Soleimani was directed by Trump in true Mafia style. The Presi- dent, who was calm and lucid throughout the whole episode, clearly laid his cards on the table, and it strengthens Iranian nationalism and its base.

It’s certainly true that since the downfall of the USSR, Russian imperialism has rationalised and re-armed, once again emerging as a major player on the world arena. Even more importantly, China is rapidly emerging as a major player too, with its economic and military rise. China’s rapid rise in the world arena, driven by its economic growth and military modernisation, is a major threat to the existing world order, and to US hegemony, demanding that a tendency towards bipolarisation between the most powerful imperialist blocs will lead to a disorder in the world. This is the real meaning behind Obama’s policy of disengagement from large parts of the Middle East, where, almost immediately, bloc thinking was loosened.


Soleimani assassination dominated by imperialist free-for-all

With the assassination of Qasem Soleimani, the battle for control of the Middle East has become a question of influence among the major imperialist powers, including bosses of Iran’s powerful military-military, political, and economic bloc. The United States, Russia, and China are each vying for influence over different regions, now the US, should be confused with the actual formation of blocs, which is being continually undermined by the general decay and decomposition of the entire reality of the “New World Order” to assert itself. Continued on page 7

The collapse of the Eastern bloc in 1989, was one of the most spectacular “peace-time” expressions of the crisis of decomposition and the end of the Soviet bloc. The collapse of the Eastern bloc off the agenda. The implosion of the eastern bloc and all its structures had its reverberations in the world where, almost immediately, bloc thinking was loosened. Despite the denouncing campaigns against the “death of communism” and the “victory of capitalism”, it didn’t take long - two years - for the reality of the “New World Order” to assert itself. Soon after the USA’s doomed attempt to prevent the fragmentation of its own bloc the coalition that fought the first Gulf War in 1991, war broke out in Yugoslavia 1992, the first outright war in Europe since 1945. A brutal, bellicose conflict, tar-Geting predominantly the Muslim populations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was certainly true that since the downfall of the USSR, Russian imperialism has rationalised and re-armed, once again emerging as a major player on the world arena. Even more importantly, China is rapidly emerging as a major player too, with its economic and military rise. China’s rapid rise in the world arena, driven by its economic growth and military modernisation, is a major threat to the existing world order, and to US hegemony, demanding that a tendency towards bipolarisation between the most powerful imperialist blocs will lead to a disorder in the world. This is the real meaning behind Obama’s policy of disengagement from large parts of the Middle East, where, almost immediately, bloc thinking was loosened. But neither the mounting rivalry between US and China, or the tensions between Russia and the US should be confused with the actual formation of blocs, which is being continually undermined by the dominant tendency towards fragmentation. This tendency has been illustrated very clearly
International Communist Current public forum

Strikes in France: the working class begins to become aware of itself

After years of retreat in the class struggle, and of a sustained capitalist offensive centred round ideologies either denying the existence of the working class or claiming that it is hopelessly divided between “native and immigrant” or the “left behind” and those supposedly part of the “urban elite”; after a series of social revolts in which the working class has been drowned in a mass of “citizens”, most notably the Yellow Vest protests in France, we can begin to grasp the importance of the recent strike movement in the same country, principally involving railway workers, health workers and other parts of the public sector. This was a movement which was undoubtedly in response to a direct attack on workers’ living conditions – the so-called “Pension Reforms” demanded by the Macron government. It was centred on the workplaces where the working class is most obviously socialising, but at the same time, there was a very strong push towards solidarity between the different sectors. There were also some signs – especially among the railway workers – of a capacity to take action outside the trade unions, even if the unions retained an overall control over the movement.
The significance of this movement was above all that it gives us a glimpse of how the working class can regain its sense of being a class – as some of the banners on the strike demonstrations proclaimed, “We exist”, “We are here”. It is the response of workers to the attacks of capitalism demanded by the remorseless economic crisis which will enable them to recover their class identity, an indispensable basis for the development of a revolutionary consciousness, the recognition that the working class is not only collectively exploited by capital, but also that it is the only force in society that can offer a real alternative to capitalism.

Saturday 7 March 2020
2.30-5.30pm
May Day Rooms
88 Fleet Street
London EC4Y 1DH

The work of the ICC

The future of the planet cannot be left in the hands of the capitalist class

The contradiction that capitalism produces is not only the incredible military chaos in the Middle East but also by threats to the unity of the European Union, the World Trade Organisation, NATO and a whole host of “international” organisations and the protocols and agreements that they are based on.

None of this makes the struggle of the working class any easier, more difficult in fact, but it does make it all the more essential for its future and the future of humanity. The united proletariat remains the only possible force able to confront and eventually overturn the unimaginable perspective that capitalism has in store for us. And, from our point of view, it doesn’t really matter if we are blown up by explosives, poisons to death or fried by climate change. In the meantime, as recent developments in the class struggle have tentatively indicated, the working class, as an exploited class, has the potential to fight, to organise itself, to set up its assemblies for consolidating and spreading its combat against being locked up by the unions, isolated as “citizens” and trapped behind corporatism and national borders.

We would be lying if we did not lay out the severity of the challenges facing the working class by these developments of capitalism, developments that can only facilitate further decay and barbarity. But despite the retreat and demoralisation of the last few decades, the working class has historically been and remains the only possible social force that can offer humanity a way out of the nightmare of moribund capitalism. Baboon.

Continued from page 6

Labour Party: Decline of ‘Socialist’ Parties is an international phenomenon

produce the ritual denunciations appropriate to a party in opposition and pose as an unconvincing government-in-waiting.

Divisions in the Labour Party are likely to further undermine its ability to take on a coherent role for the bourgeoisie. There is no point in idle speculation, but the examples from other countries in Europe show what can happen to socialist/social democratic parties. In Scotland, Labour was the dominant party for decades, as recently as 2001 holding 56 out of 72 seats in parliament. In 2015 and 2019 it only had one.

Tory peer Lord Ashcroft, introducing a report on the 2019 election, gave the idea of what the bourgeois thinks of the weakening of the Labour Party. “The country needs a strong opposition...” Moreover, at its best, the Labour Party has been a great force for decency, speaking up for people throughout the country and ensuring nobody is forgotten. We need it to reclaim that role.” The democratic apparatus is one of the most important weapons that the bourgeoisie has against the development of workers’ consciousness of the reality of capitalist exploitation. The British bourgeoisie has been one of the most experienced and effective in deploying that apparatus, with Labour playing a key part, whether in opposition or government. The diminished effectiveness of the Labour Party shows that, despite the parliamentary paralysis, British capitalism still has difficulties in regaining control of its machinery of mass deception. Car 10/20

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“Popular revolts” are no answer to world capitalism’s dive into crisis and misery

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Turkish invasion of N Syria
The cynical barbarity of the ruling class
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What lessons for future conflicts?

50 years since May 68
The difficult evolution of the proletarian political milieu

Nuevo Curso and the “Spanish Communist Left
What are the origins of the Communist Left?

Contribution to a history of the working class in South Africa IV
From the election of President Nelson Mandela (1994) to 2019

None of this makes the struggle of the working class a material necessity

The significance of this movement was above all that it gives us a glimpse of how the working class can regain its sense of being a class – as some of the banners on the strike demonstrations proclaimed, “We exist”, “We are here”. It is the response of workers to the attacks of capitalism demanded by the remorseless economic crisis which will enable them to recover their class identity, an indispensable basis for the development of a revolutionary consciousness, the recognition that the working class is not only collectively exploited by capital, but also that it is the only force in society that can offer a real alternative to capitalism.

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Anarchists and Extinction Rebellion
A bourgeois organisation cannot be transformed

Extraction Rebellion (XR) will be organising another protest in the UK. Taking part in this action, or supporting it, will be many who argue that, while XR, like the cycle of school closures, does not provide an answer to the looming environmental disaster, it does not go far enough. There will be Trotskyists like the Socialist Workers’ Party insisting that XR needs to understand that the threat to the planet comes from capitalism’s inimicable search for profit. There will be anarchists, like all Trotskyists, Stalinists or social democrats, the SWP believe that you can get rid of capitalism through the existing state taking over the economy – a state which is incapable of being accountable for profit. This disillusionments them from lecturing us about the need to overthrow capitalism. But there are others, such as the anarchists, whose claim to be opposed to capitalism can be taken more seriously, because some of them at least talk about the destruction of the capitalist state, the abolition of wage labour and the need for communism. And generally speaking, they make a lot more sense than the SWP about the aims and tactics of XR. They find it especially hard to stomach XR’s efforts to establish friendly relations with the police and their tacit encouragement of members to seek arrest. The London anar- cist paper Rebel City puts it like this: ‘XR’s main tactic seems to be getting arrested and getting arrested to put moral pressure on government to act. But it’s a pipe-dream to think we can reverse climate change without the dismantling of capitalism as a world system’. The anarchists believe that a democracy ambitious for freedom and realisable non-capitalist market economy: revers- sal of the climate catastrophe means overthrowing the climate crisis-creating capitalist state.

Perfectly true. And we can also find some well-researched anarchist interventions into XR’s study circles, particularly with the scientists, business and the upper echelons of the state: at a recent meeting of the Anarchist Communist Group in London, a member of the Green Anarchist Front provided some very telling information about links between the security services and some of the elements in- volved in XR. And yet the majority of anarchists continue to argue that it is necessary and possible to work inside organisations (Trotskyists, Maoists and ex-Maoists, western Europe, China, Cuba etc – whatever their pretext, ethnic, historical or religious, are a real poison for the working class, when it’s not the direct expression of the bourgeoisie. This organise in mass action by the proletariat, and especially by the proletariat, its role is neither to ‘organise the working class’ nor to engage in concrete political action. The work of the proletariat is everywhere, the bourgeoisie has a point to make, the workers have a point to make, it is necessary and possible to work inside organisations.

The strength of this position is undermined by the fact that XR’s claim to be non-hierarchical, showing that those who have tried to challenge its semi-hidden hierarchy have been given short shrift by the leadership. And this seems to lead Out of the way of XR’s leadership on building a ‘holocratic system’ – a system which we have seen in XR’s ‘holocratic system’ to change for the better. Our hope is that the new green environment. The XR movement, for example, ‘the right of nations to self-determination’ etc – whatever their pretext, ethnic, historical or religious, are a real poison for the working class, when it’s not the direct expression of the bourgeoisie. This organise in mass action by the proletariat, and especially by the proletariat, its role is neither to ‘organise the working class’ nor to engage in concrete political action. The work of the proletariat is everywhere, the bourgeoisie has a point to make, the workers have a point to make, it is necessary and possible to work inside organisations.

5. Jackson: Climate change special

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 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, and the working class can only fight them through its international solidarity and by struggle against the bourgeoisie in all countries.

- All the national ideological “independences”, 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 exploiting classes.

- In decadent capitalism, parliament and elections are nothing but a masquerade. Any call to participate in or be represented in the parliament is an attempt that presents these elections as a real choice for the exploited. ‘Democracy’, a particularly hypothetical form of the domination of the bourgeoisie, does not differ at all from other forms of capitalist dictatorship, such as Stalinism and fascism.

- The working class and the bourgeoisie are equally re- actionary. All the so-called “workers”, “Socialist” and “Communist” parties (now ex-Communists), the leftist trade unions and NGOs, the “official” anarchists constitute the left of capitalism’s political apparatus. All the tactics of ‘popular fronts’, “anti-fascist” fronts, ‘anti-war” fronts, “united fronts”, which misrepresents the interests of the proletariat with those of a faction of the bourgeoisie, serve only to smother and derail the struggle of the working class.

- 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 struggle.

- In order to advance its combat, the working class has to unite its struggles, taking charge of their ex- tension and generalisation through the formation of mass assemblies and committees of elected delegates 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, terror has always been a fertile soil for manipulation by the bourgeoisie. Advocating secret action by small minorities, it is a method of division to the bourgeoisie, its claim is to be a mass movement 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 over- throw all existing states and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world scale.

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5. Jackson: Climate change special

Orgins

The positions and activity of revolutionary or- ganisations are the product of the past experiences of the workers’ movement. These experiences of workers’ movements have been the starting point for the development of capitalist social relations: wage labour, commodity production, national frontiers. It means the creation of a revolutionary party in which all its members are 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 workers” nor to engage in concrete political action. But to participate actively in the movement towards the unification of struggles, towards workers taking control of their own movements at the same time to draw out the revolutionary political goals of the proletariat’s combat.

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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.

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