

the Communist Party

WHAT DISTINGUISHES OUR PARTY – The line running from Marx to Lenin to the foundation of the Third International and the birth of the Communist Party of Italy in Leghorn (Livorno) 1921, and from there to the struggle of the Italian Communist Left against the degeneration in Moscow and to the rejection of popular fronts and coalition of resistance groups – The tough work of restoring the revolutionary doctrine and the party organ, in contact with the working class, outside the realm of personal politics and electoralist manoeuvres

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The Rearmament of Imperialism

The statistical series of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, updated from year to year, reports on the military spending of over 100 states in the world since 1988. Military spending is calculated in three ways: in the current currency of each state, in dollars and finally as a percentage of the gross domestic product. The analysis of the evolution of military spending in the long run, the comparison of the expenditure of individual countries among themselves and with regard to GDP, allows us to draw a fairly realistic picture of the evolution of the balance of power in the world among the various imperialist groups.

Another series refers to the values of the sales and purchases of weapons systems by the various countries, expressed in constant 2016 US dollars, and it is also possible to trace a generic type of arms exchanged (airplanes, ships, armored vehicles), missiles, etc.).

Military spending from 1988 to 2017 showed a small dip in 2013 followed by constant increases, despite the economic crisis having generally reduced financial expenditures by countries.

The prolongation of the crisis in fact leads to an increase in conflict between the major imperialist states whose relations tend to become more and more tense, upsetting the balances established at the end of the Second World War and then painfully re-established after the fall of the USSR/Russian Empire.

The United States is the militarily the strongest imperialist state, the real police force of the world, but its economic power shows signs of slowing down in the face of competitors like China and Germany. The difficulties of the US economy became evident when the new administration started a trade war by introducing tariffs on many products considered strategic for that country. But the fact that the United States produces at higher prices than its competitors, imports more than it exports, and lives above its means by increasing its external debt, demonstrates its economic and financial weaknesses. At the same time, the fact is that only through the US' military and diplomatic power can it still impose the dollar as a world currency. The tariff war is only beginning but has already caused strong concerns in Europe and China.

The Chinese government has undertaken a decisive policy of rearmament with the aim of enabling the armed forces of that state to counteract the excessive power of the United States and its allies in the Pacific. Beijing's efforts are attested not only by a growing military spending that has gone from \$108 billion in 2008 to \$228b in 2017 (an expenditure which is 13.4% of total world spending) but also by great technological advances, especially in regards to aviation and the navy. The new Chinese policy aimed at extending control over the South China Sea and protecting its trade routes that connect the country to the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean obviously is troubling to other regional economies such as Japan, South Korea and even India.

The eastern border of Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea to Russia, the endless war in the Middle East with its extension to Yemen, the clash in the South China Sea for the control of a series of strategic islets and related sea areas, growing contrasts in various parts of Africa for access to areas of production of strategic raw materials, are only the greatest conflicts. Among the smaller states tensions are also rising, for example, between the Baltic States and Russia and between Turkey and Greece for control of the Aegean Sea and its oil resources.

To dominate the framework of arms expenditure are a "handful of countries", as Lenin wrote. In fact, the fifteen states that spend the most, account for to 80% of the total world spending and the first two of these, the United States and China, alone make up 48.6%! It is this small group of states that therefore holds the military force sufficient not only to defend their economic, political and diplomatic interests, but to also impose them on the militarily and economically weaker states.

But it is also these states, with some exceptions, that produce the major

weapon systems for their own armies and also for others. This is a world trade sector that has been growing strongly since 2002 and has not suffered the repercussions of the economic crisis.

Below is a brief account of the military spending of the top ten states in the world that are the most heavily armed. The United States remains the biggest imperialist power in the world, but to maintain its military apparatus, with dozens of bases scattered around the world and 7 naval fleets in action, has a huge cost. In 2010 that cost increased by 4.7%, one of the largest increases in the world. But those spending increases declined to only 3.1% in 2017. At its greatest, in 2010, the US spending was \$768 billion, or 45.6% of world's spending. In 2017 it fell to \$597 billion or 35.2%. According to Sipri, however, "US military spending is expected to increase significantly in 2018 to support the increase in military personnel and the modernization of classic and nuclear weapons".

In the United States, armament production is still a big economic affair since 34% of world exports are purchased. They have increased by 25% between the five years 2008-2012 and 2013-2017. In 2017 arms sales were \$12.4 billion, with sales directed towards dozens of countries. Among the largest, two of the "hottest" regions of the globe: the Middle East; Saudi Arabia (\$3,425 million), Iraq (\$506), Israel (\$515), the UAE (\$499), Qatar (\$496); and East Asia, Australia (\$1,172), Japan (\$479), South Korea (\$456), Taiwan (\$493).

China is seen by the United States as one of the "revisionist" powers and is seen, together with Russia, as its main global opponent in the medium to long term. China continues a policy of strengthening and modernizing its armed forces, especially the air force and navy. The policy is needed in order to break China's encirclement by the United States and its allies in the Pacific Ocean. In 2008 China's military spending accounted for 7% of world spending; last year it grew to 13.4%. Its military spending, which went from 108 billion to 228 billion dollars during the same period, represents only 1.9% of its GDP. On the other hand, the draft budget for Beijing for 2018 still provides an increase in military spending of 8.1% compared to 2017.

Beijing is trying to become increasingly autonomous in its weapons systems. Its expenditures show a steady decline in imports, which fell by 19% between the five years 2008-12 and 2013-17. However, it remains in fifth place among importers of armaments while it also is also increasing its share of exports, especially to Pakistan (\$514 million), Bangladesh (\$204), Thailand (\$129) and Myanmar (\$70) as well as to many African countries.

Saudi Arabia has the third largest military budget in the world and is the second largest importer of weapons, immediately behind India. Its military spending suffered a sharp reduction in 2016, falling from \$90 to \$64 billion. But in 2017 it has risen to about \$70B. Riyadh allocates about 10% of GDP to its military budget. It has been openly involved, for years now, in the war in Yemen and indirectly in the war in Syria by supplying weapons and equipment to various Islamist groups. It is currently in a joint de-facto anti-Iranian alliance with Israel and the United States.

India also participates actively in the race for rearmament. It has the fourth largest military budget in the world, going from \$41 billion in expenditures in 2008 to \$60B in 2017 which amounts from 2.6% to 3.5% of world spending. 2.5% of its GDP is allocated to the military budget. India is the largest importer of weapons systems in the world, spending 12% of global arms expenditure.

In the five year period 2013-17, the greatest arms supplier to India, with 62% of the total, was Russia. The United States has increased its exports to the country more than five times in the last few years. India's accession to the anti-Chinese QUAD Pact, together with the United States, Japan and Australia, is likely to continue to shift the balance to the United States, which has simultaneously reduced its arms exports

to Pakistan by 76% between the five-year period 2008-12 and that of 2013-17.

France is one of the largest military spenders, surpassing even Russia in the decade 2008-17, with \$56 billion spent in 2017. Its share of world spending decreased from 3.5 in 2008 to 3.3 in 2017. As an exporter, France occupies the third place, immediately after USA and Russia, with 7% in 2017 of the world total. There is considerable French interventionism in international crises. Like the US, France exports a little all over the world, but among its best customers are Egypt, where it has exported \$1.676 billion in the last two years, India (\$446m), China (\$255m), Singapore (\$213m) and Indonesia (\$160m).

Russia is seen as the main enemy of the USA, at least in the short term. While it can pose an immediate danger with its policy towards Ukraine, Georgia and other former parts of the Russian empire, it does not have the economic structure to rise to the rank of global power. This despite its territorial extension and the recent restructuring and modernization of the military apparatus. Russia's military spending in the last ten years is sixth largest. In 2016, Russia's military spending reached its greatest amount, \$69 billion, but last year it fell by about 20% compared to the previous year, falling from a good 5.5% of GDP to 4.3%. Its exports are directed only to some countries traditionally linked to the former Soviet Union: in the last two years it has exported to India (\$4.075b), Algeria (\$2.348b), China (\$1.499b), Egypt (\$1.288b), Viet Nam (\$1.167b).

Britain's military spending is closely behind that of France and Russia. After reaching a maximum of €58 billion in 2009, it has continued to decline, reaching around \$48 billion in the last few years. In the decade 2008-17 it amounts to 522 billion. Expenditure relative to GDP fell from 2.4% in 2009 to 1.8% in 2017. Its percentage of global spending also decreased from 3.7% in 2008 to 2.7% in 2017.

Great Britain also exports mainly to the states where it has a traditional influence: Saudi Arabia, (\$1.279 billion in the last two years), Oman (\$540m), India (\$143m).

Japan, which is threatened by China's new "revisionist" military strategy, has a policy of rearmament. Although it does not officially have an army but only a "Self-Defense Force", it has the most powerful fleet in the Pacific, second only to that of the United States. Japan is in fact the eighth power in the world for military spending in the decade 2008-17. For years it has been around \$46 billion a year, about 1% of GNP, and in 2017 it constituted 2.7% of world military spending. Recently, the Japanese government has removed the legislative impediments for arms exports abroad and it is expected that Japan will soon be able to also take a leading role as an exporter of weapons systems, given the high technological level of the weapons it produces.

Germany has always kept military spending relatively low at 1.3% of GDP. In 1992 it was \$54 billion, second only to the USA and France. In 2013 it fell to \$39 billion and then increased to \$43, but still remains 1.2% of GDP. In the last two years it has mainly exported to South Korea (\$777 million), Algeria (\$613m), Italy (\$560m), Qatar (\$371m), Egypt (\$340m), Greece (\$275m), Indonesia (\$168m), USA (\$150m) and Saudi Arabia (\$118m). Between 2010 and 2017 it equaled France with 5.8% of world exports, but in the last year, while France has grown to 7% Germany has fallen to 5.3%.

South Korea is certainly a country in the eye of a storm right now. Since the end of the Korean War the country has been "protected" by a strong contingent of US troops, about 35,000 men. Recently, a state-of-the-art anti-missile system, supplied by the US, the THAAD, was installed, with the motivation to protect the country from a missile attack by North Korea. But in fact, the THAAD system allows you to control the skies all the way to southern China. Beijing has repeatedly made its opposition know to THAAD's deployment by openly threatening retaliation.

South Korea, which spent \$17

billion in armaments in 1992, reached a total of \$29b in 2008, or 1.9% of the world total, reaching tenth place. Its spending then grew steadily to reach \$38 billion in 2017, accounting for 2.6% of national GDP and 2.2% of world spending.

In addition to all this, many European states are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and have agreed to increase their military spending, arguing that Russia poses a growing threat. The total military expenditure of the 29 NATO members is \$900 billion in 2017, or 52% of global spending.

Since the mid-eighties, the different states of Western Europe have steadily reduced their military effort halving their military expenditure as a proportion of GDP. For example, France dropped from 3.7% to 2.3%, Germany from 3.2% to 1.2%, Britain from 4.9% to 1.8%, to name just a few. But this is true for all countries in Western Europe. However, there is no doubt that the increase in geopolitical tensions and recent major maneuvers undertaken by Russia can only revive the arms race in Europe. Russian imperialism, which is in a weak position on the economic terrain, is accustomed to using military intimidation as a diplomatic means. In 2017, Russia made a real provocation by carrying out military maneuvers at the very frontiers of the Baltic States and Poland. In September of 2018 Russia organized maneuvers on a scale not seen since the cold war. Chinese troops participated in these military maneuvers. China wants to create a new silk road in order to flood Europe with its goods and later capital. Its participation in the Russian maneuvers shows that it could participate in a military invasion of Europe by land. For the moment it is only a question of pressure from Russia, which has taken the precaution of carrying out these maneuvers on the other side of the Urals and in the eastern part of Siberia. Russia also invited NATO representatives as observers. Nevertheless, these maneuvers are unprecedented in their scale - 300,000 soldiers, 36,000 military vehicles, 1,000 planes and 80 ships, etc. - they exceed the largest of USSR's maneuvers held in 1981.

Construction Workers in Turkey face Bourgeois Tyranny

In Turkey, the consequences of the economic crisis are being felt by the working class and the poorest sections of the population, a crisis aggravated by the costs of the war in Syria.

It is not easy to react.

However, the workers' struggle continues. In the second ten days of September, a resounding workers' revolt exploded: the strike of the workers involved in the construction of the third airport in Istanbul, which is scheduled to open on 29 October. The strike was called by grassroots trade unions and had a strong participation.

The construction of what will be one of the largest airports in the world involves about 35,000 workers, of which at least 20,000 come from the villages of deep Anatolia, who are sleeping in the construction site in crumbling barracks infested with insects. The devaluation of the Turkish lira has emptied the state coffers, contractors are not receiving payments and a large part of the workers have been left without wages.

But Prime Minister Erdoğan and the bourgeoisie cannot afford delays in the inauguration of this great work for which they are willing to commit any crime. In the construction site, which has been open for 5 years, 400 workers have already died in accidents.

The police responded first with charges and hydrants to the strike and the marches following the umpteenth accident, in which two workers died. Then, noting that the workers had no intention of giving up, they woke up the workers in the dormitories in the middle of the night and arrested 600 people. The contractors, who provide the workers with very bad transport services, immediately found dozens of buses for the police force to take the workers to their detention centres. In the following days only some of them were released and many remain in prison with heavy charges.

After further clashes at the construction site, the workers' revolt seems to have been suppressed and the construction site now looks like a large lager.

But bourgeois repression will not be enough to stop the workers' revolt forever.

Another Proletarian Uprising in Basra

A new explosion of proletarian discontent in the first ten days of September raised the already high social temperature in southern Iraq. The violent mass demonstrations that took place in the important city of Basra assumed a clearly economic character from the start, escaping the control of the political and religious apparatus.

With local unemployment exceeding 25% (compared with 20% nationally), the last straw was the salty, foul water in the water mains, which has caused the hospitalization of about 30,000 inhabitants. Proletarians rose in revolt. Overwhelmingly young Iraqis poured into Basra's streets and squares in the first days of September. Then on September 6 and 7 the clashes became even bloodier: the demonstrators attacked and set on fire the seats of government parties, militias allied with Iran and their television stations, while the police fired on unarmed protesters causing numerous deaths: at least 15 and dozens injured.

As various observers have explained, apart from the extreme poverty of most of the population, the causes of social instability and of this wave of protests (which are the natural continuation of protests that took place last July) include the demobilization of young service-people who now find themselves without sustenance.

But there is a factor that seems to give the protest a character that is unprecedented in the Middle Eastern over the past two decades: the demonstrators have not channeled their discontent into religious obscurantism, which has played such an important role in the political life of the country. This situation has been confirmed by many parties, including the Washington Post. "In this context, it makes little sense to understand Basra's protests through the sectarian lens popular with external observers [...]" "Popular sectarian allegiances are receding in Iraq."

The message delivered by the protesters against the Shiite leadership linked to Iran has also taken on "troubling" and "unacceptable" forms for the component led by Moqtada al-Sadr, which wants to free Iraq from the hegemony of its powerful neighbor. To mock the pro-Iranian militias, protesters even carried photos of Mia Khalifa, a Lebanese porn star of Catholic background and now a naturalized American. She has been used by Hezbollah as a symbol of eternal damnation. Slogans written on the placards stated that she deserved more respect than local politicians.

No cleric, of any faith, will stop the resurgence of the class struggle, which is driven by the unbearable living conditions to which workers of all countries are condemned by the bourgeoisie.

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For The Class Union

programmatically approaches and struggles from the International Communist Party

For the rebirth of the class union against regime unionism. We seek to unify working class demands and struggles. We are against any submission to the national interest. For the affirmation of the International Communist Party's direction of the proletariat's economic defense organizations for the purpose of the revolutionary emancipation of workers from capitalism.

Aluminium Strike in Western Australia

1400 Alcoa workers at two bauxite mines and three refineries in WA have vowed to continue an indefinite strike against the corporation. Workers from the Kwinana, Pinjarra and Wagerup refineries, the Huntley and Willowdale bauxite mines, and the Bunbury port went on strike early August after 20 months of painful negotiations over an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, with the corporation failing to budge.

Alcoa is an American corporation that has bauxite mines and aluminium refining facilities in Australia. Just three of these refineries produce 8.8 million tons of aluminium a year. They definitely have a large stake in the game. Alcoa claims to act with integrity, operate with excellence, and care for the people, stating that "We treat all people with dignity and provide a diverse, inclusive work culture. We work safely, promote wellness, and protect the environment.

The workers maintain that the strike is not over salary but job security and the casualisation of work. The workers are scared that they will be replaced by cheap casual labourers or will be forced into redundancy. Even the permanent workers who have been there a long time feel that they are not secure.

Alcoa has responded by refusing to negotiate with them over job security, instead offering the workers what they call a "generous EBA" which offers a 14% superannuation contribution, an extended sick leave program with two years' income support, a 36 hour work week, and an opportunity to earn extra income through supplementary shifts.

But the workers are not being fooled into stopping the strike or backing down and are maintaining solidarity with each other. Lots of these workers will be losing \$4000 to \$6000 in wages by keeping this strike going. Their militancy should be applauded.

Letter from the US A Report from the 'Rank-and-File: Organizing the Service Industry'

On July 30, 2018 an ICP member attended a panel discussion in New York City. The discussion was titled 'A Report from the Rank-and-File: Organizing the Service Industry'. The event consisted of a panel of worker organizers from five different labor organizations and focused on discussing organizing in the low-wage service sector. We feel these five campaigns demonstrate the variety of rank and file unionism occurring in the US.

Organizers on the panel are employed in the food service portion of the low-wage service economy, and those on the panel included: a member of the IWW's Burgerville Workers Union in Portland, OR; two workers who recently formed a union affiliated with SEIU/Workers United, at the Gimme! Coffee shops in Ithaca, NY; a member of the "United Kava Workers Local 138" a single shop union at the House of Kava in Brooklyn, NY, who have now formed their own worker cooperative; a worker organizer from IWW's "Stardust Family United" union in Manhattan, NY; and an organizer from the Laundry Workers Center who was involved in the Hot & Crusty Campaign also in New York City.

The service sector is no small part of the American economy, currently representing nearly 80% of both private sector GDP and employment. Though this figure could incorporate industries such as logistics and transportation, due to an ambiguity in the way that the American state considers these industries, the low-wage service sector is without a doubt a quickly-growing portion of the United States' economy. In terms of union density, the low-wage food service sector is a mere 1.8% unionized, less than the lowly total United States private sector density at 6.5%. On the other hand, however, in 2017, there has been notable growth in unionized workers among the age demographic of 35 and younger, a demographic most likely to enter into the service sector. In 2017 alone, more than a quarter of all the 860,000 hired workers in

this age group were being hired into unionized jobs.

The panel members were asked questions and each representative from the five organizations responded. Questions focused on organizing strategies, how to build community support for low-wage service work campaigns, what role one's fears and hopes play in the process of organizing low-wage workers, and questions as to how each of the campaigns progressed to their present state. Each of the five campaigns represented on the panel emerged out of the contradictions of the low-wage service economy in the United States. Stressful, high intensity work with little compensation, combined with high levels of insecurity drove these workers to band together to fight the boss on the shop floor, and eventually seek union representation. All of the campaigns represented on the panel prioritized shop-floor struggle and committee building, choosing first to use the tactics of direct action to make small gains, prior to "going public" with their union.

Nevertheless, not all the campaigns present on the panel followed similar paths to arrive where they are today. Both IWW campaigns, Stardust Family United and the Burgerville Workers Union, chose to eschew seeking a contract with their employer (the golden seal of legitimacy among bureaucratized labor unions in the United States). Instead, they maintain their union structures through continued committee-building and direct action tactics, winning workplace demands through acts of strength and solidarity on the shopfloor.

1. The IWW union at the Stardust Restaurant in Manhattan's Times Square has received a great deal of attention for their tactics. They have blockaded the restaurant to prevent deliveries being made, walked out on shift and conducted actions which involved the patrons of the restaurant. We understand that in most countries, this is not anything unusual, but in the US, these actions are increasingly rare, especially in the service industry. Their union and its tactics have been spreading to other restaurants in NYC.

2. The Burgerville Workers Union did hold a National Labor Relations Board-sanctioned vote at a location in April 2018, making the union the first fast-food union in United States history to win recognition; however they profess that the negotiation of a contract is not the primary goal of their organizing. Initially, the Union focused on pushing Burgerville to give its workers wage increases, paid sick leave, and to stop using E-Verify, a form of worker monitoring software employed by the state to check immigration status of employees, all through a combination of shop-floor direct action tactics, "quickie" walk-outs and robust community organizing, drawing support from other Portland union locals.

3. The other campaigns represented on the panel have sought from the beginning of their organizing to sign union contracts with their employer, not least among them the Gimme! Coffee workers, whose union organizing is supported by the SEIU-affiliated Workers United. Gimme! Workers Local 2833 was first organized and supported through an upstate New York workers center, who put them in touch with Workers United. The campaign's work builds upon past IWW campaigns at Starbucks stores across the US, and presents itself with language that calls into question campaigns to enact wage legislation (like the Fight for \$15) to improve the circumstances of workers.

4. United Kava Workers and their coop. The House of Kava workers began their struggle with a strike against poor work conditions, eventually calling a boycott after their employer fired an organizer. The workers eventually decided to form a cooperative to compete with their former employer, serving kava drinks at a local supporter business called Caffeine Underground. This campaign is sponsored by the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and represents a new contingent within that organization focused on organizing in precarious industries. This has been a tactic in certain localities in the IWW, which gravitate to self-management ideology. Such tactics turn workers into small business people, suck money out of the labor movement, separate militants from other workers, encourage an ideology of a nice capitalism. All common confusions in the

anarchist/punk subculture.

5. Hot and Crusty Workers Association was the fifth and final union represented on the panel. Established in 2012, the Bakery's union was composed primarily of immigrant workers from Latin America. After the union went public, it saw retaliation by Hot and Crusty Bakery owners culminating in a closure of their shop on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. After a long campaign of picketing other Hot and Crusty bakeries, a new investor purchased the store, rehired the workers and recognized their union. This campaign received support both from Occupy Wall Street participants and members of the League of the Fourth International (Internationalist Group). Now formally out of work, numerous Hot and Crusty Workers organizers are affiliated with the Laundry Workers Center, a member of whom sat on this panel.

A common theme of the panel is the neglect of the low-wage service sector by the major bureaucratized service unions - what the ICP calls "regime unions". Each of the unions present on the panel were not the product of targeted union campaigns but instead they were so-called 'hot shops' of workers fed-up with grueling conditions with little compensation and high levels of insecurity. The Gimme! Coffee workers are an exception here, organized by Workers United, an SEIU affiliate focused on organizing low-wage workers in the garment and retail sectors. Nevertheless, workers sought out union representation and called upon Workers United for support, who then subsequently advised that Gimme! Coffee workers seek a contract.

Taken together, we might conclude that although the service work is a largely un-unionized yet growing portion of the American economy, and that this sector is traditionally ignored by highly bureaucratized service unions, fertile ground for class struggle unionism exists here. The militant struggles of the IWW campaigns featured on the 'Report Back' panel, as one example, point to a potential future of non-contract focused direct action campaigns in these precarious industries.

Two Major Strikes in the UK

"It used to be that if a place treated you like crap, you'd just go somewhere else. It's got to the point where there's nowhere else to go. We've reached a tipping point. We're on minimum wage, on zero-hours. There's no such thing as overtime anymore, and now they're starting to mess with our tips. There's only so much more we can take."

With these words a young English worker describes his and many other's condition on the eve of an important and unprecedented direct action in the catering sector. On October 6, fast food workers belonging to McDonald's, TGI Fridays and Wetherspoons set up a joint strike to conclude, or give a new start we might say, to the particular struggles of which we saw several episodes happening in the last year. The cases of sexual harassment at McDonald's or the disputes over tips at TGI Fridays had only been the sparks on which the unavoidable need to end miserable wages and zero-hours contracts, as well as the disparity in remuneration that affects people under 25 had blown. And from isolated and scattered initiatives, the understanding that a coordinated action was necessary to give a greater impulse to the struggle had been gaining ground, mostly young people with no family support and no prospect of professional advancement, crushed by a labour market in a continuous downward trend, these workers have formed or joined grassroots trade unions impenetrable to bureaucrats and collaborative strategies of all kinds, that are mostly run by the workers themselves to meet their immediate interests, incompatible with those of their bosses. And where the consciousness that their situation will be difficult to improve if the existing production relations remain as such begins to spread.

The strike was mainly promoted by the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU), but GMB Union and the larger Unite the Union also back it up and push their members into action. Obviously, however, the anger was not limited to members of these unions. And so, when the strike action had already been defined, gig economy workers from the food delivery industry decided decisively to participate in the walk out. They were united by a very similar living condition, with very low wages and unguaranteed work hours, and also saw in the unity of the workers the only possibility of salvation. It must be said that this segment of workers lives in a condition at the limit of sustainability, since they are denied even the most basic rights. Although in most cases these are

actual full-time jobs as well as the only source of income, these riders are told that they should see themselves as "entrepreneurs", who work when and how they want, who are real arbiters of their own destiny. The reality is that they have no choice but to suffer a wild exploitation with the incessant uncertainty of not being able to keep up with rent and bills. Working without holiday pay, sick pay and incentives in the event of adverse weather conditions.

As many as 9 cities in the United Kingdom have seen the joint mobilization of UberEats and Deliveroo drivers, with a very participated event in the city center of Cardiff. These workers are almost entirely organised by two other major grassroots trade unions, IWGB and IWW in a single network, the Couriers Network. It certainly seems rather premature at this stage to talk about the establishment of a single trade union front, but it is surprising how quickly and easily these unions can reach full agreement on unity of action, so as to inflict as much damage as possible on the opponent by means of the strike. In a very precarious sector where it has always been difficult to organize the workforce due to its fragmentation, as many as 5 unions have managed to combine their efforts in a relatively short time.

But this was not the only episode of bold struggle that crossed the United Kingdom in recent months. Much attention deserves the genuine organizational experience of London cleaning workers at the hands of the United Voices of the World trade union. Nearly all immigrant proletarians, these workers toil at the city's most renowned public offices only to make the misery of the national minimum wage, set at £7.83 per hour. This, if perhaps it will be enough to guarantee a wretched life outside London, in the financial capital is equivalent to being able to pay for rent and little more. As a matter of fact, the minimum wage for living in London, called the "London living wage", is indicated at £10.20 per hour and highlights the significant difference in the cost of living between the capital and the rest of the country.

With 100% of votes in favor, the cleaners at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Kensington and Chelsea Council (RBKC) decided to be on strike for three days from 6 to 8 August. The main demands were to raise wages to £10.20 per hour for all, plus an end to unequal treatment and rights between internal workers and outsourced ones. The action seemed very energetic and loud right from the start: in addition to the pickets, the cleaners entered both buildings, interrupting the regular business operations. An initial acceptance of dialogue expressed by a spokesman for the RBKC was followed by the reversal of the press office, which finally expressed the refusal to listen to the workers' requests. But the fuse had already been lit.

Workers from other buildings in the city, including London's luxury private hospitals joined the UVW en masse and immediately organised a vote to decide whether or not to strike. Upon news of possible strike actions, the company that employs these workers offered them a pay rise from £7.83 to £9.18, which is a 17% increase. A move that could have made the conflict fall back. But that did not have the desired effect as the workers went ahead their own way and with another total consensus decided to continue to strike until all their demands are met. A few days after the news breaks: the management of the Kensington Council recognizes an increase in salary to £10.20 per hour starting from December 2018 and going retroactively from October 2018. In addition, their precarious contract will be reviewed and the possibility of early termination by the contractor eliminated.

Even before this victory and in the following days, other segments of the workforce employed by the Ministry of Justice also joined the UVW. Security guards and receptionists, both with lower pay than the London Living Wage, decided to fight alongside the cleaners and continue with new strikes in the coming months. The battle will also continue at the private hospitals. It is worth saying that the greatest result of the fight is the improvement of the organization and its extension.

On the Facebook page of the UVW union there are three publications concerning the strike of October 6 in the fast food industry. And the message is clear: "Your struggle is our struggle and we need maximum unity and solidarity to grow in strength." At the same time, the country's largest reformist party, the Labour Party, sends its own Members of Parliament to the pickets, declaring its support to the strikes and its intention to legislate for an increase in the minimum wage to £10. We have no doubt that this is yet another deception, in a narrative that would be very similar to the Italian one where reformism initially embraces

working class' radical demands for the purpose of winning the elections, then ends up only adopting workfare measures that are perfectly functional to the perpetration of exploitation. At this moment the Labour Party and the regime unions show a false support but they always remain the representation of the pacifying force of the movement. They are waiting for the first opportunity to harness it and force it to the path of collaboration and sacrifice, always with a view to the national interest, which is claimed, in bad faith, common to both exploiters and exploited. The English working class therefore has a task: not to listen to those who want to feed them with crumbs and continue on their valiant path of struggle

Report on Striking Marriott Workers Across the US

Marriott International is the largest hotel company in the world, with locations spread across the globe, and with many hotel chains -- Sheraton, Ritz-Carlton, Gaylord, and Renaissance to name a few famous examples -- under its ownership. In 2017, the business magazine Fortune gave Marriott the 35th place in its list of the "Top 100 Companies to Work For," saying, "Employees feel that at Marriott, we are family". But this was never the case, and Marriott workers revealed that when they had a "falling-out with their family"- roughly 8,000 Marriott workers in several cities across the US went out on strike near the beginning of October.

The strike has been led by the Unite Here union. In Marriott, the union represents 20,000 workers, and 250,000 workers in other industries. The union wrote that Marriott's profits, since the 2008 recession, have gone up nearly 280%, while Marriott workers' wages have only gone up 7% in those same years and working hours have been reduced. The strike efforts are concentrated in those Marriott hotels where wages lag especially behind. Although the demands vary from one city to the other, the common demands are: job security against automation, increased wages, and better working conditions. But primarily, the workers and the union are raising the slogan "One Job Should Be Enough" not having to work two or three full-time jobs like many do to survive.

The strikes began in Boston at the beginning of October with 1,500 workers walking out without notice. A few days later, 4,000 workers in San Francisco joined the strike. A Unite Here spokeswoman said, "We see ourselves at Unite Here as helping to restore the strike to the labor movement." This is terrible news for the bourgeoisie that wants to always punch the proletariat in the gut and not hear the slightest complaint from them. And so, Marriott responded that they "are disappointed that Unite Here has chosen to resort to a strike." Marriott would much rather have their workers roll over instead -- the last thing being united action! The method of strikes, while previously on the decline, has now become more common in the US proletariat's economic struggles, following the heroic example of the national teachers' strikes that began earlier this year and is still going on in some districts. Across the country, workers are realizing their common struggle and the valuable lessons to be learned from their comrades-in-arms.

While some striking workers have managed to negotiate with their landlords to pardon rent payments, as the strikes continued into their fourth week, this solidarity can only be temporary and conditional. Besides aids from family members and donations, workers are collaborating to provide for another. Union treasurer Carlos Aramayo told Bostonomix, "I know there's been a lot of informal banding together of folks who are on the picket lines. People know each other because they work together every day, and they're friends with each other, and they really want to care for each other".

Whatever Fortune or company slogans imagine, neither Marriott nor any other company is a family or community. There are no bonds between the worker and the owner that are not exploitative, even if they are dressed up in sheep's clothing, in the illusion that the company who treats you as a tool for their own enrichment somehow cares for you. The only community for the proletariat is the international proletariat itself. Class unity is its only strength!