Workers of the World, unite!

THE INTERNATIONALIST PROLETARIAN

ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY

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WHAT DISTINGUISHES OUR PARTY: The line that goes from Marx to Lenin, to the foundation of the Communist International and the Communist Party of Italy (Livorno 1921); the struggle of the Communist Left against the degeneration of the International, against the theory of the "socialism in a single country" and the Stalinist counterrevolution; the refusal of the Popular Fronts and the Resistance Blocks; the hard work of restoration of the revolutionary doctrine and organ, in contact with the working class, outside the personal and electioneering politicking.

ENERGY SUPPLY SPASMS, TRADE WAR, DEBT, AND OVERPRODUCTION

And this not only highlights the capitalist system's inability to plan for the long term in general — let alone to plan for the satisfaction of human needs — as it inevitably succumbs, always and everywhere, to the demands of immediate profit. It also highlights the material necessity of repeatedly inflicting these ELECTROSHOCKS, PARALYSIS, and DESTRUCTION on global capitalist production and circulation as the only mechanism capable of mitigating the tendency toward relative overproduction of capital and the deflation that stifles the rate of profit.
As we have known for more than 150 years: *"And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced **DESTRUCTION of a mass of productive forces**; on the other, by the **CONQUEST of new markets, and by the more thorough EXPLOITATION of the old ones**. That is to say, by **paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises**, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented."* (Manifesto of the Communist Party,1848). – read article on page 12

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AGAINST THE CAPITALIST CEMENT SEWER: COMMUNIST SPACE AND OXYGEN (p. 24)

Capitalism is not interested in the maintenance of constructions already made, but in the reconstruction that follows disasters and catastrophes: *"The basis of Marxist economic analysis is the distinction between dead labor and living labor. We define **capitalism** not as ownership over the accumulations of crystallized past labor, but as the **right to the subtraction of living and active labor**. That is why the present economy cannot lead to a good solution which carries out, with the minimum effort of present labor, the rational preservation of all that has been handed down to us by past labor, and the best bases for the effect of future labor. The bourgeois economy is interested in the frenzy of modern labor, and it **favors the destruction of masses still useful from past labor**, laughing at those who come."* (Homicide of the Dead, Battaglia Comunista, n. 24, 1951).

January 1924 – Death of Lenin

In January 1924, Lenin passed away. The Left assessed Lenin's work in February 1924, published as*: Lenin on the Path of Revolution,* explaining from a materialistic and dialectical standpoint the *role of leadership*.[1]

It would be contrary to Marxist doctrine to claim that the revolution depends on a single individual; therefore, **the death or physical survival of an individual alone would not have changed the course of the counter-revolution**. However, with the death of this comrade, the battle over *leninism* began, which opportunists use as a fig leaf to conceal their betrayal of Marxism. During Lenin's lifetime, it would not have been possible to speak of "leninism" because Lenin was (and claimed to be) above all a **theoretical restorer of Marxism in the face of the opportunism of his time,** and it is no coincidence that this is the aspect discussed in the first chapter of the text, as for us this was always the main aspect of his work.

In the text, the Left already denounces the opportunistic danger posed by the use of the term "leninism," which was just beginning to be presented as a doctrine in its own right: *"We do not believe it is appropriate – even if no substantial disagreement lies beneath it – **to present**, as Comrade Zinoviev seems intent on doing, **Bolshevism or Leninism as a doctrine in itself, consisting of the revolutionary ideology of the proletariat in alliance with the peasants.** This (not to speak of our comrade's intentions, but of the views of opportunist currents) **could serve as a theoretical formula for counterrevolutionaries disguised as the authors of a historic retreat from the substance of the Russian Revolution:** while among the finest traditions of the Bolshevik Party remains the brilliant historical intuition with which it confronted the Social Revolutionary program – from which it has «**stolen**» an essential point – but so that it might be carried out not by the peasant class, but by the working class: for only by the latter,*

- July 1914 – Start of World War I (bankruptcy of the II International)
- 1917 – February and October Revolution in Russia
- 1917 – Foreign military intervention and civil war in Russia
- March 1918 – Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
- November 1918 – Kiel Mutiny
- November 1918 – End of World War I
- December 1918 – Foundation of the Communist Party of Germany
- January 1919 – Assassination of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht by the social democracy
- March 1919 – 1st Congress of the 3rd International
- March-August 1919 – Hungarian Soviet Republic (participation of social democrats dynamite it)
- April 1919 – Soviet Republic of Bavaria
- March-April 1920 – Kapp/Lüttwitz "putsch" + Ruhr Uprising
- May 1920 – *Theses of the Communist Abstentionist Fraction of the PSI*
- July-August 1920 – II Congress of the 3rd International→ "21 conditions of admission" (in particular, the 21st).
- August 1920 – Defeat of the red army in Warsaw
- September 1920 – Occupation of factories in Italy
- December 1920 – Fusion of the 'left' of the USPD with the KPD
- January 1921 – Foundation of the Communist Party of Italy
- January 1921 – 'Open letter' of the KPD to the SPD and the trade unions
- March 1921 – Failure of the March action in Germany
- June-July 1921 – III Congress of the 3rd International→ **"conquest of the masses"** (of the majority...)
- December 1921 – Resolution previous to the 1st Enlarged Executive→ **"political united front".**
- January 1922 – *Theses on the tactics of the Communist Party of Italy (Rome)*
- February 1922 – 1st Enlarged Executive
- April 1922 – Joint Conference with the II and the II ½ Internationals
- June 1922 – 2nd Enlarged Executive (**workers' government).**
- August 1922 – Submission of the CPC to the Kuomintang
- October 1922 – March on Rome
- November 1922 – *Project of Thesis presented by the CP of Italy to the IV Congress*
- November-December 1922 – IV Congress of the 3rd International→ **"workers and peasants government"**
- January 1923 – French occupation of the Ruhr
- February 1923 – Arrest of the leaders of the CP of Italy, handpicking of Togliatti for the direction
- June 1923 – "National Bolshevism" in Germany
- October 1923 – Communist ministers in the governments of Saxony and Thuringia (and ulterior military dissolution)
- January 1924 – Death of Lenin
- June-July 1924 – V Congress of the 3rd International→ **"bolshevization"**
- June 1924 – Assassination of Matteoti and Aventine pantomime
- April 1925 – Hindenburg's presidential election in Germany
- January 1926 – *Theses of the Left to the III Congress of the Communist Party of Italy (Lyon)*
- February 1926 – VI Enlarged Executive
- March 1926 – Betrayal of the proletarian revolution in China (massacre of Shanghai and Canton in 1927).
- May 1926 – Betrayal of the miners' strike in Great Britain (Anglo-Russian Committee)
- December 1926 – VII Enlarged Executive→ **"socialism in one country"**, defeat of the Russian opposition
- October 1929 – Crash of 1929
- 1936, 1938 – Moscow processes
- May 1937 – May events during the Spanish civil war
- September 1939 – Start of the 2nd Imperialist World War II
- May 1943 – Formal dissolution of the 3rd International

The **complete timeline**, with the explanation of each event, can be consulted interactively on the **installable web app** by accessing through the QR code.

1 See the quotations from the text on the role of the leader in the article "Party Life" in this review, pages 7 and 8.

and not by its own forces, can the former be led to liberation." (Lenin on the Path of Revolution, 1924).

A year later, the danger warned of by the Left had been confirmed, and the anti-Marxists were acting within the International in the name of "Leninism":

"If by "Leninism" we understand accepting as true whatever those who proclaim themselves to be the true and greatest Leninists find convenient to assert, then we can only smile. We reserve the right to argue and prove that many of the opinions held by those labeled as Leninists are, more than anything else, anti-Leninist and anti-Marxist.

If by "Leninism" we understand swearing by each and every statement Lenin made during his lifetime, then we cannot even agree with that." (The Opportunist Danger and the International, 1925).

Tactical eclecticism will end up running rampant within the International in the name of "Leninism," even though, as the Left had demanded a year earlier following Lenin's death: *"**To whoever wants to emphasize too much in Lenin the tactician without fixed rules, we will always reproach the unity that binds all Lenin's political work**. Lenin is the great figure who, fixing his eyes on the final revolutionary goal, is not afraid to be called in the periods of preparation the dissolver, the centralizer, the autocrat, the devourer of his masters and his friends. He is the **ruthless bringer of clarity and precision, even if it means the collapse of false concord and artificial alliances**."* (Lenin on the Path of Revolution, 1924)

But as the text reiterates, the revolution will take place despite Lenin's death (and, we might add, despite the counterrevolution carried out in his name): *"(…) we remain, armed with a formidable set of arguments, justified in maintaining that, on this arduous path, the history of tomorrow «**will pass through Lenin**»; it will reenact the revolutionary phases whose Marxist vision he has revived in theory and refined in practice."* (Lenin on the Path of Revolution, 1924).

June – July 1924 – V Congress of the 3rd International: "Bolshevization"

In the months of June and July 1924, the V Congress of the 3rd International was held, at which **the tactical deviations of the *united front* and the *workers' government* were maintained,** with all the blame for their poor results placed on individuals.

To achieve this, a real **parliamentary farce** was unfolded: the heroes of the IV Congress (the leadership of the KPD: Brandler and Thalheimer) were now excommunicated for not correctly applying the tactic of the *workers' government* (which they had actually applied) and, in their place, new champions emerged, the *left wing* of the German Party (R. Fischer and Maslow).

A bargaining of principles and tactics began with two essential conditions from that point forward: the new champion had to swear loyalty to the International and spit on Trotsky (who had stirred controversy within the Russian Party with his "Lessons of October") on one side, and on the Italian Left on the other.

Thus, the "left wing" of the German Party accepted the merger of the Red International of Labor Unions with the Yellow Amsterdam Trade Union Central, proposed by the Executive of the International in exchange for their recognition as a newly chosen group. The correct tactic was the one that accepted as the **sole justification for working within unions controlled by opportunists the existence of a clear and distinct international reference point**, which was now eliminated by the merger.

In *The Policy of the International* (1925), the Left offered the following description of the V Congress: *"At the V Congress, those leaders of the German Left presented themselves as allies of Zinoviev, making Brandler and Co. the sole scapegoats, and lashed out against Trotsky, who was a pessimist, replacing his Marxist and revolutionary criticism with the banal assertion that, from the moment the leadership had passed to the Leftists, everything was resolved and everything was bound to go splendidly in the German party. (…) At the V Congress, they practiced diplomacy and maneuvering, and nothing more.*

In the highly secret meetings of the German delegation, the open disagreement of the radical faction – composed of workers from Berlin, Hamburg, and the Ruhr region – against Fischer's continuous concessions was never officially disclosed (…) The violent reaction with which the German comrades greeted the proposal for international trade union unity – the bombshell of the V Congress – was deflected (through a web of behind-the-scenes discussions and agreements unrelated to the proceedings of the Congress). They willingly agreed to deliver two or three speeches against the rebellious Italian left. Finally, complete agreement was proclaimed between the International Executive and the German Left on the new tactical theses and on everything else (…)

But, for all that, one might ask: Do you, as a matter of principle, demand that there be open and violent struggle and disagreement at Communist Congresses, with no possibility of a common solution?

We respond immediately that, if unanimity were achieved through the study and objective, higher-level consideration of issues, this would be the ideal; but that artificial unanimity is far more harmful than open disagreement in congressional deliberations, provided that executive discipline is maintained: and that this was a case of artificial unanimity has been proven by the facts, such as the failures of the tactic voted on with such enthusiasm, the excommunication of those who had presented themselves as its most secure pioneers, and the alternating ousting of groups of leaders whose solidarity and discipline with the infallible directives of the International had previously been praised." (The Policy of the International, 1925).

Another deviation from the V Congress was the institutionalization of the concept of a sympathizing party, which would open the door for Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang to become a sympathizing party at the VI Enlarged Executive Committee meeting in February 1926. And just one month later, in March 1926, it demonstrated its role as the executioner of the Chinese Communists.

The V Congress also introduced the misnamed ***Bolshevization.*** The so-called ***"Bolshevization"*** introduced the **dissolution of territorial organization and the establishment of factory cells as the only possible foundation for the Party**. Communist cells already existed within the Parties not only in workplaces but also in any organ where communist militants were present (see the resolutions of the III Congress of the International). Communist cells by themselves were not incompatible with territorial organization; therefore, the dissolution of the territorial organization was intended to enable the already degenerate International to impose strict control over the communist groups.

It is true that this had been the form of organization of the Bolshevik Party in Russia, where the particular configuration of

the doble revolution, with its democratic-bourgeois component, favored organization within the factory and hindered it outside. However, it was equally true that in mature capitalist Europe, the goal was to overthrow the bourgeoisie without intermediate stages, and the atmosphere within the factory was as hostile to communist organization as the environment outside during the czarist era. Furthermore, compartmentalizing communist groups within each workplace hindered the Party's primary function: synthesizing impulses and broadening the political horizon toward a common supreme goal. Groups of communist workers became isolated from each other, facilitating corporatism and a narrowing of the scope of action and vision.

This is how our current summarized the effects of so-called Bolshevization in *The Opportunist Danger and the International* (1925): *"As soon as it takes the form of cell organization, over which has omnipotent control a network of functionaries selected on the basis of blind obedience to a set of prescriptions that purports to be Leninism; in a tactical and political work method that deludes itself into believing it can achieve maximum operational alignment with the most unexpected directives; and in a historical approach to global communist action, in which the final word must always be found in the precedents of the Russian Party as interpreted by a privileged group of comrades; we believe that it will fail to achieve its own objectives and will weaken the movement, and we regard it as a misguided reaction to the disappointing results of many tactical experiments of the dominant method – carried out in defiance of our criticisms – within the International. Instead of employing more courageous remedies, it seems to us that it seeks to cloak itself in this "Bolshevization," which, far from being a strengthening, will amount to a sort of crystallization and "immobilization" of the revolutionary communist movement and its spontaneous initiatives and energies. The process is reversed; the "synthesis" (To arms…!) precedes its constituent elements; the pyramid, instead of being securely erected on its base, is turned upside down, and its extremely unstable equilibrium rests on its apex."* (The Opportunist Danger and the International, 1925).

And in reality, the introduction of Bolshevization was about this: to isolate and compartmentalize different Party units for better control based on *mechanical discipline*, *discipline for the sake of discipline*. It was the culmination in the form of **organizational degeneration** of what had been the previous cycle.

Thus, beginning with the **tactical error** of *revolutionary parliamentarism* in mature capitalism and the **ambiguous formulation** of *winning the majority*, a slide into **tactical deviation** of the *political united front* combined with a **tactical-organizational deviation** in a *federalist* direction (not individual adherence but *mergers with fragments of parties*, admission of *sympathizing parties*, an internal atmosphere of *parliamentary maneuvering*) led to **theoretical-programmatic deviations** such as *national Bolshevism* in Germany and the *workers' government*.

Once **destroyed the connection between programmatic postulates and** tactics, the sole basis of genuine communist organization discipline, the only applicable organizational cement was that of *discipline for the sake of discipline*, *mechanical discipline*, and *ideological terror* within the organization itself, even resorting to the use of the State's police apparatus to resolve internal organizational divergences. Only an **internal prison-like regime** could ensure **discipline when the organizational premises had been destroyed by all the previous mistakes.** And thus, communist parties ceased to be communist with no possibility of subsequent correction.

The issue was not addressed by the Italian Left as a democratic demand or for greater local autonomy but, on the contrary, **the Italian Left advocated maximum centralization and discipline** and a **total limitation of the autonomy of both peripheral bodies *and governing bodies***, based on the only foundation that can produce this result in a Communist Party: **unity of doctrine, program, and tactics**.

The text *Communist organization and discipline* (1924), building on the argument of a previous article *The Democratic Principle* (1922), summarizes:

*"Thus, is outlined the scheme of the conclusions towards which we tend in that matter. **There is no good mechanical discipline** for the execution of superior orders or dispositions "whatever they are": **there is an ensemble of orders and dispositions that respond to the real origins of the movement that can guarantee the maximum of discipline, that is, of unitary action of the whole organism, whereas there are other directives which emanate from the center that can compromise discipline and organizational solidity**. (...)*

*We thus summarize our thesis, and we believe to be thus faithful to the dialectics of Marxism: **the action that the Party develops and the tactics that it adopts, that is, the manner in which the party acts towards the "outside" have at their turn consequences upon the organization and its "internal" constitution. Fatally compromises the party that who, in the name of an unlimited discipline, pretends to have it disposed for an action, a tactic, "whatever" strategical maneuver, that is, without well determined limits known by the ensemble of the militants**.*

*The **desired maximal unity and disciplinary solidity** will be effectively reached only by facing the problem in the basis of this platform, and **not pretending that it is already solved prejudicially by a banal rule of mechanical obedience**."* (Organization and Communist Discipline, 1924).

In *The Opportunist Danger and the International* (1925), the Left warned that *"criticism without error doesn't harm even a thousandth of what error without criticism does,"* and denounced the International's drift toward prevailing tactical elasticity and the increasing prison-like regime, concluding as follows: *"It is necessary to condemn and abandon such methods. Where the situation does not allow for the struggle for power, this does not mean that the communist party does not have a political and action task that goes beyond that of a propaganda school. **The attitude that the party publicly assumes in the course of the struggle, even in the phase of withdrawal, will have its indispensable influence on the success or failure that will be reserved for it in the period of future resumption, in overcoming all the complex counterrevolutionary resistances or not."*** (The Opportunist Danger and the International, 1925).

June 1924 – Murder of Matteotti and Aventino pantomime

As a result of the murder of Matteotti by the fascists, the remaining parliamentary parties (including, shamefully, the Communist Party) founded the *authentic parliament* at Aventino. If the tactic of *revolutionary parliamentarism* (which, as the Left had warned, was incorrect in capitalist Europe) had any meaning

or reason to exist, then communist deputies should not abandon parliament in a bloc with bourgeois parties but had to remain in it to defend communist positions, especially now that the fascists were introducing physical violence into the parliamentary arena.

By participating in the Aventino bloc, a united front was formed with clearly bourgeois parties, confusing the masses about the bourgeois nature of both Parliament and its duplicate in Aventino.

This is how the situation is summarized in the *Theses presented by the Left to the Lyon Congress:*

"The Center (comprised of Gramsci, Togliatti, Tasca...) made a mistake by leaving parliament and participating in the initial Aventino meetings, as they should have remained in parliament to make a political attack against the Government and to take an immediate stance against the constitutional and moral prejudice of Aventino. This error represented the determining factor in the crisis outcome in favor of fascism. ***It cannot be excluded that it might have been advantageous for the communists to leave parliament, but with their own character and only when the situation allowed calling the masses to direct action.*** *This was one of those moments that decide the developments of subsequent situations. Therefore, the error was fundamental and decisive in forming a judgment about the leadership's capabilities and led to a very unfavorable use by the working class of fascism's weakening, first, and the Aventino's resounding failure, later.*

The ***return to parliament in November 1924 and Repossi's declaration were beneficial, as demonstrated by the wave of proletarian approval, but they came too late.*** *The Center hesitated for a long time and* ***only decided under pressure from the party and the Left****. The party was prepared on the basis of insignificant instructions and a fantastically erroneous assessment of the situation's prospects (Gramsci's report to the Central Committee, August 1924). The preparation of the masses, which was not aimed at the perspective of Aventino's downfall but its victory, through the proposal that the party made to the opposition to establish itself as Antiparliament, was in every sense the worst. Above all, this tactic deviated from the decisions of the International, which never considered proposals to clearly bourgeois parties. Furthermore, this was one of those tactics that led away from the field of communist principles and politics as well as from the Marxist historical conception. Regardless of any explanation the Center might attempt regarding the goals and intentions behind the proposal, an explanation that would have had very limited impact, it gave the masses the illusion of an Anti-State opposing and fighting against the traditional State apparatus, while, according to the historical perspective of our program, the only basis for an Anti-State can be the representation of the only productive class, that is, the Soviets.*

The Antiparliament slogan, with support in the country from the workers' and peasants' committees, meant entrusting the General Staff of the proletariat to representatives of capitalist social groups, such as Amendola, Agnelli, Albertini, etc. *Aside from the certainty of not actually reaching such a situation, which could only be labeled as betrayal, merely presenting it as a perspective of a communist proposal meant violating principles and weakening proletarian preparation.* (Theses of the Left to the III Congress of the Communist Party of Italy, Lyon, 1926)

April 1925 – Hindenburg's Presidential Election in Germany

The electoral victory in the German presidential elections of the *monarchist* candidate (Hindenburg) once again led to a sharp shift to the right, with the communists being blamed for keeping their candidate instead of withdrawing it to let the republican bourgeoisie win.

The proposal of the International actually meant extending parliamentary support beyond so-called workers' parties to the openly bourgeois republican candidate, condemning the communist party to permanent blackmail that reduced it to the role of insurance for the bourgeois republican faction against the "lesser evil".

This tragic farce is illustrated in *The Politics of the International* (1925):

"Let's follow the facts and documents. In the run-off elections, the German communists kept Thaelmann as their candidate, who received 60,000 more votes. However, General Hindenburg clearly won the presidency of the republic against the bourgeois republican candidate, Marx. The usual recriminations storm down on the German communists. ***The bourgeois left and social democrats act as if the revolutionaries had signed a contract with them, committing to support them when the right-wing decides to take them on. Suffering this extortion means admitting that communism is nothing more than a byproduct of democracy, a thesis worthy of the school of Treves and Turati*** *(...)*

But ***the Central Left Committee of the German Party, a few hours after Hindenburg was elected, met to declare that they had made a mistake and failed to assess the monarchical danger****. They summoned the party's National Committee, which confirmed this judgment, although a strong minority sounded the alarm against the retreat of the Executive Committee of the International and the German Center to* ***positions reminiscent of Brandler and Co.*** *(...)*

So what are the consequences of this contradictory presentation of an old and ever-new problem? Here they are: 'In the presidential elections... we should have maneuvered in line with the proposals of the German delegation and the Communist International. This would have led the German working class, forming a bloc on a minimal republican program with the true supporters of the republic (sic, sic, sic, sic!), rallying around the name of a militant republican candidate in the struggle against reaction.' Thus, the resolution says, social democracy would have been unmasked. ***The Comintern's proposal was to invite them not to withdraw their candidate, Braun, for whom the communists would have voted by withdrawing Thaelmann's candidacy****. But if the goal was: a) unmasking the social democracy; b) avoiding the danger of monarchical victory, it is clear that the social democrats,* ***with the figures in hand, would have replied that Braun's votes plus Thaelmann's were not enough to beat Hindenburg, and it was necessary to form the bloc even with the forces of the bourgeois and Catholic democrat Marx. Therefore, the consequence of the policy suggested by the International was the communists' support for a bourgeois candidacy or, at the very least, the simultaneous vote of communists, social democrats, and bourgeois democrats for a candidate, let's say, Braun.****"* (The Politics of the International, 1925).

(The publication of this series, which we began in "The Internationalist Proletarian" n.12 as a result of the collective study work of the general meeting of August 2023, will continue in the following issues of the review)

LIFE OF THE PARTY: GENERAL MEETING OF AUGUST 2026 (I)

The general meeting took place in two phases, one for study and the other for assessment and planning of activities. The sessions included both in-person and online participation by fellow members from the Party's various regional sections.

The militant formation phase lasted one week, with the main focus on the study of various texts by Lenin.

During the study sessions, comments were made to clarify and explore the study materials in greater depth, and questions were raised that were then addressed in greater detail as part of the study, using supplementary material or more detailed explanations. The study sessions took place over 7 days in 4-hour sessions, held in the morning and afternoon, following this schedule:

Monday	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**	**Saturday**	**Sunday**
morning	*morning*	*morning*	*morning*	*morning*	*morning*	*morning*
Meeting plan Lenin on the Path of Revolution	The State and Revolution (Lenin)	Proletarian Dictatorship and the Class Party Quotes from Lenin on the double revolution	Quotes from Lenin on the Revolutions of 1905 and 1917	Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism	Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism	Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder (Lenin) Quotes on the trade union question from the Sinistra and the II Congress of the IC
afternoon	*afternoon*	*afternoon*	*afternoon*	*afternoon*	*afternoon*	*afternoon*
The degeneration of the third International	The State and Revolution (Lenin)	Quotes from Lenin on the national question	Alternative to the capitalist mercantile system	Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism	Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder (Lenin)	Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder (Lenin) Theses on abstentionism in the parliamentary question and the ensuing discussion

The **first session** focused on the general framework of the meeting and examined "Lenin on the Path of Revolution" (1924) in order to – given the number of Lenin's texts scheduled for the study sessions – address the question of Lenin as a theorist and restorer of Marxism, as well as the Bolsheviks' limitations on tactical issues.

As the text states: *"At the beginning of The State and Revolution, Lenin himself says that it is inevitable that the great revolutionary pioneers will be falsified: as has happened with Marx and his finest followers. Will Lenin himself escape this fate? Certainly not (…) This hypocritical attitude of bourgeois thought is the almost certain prelude to other attempts at distortion – some closer to us than others – against which the militants of tomorrow have a duty to fight: a duty to absorb, if not with the same genius, then with the same determination that Lenin demonstrated in relation to the masters of Marxism."* (Lenin on the Path of Revolution, 1924).

Returning to this prediction, the Party text *"'Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder,' A Condemnation of Future Renegades"* (1964) states: *"Thirty-six years have passed since this facile prediction, and its assessment, forged step by step by the left's relentless criticism, shows that the volume of falsifying garbage that opportunism has attempted to heap upon the figure of Lenin is at least ten times more nauseating than that thrown at Marx. The vile method of the falsifiers is always the same: to construct a legend in place of the historical reality that gave rise to the formation of the method and program of those great communists; to fish within that legend for isolated, artificial quotations, severed from the actual conditions of struggle that led to the creation of these classic texts; and shamelessly distort their value by taking advantage of the difficult conditions of struggle faced by the revolutionary class, which, in most cases, due to the economic hardship in which it lives, must content itself with acquiring its arsenal of theoretical weapons from third- and fourth-hand sources."*

And this is why, in the face of so many subsequent falsifications of Lenin's positions, it is necessary to guide our study by following the method our Party has always used: examining the collection of Lenin's quotations in their historical order and context: *"Dishonest use of Lenin. This is the true method of the dealers in doctrine: to point to a volume in the official series and a page in that volume, confident that purges and censorship have combed through the entire edition, just as a Catholic cites the canonical text of the Gospels. And deliberately omitting the date and subject of the text, that is, its historical context, the front lines on which it was written by someone who was not an archivist, but a fighter – he certainly was – of revolutionary action. (…) Lenin's entire body of work and life speak for themselves, not just two sentences. (…) We have countered this disloyal way of quoting Lenin with a study, in its historical order, of his writings throughout the course of the revolutionary struggle in Russia"* (Dialogue with the Dead, 1956).

The Party's method is not easy – it can even drive activists and revisionists to the brink of madness[1] – but it is the only one that, when applied systematically, leads to the training of militants capable of defending a coherent Marxist line:

"We recognize that reading Lenin or Marx in this way is laborious. But it is the only way to guard against widespread opportunist ruin. Anyone who wants to take the easy way out and anyone who wants to be content with platitudes and fraudulently cherry-picked phrases should find their place in the dungheap." ('Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder,' A Condemnation of Future Renegades, 1964).

The text under study also addresses, in general terms, the issue of Party leaders and Party organization in the key chapter "The Role of the Leader":

"The expression and role of the individual are determined by the general conditions of the environment, society, and its history. What takes shape in a person's mind has been shaped by their relationships with others. Certain privileged and well-trained minds, better-constructed and more refined machines, better translate, express, and rework a body of knowledge and experience that would not exist if it were not grounded in the life of the community. Rather than inventing, the leader represents the masses themselves and enables them to recognize themselves more and more clearly in their situation with respect to the social world and historical development; to express in precise external formulations their tendency to act in that direction, for which the conditions are provided by social factors, whose mechanism is ultimately interpreted on the basis of an investigation of economic elements. (…) The leader's mind is a material instrument that functions through its ties to the entire class and the party; the formulations the leader articulates as a theorist and the norms the leader prescribes as a practical leader are not his own creations, but rather clarifications of a consciousness whose materials belong to the class-party and are the product of vast experience. (…) Leaders and the leader are those who best and most effectively organize the class's thought and want its will, necessary and active constructions of the premises provided by historical factors. (…) The party organization, which enables the class to truly be itself and live as such, presents itself as a unified mechanism in which the various ***«brains»*** *(not only brains, of course, but also other individual organs) take on diverse tasks according to their aptitudes and potential, all in the service of a goal and an interest that progressively unify more and more intimately* ***«in time and space»*** *(this convenient expression has an empirical, not a transcendent, meaning). Not all individuals, therefore, hold the same position or carry the same weight within the organization: to the extent that this division of labor is carried out according to a more rational plan (and what holds true today for the party–class will hold true tomorrow for society), it is absolutely impossible for those at the top to exert a privileged influence over the others. Our revolutionary evolution is not moving toward disintegration, but toward an increasingly scientific connection among individuals.*

It is anti-individualist insofar as it is materialist; it does not believe in the soul or in a metaphysical and transcendent essence of the individual, but rather places the individual's functions within a collective framework, creating a hierarchy that evolves toward the gradual elimination of coercion, replacing it with technical rationality. The party is already an example of a

[1] One of the manifestations of the degeneration of the Party's French and Italian leaderships, which had been accumulating since 1972 and accelerated at full speed in 1980–1982, was the elimination of the study of fundamental texts for sympathizers and even for Party members. The circular from the BCI (Bureau Centrale Internazionale) addressed to the entire Party regarding *"Work with Sympathizers and the Integration of New Members"* (dated June 1981, which reached us in late November) marked a point of no return for the Spanish section. This circular outlined the process for training the "new" type of member for the new phase, breaking with the method of training sympathizers and members that had been followed until then within the Party, imposing a faster pace, and establishing, as a substitute for Marxist texts, *"biographies of members such as the stories of Big Bill or Mama Jones, accounts of struggles such as Domitilia's, or even simply news stories or novels that inspire the struggle."* In the staging of the expulsion of the Spanish section by the French Party leadership itself (the same leadership that, a few months later, would attempt to dissolve and liquidate the entire Party, which proves that our expulsion was part of this campaign to destroy the entire Party), the degenerate leadership accused us of the following: *"the false assertion was made that a militant's theoretical training must take place before joining the Party through an immersion in the general texts of Marxism (ranging from the "Critique of the Gotha Program" to "What Is to Be Done?", from "The Origin of the Family… to "Speech on the Tax in Kind", from "History of the Working Class Movement" to "The State and Revolution")"* (BCI circular dated 12/2/82). These were the texts that the degenerate leadership of the *new course* wanted to ban as study material. The *new course* wanted unprepared militants whom they could manipulate and immerse in interclassist movement-based activism, but they were unable to subdue the Spanish section. Well, 40 years later, we maintain the Party's method and train our current and future members in the fundamental texts of Marxism, including, of course, "The State and Revolution" as well as the rest of the texts that the opportunists of the *new course* wanted to censor.

Communist militant formation does not have an end point, a moment when it is "complete"; rather, it is a continuous and ongoing process, though it must undoubtedly begin and reach a sufficient level of development before supporters can be admitted as members of the organization. We will return to this question in greater depth and detail in the next issue. It should be noted, by the way, that this BCI circular dated 2/12/82 was still being defended in 2021 by "El Proletario," an offshoot of "le Proletáire/il Comunista" (exCombat) in Spanish in its July 2021 issue No. 23, in an article in which they crudely omit the list of texts mentioned above, which the degenerate leadership wanted to prevent from serving as a basis for the training of militants. Incidentally, the article in "El Proletario," in addition to hailing the founding of the Communist Party of Spain as a milestone of the communist movement (a party that was stillborn and is the antithesis of the Communist Party of Italy founded in Livorno), is otherwise riddled with crude falsehoods, such as the claim that in issue No. 2 of "El Comunista" we had claimed that it was not a Party organ (when that issue, like all the others, clearly states "International Communist Party" as the first subtitle on the cover). This is the deceptive style that has characterized "il Comunista" (exCombat) ever since it joined the leadership of "il programma comunista" after forcing the expulsion of the Ivrea and Turin sections in 1981, when it took complete control of "il programma comunista" and published the three most repugnant issues ever published in that journal (issues 8, 9, and 10 of 1983) while simultaneously reinstating democratic centralism; when they began publishing "Combat" (whose launch was announced in issue 10 of "il programma comunista"), which was no longer considered an organ of the Party, thereby aligning themselves with the formal liquidators; and when they latched onto the French "le Prolétaire" – which, like them, was in the midst of a movementist drift – to re-present themselves as the Party's organ (in the Italian "il Comunista" from then on) and begin to lie and distort the history of the Party's degeneration that they themselves had spearheaded, with the aim of covering up their active and nefarious role in it.

collective free from coercion. (…) These general aspects of the issue show that no one better than us rises above the banal meaning of egalitarianism and ***«numerical»*** *democracy. If we do not believe in the individual as a sufficient basis for action, what value can the sheer number of individuals have for us? What can democracy or autocracy mean to us? (…) For us, the question does not arise in legal terms, but as a technical problem not prejudged by syllogisms of constitutional law or, worse still, natural law. There is no principled reason for our bylaws to include the terms* ***«leader»*** *or* ***«committee of leaders»:***

And from these premises arises a Marxist solution to the question of choice: a choice determined, above all, by the dynamic history of the movement and not by the banality of electoral contests. We prefer not to include the word ***«leader»*** *in our organizational rules because we will not always have in our ranks a figure of the stature of a Marx or a Lenin. In conclusion, if such an exceptional individual, the* ***«instrument»****, exists, the movement makes use of him; but the movement continues to thrive even when no such eminent figure is present."*

During the **second session**, we studied the material prepared as part of the series on the historical line of the degeneration of the Third International (https://siguiendo-el-hilo-del-tiempo.web.app/), which has been published in the journal. The work carried out at the general meeting in August 2023, which takes form in this web application, allows for an in-depth study of the degeneration of the International and also enables an intensive study session of approximately four hours (including comments and clarifications) on this part of the history of the communist movement, whose lessons are essential for the resumption of the class struggle. This aspect was also crucial for properly contextualizing the reading of Lenin's texts scheduled for the study sessions – and especially *"Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder"* – for the reasons outlined above.

During the **third and fourth sessions**, we studied *"The State and Revolution"* by Lenin. As noted in point 11 of the Naples Theses, *"The theoretical question [of the state] after Lenin requires no further clarification,"* and therefore the study of this text is an important part of the formation of communist militants.

First of all, and contrary to all those who seek to portray Lenin as a vulgar revisionist who invented a theory different from Marxism, this comrade's purpose could not be clearer: *"In these circumstances, in view of the unprecedently wide-spread distortion of Marxism, our prime task is to re-establish what Marx really taught on the subject of the state".*

But the method Lenin employs for this restoration is also extremely revealing: *"This will necessitate a number of long quotations from the works of Marx and Engels themselves. Of course, long quotations will render the text cumbersome and not help at all to make it popular reading, but we cannot possibly dispense with them. All, or at any rate all the most essential passages in the works of Marx and Engels on the subject of the state must by all means be quoted as fully as possible so that the reader may form an independent opinion of the totality of the views of the founders of scientific socialism, and of the evolution of those views, and so that their distortion by the "Kautskyism" now prevailing may be documentarily proved and clearly demonstrated".*

In other words, Lenin applies the same method to the study of Marx and Engels' texts that we must apply to the study of Marxism in general, including Lenin and the Party's texts. This method, which discourages the creativity of innovators but lays the groundwork for a militant commitment grounded in understanding and in the prevention of surprise or sudden shifts in direction at critical moments, consists of reproducing quotations from fundamental texts to guide any position and as a basis for the struggle against any attempt to revise the theses of Marxism, a method consistently advocated by the Party: *"The main objective of our discussions –* ***in which it is essential to continually repeat certain assertions of the fundamental «theorems», preferably using the same words and phrases*** *– is to critique* ***the delusion regarding «unforeseen»*** *forms and deformities of modern capitalism that would force us to revise the foundations of «prospectivism» and, consequently, of the Marxist method.*

Such a ***false*** *position can easily be attributed to* ***ignorance, or rather to never having known, the essential lines of our doctrine, its cardinal principles."*** (The Soul of the Steam Horse, Il Programma Comunista No. 5, 1953)

"It is useless and harmful to specify or personalize, and to search far and wide or nearby for the source of the bacteriological bombs; the point is to identify the virus and apply the antibiotic, which we stubbornly distinguish through ***continuity of line, through fidelity to principles, through preferring nine hundred ninety-nine times out of a thousand the catechist remastication*** ***over the adventure of new scientific discovery that requires eagle's wings, and to which every mosquito feels called by destiny.*** (…) *Therefore, while far too many are caught up in the hysteria of sublime calculation, we classify them as being at the level of the abacus, and we check to see if they know how to count on their fingertips."* (The Marxism of the Stammerers, Battaglia Comunista, No. 8, 1952).

Drawing on Marx's quotations, Lenin unravels the mechanisms by which parliamentarism and the democratic republic serve as instruments for the domination of the bourgeoisie:

ALTERNATIVE TO THE CAPITALIST MERCANTILE SYSTEM - documentary video (in Spanish)

How does capitalism work and what is its alternative? Exposition of the Marxist theory of the functioning and development of the capitalist mercantile system and its overcoming by a society without class division, without wage labor, without private property, without state or crisis or war.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY – "THE INTERNATIONALIST PROLETARIAN" – www.pcielcomunista.org

"At present, imperialism and the domination of the banks have "developed" into an exceptional art both these methods of upholding and giving effect to the omnipotence of wealth in democratic republics of all descriptions. Since, for instance, in the very first months of the Russian democratic republic, one might say during the honeymoon of the "socialist" S.R.s and Mensheviks joined in wedlock to the bourgeoisie, in the coalition government. Mr. Palchinsky obstructed every measure intended for curbing the capitalists and their marauding practices, their plundering of the state by means of war contracts; and since later on Mr. Palchinsky, upon resigning from the Cabinet (and being, of course, replaced by another quite similar Palchinsky), was "rewarded" by the capitalists with a lucrative job with a salary of 120,000 rubles per annum — what would you call that? Direct or indirect bribery? An alliance of the government and the syndicates, or "merely" friendly relations? What role do the Chernovs, Tseretelis, Avksentyevs and Skobelevs play? Are they the "direct" or only the indirect allies of the millionaire treasury-looters?"

*"Another reason why the omnipotence of "wealth" is **more certain** in a democratic republic is that it does not depend on defects in the political machinery or on the faulty political shell of capitalism. A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism, and, therefore, once capital has gained possession of this very best shell (through the Palchinskys, Chernovs, Tseretelis and Co.), it establishes its power so securely, so firmly, that **no change** of persons, institutions or parties in the bourgeois-democratic republic can shake it."*

To reiterate later: *"We must also note that Engels is most explicit in calling universal suffrage as well an instrument of bourgeois rule."*

Lenin recovers Marx and Engels' critique of the misleading slogan of the "free people's State" and the need to address the question of the State in propaganda and agitation: *"Every state is a "special force" for the suppression of the oppressed class. Consequently, **every** state is **not** "free" and **not** a "people's state". Marx and Engels explained this repeatedly to their party comrades in the seventies. (...) This, "no one remembers". It is not done in modern socialist parties to talk or even think about the significance of this idea, and it plays no part whatever in their daily propaganda and agitation among the people".*

Here is a review of the moments of the state's "defeat" and "extinction," which have been misrepresented for decades by German social democracy: *"According to Engels, the bourgeois state does not "wither away" but is **"abolished"** by the proletariat in the course of the revolution. What withers away after this revolution is the proletarian state or semi-state".*

This clarification is essential because the bourgeois state must be destroyed through a violent revolution, but this is not enough, and the proletariat still needs an instrument of repression with the dual purpose of crushing the resistance of the bourgeoisie and implementing measures for socialist transformation: *"The theory of class struggle, applied by Marx to the question of the state and the socialist revolution, leads as a matter of course to the recognition of the **political rule** of the proletariat, of its dictatorship, i.e., of undivided power directly backed by the armed force of the people. The overthrow of the bourgeoisie can be achieved only by the proletariat becoming the **ruling class**, capable of crushing the inevitable and desperate resistance of the bourgeoisie, and of organizing **all** the working and exploited people for the new economic system".*

From this and based on Marx's famous letter to Weydemeyer dated March 5, 1852, we arrive at the unequivocal conclusion: *"To confine Marxism to the doctrine of class struggle is to limit Marxism, to distort it, to reduce it to something the bourgeoisie can accept. Only those who **extend** the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the **dictatorship of the proletariat** are Marxists."*

Lenin returns to the fundamental issue of the Marxist critique of parliamentarism: *"To decide once every few years which members of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people [2] through parliament – this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics".*

This criticism is deliberately forgotten by opportunists: *"This remarkable criticism of parliamentarism, made in 1871, also belongs now to the "forgotten words" of Marxism. The professional Cabinet Ministers and parliamentarians, the traitors to the proletariat and the "practical" socialists of our day, have left all criticism of parliamentarism to the anarchists, and, on this wonderfully reasonable ground, they denounce **all** criticism of parliamentarism as "anarchism"!!"*

Under capitalism, democracy and parliamentarism are a farce that excludes the working class from any effective participation in power.

"Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich – that is the democracy of capitalist society. If we look more closely into the machinery of capitalist democracy, we see everywhere, in the "petty" – supposedly petty – details of the suffrage (residential qualifications, exclusion of women, etc.), in the technique of the representative institutions, in the actual obstacles to the right of assembly (public buildings are not for "paupers"!), in the purely capitalist organisation of the daily press, etc., etc., - we see restriction after restriction upon democracy. These restrictions, exceptions, exclusions, obstacles for the poor seem slight, especially in the eyes of one who has never known want himself and has never been in close contact with the oppressed classes in their mass life (and nine out of ten, if not ninety-nine out of a hundred, bourgeois publicists and politicians come under this category); but in their sum total these restrictions exclude and squeeze out the poor from politics, from active participation in democracy".

Lenin then goes on to outline the specific measures to be implemented for the abolition of parliamentarism in the socialist transformation:

- Equalization of compensation to the level of a worker
- Immediate revocability
- Participation of the entire working class in the exercise

[2] Regarding the use of the word "people" in this quote and in others that follow, Lenin makes the following observation: *"In Europe in 1871, the proletariat did not constitute the majority in a single country on the continent. A 'popular' revolution—one that would truly draw the majority into the movement — could only be one that encompassed both the proletariat and the peasantry. (…) Consequently, when speaking of a 'truly popular revolution,' Marx — without in any way overlooking the characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie (about which he spoke at length and frequently) — took into account with the utmost precision the actual class relations in most of the continental European states in 1871."* In a subsequent issue of the journal, we will publish a study on the quantitative and qualitative leap that has occurred worldwide in this regard.

of power

- General reduction of the working day

"The workers, after winning political power, will smash the old bureaucratic apparatus, shatter it to its very foundations, and raze it to the ground; they will replace it by a new one, consisting of the very same workers and other employees, against whose transformation into bureaucrats the measures will at once be taken which were specified in detail by Marx and Engels: (1) not only election, but also recall at any time; (2) pay not to exceed that of a workman; (3) immediate introduction of control and supervision by ***all****, so that* ***all*** *may become "bureaucrats" for a time and that, therefore,* ***nobody*** *may be able to become a "bureaucrat"."*

"Under socialism much of "primitive" democracy will inevitably be revived, since, for the first time in the history of civilized society ***the mass*** *of population will rise to taking an* ***independent part****, not only in voting and elections, but also* ***in the everyday administration of the state****. Under socialism* ***all*** *will govern in turn and will soon become accustomed to no one governing".*

"The possibility of this destruction is guaranteed by the fact that socialism will ***shorten the working day****, will raise the people to a new life, will create such conditions for the majority of the population as* ***will enable everybody, without exception, to perform "state functions",*** *and this will lead to the complete withering away of every form of state in general".*

As can be seen, the goal is to **maximize the direct and active participation of the entire working class**, led by the Party, in the revolutionary transformation and in the exercise of power.

Lenin's use of the word "democracy" in the text provides a potential support for those who want to bring parliamentarism back in through the window after Lenin had thrown it out the door. As we know, *"Formulas and terms may be distorted by traitors and fools, but their use is always a guide when it is consistent and coherent."* (The Revolutionary Program of Communist Society Abolishes All Forms of Ownership of Land, Installations of Production, and the Products of Labor, 1958).

For Lenin, workers' democracy is directly synonymous with the dictatorship of the proletariat, not a way to undermine the latter. In these quotes, democracy means the broadest possible participation, through the measures listed, of the working class in the exercise of the dictatorship against the bourgeoisie. But all those who, after him, prefer the term "workers' democracy" do so because they want to avoid class dictatorship and maintain parliamentarism; therefore, we will steer clear of this term, following the Manifesto's slogan that *"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims"* and Lenin's own explanation *"The whole point is that a bourgeois state which is exercising the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie through a democratic republic cannot confess to the people that it is serving the bourgeoisie; it cannot tell the truth, and has to play the hypocrite. But* ***the state of the Paris Commune type, the Soviet state, openly and frankly tells the people the truth and declares that it is the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants;*** *and by this truth it wins over scores and scores of millions of new citizens who are kept down in any democratic republic, but who are drawn by the Soviets into political life, into democracy, into the administration of the state."* (The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky, Lenin, 1918).

If we have seen above the mechanism by which the bourgeoisie exercises its dominance through immediate and deferred bribery, it becomes clear that the aforementioned measures would be ineffective if companies and the market-based system were allowed to survive. Even if officials' compensation were reduced, it would still be a very good investment to spend some time doing favors for capitalists while receiving a low official salary, in order to later secure a well-paid position. This aspect is the one we will now explore in greater depth:

"Engels here approached the interesting boundary line at which consistent democracy, on the one hand, is ***transformed*** *into socialism and, on the other,* ***demands*** *socialism. For, in order to abolish the state, it is necessary to convert the functions of the civil service into the simple operations of control and accounting that are* ***within the scope and ability of the vast majority of the population, and, subsequently, of every single individual****. And if careerism is to be abolished completely, it must be made impossible for "honourable" though profitless posts in the Civil Service to be used as a springboard to highly lucrative posts in banks or joint-stock companies, as constantly happens in all the freest capitalist countries."*

This requires the expropriation of the means of production and the outlawing of the bourgeoisie: the only freedom for the working class lies in the deprivation of the bourgeoisie's freedom. Recalling that *"Taken separately, no kind of democracy will bring socialism" (...) And the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., the organization of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose of suppressing the oppressors, cannot result merely in an expansion of democracy.* ***Simultaneously*** *with an immense expansion of democracy, which for* ***the first time*** *becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the money-bags, the dictatorship of the proletariat imposes a series of restrictions on the freedom of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists. We must suppress them in order to free humanity from wage slavery, their resistance must be crushed by force; it is clear that there is no freedom and no democracy where there is suppression and where there is violence."*

Lenin continues: *"Engels expressed this splendidly in his letter to Bebel when he said, as the reader will remember, that "the proletariat* ***needs*** *the state, not in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist".*

Democracy for the vast majority of the people, and suppression by force, i.e., exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people—this is the change democracy undergoes during the ***transition*** *from capitalism to communism."*

However, this is not the end goal; it is merely a necessary step: *"When the* ***majority*** *of the people begin independently and everywhere to keep such accounts and exercise such control over the capitalists (now converted into employees) and over the intellectual gentry who preserve their capitalist habits, this control will really become universal, general, and popular; and there will be no getting away from it, there will be "nowhere to go".*

The whole of society will have become a single office and a single factory, with equality of labour and pay. But this "factory" discipline, which the proletariat, after defeating the capitalists, after overthrowing the exploiters, will extend to the whole of society, is by no means our ideal, or our ultimate goal. It is only a necessary ***step*** *for thoroughly cleansing society of all the*

*infamies and abominations of capitalist exploitation, and for **further progress**."*

The following quotes speak for themselves:

*"For when **all** have learned to administer and actually do independently administer social production, independently keep accounts and exercise control over the parasites, the sons of the wealthy, the swindlers and other "guardians of capitalist traditions", the escape from this popular accounting and control will inevitably become so incredibly difficult, such a rare exception, and will probably be accompanied by such swift and severe punishment (**for the armed workers are practical men and not sentimental intellectuals**, and they scarcely allow anyone to trifle with them), that the necessity of observing the simple, fundamental rules of the community will very soon become a **habit**.*

Then the door will be thrown wide open for the transition from the first phase of communist society to its higher phase, and with it to the complete withering away of the state."

*"(…) In striving for socialism, however, we are convinced that it will develop into communism and, therefore, that the need for violence against people in general, for the **subordination** of one man to another, and of one section of the population to another, will vanish altogether since people **will become accustomed** to observing the elementary conditions of social life **without violence and without subordination**. In order to emphasize this element of habit, Engels speaks of a new generation, "reared in new, free social conditions", which will "be able to discard the entire lumber of the state" – of any state, including the democratic-republican state".*

*"Only in communist society, when the resistance of the capitalists has been completely crushed, when the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no classes (i.e., when there is no distinction between the members of society as regards their relation to the social means of production), only then "the state … ceases to exist", and "**it becomes possible to speak of freedom**". Only then will a truly complete democracy become possible and be realised, a democracy without any exceptions whatever. And only then will democracy begin to **wither away**, owing to the simple fact that, freed from capitalist slavery, from the untold horrors, savagery, absurdities, and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually **become accustomed** to observing the elementary rules of social intercourse that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all copybook maxims. They will become accustomed to observing them without force, without coercion, without subordination, **without the special apparatus** for coercion called the state."*

(continued in the next issue)

¡LEE, APOYA Y DIFUNDE LA PRENSA COMUNISTA!

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Oil price adjustments

We concluded the previous issue of the magazine just when the US and Iran agreed to a ceasefire, which allowed the US to avoid either carrying out its major nuclear threat against Iran or being left completely empty-handed.

As we've seen since then, every time a possible solution to the conflict emerges, the price of oil begins to fall. And the price of oil is precisely the economic reason that pushed the US into the conflict and that demands that it remain actively involved.

Oil prices fell in early April following the announcement of the ceasefire. Immediately afterward, the US announced that it would impose a blockade of the strait, and oil prices rose again. Iran announced that it considered the strait reopened, and oil prices fell. It took no time for the US to fire on two Iranian ships, and oil prices rose once more.

The most telling episode in this regard occurred in June when the US and Iran signed an agreement intended to end the conflict: *"Brent (…) stood at around $78 per barrel, while US West Texas crude fell to around $74."* (Expansión, 19-06-2026). This agreement called for a 60-day period to negotiate the remaining details, during which the sanctions against Iran would be lifted. But when *"The US Department of the Treasury issued a license to allow the sale of Iranian oil for a total of 60 days (…) Brent (…) fell more than 3%, to around $77 per barrel, its lowest level since early March."* (Expansión, 23-06-2026). Brent continued to fall, reaching $71 per barrel on July 6 on the futures market. With the price at $71 — even before traffic through the Strait of Hormuz had returned to normal and the SHOCK to the overall flow of crude oil and refined products had eased — it was clear that once these two things happened, prices would return to a level unsustainable for the US That same day, the US threatened to destroy Iran's energy infrastructure, and on July 7, at the same time that licenses for Iranian oil were revoked: *"US Central Command (CENTCOM) confirmed that it had bombed more than 80 targets along the Iranian coast, destroying air defense systems, radars, drone depots, and more than 60 speedboats belonging to the Revolutionary Guard. Iran retaliated by launching ballistic missiles at US bases in Bahrain and Kuwait."* (Expansión, 09-07-2026).

The announcement (later withdrawn) by the US that it would impose *"a 20% toll for crossing the Strait of Hormuz"* (Expansión, 14-07-2026) drove the price up to more than $80 per barrel, but it took the Houthis' attacks on Saudi ships in the Red Sea in late July — and their repeat attacks in September — to push the price of oil to $100.

Since then, oil prices have remained high amid successive escalations of the military conflict, primarily in the Strait of Hormuz and also in Bab el-Mandeb; however, they have not consistently surged well above $100 per barrel, due to: a contraction in demand (2.5 million fewer barrels per day, Expansión, 12-06-2026), increased production from other oil-producing countries (the US and Canada, but especially Brazil and Guyana, at around 1 million barrels per day), and the release of part of the reserves — *"The IEA reported yesterday that 325 million barrels (…) of the 400 million promised by the G-7 countries in March have been released"* (La Vanguardia, 04-10-2026) — , the redirection through other routes — *"nearly 40% of the region's oil exports have sought alternative routes to the Strait of Hormuz"* (Expansión, 09-10-2026) — and the actual volume of traffic passing through the Strait of Hormuz: *"The shuttling has been ongoing for months, but tracking how much oil those 'dark' ships are moving is a challenge for traders and analysts alike because vessels are protecting themselves by giving little clue about their locations."* (Bloomberg, 16-08-2026).

IEA projections: overproduction will stay

The slowdown caused by the ELECTROSHOCK delivered by the US military intervention has been significant, but it has not resolved the problem of excess crude oil production capacity: *"The Agency forecasts that global demand for crude oil will increase by 2.4 million barrels per day in 2027, reaching 105.7 million barrels per day, but supply will rebound much more strongly — barring any problems — since this year's sharp drop in supply will be followed by an even more intense rebound next year, when 8.3 million barrels per day will be added, bringing the total to 110.3 million barrels. This will result in a historic surplus of 4.6 million barrels per day."* (Expansión, 13-08-2026).

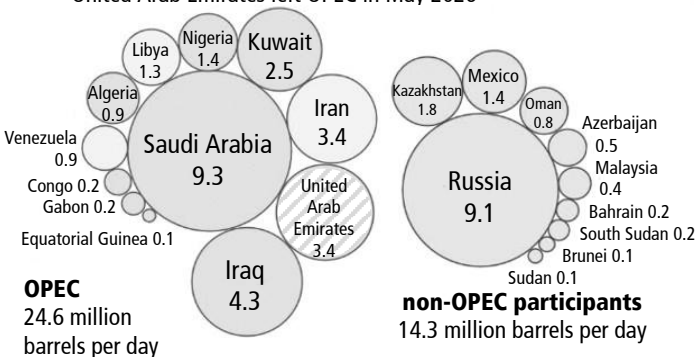
Only by forcibly keeping part of the existing overcapacity idle can the excess be prevented from prevailing in the form of a price drop (we have explained in detail in "The Internationalist Proletarian" No. 17, p. 19, how the price threshold that compels the US to intervene militarily is established). At the same time, keeping demand higher than supply in order to maintain high prices ultimately leads to increased production, thereby undermining the very basis for maintaining those high prices. As Marx explains in "Value, Price, and Profit" (1865), in his critique of Weston: *"It only expressed his perplexity at accounting for the laws by which an increase of demand produces an increase of supply, instead of an ultimate rise of market prices."* (Value, Price, and Profit, K. Marx, 1865).

And while it is true that oil can be monopolized and is subject to the laws of ground rent that hinder, complicate, and slow down this process, it is also true that the ability to exercise monopolistic control is undermined by the differing interests of oil-producing countries and by the rise of non-fossil fuel energy sources.

OPEC: a waning monopoly

OPEC was created in 1960 to challenge the dominance of the "Seven Sisters," which came to control more than 50% of the global oil market share in the 1970s. Its monopoly power has been substantially diminished since then, leading to the creation of OPEC+ in 2016 to try to counteract the drop in prices caused by increased US shale oil production.

Total crude oil production from OPEC+ (OPEC and non-OPEC participant)
2025 production in million barrels per day
OPEC members exempt from many production agreements
United Arab Emirates left OPEC in May 2026



Data source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *short-Term Energy Outlook,* june 2026

This situation has ultimately led to the United Arab Emirates' withdrawal from OPEC: *"the world's sixth-largest exporter of*

crude oil and refined products and the third-largest within the cartel, behind only Saudi Arabia and Iraq, accounting for 12% of OPEC's crude oil production" (Expansión, 29-04-2026), as a result, control over production has been further reduced: *"OPEC (including the UAE) produced an estimated 28.0 million b/d of crude oil in 2025, 35% of total world crude oil production that year. Without the UAE's contribution, the group's share of world total crude oil production would have been 31% in 2025. (…) Production from OPEC+ countries made up about 46% of global crude oil production in 2025; without the UAE, the OPEC+ portion would have been closer to 42%."* (Energy Information Administration, 07-10-2026).

The UAE's withdrawal is due to the agreed-upon production cuts, which the country refuses to comply with. However, despite the current desire to reduce the cuts and increase production, the reality is that US pressure in the Strait of Hormuz is forcibly keeping OPEC countries' production low: *"According to the latest figures published by the organization* [OPEC]*, the group's total production in August stood at 24 million barrels per day — a level that, while up 1.46% from the previous month, is 15% lower than in January, just before the US and Israeli attacks on Iran that sparked the war"* (El País, 04-10-2026).

And yet, this does not mean that the situation is entirely negative for everyone involved. The UAE and Saudi Arabia have oil pipelines that allow them to bypass the Strait of Hormuz entirely or partially. For this reason, the UAE believes that now is the right time to leave OPEC. The desire of others to expand production and break free from the externally imposed standstill is obvious: *"Dubai is already planning the construction of a new port and a container terminal on the east coast of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)."* (Expansión, 14-07-2026). For its part, as we saw in "The Internationalist Proletarian" No.17, depending on the price of oil, the Saudi production cut could be counterbalanced by a rise in that price — as has indeed been the case: *"Saudi Arabia's revenue from oil exports jumped to a more than three-year high of $24.7 billion in the first full month of the war in the Middle East."* (Bloomberg, 25-05-2026). At least until the Houthis resumed their intense attacks on Saudi Arabia in September, forcing the closure of its terminal. In any case, *"although attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels on Saudi facilities in the Red Sea caused a significant drop in exports — down to 3.5 million barrels per day — this situation appears to have been resolved, to the point that Riyadh is now pumping 6 million barrels, or 80% of its total capacity."* (Expansión, 18-10-2026).

The US and its allies in the Middle East

Saudi Arabia, in particular, maintains relations with China and France to reduce its dependence on the US, and is also interested in increasing oil production — a move that tends to drive prices to levels the US cannot afford. Although it openly participated in the joint attack with the US against Iran-linked targets in Iraq in July, the response from the representative of the ruling bourgeois faction in the US to the Saudi request for support against the Houthi attacks in September is highly telling: *"'[The Houthis] prefer that we not get involved and are letting most of the ships through. There's only one country they're not very happy with* [Saudi Arabia], *and we'll take care of it.' (…) In a previous meeting with US officials in Oman, the Yemeni rebels had assured Washington that they would not block the Red Sea for everyone — only for the Saudis."* (El País, 20-09-2026).

This is clear evidence that the US is willing to sacrifice its allies in the region and that, in part, its actions are aimed at putting pressure on them, trying to keep them under its control so it can use them, and ensuring they do not serve as bases of support for other imperialist powers.

On August 18, the chief clown of the US ruling faction *"threatened yesterday to bomb Oman, a traditional ally, if it interferes with talks with Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz"* (La Vanguardia, 18-08-2026) and the next day *"announced that he would declare the Strait of Hormuz 'US territory' once he has defeated the Iranian regime."* (Expansión, 19-08-2026).

And this is notwithstanding the fact that these imperialist outbursts are interspersed with promises of future support, such as the 30-year nuclear agreement signed on July 22 by the US Secretary of Energy and the Saudi Minister of Energy, on the condition that Saudi Arabia recognize Israel — an agreement that *"gives US companies exclusive rights to develop nuclear infrastructure in Saudi Arabia and bars foreign companies from doing so."* (Expansión, 23-07-2026). This agreement has been submitted to the US Congress and will be automatically approved on October 24 unless it is expressly repealed. This is an attempt by the US to entice Saudi Arabia with a carrot and try to prevent it from knocking on other doors. However, on the one hand, what has come to light is that *"the construction of a uranium enrichment plant is contingent upon the joint approval of the US and Saudi Arabian governments."* (Expansión, 23-07-2026) and, on the other hand, we must not forget that the nuclear program for which Iran is being bombed began with the export of nuclear material by the US (1967), the creation of a program at MIT (1974) to train Iranian nuclear engineers, and permission to purchase and operate a processing facility (1976). When Iran tried to play an independent imperialist role, US and European imperialist powers took action to overthrow the Shah, and when the creature they themselves had installed showed that it would follow the same path (determined by the development of the productive forces), they tried to block the progress of this plan.

The other bait the US has offered Saudi Arabia has been the approval of the sale of the most advanced F-35 fighter jets, although this must still be approved by Congress, where there is reluctance both because of the fact that the technology provided to Saudi Arabia would be on par with that provided to Israel and because of Saudi Arabia's ties to China, which could allow access to sensitive military technology. Even if authorization is granted, it could still take years for the delivery to take place.

Oil refining crisis

Crude oil must be refined before it can be used. According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA, 20-06-2024), the final volume of refined products from a barrel of crude oil is greater than that barrel due to the added products and is distributed in the following proportions: gasoline (50%), distillates such as diesel and heating oil (25%), kerosene and jet fuel (9%), coke (4%), still gas (3%), hydrocarbon gas liquids (3%), asphalt (2%), petrochemical feedstocks for plastics (1%), heavy fuels and residual fuel oil (1%), lubricants (1%), and others such as waxes, solvents, etc. (1%).

As we discussed in "The Internationalist Proletarian" No. 17 (April 2026, p. 22), 20 million barrels of oil passed through the Strait of Hormuz, of which 15 million were crude oil and condensates, while the remaining 5 million were refined products.

While the importance of crude oil itself and the impact of taking 15 million barrels per day out of circulation are undeniable, we have seen that this has been offset to some extent by prior overcapacity, increased production from other countries, the release of reserves, and the covert passage

through the strait despite the apparent blockade. But this blockade also affected refined products, putting upward pressure not only on the price of oil in general but also on the price of refined petroleum products in particular: primarily gasoline and diesel. And it is the price of these products — not simply the price of crude oil — that has an immediate impact on inflation.

According to EIA data (01-11-2025), global refining capacity of 102.1 million barrels per day was distributed as follows (in millions of barrels per day and as a percentage): China 18.50 (18.1), United States 18.40 (18.0), Russia 5.40 (5.3), India 5.00 (4.9), South Korea 3.30 (3.2), Saudi Arabia 3.29 (3.2), Japan 3.10 (3.0), Brazil 2.4 (2.4), Iran 2.24 (2.2), Venezuela 2.15 (2.1), Germany 2.08 (2.0), Italy 1.80 (1.8), Mexico 1.78 (1.7), Canada 1.72 (1.7), Spain 1.50 (1.5), Kuwait 1.45 (1.4), Singapore 1.40 (1.4), Indonesia 1.25 (1.2), Thailand 1.25 (1.2), Iraq 1.24 (1.2), Rest of the world 22.8 (22.4).

China has kept its refining capacity essentially intact, as has the United States. India suffered a temporary setback due to a shortage of crude oil, which it replaced with Russian crude (whose consumption had temporarily declined) and Venezuelan crude (confirming the US plan to find an outlet for this oil amid the turmoil in the Middle East). Saudi Arabia was able to continue exporting its refined products via the Red Sea, and, following the Houthi attacks, is now doing so with greater difficulty by land and through the Suez Canal. Japan and South Korea also suffered an initial impact, which they have been able to offset only partially because their refineries are not adapted to US light crude. Iran, Kuwait and Iraq have had to limit their refining to what can be transported by land and through the strait via ghost ships.

With the US and Israeli military intervention against Iran, Russia initially saw a surge in revenue from the sale of oil (to Asia, especially China and India, but also the Philippines, Japan, etc.), natural gas (especially to Europe), coal, and fertilizer (to Asia), demonstrating how the US can only act in its own interest by further strengthening its rivals. And this is despite the fact that the Russian State has made progress in reducing its dependence on hydrocarbons — *"revenues from oil and natural gas exports have fallen to 19.7%"* (La Vanguardia, 19-07-2026). However, the intensification of the Ukrainian offensive in September 2026 has dealt a severe blow to Russia's refining capacity: *"Following a wave of attacks, EA Analytics estimated that Russia's crude-processing rates were running at 3.6 million barrels a day in July, about a third below the seasonal norm. Since then, Kyiv has intensified strikes, hitting five processors last week and at least two more this week."* (Bloomberg, 12-08-2026).

Russia has been forced to import gasoline from India, *"It's the first time Moscow has imported the motor fuel from the South Asian nation, according to Kpler data"* (Bloomberg, 12-08-2026). This impact is being felt throughout Central Asia: *"Russia's exports of jet fuel by rail to Central Asia and Afghanistan plummeted by more than 92% in June (…) local companies* [in Kyrgyzstan] *are seeking supplies from Azerbaijan, China, Belarus, and Turkmenistan, and 'prices have doubled.' While in the spring the cost of a metric ton of gasoline was $700 and diesel was $800, prices have now risen to $1,800 and as high as $1,900, respectively."* (La Vanguardia, 22-07-2026), and across Asia in general, *"Chinese fuel exporters have canceled in recent days some shipments of petroleum products scheduled for export in October"* (Expansión, 02-10-2026). In the context described above, where refining capacity has been compromised, this is the straw that broke the camel's back and is affecting the entire capitalist world: *"Diesel currently trades at a premium of around $70 a barrel to crude, close to last week's record high of $90 and many times larger than typical levels of about $20 a barrel"* (Financial Times, 07-08-2026).

This has put pressure on inflation worldwide and, in particular, in the US. The plan of the US ruling faction was to keep oil prices moderately high while at the same time keeping the refining differential at limited levels to moderate the ultimate impact on inflation, all while achieving their goal of finding a market for their own oil and Venezuelan oil ("officialism", now a US trading partner, has ceded the exploitation of 20% of Venezuela's oil reserves — 17 wells — to the US).

The price of refined products (gasoline and diesel) is what the "consumer" pays. And this "consumer" consists of the proletariat but, above all, of the petty and middle bourgeoisie as well as the labor aristocracy. In other words, the electoral base that propelled the faction advocating for walled-in withdrawal 2.0 to power in the last elections. And this electoral base is being suffocated by the combined effect of the war initiated/provoked in Ukraine by the previous ruling faction, which favored diplomatic-military expansion, and by the war initiated by the current ruling faction, which favors walled-in withdrawal — although their perception of causality is directed toward this second faction. *"The price of a gallon of diesel has skyrocketed from around $3.76 — the price it was at before the coordinated attack launched by the United States and Iran against Iraq on February 28 — to a record high of $6.53 per gallon by the end of September."* (Expansión, 07-10-2026). The midterm elections are approaching, and the ruling faction in the US is nervous about the consequences of its own actions.

The series of measures it is being forced to take range from domestic populism to the global geostrategic sphere. On the domestic electoral scene, the ruling faction has lifted legal restrictions on the purchase of "red diesel" (conventional diesel fuel that is tax-free and artificially dyed red to prevent fraudulent use) and has temporarily deferred *"payment of the federal excise tax applicable to fuel consumed between October 5 and December 31, 2026, which would be paid in 2027 without interest or penalties."* (Expansión, 07-10-2026), in addition to promising a $5,000 check to all US citizens if they win the midterm elections.

Faced with the US threat to impose a ban on its exports of refined products, the G-7 *"decided yesterday to release up to 100 million barrels of strategic reserves of diesel and crude oil over the next four months (…) there will be a release of distillates concentrated in the first 20 days"* (La Vanguardia, 03-10-2026).

Finally, the US has reached an agreement with Russia for it to supply *"'(…) more than 300,000 metric tons of diesel fuel to the US and global markets immediately," the US president announced on his social media platform, Truth Social. (…) The agreement reached with his Russian counterpart calls for the distribution of an additional 500,000 metric tons of Russian diesel to the global market during the month of November and 1,000,000 metric tons 'immediately thereafter'. 'In addition, depending on the status of its diesel refineries, Russia will shortly deliver 3,000,000 metric tons of diesel,' he added. (…) 'Lowering prices for Americans — especially for our farmers, ranchers, and truck drivers — is my top priority', the US president stated."* (Expansión, 07-10-2026).

And the US has not only reached this agreement but has also pressured Ukraine to stop attacking Russian refineries, cut off access to *Starshield* (a US government-controlled version of Starlink used by the Ukrainian military) for a day, and not warned Ukraine about the latest Russian missile launches. This action is

an attack on Ukrainian capitalism but, above all, on European imperialism. In this way, the US demonstrates once again that it is willing to sacrifice its allies and that, in fact, it cannot do otherwise in the midst of its zigzagging decline.

The narrow horizon of the anarchy of production

The immediate situation resulting from the US attack on Iran has sent freight rates soaring: *"Tanker rates reached an all-time high of $1 million per day for voyages to and from the Persian Gulf."* (Expansión, 22-09-2026). And even though everyone knows that it is only through this SHOCK that oil is kept at a price acceptable to the industry — given the current volume of supply and demand, coupled with the emergence of other energy sources — the truth is that, here and now, it is a lucrative business, and this is the logic that inevitably governs a mode of production based on PROFIT. Everyone is now rushing to buy newly built or used oil tankers (with a preference for the latter): *"The price of used oil tankers has skyrocketed since the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, and some used vessels are now valued higher than new ones, because it would take two or three years to build a new ship."* (El País, 07-09-2026).

"Trafigura is preparing to take one of its companies public for the first time by listing its supertanker division, with which it aims to capitalize on the record prices driven by the crisis in the Persian Gulf. The group announced yesterday that it plans to raise approximately $500 million (435 million euros) through a private placement of Volare Shipping, ahead of its debut on the Oslo Stock Exchange in early October. The funds will be invested in expanding Volare's supertanker fleet, which will be chartered on a spot basis." (Expansión, 22-09-2026).

And although *"shipowners had been expecting to enter a down cycle this year due to a high number of new ships entering the market (…) Equity investments in listed shipping companies by US and UK investment firms were at similar levels to last year, when they reached a 20-year high."* (Financial Times, 31-08-2026).

And this not only highlights the capitalist system's inability to plan for the long term in general — let alone to plan for the satisfaction of human needs — as it inevitably succumbs, always and everywhere, to the demands of immediate profit. It also highlights the material necessity of repeatedly inflicting these ELECTROSHOCKS, PARALYSIS and DESTRUCTION on global capitalist production and circulation as the only mechanism capable of mitigating the tendency toward relative overproduction of capital and the deflation that stifles the rate of profit.

As we have known for more than 150 years: *"And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced* ***DESTRUCTION of a mass of productive forces****; on the other, by the* ***CONQUEST of new markets, and by the more thorough EXPLOITATION of the old ones****. That is to say, by* ***paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises****, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented."* (Manifesto of the Communist Party,1848).

Energy overproduction

In March, several African countries — including Tanzania, Namibia, Zambia, Mozambique, and Uganda (which rely on Middle Eastern oil as their primary source) — began receiving reports of delays or non-delivery of oil shipments. The previously agreed-upon prices were not profitable, and the traders stopped delivering the oil. This has forced these countries to rely on a single company to ensure their supply: the Vitol Group. Significantly, Vitol was one of the traders that was unable to deliver the supply… while prices remained at their previous level. *"Vitol now has exclusive agreements, either directly or indirectly, to supply fuel to at least five countries, with a combined population of roughly 180 million people"*. (Bloomberg, 17-08-2026).

This control over energy supplies at the imperialist level can only accelerate the adoption of other energy sources and attract other imperialist powers to present themselves as alternatives. European imperialism is reviving old plans (thwarted by the outbreak of the so-called "Arab Spring") to electrify North Africa: *"The Middle East and North Africa region has an estimated renewable energy generation potential of more than 2,300 GW, which is more than double the current installed capacity of the entire European Union. Furthermore, the costs of solar and wind power generation are between 30% and 40% lower than in the EU. (…) The Mediterranean Renewable Energy Pact will not only provide an additional source of renewable energy but will also give European industry access to a market with enormous potential. By developing projects that can be financed under the new strategic partnership, EU companies will sell their parts, solar panels, wind power components, and electrolyzers, among other products, generating sales that will strengthen their competitiveness."* (Expansión, 10-06-2026).

The capitalist world operates entirely within the framework analyzed by Lenin in "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" (1916): *"The export of capital thus becomes a means of encouraging the export of commodities. (…) report from the Austro-Hungarian Consul at San-Paulo (Brazil) states: 'The Brazilian railways are being built chiefly by French, Belgian, British and German capital. In the financial operations connected with the construction of these railways the countries involved stipulate for orders for the necessary railway materials.'"*.

Regardless of European imperialism's plans, it is the low prices of solar panels that are causing them to spread like wildfire: *"Africa's adoption of solar panels as an electricity source will rise 45% this year as the use of the clean power technology broadens across the continent, Ember projects. (...) The $2.4 billion spent across Africa on panels in the year through June is equivalent to what it would have traditionally cost to run diesel generators for three months, Ember said. (...) Even though Ember estimates that 36 of Africa's 54 countries will install record amounts of solar in 2026, South Africa will remain the biggest buyer, with 3.3 gigawatts expected to be added."* (Bloomberg, 27-08-2026).

Not only in Africa, the installation of solar panels just keeps increasing: *"By the end of 2025, that capacity totaled nearly 1.2 terawatts worldwide, according to the World Energy Statistical Review published by the Energy Institute (…) At the beginning of the millennium, solar panels cost between $5 and $6 per watt of generating capacity. Today, they sell for about 12 cents per watt"* (Expansión, 26-09-2026). And this installed excess production capacity poses serious problems for energy companies, as well as grave logistical and industrial challenges, within a commodity-based society. Large power plants remain necessary to maintain the stability of the system and during prolonged periods without sunlight, but under capitalism, these plants can only exist if they are profitable, and the flood of solar energy is wreaking havoc on that profitability.

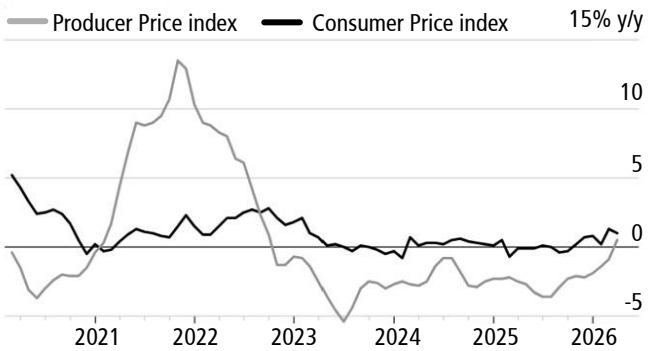
One of the main arguments in favor of fossil fuels is the difficulty of storing excess energy from sources such as wind and solar power — which depend on natural conditions — in sufficient quantities and with acceptable charging times. Let's examine the current state of affairs through three very significant

reports:

- *"The Chinese company CATL, (…) unveiled yesterday a lithium iron phosphate (LFP) battery capable of charging from 10% to 98% in just 6.5 minutes — slightly longer than it takes to fill the gas tank of a combustion-engine car. (…) It has also developed a battery capable of providing up to 1,500 kilometers of driving range on a single charge."* (Expansión, 22-04-2026).
- *"The Chinese group* [CATL]*, which controls 37 per cent of the market for EV batteries and 22 per cent for energy storage systems in power grids and data centres, has deployed batteries on about 900 ships, mostly smaller craft operating close to the Chinese coastline, at ports or in rivers."* (Financial Times, 06-04-2026).
- *"(…) an aircraft with a 32-meter wingspan, a takeoff weight of more than 11 metric tons, and the dimensions of a regional turboprop took off, flew for 27 minutes, and landed without burning a single liter of kerosene. (…) cost of the flight: about five dollars in electricity (…) the company estimates that the ES-30 could reduce operating costs by more than 40%"* (La Vanguardia, 06-09-2026).

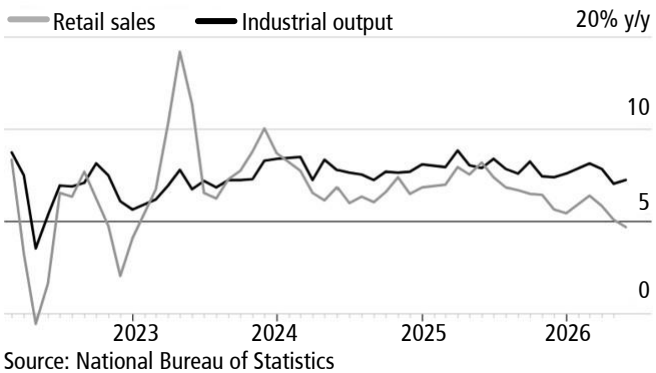
The production volcano

The SHOCK in oil prices pulled Chinese capitalism out of the deflation it was experiencing in April:

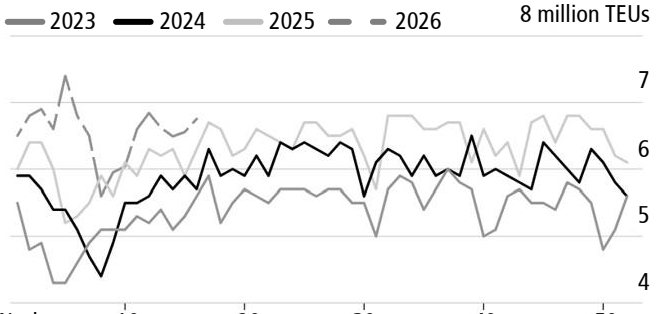


Source: National Bureau of Statistics

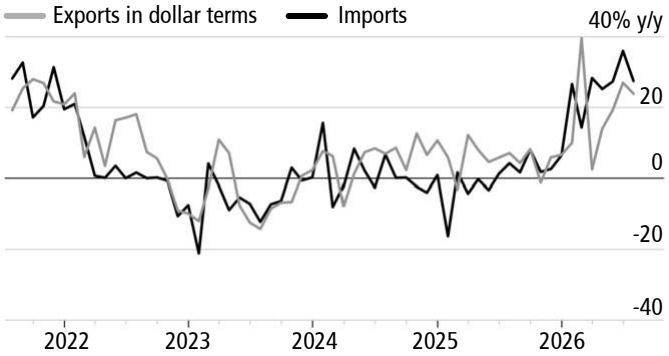
However, although the immediate response to this SHOCK is a rise in industrial prices, the reality is that this does not alter the underlying cause of overproduction that was driving prices down — that is, excess production capacity. This manifests itself in increased production coupled with a decline in retail sales, driving a continued rise in exports. If exports in metric tons (second graph) increase, they increase even more when measured in dollars (third graph), due to the rising cost of technological products.



Source: National Bureau of Statistics

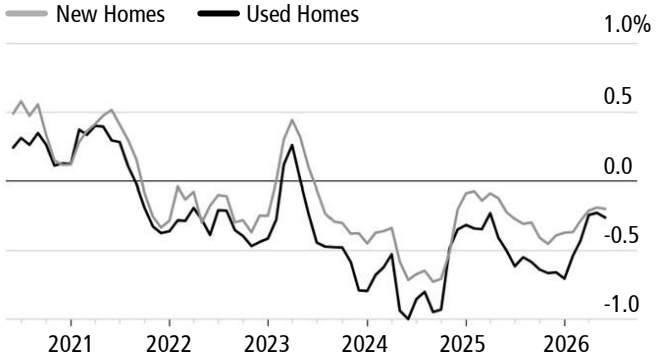


Source: China's Ministry of Transport



Source: China's General Administration of Customs

Another manifestation of overproduction is the unstoppable and continuous decline in housing prices in China. The conviction of Evergrande's founder may serve as an exemplary punishment for a market's puppet, but it does not solve the real problem.



Source: National Bureau of Statistics

Automotive

The automotive sector is a clear example of the unchecked race to increase production capacity in China: *"As competition grows and margins get squeezed, the use of artificial intelligence could set a new industry standard of just 18 months for bringing a brand new model to market, according to an estimate from car designer IAT Automobile Technology and China's Association of Automobile Manufacturers. That's down from the current pace of around two years and compares with roughly three to five years for legacy foreign competitors."* (Bloomberg, 01-09-2026). Even the Chinese capitalist State is trying to slow down this process by artificially increasing the required test mileage for bringing new models to market.

For its part, Toyota has announced that *"it will invest $6.4 billion each year until it deploys a fleet of 400,000 humanoid robots (…) that, thanks to artificial intelligence, will learn from the most experienced workers until they replace them."* (La Vanguardia, 22-09-2026), increasing market pressure through the race for accumulation for accumulation's sake, via production for production's sake.

In Europe and the US, more and more automakers are being

forced to share plants and technology with Chinese automakers and battery companies, to the point that Ford itself has been declared "unreliable" by the US government: *"US Secretary of Transportation Sean P. Duffy yesterday criticized the partnership Ford entered into in July with the Chinese automaker Geely for the joint operation of its factory in Almussafes (Valencia). This deal will lead to the creation next year of a joint venture in which Ford will hold a 66% stake and Geely a 34% stake (…) It also notes that Ford continues to use technology licensed from the Chinese battery manufacturer CATL — which appears on the Department of Defense's list of prohibited companies — at its Michigan plant."* (Expansión, 10-09-2026). Volkswagen and Stellantis have also followed this approach in Sagunto and Zaragoza, respectively: *"A 49% stake in the German Volkswagen Group's car battery factory (…) has been sold to the Chinese group Gotion. (…) The largest project is the battery gigafactory that Stellantis and CATL are building in Zaragoza, with a projected investment of up to 4.1 billion euros."* (La Vanguardia, 29-09-2026).

Trade War: China vs the EU

Competition between Chinese imperialism and European imperialism has intensified over the past decade. It now *"competes directly with the eurozone in nearly 40 percent of the sectors in which Europe has a comparative advantage, compared with about 25 percent at the beginning of this century."* (La Vanguardia, 20-08-2026), with Germany being the European country hardest hit by the impact *"when the perspective widens to the top 100 Chinese export categories, Germany records 51 per cent export exposure"* (Global Trade Alert, 17-12-2025). On the other hand, *"the trade deficit with China now stands at 365,000 million euros, which amounts to a daily imbalance of 1,000 million euros."* (Expansión, 20-06-2026).

Faced with this increase in competition and the flood of Chinese goods and capital into Europe, European imperialism has launched a trade counteroffensive: *"It has decided to impose across-the-board tariffs of 50% on all imports exceeding the annual quota of 18.3 million metric tons. (…) Furthermore, with the arrival of July, a three-euro tax also goes into effect on e-commerce packages valued at less than 150 euros, which until now had been exempt from tariffs."* (Expansión, 01-07-2026). In addition, *"the European Commission announced yesterday that it is imposing a fine of 550 million euros on AliExpress for selling illegal products on its platform (…) The previous fines — on Temu (200 million euros) and X (120 million euros) — pale in comparison to AliExpress's fine."* (Expansión, 21-07-2026).

European imperialism is also reforming its public procurement regulations by adding a "principle of European preference" to curb Chinese companies. *"The public procurement system is very important because spending through competitive bidding accounts for approximately 20% of the European Union's GDP, or about 3.7 trillion euros."* (Expansión, 09-09-2026).

For the time being, it seems that Chinese imperialism has agreed to slow down somewhat and give European imperialism a little breathing room, although the race for accumulation will ultimately prevail: *"China has committed to curbing its exports of hybrid and plug-in hybrid vehicles to the European Union, with the goal of reducing those exports by about 50 percent, thereby easing the pressure on the European industry, which had accused the Asian country of unfair competition. (…) With regard to fully electric vehicles, (…) if Chinese companies decide to sell their products below these established limits — which are set based on European industry prices — customs authorities will impose severe tariffs that eliminate that price difference. (…) the EU has secured assurances that the licensing process for exports of rare earths and critical minerals to European companies — elements essential to numerous EU industries — will be streamlined."* (Expansión, 10-10-2026).

Meanwhile, in May, the US raised tariffs on European cars from 15% to 25%. The trade war is developing in all directions.

The US against the world (and against itself)

As part of the process of US decline, some factions of the bourgeoisie are tripping up others. After the US's grand "liberation" maneuver — imposing tariffs on the entire world — was overturned by the US Supreme Court itself, the State has had to begin refunding the money it collected. So far, *"it has processed refunds totaling about $100 billion (nearly 87 billion euros) to date (…) This represents about 60% of the annulled tariffs."* (Expansión, 06-08-2026).

In July, the US ruling party came up with a third excuse to keep global tariffs at around 10 percent. Countries considered to have some form of regulation against forced labor (the EU, Canada, Mexico, Ecuador, Indonesia, Pakistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Malaysia, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, India, Honduras, Jordan, and Sri Lanka are on the list) will be subject to a 10% tariff, while the rest will be subject to a 12.5% tariff.

There has been widespread outrage among all exploiters around the world, when the harsh reality is that the slavery of wage labor — on which everyone's profits are based — operates primarily on the basis of "free" labor, which is nothing more than forced labor, imposed by the social conditions of production and distribution under the capitalist mode of production.

We saw in "The Internationalist Proletarian" No. 17 that the US had been rolling back some tariffs in an effort to reduce their impact on food, clothing, etc. As recently as August, the US announced that for 90 days it *"will allow the importation of up to 300,000 metric tons of ground beef outside the tariff quota without tariffs (…) committing to ensuring that this type of meat 'is sold at 25% below current market prices.'"* (Expansión, 22-08-2026). Also in August, the US imposed 100% tariffs on drones weighing more than 25 kg or with critical safety functions, and a 25% tariff on those that do not meet these conditions. The European Union, Japan, South Korea, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Taiwan will pay a 15% tariff. For the United Kingdom, the rate will be reduced to 10%.

As for the trade war with China, at the recent bilateral summit held in the US, US imperialism has had to acknowledge that it cannot bring Chinese imperialism to its knees in this arena. Both imperialist powers *"have announced an agreement to cut their mutual tariffs by $60 billion (about 52.8 billion euros). (…) As part of the tariff reduction, the United States will lower tariffs on 77 groups of Chinese products, including household appliances, toys, Christmas items, baby products, kitchenware and utensils, blankets, thermoses, and fishing gear. For its part, China is reducing tariffs on 1,619 lines of US products ranging from coal to personal care products, including medical supplies and equipment such as MRI machines, medical instruments, surgical robots, hearing aids, and pacemakers."* (Expansión, 29-09-2026).

In its immediate context, in July the US expressed its opposition to renewing the USMCA with Canada and Mexico, although it will remain in effect until 2036. Immediately afterward, the US resumed its trade offensive against Canada.

The turning point came with the Trans Mountain diversion to provide access to oil to the Pacific Ocean on Canadian territory (see "El Internationalist Proletarian" No.16, April 2025, p. 21) and to begin selling it to other countries. But critical minerals also play a role in the background. Canada actively produces 60 minerals and metals; it is the world's leading producer of potash, the second-largest producer of uranium, the third-largest producer of palladium, controls the third-largest cobalt reserve, and is the fourth-largest producer of this material. And in June, Canada had the nerve to sign 13 new bilateral agreements with G7 powers, India, and Saudi Arabia — within the framework of the Alliance for Resilience and Critical Minerals Production — to finance mining projects worth $5 billion. The US was convinced that Canada was its appendix, but as the US has declined and the center of gravity of capitalism has shifted toward Asia, Canada has been forced to try to play an independent role, and the US has discovered the difficulties it faces in controlling it.

The 50% tariffs imposed by the US on Canadian products worth an estimated $20 billion (5% of Canadian exports to the US) have prompted Canada to impose reciprocal tariffs on 800 US products. The US response: *"He issued a ban on imports of dairy products, alcoholic beverages, and motorcycles"* (Expansión, 10-09-2026). But more importantly, they have pushed Canada into a closer alliance with European imperialism.

This imperialism, after having secured the free trade agreement with Mercosur, has signed an agreement with the Philippines: *"renewed and advantageous access for European Union companies to a market of 113 million people, with the resulting reciprocity. The agreement reached will eliminate no less than 94% of all tariffs that the Southeast Asian country had imposed on trade with the EU — tariffs that covered 97% of all goods and services exchanged — thereby opening up a world of new possibilities."* (Expansión, 23-09-2026).

The South American bourgeoisie is also taking steps to expand its exports, although they do not yet play the main role: *"Officials have said they hope to seal the terms of a trade deal with Canada by the end of 2026, while Mercosur and Japan in June officially launched negotiations for an economic partnership. Trade talks are also in progress with countries including the United Arab Emirates, India and Vietnam. Mercosur exports currently represent less than 20 per cent of combined GDP, according to analysts, far below the global average."* (Financial Times, 24-08-2026).

Growing debt of the capitalist world

The capitalist world's debt continues to rise, while the cost of financing that debt is also increasing.

The beginning of the war in the Strait of Hormuz took a toll on corporate bond issuance: *"Issuers have had to pay more to place their bonds. So far this year, the average corporate risk premium in euros has risen 6.4% for the most creditworthy companies and 12% for those with lower creditworthiness."* (Expansión, 27-04-2026).

More and more capitalist countries have debt exceeding 100% of their GDP, including the United States, which, far from reducing its debt, sees it increase with every step it takes:

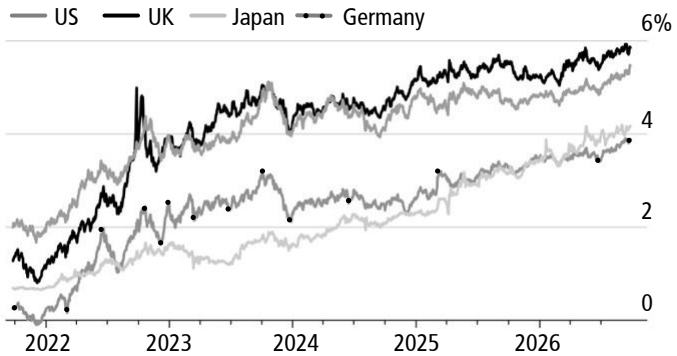
"The total liabilities of the US federal government have reached 40.047 trillion dollars (…) the administration's spending exceeds its tax revenue by about two trillion dollars annually. Added to this is the major tax cut bill that Trump pushed through last year, which will very likely increase the annual deficit to over four trillion dollars over the next decade. (…) Currently, the federal government is spending more than one trillion dollars a year on interest payments — which are also on the rise — to finance its debt, and this already represents the second-largest spending category after Social Security." (Expansión, 21-08-2026).

The size and trend of US debt partly explain the rise in US bond yields: *"The 30-year yield reached almost 5.34 per cent on Tuesday, the highest level since 2007"* (Financial Times, 19-08-2026).

But it's not just US bonds whose yields are rising: *"The yield on the 10-year Spanish bond has surpassed 4%, and at 4.07% yesterday, it reached its highest level since January 2013, at the height of the euro crisis. The German bond is hovering around 2011 levels and yielding close to 3.6%; the Italian bond, at 4.5%, remains at levels last seen in 2023; and yields on U.K. and French bonds are extending their highs to levels last seen in 2007 and 2008, respectively. (…) The 10-year Japanese bond is offering its highest yield since 1996, at 3.06 percent."* (Expansión, 25-09-2026). These peaks were reached as part of the massive sale of bonds triggered by the rise in oil prices.

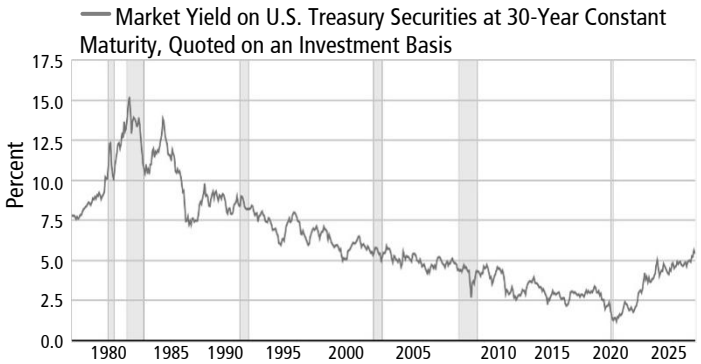
However, if we look at the trend in returns in other capitalist powers, we will see that the trend over the past four years has been upward.

30-year Sovereign bond yields across developed countries



Source: Bloomberg

It is worth putting into perspective the trend that preceded the epileptic resumption of production and circulation, the corresponding inflationary SHOCK, and the successive ELECTROSHOCKS administered to the energy sector and capitalist circulation through the military conflicts in Ukraine and Iran — conflicts that have caused spasms which have partially reversed this trend, at least for the time being.



Source: https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/dgs30#

In addition, capitalist States are having to compete with a whirlwind of debt centered on technology companies, which is also driving up returns: *"As tech firms seek to expand their AI infrastructure, they are increasingly issuing bonds with longdated maturities so they don't have to pay back investors for decades. That means governments are facing more competition*

from corporate debt issuers. Investment-grade companies, including tech giants, have already sold nearly $1.5 trillion of bonds this year, a 36% jump from a year earlier. Nomura Securities estimates that the roughly $200 billion borrowed by the biggest tech firms alone is equivalent to about 25% of the US Treasury's net issuance of notes and bonds to private investors — five times the share in 2025." (Bloomberg, 01-09-2026).

The amount of government debt is much greater than what tech companies are issuing, and as we have seen, the gradual rise in government bond yields (i.e., the increase in the cost of refinancing that debt) had already begun with the effects of the epileptic resumption of circulation in 2022. Therefore, while this is not the main cause of the rise in yields, it nonetheless contributes to it and represents an additional problem for governments — and even more so for other companies: *"Many companies are forced to tread cautiously around the big tech firms, scheduling their bond issuances to avoid overlapping with those of the tech giants and, according to investors, often opting to borrow at shorter maturities to avoid an oversupply of long-term debt in the market (…) The scale of the borrowing has broken all previous records. Last week, the Japanese conglomerate SoftBank raised more than $11 billion in debt through the largest junk bond issuance in history to finance an investment in OpenAI. (…) This has distorted prices, and high-rated bonds are sometimes trading at a discount to lower-quality issues due to the sudden excess supply."* (Expansión, 12-10-2026).

The race for AI

Major US tech companies are desperately trying to maintain a competitive edge over their Chinese rivals through cross-debt arrangements among themselves to facilitate annual capital investments of 750,000 million. And yet, Chinese companies are hot on their heels to such an extent that it is Chinese imperialism that is now considering how to prevent Western companies from accessing its most advanced technologies:

- *"Huawei is set to capture the largest share of China's AI chip market this year, with sales jumping by at least 60 per cent amid strong demand from Chinese companies seeking domestic alternatives to Nvidia."* (Financial Times, 01-05-2026).
- *"Alibaba's new AI chip (Zhenwu V900), which offers three times the performance of the previous generation, 'is China's most powerful AI chip'"* (Expansión, 23-09-2026).
- *"China's AI lab Moonshot last week released its Kimi K3 model that exceeded Anthropic's flagship Opus 4.8 by most of the benchmarks"* (Financial Times, 22-07-2026).
- *"ByteDance is training an AI model that could approach the size of Anthropic's most cutting-edge Mythos system, as Chinese companies continue to narrow the gap with the top US labs. The Chinese tech giant is at an early stage of training a model with as many as 10tn parameters — three times larger than Moonshot's Kimi K3 (…) Mythos 5 has about 8tn parameters and Fable 5 about 5tn."* (Financial Times, 07-08-2026).

All this competition fuels a race to the bottom characterized by excessive debt and investments that render developments obsolete before they can turn a profit, thereby driving down sales prices. Examples:

- *"OpenAI recently said that it was slashing prices for GPT-5.6 Luna, its "fastest and most affordable model", by 80 per cent."* (Financial Times, 14-08-2026).
- *" Anthropic has launched a new AI model, which the startup claims could perform at the same level as its most advanced models, but at a significantly lower cost, to compete with OpenAI and China's DeepSeek, (…) Anthropic's new model, Claude Opus 5.5, is about 40% cheaper than its previous version."* (Expansión, 23-09-2026).

This is the mechanism described by Marx in "Wage Labor and Capital" (1849), which inexorably prevails in a profit-driven market society:

"The capitalists therefore find themselves, in their mutual relations, in the same situation in which they were before the introduction of the new means of production; and if they are by these means enabled to offer double the product at the old price, they are now forced to furnish double the product for less than the old price. Having arrived at the new point, the new cost of production, the battle for supremacy in the market has to be fought out anew. (…) This is the law that continually throws capitalist production out of its old ruts and compels capital to strain ever more the productive forces of labour for the very reason that it has already strained them – the law that grants it no respite, and constantly shouts in its ear: March! march!" (Wage Labor and Capital, K. Marx, 1849).

"No matter how powerful the means of production which a capitalist may bring into the field, competition will make their adoption general; and from the moment that they have been generally adopted, the sole result of the greater productiveness of his capital will be that he must furnish at the same price, 10, 20, 100 times as much as before. But since he must find a market for, perhaps, 1,000 times as much, in order to outweigh the lower selling price by the greater quantity of the sale; since now a more extensive sale is necessary not only to gain a greater profit, but also in order to replace the cost of production (the instrument of production itself grows always more costly, as we have seen), and since this more extensive sale has become a question of life and death not only for him, but also for his rivals, the old struggle must begin again, and it is all the more violent the more powerful the means of production already invented are. (…) While competition, therefore, constantly pursues him with its law of the cost of production and turns against himself every weapon that he forges against his rivals, the capitalist continually seeks to get the best of competition by restlessly introducing further subdivision of labour and new machines, which, though more expensive, enable him to produce more cheaply, instead of waiting until the new machines shall have been rendered obsolete by competition." (Wage Labor and Capital, K. Marx, 1849).

The division of the capitalist world

It is clear from the data we have been reviewing in this and previous issues of "The Internationalist Proletarian" how current Lenin's analysis in "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" remains, as well as the definition he provided at that time: *"(1) the concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life; (2) the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this "finance capital", of a financial oligarchy; (3) the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; (4) the formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves, and (5) the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed"*

We will revisit other aspects of this text in the next issue of

the review; but for now, it is worth highlighting the methodological aspect and then delving deeper into how Lenin frames the question of the division of the world — point 5 of his definition of the highest stage of capitalism.

First, the methodological aspect (which makes some really nervous): *"To enable the reader to obtain the most wellgrounded idea of imperialism, I deliberately tried to quote as extensively as possible bourgeois economists who have to admit the particularly incontrovertible facts concerning the latest stage of capitalist economy. With the same object in view, I have quoted detailed statistics"*. This method — which Lenin did not invent but rather borrowed from Marx's approach to the study of the development and death of capitalism in "Capital" — is fundamental to the *"scientific registration of social phenomena, in order to confirm the fundamental theses of Marxism"* (Characteristic Theses, 1951), and we adhere to it without hesitation.

As for the completion of the territorial repartition of the world, it is essential to understand the depth of Lenin's point. Capitalist powers cannot expand without clashing with one another, without seizing each other's spheres of influence, without forcing a change in the division of the world. **Not only does the repartition of the world not exclude a new repartition, but it actually demands future repartitions, which under capitalism can only occur through covert or open war** between imperialist powers.

The following quotes will help clarify the topic:

- *"the characteristic feature of the period under review is the final partitioning of the globe — final, not in the sense that repartition is impossible; on the contrary, repartitions are possible and inevitable — (…). For the first time the world is completely divided up, so that in the future only redivision is possible, i.e., territories can only pass from one 'owner' to another, instead of passing as ownerless territory to an owner."*
- *"The capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits. And they divide it "in proportion to capital", "in proportion to strength", because there cannot be any other method of division under commodity production and capitalism."*
- *"Finance capital and the trusts do not diminish but increase the differences in the rate of growth of the various parts of the world economy. Once the relation of forces is changed, what other solution of the contradictions can be found under capitalism than that of force?"*
- *"In the division of this 'booty', an exceptionally large part goes to countries which do not always stand at the top of the list in the rapidity of the development of their productive forces. (...) The question is: what means other than war could there be under capitalism to overcome the disparity between the development of productive forces and the accumulation of capital on the one side, and the division of colonies and spheres of influence for finance capital on the other?"*
- *the only conceivable basis under capitalism for the division of spheres of influence, interests, colonies, etc., is a calculation of the strength of those participating, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc. And the strength of these participants in the division does not change to an equal degree, for the even development of different undertakings, trusts, branches of industry, or countries is impossible under capitalism. Half a century ago Germany* [replace with China] *was a miserable, insignificant country, if her capitalist strength is compared with that of the Britain* [replace with US] *of that time; Japan compared with Russia in the same way. Is it 'conceivable' that in ten or twenty years' time the relative strength of the imperialist powers will have remained unchanged? It is out of the question.*
  Therefore, in the realities of the capitalist system, and not in the banal philistine fantasies of English parsons, or of the German 'Marxist', Kautsky, 'inter-imperialist' or 'ultra-imperialist' alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing all the imperialist powers, are inevitably nothing more than a 'truce' in periods between wars. Peaceful alliances prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars; the one conditions the other, producing alternating forms of peaceful and non-peaceful struggle on one and the same basis of imperialist connections and relations within world economics and world politics."

The development of imperialism leads to war

The post-World War II period saw the **culmination of the bourgeois revolutions** in Asia and Africa and the **extension of capitalism all over the world**. This worldwide extension of capitalism has happened, in the economic field, on the basis of the higher phase of capitalism described by Lenin as imperialism. In parallel, in the field of class domination of the bourgeoisie it has developed on the basis of fascism: state intervention in the economy, attempt at centralized world planning and control, integration of the labor union network within the bourgeois State for the control and suffocation of any attempt of workers' struggle, while maintaining in a general way the democratic-parliamentary narcotic.

The period in which the existing imperialist powers battled to prevent the revolutionary irruption of capitalism in their areas of colonial influence, which culminated in the defeat of the US in Vietnam in 1975, was followed by the struggle to stop or slow down the development and interconnection of these new areas of the capitalist world.

It is a phenomenon derived from the **tendency of the rate of profit to fall** that the younger capitalisms accumulate at a faster rate than the older ones. For this reason, the end of the cycle of post-war reconstruction pushed the capitals of the – older – western imperialisms towards Asia, where they found a higher rate of profit. With this, the Western imperialisms kept the rate of profit afloat while, dialectically, they developed and strengthened their future competitor. The development of the process of capitalist accumulation since then has entailed the **displacement of the center of gravity of capitalism** towards Asia.

This development has led to the rupture of the post-World War II division of the world since the relative economic weights of the contending powers no longer correspond to those of the time. This **rupture of the division of the world** is also characterized by the fact that the United States has gradually lost its ability to play the role of world bully, bloodily and criminally accredited at the end of World War II with the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The extension of capitalism worldwide, the end of the cycle of post-war reconstruction and the scrapping of capitalism in the Eastern bloc has been followed by the deepening of the **crisis of relative overproduction of capital**, which has manifested itself especially since 2008 in the production volcano whose epicenter is in Asia and which floods the world market

with commodities, overwhelming its competitors, as well as in a permanent global plethora of idle capital.

The relative crisis of overproduction leads to the necessity of the destruction of idle capitals and of the productive forces already created: *"the loss is distributed in very different proportions and forms, depending on special advantages or previously captured positions, so that* ***one capital is left unused, another is DESTROYED****, and a third suffers but a relative loss, or is just temporarily depreciated, etc. But the* ***equilibrium would be restored under all circumstances through the withdrawal or even the DESTRUCTION of more or less capital. This would extend partly to the material substance of capital"*** (Capital, Book III, Chapter XV, K. Marx).

This need for destruction is what leads to military war, regardless of the will of the puppets who delude themselves to rule the world. In all parts of the capitalist world our words are the same as they were in 1920:

"'Remember the imperialist war!' *These are the first words addressed by the Communist International to every working man and woman;* ***wherever they live and whatever language they speak****. Remember that because of the existence of capitalist society a handful of imperialists were able to force the workers of the different countries for four long years to cut each other's throats. Remember that the war of the bourgeoisie conjured up in Europe and throughout the world the most frightful famine and the most appalling misery. Remember that* ***without the overthrow of capitalism the repetition of such robber wars is not only possible but inevitable.*** *(...) The imperialist war once again confirmed what was written in the statutes of the First International:* ***the emancipation of the workers is not a local, nor a national, but an international problem."*** (Statutes of the Communist International, II Congress, 1920).



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EARTHQUAKE IN VENEZUELA: RECONSTRUCTION AND INVESTMENT FOR CAPITAL, DEATH AND EXPLOITATION FOR THE WORKING CLASS

"Natural" disasters or a product of greed?

On 24 June 2026, two earthquakes struck north-central Venezuela, leaving thousands dead, missing beneath the rubble, and injured. The current death toll stands at over 4,000, and this figure is set to rise as the 40,000 to 50,000 missing are accounted for. The worst-affected region, where the most buildings collapsed and the highest number of deaths occurred, was La Guaira.

When there is a **FIRE**, a **FLOOD** or an **EARTHQUAKE**, it is quickly labelled as a "natural" disaster. But how can it be considered "natural" that houses are knowingly built on flood lands, that these houses have real mousetraps in which part of the working class is condemned to live and die, that forests are left uncleared because it is not profitable, or that they are deliberately set on fire to collect subsidies, or that bridges that are known to be in a precarious condition are left unrepaired until they collapse?

Fire, water, gravity and seismic activity are natural forces, but the reasons and consequences of these natural forces throwing thousands of people to their deaths are **social reasons and consequences**. It is the **LUST FOR PROFIT** imposed by the **process of ACCUMULATION of Capital** (impersonal force that feeds on the exploitation of the working class) that produces the circumstances in which these natural forces cause ravages, dragging thousands of people to premature death: *" (…) when society places hundreds of proletarians in such a position that they inevitably meet a too early and an unnatural death, one which is quite as much a death by violence as that by the sword or bullet; when it deprives thousands of the necessaries of life, places them under conditions in which they cannot live – forces them, through the strong arm of the law, to remain in such conditions until that death ensues which is the inevitable consequence – knows that these thousands of victims must perish, and yet permits these conditions to remain, its deed is murder just as surely as the deed of the single individual; disguised, malicious murder, murder against which none can defend himself, which does not seem what it is, because no man sees the murderer, (…). But murder it remains."* (Condition of the Working Class in England, F. Engels). This is the situation that has been lived in Venezuela.

In 1999, in the region of La Guaira – then known as Vargas State – mudslides, earth and rock swept away everything in their path when dozens of rivers and streams burst their banks simultaneously. The ground was unable to absorb the water from the extremely heavy rainfall that fell over a four-day period, so the terrain gave way under the force of gravity, literally sweeping the mountain down towards the coastal towns, leaving thousands dead and triggering a mass exodus of more than 100,000 people who were forced to flee to other areas.

But Capital cares very little about this; the concentration of capital in the area where the country's second-largest port and the main international airport are located caused the population to flock back there and the resumption of speculative real estate business with the reconstruction.

On the one hand, people who had to return because the need of a salary were forced to build their homes informally in the very riverbeds where the mudslide occurred or on the hills; on the other hand, the Venezuelan capitalist state—disguised as socialist—and private companies built, for their own profit, massive buildings and residential complexes—both public and private—with 20 floors or more on the new coastal land gained from the sea by the mud.

The **CYNICISM** of this capitalist society is such that, after thousands of deaths, it has the shameless nerve to publish that it was common knowledge that one couldn't build there, interviewing geologists and engineers who had warned that the land was not suitable for development. The so-called experts under capitalism are the very same people who end up signing off on all construction plans as loyal servants of capital, falsifying land surveys and rubber-stamping technical inspections of substandard and obsolete buildings and structures.

A part of the bourgeoisie, through its media, blames corruption and lack of oversight for the construction in those areas, claiming that cheap materials were used, and stokes the specter of so-called Venezuelan socialism as the cause of the catastrophe. There is no shortage of statistical battles over whether more buildings built by state-owned or private companies collapsed, all in an effort to shift responsibility for the thousands of deaths and promote their own business interests.

All of this is to **HIDE** the fact that as long as **CAPITALISM** exists (and there has never been even a gram of socialism in Venezuela), **no matter which government is in power, construction will take place wherever the needs of capital and profit demand, at the lowest possible cost, concentrating working-class populations in dangerous areas with full awareness of the risks involved, if labor is needed there to be exploited**.

The media are showing images of the wounded and the dead in Venezuela, highlighting the horrors of the disaster and the people clearing debris by hand due to a lack of machinery. Capital exploits the corpses of those whose deaths it has caused, calling for interclass unity between the exploited and the exploiters, manipulating them for its parliamentary agenda and to divert attention from the true culprit: the capitalist system itself.

Social Control and Repression

A few days after the earthquake, under the pretext of helping the population, the government ordered the militarization of the region: *"Given the gravity of the situation, Acting President Delcy Rodríguez declared the state of La Guaira a disaster area and ordered the militarization of the region to facilitate search and rescue operations and the distribution of humanitarian aid."* (América Económica, 03-07-2026)

The bourgeoisie's real interest in militarizing the area is to control and repress the population. With thousands of people injured, hospitals whose infrastructure was already obsolete and lacked sufficient supplies are now overwhelmed. With thousands of people left homeless and thousands displaced, the bourgeoisie must prevent the situation from spiraling out of control. The army's role is to suppress the protests that are bound to arise due to the lack of relocation, the lack of food, supply cuts, the lack of adequate medical care and medication, the state and conditions of the camps where the population is to be relocated, and the frustration, anger, and powerlessness that this situation will provoke. The bourgeois facade for the control and repression exercised by its repressive forces (police, army) is called "humanitarian aid."

US imperialism has sent a contingent of some 2,000 soldiers to Venezuela not only to control the reconstruction business, but also to establish direct military control over one of the country's most important strategic points: the port and the airport of La Guaira; the very port where Chinese imperialism had promoted the creation of a Special Economic Zone intended to subject the Venezuelan proletariat to the same level of overexploitation applied to the Chinese proletariat. The catastrophe has become an opportunity that US imperialism is exploiting to advance its position, seeking to displace Chinese imperialism from a strategic location in Venezuela.

Reconstruction and Debt

The bourgeoisie has already announced a reconstruction plan using funds released by the IMF. Let's remember that the US plan regarding Venezuela, which was dramatized with the arrest of the puppet Maduro in January, is for American oil companies to rebuild the energy infrastructure, advancing the funds against future sales of the extracted oil. Thus, by modernizing the infrastructure and increasing production, they could sell Venezuela's crude oil to the world, making huge profits and promising a Golden future for Venezuelans.

But there remains the enormous debt of Venezuela's capitalist economy: *"Venezuela is set to reveal a $240bn debt pile, much higher than previously thought"* (Financial Times, 24-06-2026). And the effects of the post-disaster hoarding of dollars are already being felt in inflation, an additional scourge on the Venezuelan proletariat through which the purchasing power of wages evaporates in bolivars, while profits have been converted into dollars throughout all these years of rule by the Army Party. The shipment of physical dollars sent by the US (the first since 2017) will be used, as it has been until now, to ensure business operations and corporate profits.

The harsh reality is that Venezuela's capitalist debts, the reconstruction of its energy infrastructure, and the rebuilding of the devastated area—as long as capitalism survives—**can only be paid for and carried out through the overexploitation of the Venezuelan proletariat**. As long as capitalism survives in Venezuela (even if one side or the other falsely dresses it up as socialism), the only fate for the working class is the exploitation of the commodity labor power to extract surplus value as the sole source of profit.

In this exploitation, the working class will again be the ones who pay in lives. According to the ILO report, more than 2.9 million workers die each year worldwide as a result of the so-called "workplace accidents" or occupational diseases. Exploitation and the poor state of Venezuela's infrastructure continue to leave a trail of injured and dead workers: *"Four Corpoelec workers injured after explosion at El Mácaro substation"* (July 2025), where a transformer explosion claimed the life of a technician and left linemen with severe burns. *"Emergency on Lake Maracaibo: Fire on a mixed-use platform leaves six workers with burns"* (May 2026). *"17 workers injured in a PDVSA drilling rig explosion in La Victoria, Apure state"* (June 2026). The capitalist market system is a **CRIMINAL** system that oozes death from every pore.

The Narcotic of National Unity

Precisely because the entire burden of reconstruction will fall on the working class, the bourgeoisie injects the proletariat with the narcotic of national unity and the fatherland. But for the working class, this famous "fatherland" is nothing more than our exploitation. All of them, everyone who has an economic interest in the exploitation of the working class worldwide in general and in Venezuela in particular, whether they belong to the officialist or opposition Venezuelan bourgeois, or American, Russian, Spanish, Chinese, or Italian—all base their profits on our exploitation.

Both the officialism and the so-called "opposition" have appealed to "unity, calm, and solidarity among all Venezuelans." But "fraternity" and "solidarity," as used by the bourgeoisie, mean nothing but subjugation and exploitation for the working class. The mask of "fraternity" fell away before the proletariat when it rose up against the bourgeoisie in June 1848 in Paris, in a historic lesson we must not forget: *"Fraternité, the brotherhood of antagonistic classes, one of which exploits the other, this fraternité which in February was proclaimed and inscribed in large letters on the façades of Paris, on every prison and every barracks—**this fraternité found its true, unadulterated and prosaic expression in civil war, civil war in its most terrible aspect, the war of labour against capital**. This brotherhood blazed in front of all the windows of Paris on the evening of June 25, when the Paris of the bourgeoisie held illuminations while the Paris of the proletariat was burning, bleeding, groaning in the throes of death. This brotherhood lasted only as long as there was a fraternity of interests between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat."* (The Class Struggles in France, Marx, 1848).

The big lie of socialism in Venezuela

The major victory of the Venezuelan bourgeoisie – both of officialism and of the "opposition" – has been its success in identifying the Party of the Army with socialism and communism. **It is an imperative necessity for the working class to eliminate this BIG LIE.** In Venezuela there is no socialism, there is CAPITALISM. Capitalism is based on **wage labor**, on the fact that **our labor power is just another commodity** and has a price: the wage. This is why **capitalism inevitably means exploitation and hunger for the working class. No change of parliamentary government is going to mean a real change for the working class under capitalism.**

This bourgeois world is sinking and threatens to drag us down with it, we have no patches or mends to apply it but a new society to fight and live for. And not a caricature of it with changed names but **a truly communist society:** without wage labor, without market, without anarchy of production, without private property, without State, without crisis or war... in which ***"the free development of each will be the premise of the free development of all"*** (Manifesto of the Communist Party, 1848).

DOWN WITH CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION THAT MURDERS THE WORKING CLASS!
DOWN WITH THE FALSE "SOCIALISM" OF THE ARMY'S PARTY!

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY – "THE INTERNATIONALIST PROLETARIAN" – July 2026 –
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AGAINST THE CAPITALIST CEMENT SEWER: COMMUNIST SPACE AND OXYGEN

A scientific verification

In the first chapter of the Manifesto of the Communist Party, Marx and Engels recount the birth, development and rise of the bourgeoisie on the material basis of the development of trade and the discovery of new shipping routes. It is recorded as early as 1848: *"The bourgeoisie has subjected the countryside to the rule of the city.* ***It has created enormous cities; it has greatly increased the urban population*** *as compared with that of the countryside, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life."* In the contingent immediate revolutionary program of 1848, the Manifesto includes as an immediate measure after the seizure of power the *"Combination of agriculture and industry; measures aimed at gradually eliminating the opposition between town and country."* This point is not only an immediate measure but also is part of the integral revolutionary program. In fact, the scientific socialism of Marx and Engels recognizes the utopian socialists for having placed in the foreground of social transformation the need to eliminate the contrast between town and country.

In 1848, when the Manifesto was written, the most populous city in the world was London, the capital of the model country that Marx used to study and describe the laws that govern the parable of capitalism from its birth to its ineluctable death. This is how Engels described it in 1844: *"A town, such as London, where a man may wander for hours together without reaching the beginning of the end, without meeting the slightest hint which could lead to the inference that there is open country within reach, is something truly very particular. This colossal centralization, this heaping together of 2.5 million human beings at one point, has multiplied the power of these 2.5 million men a hundredfold."* (The Condition of the Working Class in England, 1844).

At that time Marx was told that it was madness to say that the rest of the countries would develop in the same way as England, but in the course of these 180 years it has been possible to see how capitalism has taken root all over the globe, how the "particularity" of London has become universal, and how *"entire populations arising by charm, as if they came out of the earth"* (Manifesto of the Communist Party, 1848) have proliferated and proliferate on all continents.

In 1952, at the meeting in Forlì, our Party, in full continuity with the Marxist line, set as the point of the immediate revolutionary program the *"«A halt to construction» of houses and workplaces around large cities and even small ones, as a first step toward the even distribution of the population across the countryside. Reduction of congestion, speed and volume of traffic by prohibiting the unnecessary one."*

In 1952 there were 339,867,767 inhabitants in urban conglomerates of more than 100,000 inhabitants, representing 14.13% of the world's population; in 50 years, in 2006 the figure rose to 2,162,591,788 representing 34.13% of the world's population (see The Communist nº48 and 49), in 2025, the figure has increased to about 3,267 million out of a population of about 8,300 million (39.69%). In 2026 only the 100 most populous cities in the world are home to about 1,000 million people: an eighth of the world's population is concentrated in these 100 urban macro concentrations. Tokyo has 37 million inhabitants; Delhi 34.25 million, Shanghai 29.99; Dhaka 23.67; Sao Paulo 22.93; Mexico 22.58; Cairo 22.49; Lagos 16.36... The oldest capitalism, London, 9.69.

These large urban agglomerations impose by their very structure a very high percentage of dispossessed – wage-earners – who have no property or means of production of their own to prevent their accumulation. In them the **law of growing misery is verified**: *"Misery grows and wealth is concentrated, because the absolute and relative number of dispossessed proletarians grows disproportionately, who must eat every day what they have earned that day. Nothing changes in the economic phenomenon if every day the wages of some proletarians, in given professions, in some countries, allow the cut of meat and the cinema, and, supreme luck, the subscription to L'Unità"* (Marxism and Misery, Battaglia Comunista, 1949).

The sewer and capitalist overcrowding

This concentration and agglomeration of the population in the big cities makes them a focus of unhealthiness. In the third volume of Capital, Marx explains the difficulty of the bourgeoisie in processing the waste generated by man's consumption in the big cities: *"The capitalist economy registers an enormous waste of them in the capitalist economy. In London, for instance, they find no better use for the excretion of four and a half million human beings than to contaminate the Thames with it at heavy expense."* (Capital, Volume III, Chapter V section IV). The bourgeoisie of twenty-first century France has had to invest more than 1,400 million euros to make the Seine a river in which (supposedly) bathing no longer causes diseases... The bourgeois "scientific" proof that the waters are not polluted is to bathe one of their parliamentary puppets and show him to the masses: if the parliamentary cretin is still alive, there is no danger!

In the international division of labour, there are cities which have the "honor" of being directly the dumping ground for international waste and garbage. This is the case, for example, with electronic waste sent to Ghana and which ends up concentrated in processing areas in Accra. But everywhere, the lot of the majority of proletarians in the big cities is to live in crowded working-class neighborhoods: *" the confusion has only recently reached its height when every scrap of space left by the old way of building has been filled up and patched over until* ***not a foot of land is left to be further occupied****."* (The Condition of the Working Class in England, 1844).

In these working-class neighborhoods, diseases spread more easily because of the lack of air renewal and because the bourgeoisie does not invest in cleanliness; and the same happens in the subways, buses or trains where the proletariat is crammed in like cattle to go to and from work.

The workers living in basements are not exclusive to the Manchester and Liverpool of 1844 and when there are floods these houses are the first to be flooded. After catastrophes, the bourgeoisie throws its hands to its head and makes restrictions on construction, but *"The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished; they are merely shifted elsewhere! The same economic necessity which produced them in the first place, produces them in the next place also. As long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist, it is folly to hope for an isolated solution of the housing question or of any other social question affecting the fate of the workers."* (The Housing Question, Engels, 1872).

Capitalism not only forces its workers to live underground in basements, real mousetraps, but also locks them up hundreds of meters high in tiny confinement cells in macro-buildings of 20, 30, 40 or more floors to make the most of each square meter.

This is how our current described the urban plans of the highly laureate Le Corbusier in 1953: *"The principle of the **super-exploitation of space** goes as far as these crazy tendencies: to overlap the green of urban gardens (tomorrow also that of wheat and potato fields!), the transit routes and the covered surface of buildings vertically in the same space. **Verticalism, is the name of this distorted doctrine; capitalism is verticalist. Communism will be «horizontalist».**"* (Space against cement, Il Programma Comunista). This capitalist verticalism has nothing to do with the fact that the globe lacks space, but is the exclusive product of the concentration of capital.

Capital needs a mass of available wage earners to be able to hire at a low price and the mass of wage earners is forced to go where it is most likely to find a buyer for its labor power, that is, where there is more capital. This is the irresistible force that pushes the population to agglomerate in the big cities, which is why these agglomerations that are a source of pollution and unhealthiness are inevitable as long as wage labor and capital subsist.

This gigantic agglomeration of the working class is accompanied by the epileptic traffic that saturates and blocks the big cities. The **anarchy of mercantile production** imposes on the labor force to look for a buyer wherever it finds one, this inevitably produces a multiplication of useless, chaotic, irrational and unplannable displacements. In addition to a waste of time going to and from jobs and an increase in pollution.

The criterion of least cost and the business of disaster

In capitalism, constructions are carried out with the sole objective of satisfying the needs of profit, so only *"With the end of capitalism, this criterion of construction technique that is presented today in schools and centers as eternal truths, will end without honor the criterion that says: to bear the maximum weights and maximum efforts in structures of the minimum weight and above all of the minimum possible cost".* (Politics and Construction, Prometeo, series 2, n.3 and 4, 1952). The number of stations and metro tunnels in large cities that have ended in collapses, potholes, etc. gives us a good example of the criterion of minimum cost. Asbestos was very economical, as well as carcinogenic; but the latter was very well concealed for years by the bourgeoisie in pursuit of the criterion of minimum cost.

Capitalism is not interested in the maintenance of constructions already made, but in the reconstruction that follows disasters and catastrophes: *"The basis of Marxist economic analysis is the distinction between dead labor and living labor. We define **capitalism** not as ownership over the accumulations of crystallized past labor, but as the **right to the subtraction of living and active labor**. That is why the present economy cannot lead to a good solution which carries out, with the minimum effort of present labor, the rational preservation of all that has been handed down to us by past labor, and the best bases for the effect of future labor. The bourgeois economy is interested in the frenzy of modern labor, and it **favors the destruction of masses still useful from past labor**, laughing at those who come."* (Homicide of the Dead, Battaglia Comunista, n. 24, 1951).

Revolutionary potentiality

Avoiding the process of urban concentration in capitalism not only impotently clashes with the laws of accumulation, but represents a reactionary illusion. *"The solution lies in the **abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the appropriation of all the means of life and labor by the working class itself**."* (The Housing Question, Engels, 1872). And it is the task of these proletarian masses previously piled up in the big cities for the convenience of capital, to dismantle them later as part of the anti-capitalist revolutionary process: *"It is precisely modern large-scale industry, which has turned the worker, formerly chained to the land, into a completely propertyless proletarian, liberated from all traditional fetters, a free outlaw; it is precisely this economic revolution which **has created the sole conditions under which the exploitation of the working class in its final form, in the capitalist mode of production, can be overthrown**."* (The Housing Question, Engels, 1872).

Capitalism has also laid the other material premises for overcoming both urban and productive agglomeration: *"With inventions and the enormous increase in the productivity of labor, the coordination of many workers remains, but there is no longer any reason for beastly overcrowding side by side. (…) The very modern forms of production, which use networks of stations of all kinds, such as hydroelectric power stations, communications, radio, television, increasingly give a unique operational discipline to the workers spread out in small groups over enormous distances.*

*Combined labor remains, in ever larger and more wonderful interconnections, and autonomous production disappears more and more. But the technological density mentioned above is steadily diminishing. **The urban and productive agglomeration remains, therefore, not for reasons dependent on the optimum of production, but because of the persistence of the profit economy and the social dictatorship of capital.** "* (Space against Cement, Il Programma Comunista, 1953).

The overcoming of the contradiction between city and countryside is engraved as a cardinal point in the integral communist program, the development of which must be initiated as an immediate measure by the revolutionary proletariat by stopping construction and drastically reducing traffic after the overthrow of the bourgeois state: **horizontalism against verticalism; communist oxygen against capitalist sewer; space against cement.** *"When it is possible, after having crushed by force this dictatorship that is becoming more and more obscene every day, to subordinate every solution and every plan to the improvement of the conditions of living labor, transforming for this purpose what is dead labor, constant capital, the infrastructure that the species human has contributed with over the centuries, and continues to contribute with, to the earth's crust, then the brute verticalism of the concrete monsters will be mocked and suppressed, and thanks to the immense horizontal expanses of space, once the gigantic cities have been vacated, the strength and intelligence of the animal man will progressively tend to uniformize in the habitable lands the density of life and the density of labor, already converted into concordant forces and not, as in the present deformed civilization, into ferocious enemies, and held together only by the specter of serfdom and hunger."* (Space against Cement, Il Programma Comunista, 1953).

THE ROLE OF THE LABOR UNION QUESTION IN THE DEGENERATIVE PROCESS OF THE PARTY (1972–1982)

The dynamics of labor union integration within the tentacles of the bourgeois State after World War II were one of the stumbling blocks the formal Party encountered beginning in the second half of the 1960s, leading it to make a series of zigzags on this issue that paved the way for the process of degeneration suffered by the Party's center (or rather centers, the Italian and French ones) known as the *new course* [1].

This is a specific aspect of the difficulties arising from the prolongation of a counterrevolutionary situation that has been giving rise to deviations in either an activist or a mystical-idealistic direction[2], depending on whether impatience and a lack of understanding of the historical process result in an attempt to move history forward through an act of one's own will (throwing tactics overboard and, a few steps later, the program itself) or in an attempt to avoid the difficulties of the hard work of maintaining the organizational thread even during the most unfavorable periods.

Although, as we shall see, the process of the labor union network being imprisoned by the bourgeois state was a phenomenon foreseen in the Party Theses themselves, and although those Theses contain the tactical guidelines necessary to navigate this phenomenon even in an unfavorable and blatantly counterrevolutionary situation, the material weight of this situation's prolongation led to a series of errors of an activist nature on the part of the Direction, which resulted in the abandonment of the correct tactics.

The Party's position on the labor union question

Without prejudice to a broader examination of the labor union question in Marxism, we will focus here on determining what the Party's classical assessment of the issue had been after World War II, using the two texts that formed the basis for Party membership in 1951–52: *"Theory and action in Marxist doctrine"* and the *"Characteristic theses"*.

"Even where, after the Second War, according to current political formulation, capitalist totalitarianism seems to have been replaced by democratic liberalism, ***the labor union dynamic continued uninterruptedly to unfold in the full sense of state control and insertion into official administrative bodies****. Fascism, the dialectical realizer of the old reformist instances, carried out that of the legal recognition of the union so that it could be the holder of collective agreements with the bosses* ***until the effective imprisonment of all union network in the articulations of bourgeois class power.***

This is a fundamental result to the defense and preservation of the capitalist regime *precisely because* ***the influence and utilization of union associationist network is an INDISPENSABLE STAGE for any revolutionary movement directed by the Communist Party."*** (Theory and Action in Marxist Doctrine, Revolutionary Party and Economic Action, 1951).

"5.- In the several phases of the bourgeois trajectory (revolutionary, reformist, counter-revolutionary), the dynamics of labor union action underwent profound changes (interdiction, tolerance, submission); but ***this does not alter the fact that it is organically indispensable to have among the mass of proletarians and the minority within the party an additional layer of organizations that are politically neutral in principle, but constitutionally accessible only to the workers, and that organizations of this type must re-emerge in the phase in which the revolution is approaching.*** " (Theory and action in Marxist doctrine, 1951).

"8.- Over and above the contingent problem of the participation – or non-participation – of the revolutionary communist party in certain types of labor unions in a given country, the elements of the question summarized up to this point lead to the conclusion that ***in any perspective of any general revolutionary movement these fundamental factors cannot be absent: 1) a large and numerous proletariat of pure wage earners, 2) a large movement of associations with economic content embracing an imposing part of the proletariat; 3) a strong class party, revolutionary, in which a minority of the workers militate, but to which the development of the struggle has allowed to validly and extensively counterpose its influence in the labor movement to that of the bourgeois class and power.*** " (Theory and Action in Marxist Doctrine, Revolutionary Party and Economic Action, 1951).

"6.- Marxism has vigorously rejected, whenever it has arisen, syndicalist theory, which endows the class with economic organs – associations based on occupational category, industry, or enterprise – believing them capable of waging the struggle and bringing about social transformation.

While ***Marxism considers the labor union, on its own, insufficient for the revolution, it nevertheless regards it as an indispensable instrument for the mobilization of the class on the political and revolutionary level, achieved through the presence and influence of the communist party*** *within the class's economic organizations. In the difficult stages involved in the formation of economic associations,* ***those associations are considered suitable for the party's task that comprise only proletarians and to which they join spontaneously, but without the obligation to profess specific political****, religious, or social* ***views. This character is lost in confessional associations and those with mandatory membership, or in those that have become an integral part of the state****.*

7.- The party never adopts the method of forming partial economic organizations comprising only workers who accept the principles and leadership of the communist party. But ***the party acknowledges without reservation that not only the situation preceding the insurrectionary fight, but also any phase of strong increase of the party's influence among the masses, cannot develop without the extension between the party and the class of a layer***

[1] For a more detailed analysis of this degenerative process within the Party direction, see *"The degeneration of programma comunista and our battle"* (El Comunista No.1), as well as *"The physiognomy of the degenerative process of the new course (1972–1982)"* (The Internationalist Proletarian No.14) and *"Le Prolétaire/il Comunista: spearhead of revisionist degeneration of the new course"* (The Internationalist Proletarian No.13).

[2] We refer the reader to the introductions on the splits of 1952 (The Internationalist Proletarian No.16) and 1965–66 (The Internationalist Proletarian No.17), as well as the articles mentioned in the previous note, to observe the recurrence and correlation of the nature of the deviations.

of organizations with immediate economic objectives and with high numerical participation, within which there is a network emanating from the party *(nuclei, groups and communist labor union faction).* ***It is the task of the party, in unfavorable periods and periods of passivity of the proletarian class, to foresee the forms and encourage the appearance of organizations with economic objectives for the immediate struggle****, which may even assume totally new aspects in the future, after the well-known types of corporation, industrial union, enterprise council, etc.* ***The party always encourages those forms of organization which facilitate contact and common action among the workers of various localities and of different professions, rejecting closed forms."*** (Characteristic Thesis, 1951).

"11.- ***The party does not hide that in the resumption phases it will not be strengthened autonomously, if a form of mass labor-union economic associationism does not arise.*** *Although the union has never been free from the ideological influence of hostile classes and has served as a vehicle for continuous and profound deviations and distortions, and although it is not a specific revolutionary instrument, it is nonetheless of interest to the party, which does not voluntarily refrain from working within it, thereby clearly distinguishing itself from all other political groups. The party recognizes that today it can carry out union work only sporadically; however,* ***as soon as the actual numerical ratio between its members, sympathizers, and those organized within a given union becomes significant, and provided that such an organization has not ruled out the final theoretical and statutory possibility of autonomous class activity, the party will seek to penetrate it and attempt to win control of its direction."*** (Characteristic Thesis, 1951).

The loss of labor union tactics: the CGIL characterized as a class union

Our Party Theses establish a central role for the tactic of influence and penetration within the network of immediate struggle at the labor union level, expressly excluding from its application those organizations that are confessional or that are an integral part of the bourgeois state. However, attempts were made to apply this tactic, intended for non-integrated organizations, to those organizations within the integrated labor union movement that had become an integral part of the state and that, in many areas, are directly subsidized by the state and employers, to the point that in several countries they have even come to form a genuine corporate network of their own, functioning in reality as labor union service companies.

In Italy, the supplement "sindacato rosso" began to be published, and it eventually launched the slogan *"For the defense committees of the class union!"* (Il sindacato rosso, No.3, March 1971). In France, beginning in July 1969, a supplement to Le Prolétaire titled "syndicat de classe" began to be published; it emulated the approach of the Italian "sindacato rosso," calling for *"A Red CGT; (…) let's form groups of the International Communist Party within the CGT!"* [3].

This was in direct conflict with the Party's characterization of the C.G.I.L. following its reconstitution by the *Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale* (National Liberation Committee). The Party had characterized the C.G.I.L. (with the "i" standing for Italy, unlike the C.G.L. of the 1920s) by stating that: *it cannot dissimulate that not even the confederation that remains with the social-communists of Nenni and Togliatti is based on class autonomy. It is not a red organization, it is also a tricolor organization* ***STITCHED ACCORDING TO THE MODEL OF MUSSOLINI.*** " (The Trade Union Splits in Italy, 1949).

The misjudgment regarding the nature of the organizations they were trying to win over was compounded by forgetting the tactical premises that allow for and even require a split in the field of the labor union faced with the expulsions of revolutionaries by the opportunist direction. Issue No.17 of "il sindacato rosso" (November 1969) provides a clear picture of the situation. It explains how *"In Belluno, our comrades, after denouncing the dirty tricks that the Communist Party of Italy and its allies pull off every day at local factories, particularly at Faesite, Corono-costruzioni, etc., were expelled from the CGIL, even though the unanimous assembly of the Sindacato-Scuola, to which our militants belong, rejected this despicable measure"* [4] stating thereafter *"Let's repeat once again that communists do not leave class unions"*. Does this mean that any expulsion or disciplinary proceeding should have led or should lead to a split? Obviously not. But when these expulsions become recurrent, when groups of militants are expelled, when there is unanimous support from a union assembly that rejects the expulsion, allowing oneself to be expelled while arguing that one cannot leave these organizations because they are class unions when they were already integrated unions is a serious mistake whose repetition becomes a deviation. It would have been possible and necessary to establish a union reference point from which to build a non-integrated network, outside these integrated apparatuses, without abandoning them immediately but rather as a result of the maturation of outreach efforts with groups of workers who were either pushed to break away in order to carry out struggles without the direction's constant betrayal, or expelled by the opportunist union direction once it realized it could not control the situation.

The Party was steeped in the belief that communists could under no circumstances take the initiative in helping to create independent labor union organizations, but that this could only be a spontaneous decision by non-communist workers, thus condemning the Party to be a passive player in this area, able only to attempt, subsequently, to gain influence within the organizational landscape determined by others. This was based on a biased interpretation of point 7 of the Characteristic theses (1951), which distorted the correct thesis *"The party never adopts the method of forming partial economic organizations comprising only workers who accept the principles and leadership of the communist party"* into this castrated and sterile version: *"The party never adopts the method of forming partial economic organizations"*, which, moreover, is in complete contradiction with the continuation of that same point in the

[3] *"Pour une C.G.T. rouge ; pour l'unité prolétarienne, contre le front syndical avec les organisations jaunes (F.O. et C.F.D.T.) ; (…) formons des groupes du Parti communiste international dans la C.G.T. !"* (Syndicat de classe, No.8, supplement to "Prolétaire", March 1970).

[4] *"A Belluno i nostri compagni, a seguito della denuncia delle porcherie che PCI e affini combinano ogni giorno negli stabilimenti locali, in particolare alla Faesite, alla Corono-costruzioni, ecc. sono stati espulsi dalla CGIL, benché l'assemblea unanime del Sindacato-Scuola, in cui sono inquadrati i nostri militanti, abbia respinto questo sporco provvedimento".*

Theses: *"It is the task of the party, in unfavorable periods and periods of passivity of the proletarian class, to foresee the forms and encourage the appearance of organizations with economic objectives for the immediate struggle*" .

The Party had no shortage of examples from its own experience in the 1920s regarding clandestine action within fascist unions when circumstances precluded other courses of action, with a clear focus on the limits and objectives of such action:

"8) There are local situations in which the combined effects of unemployment and brutal violence have forced the entire population to join the autonomous (fascist) unions, as has happened almost exclusively among certain rural populations. In these cases, ***everything justifies the decision to allow Party members and sympathizers to join the masses in joining the autonomous unions when any other course of action becomes impossible. Experience shows that in such cases not only the union network but also the Party organization itself, especially in small centers, must become illegal****. Although there have been instances where this tactic has been used to secure leadership positions within fascist unions,* ***the objective of such action is to sabotage the fascist organization and bring the masses back into the ranks of the red organization. In general, the Communist Party will set itself the goal of demonstrating that fascist unions do not guarantee the immediate interests of workers and peasants and act as instruments of the employers and landowners,*** *despite certain initial appearances to the contrary."* (Draft Program of Action of the Communist Party of Italy, contained in the Report of the Communist Party of Italy to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, November 1922).

Even the Theses of the Second Congress of the Communist International (1920) provided tactical tools in line with the Party's positions cited above. Communists do not renounce labor union activity wherever it is possible, nor do they act on the basis of a splittist approach as a matter of principle; however, this does not mean that they cannot and indeed should not promote a split when a labor union organization led by opportunists (all the more so if it is an integrated labor union apparatus) expels revolutionary militants, dissolves combative union sections, and hinders and blocks revolutionary propaganda work[5]:

"4.- (…) All voluntary withdrawals from the industrial movement, every artificial attempt to organise special unions, ***without being compelled thereto by exceptional acts of violence on the part of the trade union bureaucracy such as the expulsion of separate revolutionary local branches of the unions by the opportunist officials****, or by their narrow-minded aristocratic policy, which prohibits the unskilled workers from entering into the organisation – represents a great danger to the Communist movement (…)*

5.- Placing the object and the essence of labour organisations before them, the Communists ***ought not to hesitate before a split in such organisations, if a refusal to split would mean abandoning revolutionary work in the trade unions****, and giving up the attempt to make of them an instrument of revolutionary struggle, the attempt to organise the most exploited section of the proletariat. (…) The Communists, in case a necessity for a split arises,* ***must continuously and attentively discuss the question as to whether such a split might not lead to their isolation from the working masses"*** [6].

But instead of working to revive a network of non-integrated union struggle, agreeing to join the integrated unions solely to avoid isolation, with the aim of exposing their bourgeois class character and pulling workers away from their influence, using the abuses and excesses of the opportunist union directions to gradually draw groups of combative workers toward a non-integrated union pole, it was theorized that the CGIL (or the CGT in France) was a genuine class union that had to be defended, and that communists and workers should remain within it despite the recurring expulsion of militants who sought to carry out their communist work.

While these apparatuses served to suppress workers' struggles rather than to expand them, to denounce communist militants, leading to their expulsion and even dismissal from the company, the Italian and French Party centers painted a rosy picture of the cell in which the labor struggle is imprisoned, fantasizing that this would allow them to gain greater influence among the working class. In this way, control of the struggle in the labor union arena is effectively handed over to opportunism, and any attempt to wrest it from the clutches of integration is thwarted: all that is needed is to expel the communist militants when the situation demands it, and they are automatically disarmed by this castrated interpretation of the theses, which prevents them from proposing an organized alternative[7].

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[5] For those who regard Lenin's *"Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder"* as the sole reference on labor union matters, we would like to remind that this text was a polemical pamphlet prepared for the Second Congress of the Communist International (*"cursory notes of a publicist"* in Lenin's own words), but that at that Congress, the Theses on *"Trade Union Movement, Factory Committees and the Third International"* were adopted as a positive tactical guideline for the actions of communists in labor union matters at the international level, precisely addressing the various anticipated situations and how to act in each of them.

[6] Let us recall the assessment regarding the process of sterilizing integrated trade unionism, which even extended to the once-fertile battleground of the Chambers of Labor: *"Even this last resort has been destroyed in the current phase of the wave of Stalinist opportunism, since the Labor Chamber, as the venue for feverish gatherings of the most combative workers, has ceased to exist (traditionally, thousands of workers attended the nightly meetings, and it was easy to spread their decisions throughout the entire area by the following morning). In its place, the pink and red clerical cliques have built a corridor lined with bureaucratic rows of windows, where each isolated and intimidated worker goes to ask what his rights are or what the "****instructions****" from above are regarding some ridiculous move of today's ones, then mumbles the slogans he has received and weeps over the castrated strikes."* (Fundamentals of Revolutionary Communism, 1957). Under these conditions, isolation from the working class occurs precisely by remaining within these organizations and ensuring that others remain trapped in this straitjacket of integrated trade unionism, whose primary function is precisely to isolate and atomize the struggles of the working class.

[7] In 1996, after yet another expulsion of our militants in Spain due to their communist activities and positions, in this case in "Solidaridad Obrera" (SO) expelled by the anarchist minority within that union (members of Lucha Autónoma), who imposed their will by force with the help of Stalinist and pro-Cuban groups, among others (see "El Comunista" No.32, November 1996), the Spanish Section of the Party decided to apply point 7 of the Characteristic theses, promoting and helping to establish an organization for immediate struggle composed of the organized groups that opposed the expulsion, a process that led to the formation of "Solidaridad y Unidad de los Trabajadores" (SUT). This step cannot be taken artificially at any time because the conditions must mature, and this is a complex process. But it should have been taken in the past when other favorable opportunities were blocked and

It was, therefore, an activist deviation that, rather than working toward the resurgence of the non-integrated union network, imagined it as already existing, thereby disorienting the working class and the activists themselves and preventing a break from the Mussolinian straitjacket.

As was to be expected, this tactical deviation disconcerted and confused large groups of militants within the Party, paving the way for the anti-union deviation that would subsequently take hold through increasingly elaborate tactical twists leading to a complete abandonment of the Party's positions on the labor union question and ultimately to its collapse into anti-nuclear, pacifist, squatter, Palestinian nationalist movements, etc.

The deviation of the Scandinavian sections

In contrast to the recovery of integrated labor unions such as the CGT in France or the CGIL in Italy, the Scandinavian sections (practically newborn, formed in 1967) deviated in 1970–71 toward openly councilist positions, openly advocating for the "revolutionary unions" theorized by this current and rejecting the possibility of a union network not integrated into the state. In their 1971 thesis draft on the labor union question, they stated: *"9.- (…) We must combat the trade unionist illusions that there are still unions in the imperialist metropolises with opportunist leaderships capable of being 'won over' by 'the communist faction within the union' and used as a 'transmission belt' for the class political party."* And while it was true in 1971 that neither the French CGT nor the CGIL met the requirements set forth in the Party's Theses for the application of the union tactic of penetration and conquest, the premises underlying this assertion were a denial of the very possibility of a non-integrated union network in which the Party could apply the aforementioned tactic and extend its influence. Later on, the anti-union position becomes clearer: *"11. Thus, the Communist Party in the imperialist metropolises must demonstrate that the trade union*

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squandered by the (Italian and French) Direction of the *new course*, which had degenerated into a movementist orientation that used a sterilized interpretation of point 7 of the Characteristic theses to avoid labor union action. As anyone who reads the SUT statutes can see, not only is there no requirement to accept a specific political discipline, but this possibility is expressly ruled out: *"The class workers' union cannot be monolithic by statute, since different currents of thought converge within it."* At the same time, one can also see that the closed forms of company- or sector-based unionism are rejected, establishing a unified territorial organization whose subdivisions are territorial in nature, thereby stripping company-level union sections of any autonomy, without prejudice to the maximum freedom to act on behalf of and in conjunction with the union as a whole: *"Since the Union's objective is to promote solidarity and mutual support among all its members, this is incompatible with the existence of divisions regarding its financial or other resources. The commitment to solidarity at all levels among members and organized groups, overcoming geographical barriers and distances, as well as corporate or sectoral divisions, leads to the conclusion that the finances and resources of the organized movement must be unified."* and also: *"The cancer of the labor movement is company-based unionism. The union's organization is territorial because this is the best way to overcome corporatism and the limitations of company-based unionism. The Union Sections that members establish within their respective areas are neither autonomous nor independent from the Assembly of the Territorial Section nor the Union's General Assembly, and may not hold funds separate from the rest of the union. Union Sections are a legal instrument through which the union operates in a specific area, but they do not replace its decision-making bodies: the Assembly of the Territorial Section and the Union's General Assembly. The assemblies and meetings of the Union Sections shall be open to all other members of the union. In any case, the Union Branches may call a strike on behalf of the Union and initiate, on behalf of the Union, any type of administrative or judicial action in defense of the interests of the working class, as well as appoint Union Delegates."* In "Force, Violence, and Dictatorship in the Class Struggle" (1947), the following position is stated regarding the false "Bolshevization" that imposed company cells as the basis of the Communist Parties: *"If the party's organic function, which cannot be replaced by any other body, is to develop sectoral and local economic struggles into the unified general struggle of the proletarian class on the social and political levels, then no serious reflection of that task can take place at a meeting attended only by workers from the same occupational category and the same production enterprise. Such an environment will be attuned only to narrow, corporatist demands, the expression of the party's unified leadership will reach it only from above and as something foreign"*. If the above is vitally true for the Party, it remains true – although to a lesser degree, given that the primary revolutionary function lies with the Party – for the network of organizations engaged in immediate struggle within which the Party must exert its influence and carry out its activities; for this reason, the Characteristic Theses unequivocally state that *"The party always encourages those forms of organization which facilitate contact and common action among the workers of various localities and of different professions, rejecting closed forms"*. This conclusion can also be drawn from the lessons of the influence of the Chambers of Labor – which were not subdivided by sector – in Italy in the 1920s: *"Consequently, within the labor union network, we see above all the powerlessness of the local union and the national professional federation, with the national federation controlled almost everywhere by opportunist parties, whereas the only center of class action once lay in the inter-union headquarters of cities and provinces."* (Fundamentals of Revolutionary Communism, 1957). As we have reminded, communists place *"the object and the essence of labour organisations before them"*, the problem of *"of the participation – or non-participation – of the revolutionary communist party in certain types of labor unions in a given country"* is a *"contingent problem"* and the Characteristic Theses state that the organisms of economical struggle may *"even assume totally new aspects in the future, after the well-known types of corporation, industrial union, enterprise council, etc."*. Therefore, it is not a particular form or contingent organization that interests us, one from which we cannot rule out the possibility of regression – something we cannot rule out even for the formal Party – or even integration, should the dynamics of political influence change in the future. In Venezuela, our comrades participate in the Núcleo Proletario Clasista, an immediate action group that coordinates participation in workers' groups organized within other labor unions to the extent that the conditions for forming a new organization are not yet met, leaving open the possibility of its transformation from a coordinating body into a union in its own right or its participation in the formation of a new, non-affiliated labor organization. In Italy and Chile, our comrades can carry out union work only sporadically, both within and outside existing union organizations. But what is indisputable is that this experience in Spain has not only not isolated us from the immediate struggle of the working class but, on the contrary, has made the Party's influence more fruitful and widespread by bringing in an influx of comrades who have come to Marxism through the reality of struggle (this "school of war" that strikes represent, though we must remember, as Lenin did, that it should not be confused with war itself), and to train militants with real experience in struggle and genuine organizational skills, far from the bleak landscape of marshals without troops who would not even know where to begin organizing a strike and who are all too common in the "communist left" scene, even among those bearing our very own Party name. We draw from this further confirmation that – regardless of the development and vicissitudes of existing or future organizations for immediate struggle – communists must not fail to encourage and help bring about a network of independent union struggle, striving to extend their influence within it and achieve leadership through their participation in it, without preemptively establishing this situation through statutory provisions.

cannot be conquered. It must prepare the class to follow, without hesitation, its own historical tendency in the revolutionary period: the tendency to provide political leadership from the standpoint of the program and the organization (the party). (…)".

Here, the issue is no longer one of denouncing the integrated unions and freeing the workers trapped within them in order to encourage and promote the formation of a network of union struggle (the class union) that is not integrated; rather, the theory holds that, during a revolutionary period, there should be no *"mass labor-union economic associationism"* between the Party and the working class, which the Characteristic theses consider indispensable.

The members of this councilist deviation evolved naturally and rapidly toward the mystical-idealist positions of *Invariance*.

The labor union "tesine" of 1972

Just one year after the Scandinavian sections left, the Direction of the party wrote the "tesine sindacali" of 1972 (published as *"il partito di fronte alla questione sindacale"* in "il programma comunista" No.3/1972) which are a compilation of spontaneous and anti-union positions.

In the "tesine sindacali" [8] it is stated, speaking of the intermediate organizations: *"these organizations may not be the labor unions. In the perspective of an abrupt change towards the revolutionary assault, they will not be the labor unions (…)"* [9].

This slides the theory that intermediate organizations with economic struggle content (of labor union type) may not be necessary, a theory linked to the prospect of an abrupt change that would magically transport us from the period of counterrevolutionary depression directly to the revolutionary assault. It is difficult not to see the continuity between this approach and that of the Scandinavian sections: a rejection of union-based intermediate organizations between the Party and the working class as a whole. The difference is that here the anti-union position does not explicitly advocate councilism, although the spontaneousist and anti-union positions are the same. It is, in fact, a restoration of Damenism, which was thrown out the door in 1951 and is now being brought back in through the window: *"I believe that the current corporatist union (whether fascist, social democratic, or communist, it makes no difference), by virtue of its role as an indispensable organ for sustaining the capitalist system, is destined to endure the economic, social, and political vicissitudes of moribund capitalism until the very end, and will only be broken along with the imperialist state by the onslaught of the revolutionary proletariat. In such a phase of advance or conquest of power, the regrouping of the forces of the proletariat will not wait for the traditional practice of the labor union to be repeated (…)."* (Letter of O. Damen, 1951).

Speaking of the groups of combative workers who organize themselves outside the integrated labor unionism to fight against the employers, this text states the following monstrosity: *"but recognizing the symptom of an instinctive proletarian reaction against the state of impotence to which the unions reduce their struggles and demands* [the Party] *must find in this a motive to instill in even a very small stratum of the exploited the consciousness that their efforts, however generous they may be, are doomed to remain sterile if the class does not find in itself the strength to carry out a total political overturn in order to move towards a direct and general assault on capitalist power"* [10].

That is, with regard to the combative workers' groups that are breaking free from the straitjacket of mainstream unionism, the Party's role would not be to rally these comrades and help weave a network of immediate struggle (union-based, even if that word is unpleasant to some…) but rather to convince them that their efforts are futile and to wait for the working class to *"find in itself"* (pure and simple spontaneism) the strength for a direct and general assault on capitalist power (this phase in which we were previously told that the intermediate organizations would not be of an economic or union nature). Thus, it is no longer stated that the French CGT or the Italian CGIL are class unions to be defended, yet the actual blockade against the creation of a non-integrated union network, the class union, remains in place.

These 1972 "tesine" represented a political compromise between the workerist spontaneism of southern France (which was effectively responsible for writing them) and the Italian and French centers that saw in them a clear path toward interclass activism in the search for these other non-union intermediate organizations: open interclassist organizations and united political fronts, which would be given free rein in the years that followed. As is also well known, the sections in southern France were later expelled in 1981 due to their subsequent resistance to the interclassist drift of the Italian and French directions, though this does not detract from the fact that they contributed to that drift through their confusing stance on union matters.

The result of this compromise was the anti-organizational expulsion the following year (1973) of the Tuscan sections. While we cannot say that these sections (the "Florentines") were on the correct line, given their particularly significant role in previous tactical errors (the "sindacato rosso" was published in Florence), it is indisputable that they were not expelled for this reason but because they maintained a considerable labor union presence and were an obstacle to the free development of the new movementist course, just as were the other Party sections with a strong working-class membership and considerable labor union activity in 1981 and 1982, in Italy and Spain.

It is no coincidence that the two political heirs to the degeneration of the *new course* – the current "il programma comunista" and "le prolétaire"/"il comunista" (formerly Combat) – which prevailed thereafter, vindicate these "tesine sindacali" which may well be considered their founding document.

The drowning in movementism

In *"The physiognomy of the degenerative process of the new course (1972-1982)"* (The Internationalist Proletarian No.14) and *"le Prolétaire/il Comunista: spearhead of revisionist degeneration of the new course"* (The Internationalist Proletarian No.13) we have published a more detailed analysis of the many ways in which the degenerate Direction of the *new course* had been dismantling the line of the historical Party, and we refer the reader to these articles for further details. In any

[8] *"Tesine", as this article was known within the Party, it means "small theses" in Italian.*

[9] *"Queste organizzazioni possono anche non essere i sindacati - e non lo saranno nella prospettiva di una brusca svolta nel senso dell'assalto rivoluzionario (…)"* ("il programma comunista" No.3/1972)

[10] *"(…) ma, riconoscendovi il sintomo di una istintiva reazione proletaria allo stato di impotenza al quale i sindacati riducono le sue lotte e rivendicazioni, deve trarne motivo per inculcare in uno strato sia pure esile di sfruttati la coscienza di come i loro sforzi, per quanto generosi, siano condannati a rimanere sterili se la classe non trova in sé la forza di provocare e compiere una inversione completa di rotta politica in direzione dell'attacco diretto e generale al potere capitalistico."* ("il programma comunista" No.3/1972)

case, we will reproduce here the most relevant section regarding the topic we are treating.

The effects and practical interpretation of the 1972 labor union "tesine" were felt almost immediately. In 1976, in the circular of March 26, the degenerate center theorized the intervention in interclass organizations to defend the *"common immediate interests"* (sic) of *"proletarians and non-proletarians"* (sic): ***"THE SECOND CASE (Interclassist base organizations) includes those non-proletarian base organizations*** *in which questions are debated or interests are defended to which the working class is not and cannot be indifferent: women's committees, soldiers' committees, tenants' committees, school committees, etc. With the reservations considered in the previous case, we can and should join them, either simply to expose our positions, even for a single day and before a single proletarian, or to carry out a more or less continuous action,* ***not putting as a precondition for our participation that the organization itself adopts class objectives to which in principle it is alien and refractory*** *(…)"* [11].

In 1979 we have the artificial creation of the "Comitato Nazionale contro i Licenziamenti" (CNCL) on the basis of ten (yes, 10) dismissed workers from FIAT ("il programma comunista", No.22/1979, p. 6), in an act of labor union activism which ends in a body in which there is no real workers' participation but only a parade of militants of different political organizations, serving in reality as a platform of political united front combined with an authentic and empty labor union activism.

We also have the creation of RIPRA (Comité Riposte à la Répression en Algérie) in 1981 and meetings such as the one held on 22-05-1982 with the aim of *"creating a unitary collective against repression in Algeria"* in which participated from the Committee for the Defense of Cultural Rights in Algeria and the Trade Union Association of Algerian Students in France to a number of other organizations described by El-Oumami itself[12] as petty bourgeois. Despite the unsuccessful nature of the meeting, El-Oumami proposes the *"minimum basis on which we can consider collaboration with other forces that have a program and ideology different from ours"* (El-Oumami, No. 26, p. 4)[13].

That is to say, while the communist militants who carried out labor union activity were told ad nauseam that they had to remain in the straitjacket of integrated labor unionism or consider their efforts sterile, the direction of the Party in Italy and France dedicated itself to artificially creating activist committees of political united front, such as the CNCL, the RIPRA and the Committee of Solidarity Lebanon-Palestine ("Le Prolétaire", No. 363 of 1982, p. 2). What is clear is what the *new course* wanted to exist and, on the other hand, what they did not want to see come into existence.

Continuing in 1981 an article is published on the "*Struggles in the university canteen in Florence*". Is it perhaps the struggle of the workers of that canteen? No! It is the struggle so that *"former students or 'not very studious' figures"* who *"are not in order with the exams*" continue to eat there at a reduced price ("il programma comunista", No. 12/1981, page 6).

In the same issue No. 12/1981, on the same page in a box there is the following: *"NOTICE: We inform the sympathizers and readers of the* ***Ivrea area not to use the address published until now as a point of contact with the party****. This address has been suppressed as a consequence of a* ***political disagreement that has developed within the positions defended in recent years by our biweekly, particularly in the field of immediate struggles****."*

What is not said is that the comrades of the Ivrea section had been anti-organically expelled. This page illustrates in a very expressive way **the essence of the *new course***. On the one hand, the Party militants whose factory group at Olivetti was respected among the workers and the most important in the Party, who defended the continuity of the communist program against the innovative activists of the *new course*, were expelled[14], labeling them as supposedly *"attendists"*[15]. On the other hand, the "struggle" of the hippie students for subsidized food was praised as the ultimate proletarian struggle.

The militants and sections in France and Italy who opposed this revision of the principles and tactics of the Party were labeled with the epithet *"attendista"*. In these sections which resisted the maneuverist and disciplinary pressure of the direction of the *new course*, the transmission of *"the flame along the historic 'thread of time'"* [16] had not been broken and the young militants learned from the old militants not only the ABC of Marxism, but a method and the sense of militancy, the old guard had transmitted *"an uncorrupted and powerful motto to a young guard"* [16].

The Spanish section was formed by workers who had emigrated to the factories in Germany and there they had met old Italian militants of the Party who had also emigrated either due to the persecution of the Stalinists or for economic reasons. There they met, worked and militated together with an old guard from whom they were able to learn an uncorrupted motto that from that moment on they defended tooth and nail against any deviation, renovation or updating of the line of Marxism and the *Sinistra*. As in the sections that were opposing the *new course* these comrades learned a method and the sense of militancy, at a time when the *new course* was beginning to manifest itself in the direction of the formal organization.

These comrades returned to the Spanish state to develop a Party action that went from the publication of the review "El Comunista" (since 1974), the translation of the texts of the Party, the study and formation of sympathizers and militants, the monitoring of the bourgeois press and the development of the capitalist economy, at the heat of the intervention in the struggles of the working class, of the employed and unemployed. In the case of the Spanish section, given the impossibility of dispatching the issue with the qualification of *"attendista*" (falsely applied to others) given the obvious intensity of our activity at the labor union level, the bicephalous center (Paris-Milan) coined the qualification of *"syndicalists and generically theoreticians*".

This was the *new course*'s way of saying that **we did not renounce to the study of the fundamental texts** and to

[11] Circular of the direction, March 26, 1976, republished and vindicated by "il Comunista" in issue 34-35.

[12] Organ of the Algerian section, epicenter of the nationalist degeneration of the formal organization.

[13] *"base minimale que nous pourrons envisager de travailler en commun avec d'autres forces qui ont un programme et une idéologie différente des nôtres"*

[14] Expelled with the excuse of "factionalism" for having held a meeting with comrades from the South of France in the face of the serious drift of the Party.

[15] From "attesa" or "attendere", which means "to wait" in Italian.

[16] Considerations on the organic activity of the party when the general situation is historically unfavorable, 1965.

the fact that these were **the basis for the formation of sympathizers and militants** as well **as the exclusive guide of all our action**, at the same time that **we developed our activity within the working class** (that all the members of the section were part of, most of whom had known the Party in contact with Italian comrades in emigration, in the factories of Germany[17]), **instead of in the interclassist organisms or in the committees of political united front** where the *new course* wanted it to be carried out[18].

It must have been hard for the emissaries of the different currents of the degenerated center, **in our section and in others that opposed the *new course***, to see worker comrades carrying forward not the innovative tactics of the *new course* but the tactics of the historic Party, of the line of the Communist Left, and not being able to trick them with methods of cheap intellectualism because these workers maintained the habit of individual and collective study and knew the fundamental texts of the Party better than the envoys of the center. Hence, the coining of the double label of "*syndicalists and generically theoreticians*" that some[19] continue to ruminate as an "explanation" for internal and external consumption about our existence.

[17] See in "The Internationalist Proletarian" No. 6, "*An uncorrupted motto that transcends generations 'of the dead, the living and the yet to be born*".

[18] Entering 1982, the *new course* publishes in the press organs of the organization: *"The tyranny of space has prevented us from offering an* ***image of the movement of occupation of the houses of Berlin at the moment when, during the spring, it reached the apogee of its vigor, intertwining with movements such as those of struggle against repression, in defense of political prisoners, against the preparations for war****, etc., and thus allowing the comrades to intervene in a terrain less and less spurious from the class point of view. (...)*

It is here that a ***fertile ground of agitation opens up for the party, to which objectively favorable conditions are also offered for its development by those 'free spaces'*** *of collective life, of exchange of experiences of struggle and of discussion of social and political problems broader than those strictly linked to contingency, which in Berlin have become* ***the 'squats'.*** *"* ("il programma comunista", No. 3/1982, p. 6).

During 1982, the degenerate direction of the *new course* discovers also a *"youth question"* ("il programma comunista", No. 9/1982), *"the ability to question oneself on the path travelled"* (il programma comunista, No. 10/1982) and that *"The communists for this reason must try to lead themselves the national claim of the Palestinian proletarians"* ("il programma comunista", No. 19/1982).

In "Le Prolétaire", No. 362 of June 1982, *"a possibility of linking the anti-nuclear struggle with the workers' struggle"* is affirmed and on the plane of "anti-militarism" it gives as an example that *"militants of various organizations participated in the organization of this initiative"* organized by the *new course*. In "Le Prolétaire", No. 363 of 1982, p. 2, the *new course* declared *"it is essential not to start from the criticism of the PLO".* The September 27, 1982 issue of El-Oumami carried on its cover the slogan *"Palestine Vaincra!".*

[19] Like the epigone of "le Proletáire/il Comunista" in Spanish (No.23 of July 2021) which, besides claiming the formation of the PSOE as "*a milestone of Marxism in Spain*" (sic), vindicated this artificed characterization made by the Parisian center, made only ten (10) months before this Parisian center abandoned the organization pretending furthermore its international dissolution.

HISTORICAL LINE OF THE DEGENERATION OF THE III INTERNATIONAL

In this timeline, a series of **synthetic facts** and **fundamental texts** are collected, which constitute the **framework for the study** of the **struggle of the Communist Left against the degeneration of the Communist International**, as well as the causes and external manifestations of this degeneration.

In the course of only seven years after its birth in 1919, what should have been the world organization of the revolutionary proletariat and for a moment was so, completed the full parabola from an initial tactical error to a true **tactical deviation** ("political united front", 1921), **tactical-programmatic deviation** ("workers' government", "workers' and peasants' government", 1922), **organizational deviation** ("bolshevization", 1924) to end in a complete betrayal of communist principles with the **programmatic deviation** of "socialism in one country" in 1926, which culminated the process of **degeneration** of the International and the **abandonment of the world revolution**.

The lessons of the struggle of the Italian Communist Left against this degeneration are **indispensable material for the resumption of the communist revolutionary movement** for the overthrow of the bourgeois regime.

The material presented here is **deliberately schematic** for several reasons.

Finally, the detailed study of the schematically presented facts, together with the explanations provided and – most importantly – **the study of the fundamental texts linked, is a task to which communist militants must devote the utmost attention**. The programmatic and tactical political content of the fundamental texts presented throughout the timeline is not easy to absorb in the current hostile environment devoid of immediate revolutionary prospects. These texts must be **the subject of permanent study at the individual and collective level**, not for historiographical erudition but **to correctly apprehend and apply the profound lessons they contain to the militant activity of the Party**.

The **complete timeline**, with the explanation of each event, can be consulted interactively on the **installable web site** by accessing through the QR or the link.

https://siguiendo-el-hilo-del-tiempo.web.app/?line=ic&lang=en