

country, which succeeded the old union controlled by the Tito party and from which it inherited most of the structure. This is the majority union in the FCA Serbia, while a minority of workers is part of the Ujedinjeni granski sindikati "Nezavisnost" (Ugs-N), Union of Trade Unions "Independence", another trade union confederation of the regime born from a split from the SSSS in the '90s, a reflection of the struggle between the opposing pro-Milošević and pro-Western bourgeois factions.

While at FCA Serbia workers accepted a company contract - obtained according to the FCA Plastic Strike Committee by "dirty methods" - at the latter the SSSS section refused to sign. In response, in January, the company management, in order to blackmail and intimidate the workers, reduced the wages of holidays and that of production stoppage (a kind of layoff) due to overproduction, exacerbated by Covid 19.

After a series of one-hour warning strikes in January and February, following the failure of negotiations on February 18, 90% of the workers went on strike. This first strike lasted a full month, ending on March 24, when the company paid the dues related to the days of production stoppage, but reduced according to the January decision.

On April 24, according to the words of the struggle committee, the workers decided to radicalize the strike, resuming it and accompanying it with demonstrations under the city hall.

The company refused any compromise, despite the fact that the strike soon ended up leading to the blocking of activity at the FCA Serbia plant as well. The company has thus started to move some machinery from the FCA Plastic plant to the FCA Serbia plant. At the same time it started circulating rumours about redundancies in the striking factory.

No solidarity came from the SSSS section of the "mother" factory.

The Strike Committee for the time being proclaims its intention to continue the struggle, but it is clear that under these conditions the only chance of success would lie in extending the strike to the assembly plant of FCA Serbia, something that the majority union - Savez samostalnih sindikata Srbije (SSSS) - is careful not to do, having supported the approval of a company agreement similar to the one contested at FCA Plastic.

The workers' movement in Serbia is no exception: the crucial issue is the defeat of regime unionism through the rebirth of the class union.

Spain:

In pandemic-hit Spain, the government instituted a fairly strict confinement that lasted until May. This had serious economic consequences. About 4 million workers - out of a national total of 20 million - were put on "temporary" rest, but for 800,000 of these it was permanent. The government instituted a layoff freeze, but, of course, companies were often able to circumvent it.

Since May, the confinement measures have been gradually relaxed, until the return to normal on June 21. This contributed to a second wave of the pandemic, which peaked in October. This time, the confinement measures were softer: curfew from 11 a.m. to 6 a.m., some restriction on mobility, limits on gatherings. The government then tried to safeguard the Christmas shopping season, another factor that contributed to a new upsurge of the pandemic, after a partial downturn in November.

Museums and tourist attractions considered non-essential were closed during the first shutdown and workers temporarily laid off. At the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, there was already discontent among workers prior to the virus, who had thus organized in good numbers into a small grassroots union, the SUT, Solidaridad y Unidad de los Trabajadores. However, the Works Council - a kind of factory council that in Spain is provided for workplaces with more than 50 workers - was all in the hands of the regime union UGT, Union General de Trabajadores.

Even in Spain in the grassroots unionism there is a debate about whether or not to participate in these bodies of corporate representation of workers. For example, the anarcho-syndicalist-led CNT (Confederacion Nacional de Trabajo) does not participate, but the SUT does, even though it correctly believes that the center of union life should not be the company.

Among the main reasons for the dissatisfaction of the workers of the Sagrada Familia were the fixed-term contracts of three years - in violation of the same law - the lack of a schedule of shifts, often communicated or changed at the last moment - in violation of the collective bargaining agreement - the payment of holiday work without a surcharge, the constant delay in the payment of wages, the

prohibition for workers to be able to sit for the entire 6-hour shift.

When the facility reopened to visitors, conditions worsened even further: several workers were transferred without notice to other sites; overtime was not paid; vacation shifts were no longer granted to allow for rest; and the company refused to explain various errors on payroll. But the most serious thing was that only a small portion of the retired workers were called back to work, resulting in a heavy increase in loads: for example, before the pandemic 40 workers handled an influx of 1,500-2,000 visitors per hour; in September the company had reduced the workers to 6 for an influx of 1,000 visitors per hour, 4 times as many.

On September 26, the workers went on all-out strike with three demands: permanent contract, shift scheduling, and recall of all active workers.

ICP Leaflet Distributed In Venezuela: Fight for an Increase in Wages

The bourgeois government of Venezuela has announced an "increase" in the minimum wage, starting in March, which thus rises to 1,800,000 bolivares. That's \$0.95, which, added to the Cesta Ticket, makes \$1.9 monthly, what the government calls the "full wage." Shopping vouchers - called "Cesta Ticket" - also come in at a monthly value of the same amount. Pensions have been raised to the same level as the minimum wage.

In the salary scale for public employees, the highest salary is \$2.89 per month (\$3.84 with the Cesta Ticket).

The "Canasta alimentaria", i.e., the basket of food expenses, is estimated to be \$282 for 2021, an amount clearly not attainable by any worker, skilled or unskilled.

In the petrochemical sector, the demagogues of regime unionism are promoting an agreement with the bosses for a basic wage of \$16.6 per month and a Basket Ticket of \$43.62, plus an "economic warfare voucher" of \$8.35, for a total of \$68.67, equivalent to 24% of the cost of food. Even in the private sector, wages are higher than in the public sector, but the wide gap between the amount received and the cost of living remains.

Proletarian families manage to survive only with remittances from relatives who have emigrated to work abroad.

The productive apparatus is paralyzed for 70% due to the decay of activity in the oil sector, already the driving force of the Venezuelan economy, the fall in consumption and the economic effects of the Covid containment measures.

Economic paralysis fuels unemployment and reduces the economically active population. Although between February and March the exchange rate stopped at 1,800,000 bolivares per U.S. dollar, inflation does not stop and real wages will continue to fall.

The government is pushing real wages down to support the national and transnational capitalists who are trying to maintain and expand their profit margins.

Workers are trying to fight back and are beginning to meet and try to stage protests to demand better wages. This reaction is still weak due to the lack of grassroots organization and the treacherous and demobilizing action of the current unions.

To continue the struggle, workers need to organize grassroots workers' committees and unite in class unions, outside of the regime unions, joining their struggles for wage increases. Struggles and protests are needed, despite the restrictions for Covid and government repression. These actions of struggle must converge in the general and all-out strike, without minimum services, of all categories and in all economic activities. Meetings and assemblies inside and outside of workplaces must be promoted. There is no other way for the wage-earners subjected to capitalist exploitation.

And, on this path, it is important to keep away from the electoral appeals of vote-seekers of all colors.

Unity of action of all workers for a general increase in wages!

The company responded by replacing the strikers with private security personnel. The pickets were constantly threatened by the police, until a violent confrontation ensued on the last day the site was open, November 7.

This was followed by the new period of closure due to the measures against the pandemic until December 16 when the company announced the dismissal of 231 workers and the transfer of another 55 to another site, all based on an agreement with the Works Council, i.e. the UGT.

A small example of how phony and hypocritical democracy proves to be when the workers return to the struggle, with means and tools proper to class unionism, and how their wider organization is needed.

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Israel-Palestine: A War on Behalf of Bourgeois States

May 15, 2021

The violence of bourgeois war is unfolding once again in Palestine, and is creating suffering and grief. The Israeli bourgeoisie sees a new crackdown based on national oppression and ethnic segregation as a means to quell the effects of the economic crisis.

Evictions of Palestinian homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem lit the fuse. The Israeli state legally justified the evictions as the recovery of property titles dating back to the long dead Ottoman Empire. The plan is to tear down those houses to construct new buildings for Jews. This project has the objective of strengthening the ethnic segregation of Palestinians and promoting Israeli nationalism.

In Jerusalem, tensions have grown in recent weeks. There have been protests by Palestinians opposing ethnic cleansing by the Israeli State, as well as demonstrations by the Jewish extreme right through the Old City, shouting "death to Arabs".

Police provocations on the Esplanade of the Mosques/Temple Mount in Jerusalem corresponded with the final days of the holy month of Ramadan. These were followed by Palestinian riots, which soon extended to the whole West Bank and, in a largely unprecedented development, to Israeli cities where Arab citizens of Israel have been living among Jews since 1948.

For centuries, a ruse has been used by dying regimes to shore up decay in the face of social discontent. For its effectiveness, the ruling classes endorse the pogrom.

Groups from both ethnic communities carried out raids of the neighborhoods inhabited by the other, set fire to religious buildings, looted businesses, and even beat up individuals. These are the expected fruits of the nationalist policy pursued both by the government of Israeli capital and by the neighboring states, and also by all the imperialist powers. This is the crescendo of all their incessant provocations.

Hamas, the bourgeois party that dresses up in religious extremism, has dominated the Gaza Strip for 15 years and, for its part, controls the political movement of the dispossessed Palestinians in order to orient them towards nationalism and to gain influence in the West Bank against its rival

Fatah.

The launching of thousands of rockets against Israeli cities from Gaza, which has been subjected to an Israeli siege for many years, have caused deaths and injuries among the Jewish civilian population and killed two Arabs. Israeli reacted predictably, starting the raids on against Gaza which caused so many casualties among the civilian population, this time Palestinian. In the meantime, Israeli troops claimed many victims among those in the West Bank who demonstrated against the worsening of the occupation regime, while in Jerusalem there were also protests by the Palestinian community, intolerant of the apartheid regime imposed by the State of Israel and rebelling against the hateful national and class oppression to which it is subjected.

But the war between the State of Israel and Hamas, while "asymmetrical", is a war between bourgeois states, fighting as proxies of larger states and imperialist world powers.

The rockets fired on Israeli cities are also part of this war. How did Hamas obtain these weapons, since everything that enters the Gaza Strip is subject to the strict control of the Israeli authorities?

Palestinian proletarians would be wrong to trust an "anti-colonial" national war of liberation. They could never win because the large world powers would prevent it, but also because the Palestinian bourgeoisie will never be willing to dissolve its coupling with the Israeli one. That impossible national war has already failed decades ago, with betrayal by all the other Arab bourgeoisies, who are inextricably tied to imperialism.

This is not an anti-colonial struggle. Israel is not the continuator of the colonial domination that manifested itself in Palestine at the time of the British mandate. Israel is a country in the imperialist chain where capital and world finance dominate.

Today capitalist domination inside the State of Israel, as well as the occupied territories, is based on effective collaboration between the Israeli bourgeoisie and its Palestinian younger sister. The Palestinian side is weaker, and therefore more servile towards the former, but no less greedy, cynical and ruthless. These united bourgeoisies support each other to page 6

Capitalism cannot be reformed On the Repeal of Abortion in Poland

At the end of January in Poland, the constitutional court confirmed the ban on abortion, except in cases of incest, rape or danger to the life of the mother, as not conforming to the articles of the Basic Law on the protection of the life of the unborn. It was all decided democratically, perfect and within the rules, so therefore, it became illegal to terminate a pregnancy in the case of serious and fatal malformations of the fetus or when a death of the newborn is inevitable. The bill originated with the majority Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice Party or PiS), whose orientation is "right-wing", "socially conservative" and "sovereignist".

The new abortion law is worse than the previous one, which was one of the most restrictive in Europe, but allowed for abortion in cases of fetal malformations.

Even before the law came into force, an estimated 200,000 abortions were carried out illegally in Poland every year, obviously with serious risks for the woman. Another 120,000 abortions took place in one of Poland's neighboring countries where abortion is legal: Germany, Czechia, and elsewhere in Northern Europe. COVID travel restrictions have made it almost impossible even for middle-class women, who can afford, unlike the proletariat, abortion in neighboring countries in minimum health security.

Since the ruling on October 22, street protests in Poland have never stopped. The Strajk Kobiet ("Women's Strike") movement has organized several demonstrations in recent months. On the day the law came into force, thousands poured into the streets and a new national demonstration was called on January 29. ->page 6

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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COVID-19: Overcoming Global Vaccine Inequality

With over 3 million deaths as of April 2021 and an economic cost which could be as high as 14 trillion US dollars, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused social and economic catastrophes, being described as “the most challenging crisis since World War II.” On 31 December 2019, the World Health Organisation (WHO) was informed of the outbreak of a life-threatening viral pneumonia in Wuhan, China; over the course of the following months, the disease caused a worldwide health crisis and plunged humanity into the worst economic recession since the Great Depression. Although viral spread can be mitigated through measures such as social distancing, use of face masks and testing and tracing, the pandemic is unlikely to end until there is a global roll-out of effective vaccines that can prevent infection and drive herd immunity. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has seen unprecedented progress in vaccine development, manufacturing and deployment. Within a record time of less than one year, 11 vaccines are already in clinical use and approximately 900 million doses have been administered across 155 countries. Furthermore, 88 vaccines are undergoing clinical trials and 184 additional vaccine candidates are at the pre-clinical stage.

However, having licensed vaccines which are produced in large numbers is not enough to achieve control of COVID-19; they must also be priced affordably and distributed effectively on a global scale so that they are available where needed. National interests – especially those of high-income countries – remain the dominant factor in vaccine rollout. Developed nations have stipulated massive advance-purchase agreements with pharmaceutical companies, which means that rich countries have secured the majority of available doses. Several wealthy nations have pre-ordered a number of COVID-19 vaccines that far outnumber their populations, fuelling an extraordinary gap in vaccine access around the world. The EU has ordered 1.6 billion doses for its adult population of roughly 375 million, which will create a surplus of approximately 525 million vaccinations. Similarly, the UK has

ordered 219 million vaccines for its 54 million adults (a surplus of 165 million), while Canada has ordered 188 million doses for its 32 million adults (an excess of 156 million vaccines). Although high-income nations only account for 19% of the global adult population, collectively they have laid claim to 54% (4.6 billion) of all vaccine doses purchased to date, leaving 3.2 billion doses for the rest of the world combined. This global disparity in vaccine access may have devastating consequences: billions of individuals will not be vaccinated by the end of 2021, which could prolong the pandemic and raise the risk of further viral mutations emerging, potentially undermining the efficacy of existing vaccines.

COVID-19 vaccine technologies, production and prices are entirely controlled by profit-driven pharmaceutical companies that fiercely compete on the global market. Despite the WHO's efforts, vaccines remain unaffordable and/or inaccessible for many countries. As a possible remedy, calls have been made for patents to be waived in order to accelerate manufacturing and supply of vaccines in low and middle-income countries. To this end, some governments have proposed a waiver of parts of the TRIPS Agreement, the World Trade Organisation's international treaty which protects intellectual property at a global level. The proposal, which was jointly submitted by India and South Africa in October 2020, has been backed by over 100 developing countries. Despite receiving full support from numerous international organisations, the bid to suspend COVID vaccine patents is facing opposition by many States, assiduously working to protect the interests of their pharmaceutical industries. Those who oppose the waiver argue that pharmaceutical companies have taken significant risk and should be rewarded for their considerable investments in vaccine research and development. Governments in the US and Europe as well as the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers claim that the waiver would threaten profits and disincentivise private investment in vaccine research, thus hampering scientific progress and innovation.

However, others argue that the urgent need for vaccines should take priority over intellectual property rights, and that the waiver could be an important step towards scaling up vaccination in impoverished areas of the world. In addition, supporters of the waiver point out that research for COVID vaccines benefited from extensive public funding, and therefore private companies should not have exclusive rights to profit from the results.

The ongoing debate over the production and distribution of vaccines leads to an important question: to what extent are COVID vaccines the result of private research and investment? Virtually all currently available COVID vaccines are largely the product of government-funded research rather than private investment. The development of several viable vaccines in less than a year represents a monumental scientific achievement, but the springboard was decades of massive public investment in vaccine research and testing. It is estimated that the US government's National Institutes of Health (NIH) spent 17.2 billion dollars in vaccine technologies from 2000 to 2019; this funding was essential to the speed and success of the COVID-19 vaccination programme. Most of the leading vaccine candidates prime the immune system against the viral spike protein (the viral receptor-binding domain), an approach based on the pioneering work of scientists at the NIH and other government-funded institutions. Specifically, two fundamental discoveries that emerged from public research laid the groundwork for nearly all available COVID vaccines: the viral protein designed by Barney Graham and his colleagues at the NIH, and the concept of RNA modification, first introduced by Drew Weissman and Katalin Karikó at the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to the key contributions made by public research in the past, an unprecedented amount of public funding has been poured into vaccine development and manufacturing during the pandemic. Initially, most pharmaceutical companies were reluctant to invest in COVID vaccines. Creating vaccines, especially in the wake of an acute health emergency, did not prove profitable during previous epidemics. The development process is long, and the outcome is far from certain. In some cases, the failure rate may be as high as 94%. Furthermore, vaccines

for the class union news and interventions of the class struggle

Australia:

At 5 a.m. on November 19, 2020, at the Coles distribution center in Smeaton Grange, a suburb of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, 350 workers stopped work, opposing the announcement that the plant would be fully automated at an unspecified date in the coming years. In response, Coles management soon called a lockout that was initially scheduled to last until February 11, 2021.

In the face of this attack, workers - and the United Workers Union in which they were organized - responded by initiating one of the longest strikes in Australia's recent history. After 14 long weeks, the strike ended on February 27, 2021: 71% of the vote was in favor of reaching an agreement, dubbed the "Coles Smeaton Grange (UWU) Regional Distribution Centre Enterprise Agreement 2020."

Coles is an Australian supermarket chain with 100 thousand employees that operates under a national duopoly, since together with its competitor Woolworths it holds 80% of the distribution market in Australia.

Despite the historic duration of the strike and its importance, given that its outcome will play a crucial role in determining how Coles will deal with the automation of its other stores in the future, the bourgeois press, even the left-wing press, has essentially - and deliberately - ignored it.

Far from being the victory of historic magnitude as the UWU proclaimed, the manner in which the strike was conducted and the concluding agreement represent a searing defeat for workers. The great fervor of workers' struggle was completely wasted.

The strikers were supported with only 60-70 Australian dollars (AuD) per head per week by a union with 300 million in assets, about 90-100 million in liquid funds, and about 100 million in annual dues. Some were forced to sell their homes; others ended up separating from their spouses.

UWU officials have consistently intimidated workers by fearing disciplinary action and police intervention, demanding that the picket line at Smeaton Grange be broken up. They were careful not to organize at the other Coles distribution centers the most basic of protests, despite the UWU's organized presence at all plants. They argued with the police behind the scenes without consulting the workers, promising that the picket line would be short-lived. According to a member of a

grassroots group of strikers - the Concerned Workers Smeaton Grange (CWSG) - although the NSW police did not show interest in intervening, UWU unionists still successfully urged workers to break the ongoing roadblock and simply rail at trucks entering and leaving the plant.

Solidarity strikes and "hard" picketing are illegal in Australia's corporate system of labor relations called "Fair Work," introduced in 2009, but there as elsewhere the anti-strike law is a paper tiger in the face of sufficiently strong action.

In 2012, at a Coles distribution center in Melbourne, members of the National Union of Workers (NUW), which would later merge with United Voice to form the UWU in 2019, won their battle through determined picketing, despite a court order declaring it illegal and ordering its revocation.

The Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) signed at the conclusion of the strike provides:

- exit incentives for 50-80 workers, out of the total 350, while clauses 5, 36 and 38 praise the "mutual interest" of workers and bosses in increasing productivity;
- workers who do not benefit from the redundancy incentive will be progressively laid off;
- clauses 34.4.8-34.4.9, limit the payment of redundancy incentives to 52 weeks;
- the promised redundancy payment will last 80 weeks, but it is to be seen whether Coles will opt for more disadvantageous resolutions for its profits when the closure process of the center will definitely start;

- until layoff, workers will receive a wage increase of 3.5% per year for up to 3 years (the union had claimed a 5.5% increase), a pittance for workers short of reserves, if not in debt, because of the strike;

- 1000 AuD signing bonus; the union demand was 5000 AuD; the issue of the 14 weeks of lost wages is absent from the text, despite the fact that it was Coles that forced the strike by choosing the lockout route.

In the meantime, the management is trying to flush out the most combative of the workers involved in the strike, labeling them as "extremist anti-worker socialists" and even as infiltrators of ASIO (the Australian spy services).

Ultimately the union acted as an obstacle rather than a collective condenser of resources: there was no tangible support, no strike funds, no contributions to members, no solidarity action in other workplaces, while there was a suspension of picketing and

attempts to gain the support of other Coles workers. Coles management and investors are right in being satisfied. Meanwhile, unionists are complaining that union membership in Australia has inexplicably dropped to 9%!

From the other UWU trade federations, no critical voices have been raised against the agreement. The UWU Hospo Voice, the tourism and catering federation, even said it was none of their business. According to one CWSG member, some leaders of the Sydney Seafarers' Federation - the Maritime Union of Australia - privately voiced sharp criticism of the handling of the Smeaton Grange strike but chose not to express it publicly in order to maintain union unity. So much for uniting workers over divisions between companies and categories!

Pakistan:

On February 10, a strike was called in Islamabad by the All Government Employees Grand Alliance (AGEGA) union, which organizes federal government employees, essentially demanding a substantial wage increase, adequate health care and standing against the privatization process.

The workers who took to the streets marched to the press club, despite the fact that several union leaders had been arrested the previous day. Their union headquarters in Islamabad was attacked by police who used tear gas in an attempt to clear the premises. Workers who came to defend it were pelted with rubber bullets. In several areas of the city there were bitter clashes between workers and police. Some highways, such as the Kashmir highway, were blocked.

"A well-armed contingent of police, including riot units and the anti-terrorism department were deployed on Constitution Avenue and in the Red Zone, and paramilitary troops in government buildings," this is what newspapers write, and that more than a thousand tear gas shells were fired. The Minister of Interior, responding to questions from journalists, with sarcasm and intimidation declared: "we have never used so many tear gas, many more are ready".

It should be pointed out how in the streets the federal employees of the capital, if they found the harsh repression of the government, were able to react by organizing and defending themselves. In two hundred were arrested.

In the bourgeois camp, the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) a conservative political movement, today aligned against the government of Imran Khan, has cautiously stood up for the

striking workers describing their movement as against "neo-liberalism". The truth is that this, like the other organizations of the ruling classes, will not hesitate, when they have the opportunity and the demands of Capital require it, to attack the living and working conditions of the wage-earners.

The next day the workers continued their protest. Federal offices in the capital remained closed. Other unions, denouncing the violence, joined the strike in several cities in Pakistan. Adhesions were registered in North Waziristan, Belucistan and Sindh province, but also in several districts such as Dasu Kohistan. In Punjab, civil servants from various areas including electricity and railway workers, represented by their respective unions, joined the strike. A substantial number of strikes and demonstrations in favor of the workers brutally attacked by the police show us a significant, as well as fundamental, worker solidarity.

The next day, with unusual haste, the government approved a wage increase for federal workers, following which the unions ended the protest in Islamabad. The salary was increased up to 25%. The initial demand was 40 percent. Workers who had been imprisoned were released and lawsuits dismissed. An achievement due to struggle and solidarity memberships.

These days have been an important lesson for the entire working class of Pakistan, which will have to understand more and more how their unity in the struggle, through sincere and combative class organizations that nurture workers' solidarity, are fundamental conditions to oppose the attacks of governments of all political colors.

Serbia:

On April 24, the strike resumed at FCA Plastic in Kragujevac, Serbia, which employs 90 workers and supplies bumpers to the plant in the same town where the Fiat 500L is assembled. FCA Serbia is 66% owned by Stellantis and the remaining 37% by the State of Serbia. FCA Plastic is now part of Stellantis, although it enjoys a certain autonomy.

The strike continues the struggle that began last December over the new company contract. The points in dispute are the anti-strike clause that prohibits the use of collective abstention from work for three years and the amount of the production bonus.

The workers of FCA Plastic are members of Savez samostalnih sindikata Srbije (SSSS), the Confederation of Autonomous Trade Unions of Serbia, the largest confederation of the regime in the

Palestine/Israel (con't)

other and, through the bourgeois war, like the two jaws of a vice, tighten their grip on the proletarian class, both Jewish and Arab.

The maintenance and escalation of this bourgeois war, in which almost exclusively proletarians die, serves to throw both the Israeli workers and their Palestinian comrades into the arms of their respective bourgeoisies.

As the economic crisis advances, attacking the living conditions of all proletarians, economic attacks will take the form of diminishing wages and increasing precariousness. The Israeli ruling class offers Jewish workers the meager consolation of a fictitious unity of the nation. It will demand to be paid for at an ever increasing price of misery and blood

We internationalist communists know how difficult it is for the proletariat to return to the path of class struggle. When the bourgeoisie is at war, counter-revolution manifests itself more strongly. But we also know that the bourgeoisie will not be able to preserve social peace between classes for long.

The road to the class struggle requires the camaraderie of the Israeli proletariat with the Palestinian proletariat. The workers of both these sections of the world working class will then break all solidarity with the bourgeoisie.

To the Jewish proletarians we give the mandate to sabotage the infamous national oppression that the bourgeoisie of Israel imposes on the Palestinians. To the Palestinian proletarians, to break with the nationalist leadership that drags them to the slaughterhouse of bourgeois armed conflict and then consigns the survivors to the market of wage slavery, a labor force to be sold out.

Our call to the Palestinian and Israeli proletarians is for class unity, for the overthrow of every national bourgeoisie and the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat. The perspective must be of proletarian revolution throughout the entire region and the world, overcoming all national boundaries for a future humanity liberated from capitalism and its infamous national homelands.

Only the proletariat can break the infernal chain of wars, as well as the no less infamous bourgeois "peace". Only the proletariat can put an end today to the national oppression of the Palestinians and of all the oppressed peoples. Only the proletariat can put an end to racism, an evil of capitalism of every climate. Only the international proletariat, organized in its class unions and directed by its party, can support the struggle of its comrades in Palestine, sabotaging the bourgeois war and resuming the path of the class war for the world revolution, which alone can put an end to the miseries of the present.

POLAND (con't):

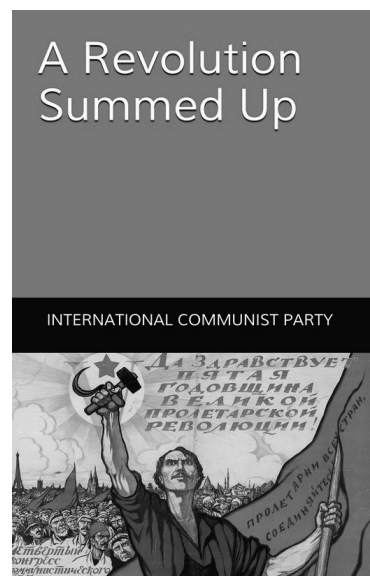
Since October, police in Warsaw have attacked the demonstrations with batons, tear gas and mass arrests. This brutality has continued in the following months.

As well we know, the demands of women organized in interclass feminist movements, i.e. led by the bourgeoisie, again, will result in nothing. Or, at most, a few crumbs which can be taken back at an opportune moment as well as serving as a political distraction.

The Polish government is accused of being "right-wing" and "clerical". But the condition of women in capitalism in all countries and cultures is everywhere threatened, kept in a condition of personal and economic inferiority and the first victim of the harassment and abuse of the present social regime, especially when it is in the grip of its crises.

As we wrote in our work "Oppression of Women and Communist Revolution" in 1979: "In the socialist state women will be free to have children or not to have children, they will not be forced to abort or give birth as in bourgeois society (...) In communism the bourgeois family will be extinguished and replaced by community life in all its forms. Children will no longer weigh on mothers, mothers will be able to stay with their children if they want, finally expressing an authentic maternal feeling, as no longer produced by selfishness towards their offspring, no longer deformed by the need to starve other people's children to feed their own".

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An assessment of the impact of the Russian revolution, written 50 years later (in 1967-68), reasserting the international nature of the movement that made it possible and refuting the Stalinist doctrine, still prevalent at the time, that socialism can be built in one country. The study unpicks the various false interpretations of the revolution (conservative-liberal, social democratic, anarchist and Trotskyist). In the second half it analyses the evolution of the Soviet economy through war communism, the New Economic Policy, the debates within the Party after the death of Lenin and the triumph of the counter revolution under the influence of Ustryalovism; the horrors of "dekulakization" and forced industrialization, the sham socialism of the "collective farms", followed by the liberalization and steady adjustment to capitalist norms in the Khrushchev era. Already, in 1967, the post-Stalinist reforms and the growth of foreign trade pointed to the so-called "fall of communism" in 1991, made inevitable by the USSR's inability to keep up with the USA. The Communist Left was the only current that made such a thorough materialist analysis of the degeneration of the USSR, starting with its intervention at the Enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International in 1926.

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are generally regarded as low-margin products with a limited expected growth potential compared to pharmaceuticals in other therapeutic areas. Therefore, private investors showed little interest in the race for a vaccine. Only when governments and agencies stepped forth with funding pledges did pharmaceutical companies get to work on the COVID vaccine. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the leading six vaccine candidates have received an estimated 12 billion dollars of taxpayer and public money, including 1.7 billion dollars for the Oxford/AstraZeneca jab, 1.5 billion dollars for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and 2 billion dollars for BioNTech's and Moderna's messenger-RNA vaccines. According to a recent study, public grants accounted for 97-99% of the research and development funding towards the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, with less than 2% coming from private industry.

Waiving vaccine patents will not change this reality. But the fact that the bourgeois state is ready to intervene in cases of emergency, in times of peace as well as of war, by providing capital, tax concessions of every kind, by imposing moderate or sustained prices, by making its forces and means available, does not alter the fact that goods are produced and sold in any case, within capitalist relations of production. The state of the capitalists helps the capitalists to solve their problems, it comes to the aid of the capitalists. Obviously, by referring to the other classes and the half-classes. But the fact that the bourgeois state, in cases of emergency, is ready to intervene, in time of peace as well as in time of war, by providing capital, tax concessions of all kinds, imposing moderate or sustained prices, making its forces and means available, does not mean that goods are not produced and sold within capitalist relations of production. The state of the capitalists helps the capitalists to solve their problems, it comes to the aid of the capitalists. Obviously, by referring to the other classes and the half-classes. Thus it does not escape Marxist analysis that the "public contribution" of the bourgeois state goes to strengthen capitalism, does not condition it, and is not qualitatively different from that of private investors. While the recent vaccine news has brought hope, it has also exposed our economic system's dramatic inability to deal with a global threat such as the COVID19 pandemic. A solution can only be achieved through the eradication of existing property relations, the single greatest barrier to universal access to lifesaving vaccines and therapeutics.

Port of Montreal: Capitalism needed a special law to put an end to the strike

The movement, which seemed so combative, lasted only a few days. This time, the federal government used its joker to violate the right to strike of workers across the country. This time, it was the longshoremen at the Port of Montreal who got a taste of the violence of the state, which has no qualms about abusing its powers to serve the interests of the bosses and crush the workers. The special law forced the workers to return to work or face fines of up to \$100,000 per day of "violation. Now that the strike has been broken, a mediator-arbitrator will have the role of deciding the content of the next collective agreement. Faced with this reality, we must accept the following facts: for Canadian democracy, the right to strike is in fact a privilege that the state can take away at any time.

Anger and the will to fight

The 1,150 dockworkers at the Port of Montreal have not had a work contract since December 2018 and have never been able to come to an agreement with the employer side. The union's demands were mainly opposed to changes in shift assignments that the bosses wanted to impose on its employees, who already have to deal with unstable schedules, making it very difficult to balance work and family. In August, the inflexibility of the bosses had already pushed the union into a strike (for a period of 10 days), which was then postponed after an agreement in principle was reached. However, with management unwilling to back down, 99% of CUPE Local 375 members voted for an indefinite general strike on April 26. Unfortunately, all this fighting spirit did not carry much weight in the face of the repressive measures taken by the Canadian government, which hastened to impose a special law with the aim of breaking the strikers. The latter was adopted by the House of Commons on Wednesday night, April 29.

Special laws are not emergency laws

Special laws have long been commonplace in Canada. A similar law had crushed the postal workers in 2018. In 2017, it was government lawyers who were victims of a law passed by the provincial government. In 2015, it was CP employees, broken by the federal government. Since the creation of the Labour Code in 1964, no less than 42 special laws have been used to break various strike movements. So we see that the state, which itself has framed the workers' right to strike as an essential element of democracy, has no qualms about taking it away from the most combative elements of the proletariat when they decide to fight to defend their working conditions. Many people are offended by these laws, which they consider undemocratic, and the fact that they have been struck down by the courts as unconstitutional reinforces their position. But this is not the case. Court overruling may indeed save some union sections or individuals affected by the laws from paying the hefty fines imposed on them. However, they do not prevent these laws from performing their real function of breaking the movement, which they do every time. Workers should be under no illusion that although the courts work hard to give the impression of impartiality and equality of all before the law, they are bourgeois institutions that serve primarily to consolidate the power of the ruling class. Workers cannot count on them to defend them.

In fact, bourgeois democracy is only following its normal evolution in this rotting capitalism. In the countries of advanced capitalism, the bourgeois state tends to centralize and impose tighter and tighter control over workers' organizations and society in general. This interference in labor disputes will only get worse and the state's repression will only become more violent. There is no point in hoping for a return to the "real democracy" (which has never existed) that some liberals dream of, and which calls on strikers to defy special laws and take the protection of the courts. In such a situation, workers should not be blind to the fact that the contradictions between labor and capital are becoming more and more severe. Therefore, the unions must be ready to take the struggle to a higher level.

Lack of combativeness of the union leadership

As has happened so often in the past, the longshoremen were left powerless when they were hit by the special law. As long as this situation continues, workers across the country will never really be able to defend themselves. In the future, it will take a convergence of struggles that brings workers together by the hundreds, and then by the thousands, to create a movement strong enough to challenge the special laws. This will only be possible by breaking out of union corporatism. Unfortunately, we cannot currently count on the union leadership, which tends to lack ambition, if not courage. We need the rank and file to fight to force leadership to act and change this unequal balance of power. In the context of the Port of Montreal longshoremen, the isolation of the movement allowed the government to crush it in a matter of days.

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On the Suez Canal Debacle

In March, the case of the container ship Ever Given got stuck across the Suez Canal due to "a gust of wind". Just to reduce transport costs, the bourgeoisie, with idiotic zeal, builds ships as big as a small city, 400 meters long and capable of loading 18,300 containers. For a week, the blockade of the waterway, through which 12% of world trade passes, has demonstrated how the circulation of goods, an artificial counterpart to the natural turnover of living organisms, can put world capitalism in crisis. The damage is estimated at 10 billion dollars a day, for the delayed sale of all that useless junk.

The huge ship, that stranded mountain of steel, a symbol of all modern capitalism and its hyper-productive madness.

Capitalism commits working humanity to an idiotic dissipation of energy to saturate the world with useless goods. The bourgeois class, for the sole purpose of conservation, ceaselessly spreads the reactionary ideology of ecology, made of "sustainable developments", "green transitions", when capital can never stop or even slow down on the mad race of production as an end in itself.

Now, in Italy, an ad hoc ministry "for the ecological transition" has been set up, promising new investments in infrastructures, still poured with concrete, but definitely "green". On the other side of the Atlantic, in the United States, we hear Biden singing the same song with his new plan "Build back better", which plans to invest 2,000 billion dollars in infrastructure, 650 billion of which for roads, bridges and ports alone.

But the ideology of ecologism is looking for more noble support than advertising talk and finds followers among specialists in the natural sciences. In this field it has been proposed for a long time the addition in the geological stratigraphy of a new age, the current one, called Anthropocene, in which the human species would influence in a decisive way the future of the earth's crust, water, atmosphere and living beings, the so-called biosphere.

We maintain a strong skepticism in the face of the alleged science of this era of social decay, and we are not at all inclined to consider as due to the human species the work of devastation that is instead imposed by the capitalist mode of production. What determines this ruin are the necessities of valorization of capital, in its chaotic action for the sole purpose of producing a profit, and certainly not to meet the vital needs of the species.

Marxist theory teaches us that capital is a relationship between men, which is not identified with the productive capacity of the species, with its technical endowment, with scientific knowledge and with the forces of nature, all of which are now subject to the reproduction of capital. Whenever the urgency arises to reckon with the devastating effects on nature of the mad race for the accumulation of surplus value, we look with strong suspicion at what is produced in terms of "scientific" analysis or, even worse, of incongruous proposals by the bourgeois political class, only interested in its slice of the social product.

But that we have entered the anthropocene is our thesis! The anthropocene is communism! That era of our history as a species in which the development of man's capacities has come to be able to influence the whole life of the planet.

It is a new and immense force. It is enough now to remove it from the arthritic but still rapacious hands of Capital. Tomorrow, the communist society, having stifled today's nauseating, moralistic, terrorist, commercial "green" rhetoric, and no longer deaf and blinded by its internal conflict between opposing interests, will be able to see, know and foresee the very long cycles that regulate in grand, delicate and complex balances the life on our Earth. And, with caution, try wisely to intervene, in a project extended to the whole globe and to several generations.

Going along with the current fashion, even a recent study carried out by an Israeli university, the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, has come to the "distressing" conclusion that the historically accumulated mass of minerals processed by man, excluding therefore the products of agriculture, would have exceeded that of living organisms on the planet, even excluding the water they contain.

We do not guarantee at all the seriousness of these university "studies", that we know by now are more and more moved by mercantile and career interests, especially today when the exanguineo financings are contended with the most indecent methods. Therefore, we cannot evaluate how much the data used in the research are reliable, or even falsified, nor if the authors at least show to know which quantities they are talking about.

The fact remains, however, that we feel no need for further study, as we knew this before. We are in fact well convinced of the problem of the progressive mineralization of the biosphere. Iron or wheat? Beyond calculation errors, given the immense amount of data to be collected and correlated, we do not deny a certain verisimilitude of the conclusions reached with our thesis. That is, if the overtaking of the mass of mineral products processed by our species, defined in the study as anthropogenic mass, on that of the total living biomass, which according to the research would occur as early as 2020, had not yet been reached, it will certainly be in a few years.

The biomass on Earth would be around 1,100 gigatonnes, relatively constant over a wide geological span (a "giga" is a 1 followed by 9 zeros). Conversely, the anthropogenic mass has evolved very rapidly in the last 120 years: even at the beginning of the 20th century it did not exceed 3% of the dehydrated biomass. Moreover, the race of the anthropogenic mass has experienced a formidable acceleration in recent decades, doubling every 20 years.

It is evident that not even the capitalists, even if they wanted to, and not even if they were united, have the slightest possibility of stemming this infernal eruption. This is demonstrated by the deluge of proclamations by eminent politicians and heads of state in the last two decades, of world gatherings devoted to ecological talk and to the "historic" treaties that were supposed to curb "climate change" and "defend the environment".

Other consequences that capital cannot control are those of agriculture, deforestation and livestock breeding, all ancient activities but now implemented on a very large scale, aided by the enormous development of the means of production, which, however, do not give strength and wealth to this society but only generate new imbalances and new crises, as well as the misery of the proletarians who work there. The same can be said for mining activities, a real robbery of the goods of the subsoil.

Vegetable biomass is estimated at 900

gigatonnes while that of buildings and infrastructures is 1,100. Urbanism and capitalism, and land rent, worse if small and fractional, are incompatible with each other. Think of the "ghost" cities and towns, old or new from the plans of governments forced to deal with capitalist anarchy, and greedy for huge profits and rents from construction contracts. Not to mention the myriad of industrial plants abandoned due to the capricious change of the rate of profit between sectors and productive regions of the world: ruins that in every corner of the planet mark a monstrous civilization unable to provide even for its own survival and that clutters the space with its corpses.

Capitalism catapults immense quantities of goods in those hubs of the world market that are called cities. Hence the frenzied giantisation of cyclopean concrete agglomerations, temples of real estate investment, an instrument of solidification of otherwise evanescent capital. No plan can limit the expansion of cities beyond the "walls", exorbitantly overflowing into the countryside. In this horrible world colonized everywhere by capital, the agony of associated life is consumed. A civilization that only destroys the work of the dead neither knows nor cares to recover what has been inherited from past generations. In squalor lives the species Homo sapiens: how history plays with words!

"The Basis of Marxist economic analysis is the distinction between dead and living labor. We define capitalism not as ownership over the heaps of crystallized past labor, but as the right of subtraction from living and active labor. That's why the present economy cannot lead to a good solution which would achieve, with the minimum of present labor effort, the rational preservation of what past labor has given us, and the best basis for the effect of future labor. The bourgeois economy is interested in the frenzy of the contemporary rhythm of work, and it favors the destruction of the still useful masses of past work, not caring about posterity" (Murder of the Dead, "Battaglia Comunista", 1951, no. 24).

We wrote this 70 years ago, before the word ecology was being bandied about by anyone and everywhere, even in the Stalinist East, it was being immolated on the altars of productivism.

The consequences are devastating for the entire animal kingdom, in an environment increasingly artificial and less suitable for their reproduction. The mass of all animals is said to represent a small fraction of the planetary biomass, less than 4 parts per thousand since they do not exceed 4 gigatons, while the mass of humans is much lower, amounting to only 0.01% of living species.

The plastics present on the planet are estimated to be about 8 gigatons, twice the mass of all terrestrial and marine animals. It seems that many end up forming large floating islands in the Pacific Ocean. Why is so much of it produced? Because the rate of profit in its production is sufficiently high. Is there a remedy? In this society, no. Even in these pandemic times, no government is willing to give up on "development." All assemblies are forbidden, except in the factories!

The proletariat alone will have the task of saving itself and the human species if it is able to suppress the suffocating domination of capital and its demented endless reproduction.

CUBA: Bringing Order to their Capitalism

El Partido Comunist #21 April 2021

On January 1, 2021, opportunists celebrated the 62nd anniversary of the so-called "Cuban revolution", a reference of all the opportunist parties and movements that proclaim themselves socialist, but which are nothing more than a masquerade of the political alternatives that the bourgeoisie counts on to give continuity to capitalist exploitation.

On this occasion the bourgeois government of Cuba announced that "In accordance with the new economic context of the country as of January 1, 2021, the Ministry of Finance and Prices modified the wage scale of the country, setting the minimum wage at 2100 Cuban pesos". Likewise, Miguel Díaz-Canel, Cuban president, announced that Cuba will unify its two current currencies, the Cuban peso (CUP) and the convertible peso (CUC), as of January 1, 2021: "It is considered that the conditions are created that allow announcing the beginning of the task as of January 1, 2021 with a single exchange rate of 24 Cuban pesos for one dollar", said Díaz-Canel.

These announcements, long awaited and announced on television by Díaz-Canel, accompanied by the former president and leader of the "communist" party of Cuba, Raúl Castro, are part of a set of tasks indicated by the Cuban leadership, framed in the so-called "ordering task". "We reiterate the transcendence and importance of this task that will put the country in better conditions to carry out the transformations demanded by the updating of our economic and social model on the basis of guaranteeing all Cubans the greatest equality of rights and opportunities," Díaz-Canel declared.

In monetary matters, the "ordering task" consists of the disappearance of the CUC, created in 1994, and the establishment of a single exchange rate.

With these measures, the Cuban bourgeois government is sincere about the advance of the currency devaluation process and the existence of an inflationary process, like the one currently undergone by many capitalist countries. The fact that an apparently low initial exchange rate was established (24 pesos per dollar) will not prevent the rise of the inflationary wave and the exchange rate. In fact, after the government's announcement, it was observed that in the black market it reached prices of up to 45 CUP or Cuban pesos per dollar.

Although the government has established that the population must make its cash transactions only in CUP (Cuban Pesos) and has opened the use of credit cards in dollars to those who receive remittances from relatives abroad, in practice it is imposing the payment in Dollars or Euros in cash, especially for all the services and needs of a foreign tourist; and it is in these market spaces where the real devaluation of the Cuban peso will prosper.

In correspondence with this monetary policy, the new salary scale or table was set, which has a minimum salary of 2,100 pesos (87.5 dollars at the official exchange rate and 46.67 dollars according to the street value). In the new wage tabulator the amount increases

according to what the government determines as degrees of complexity of the work and according to the number of hours worked during the week. Thus, the 2,100 pesos apply to the complexity group I, but only if they work 44 hours per week; if the workers work 40 hours per week, their salary will be 1,910 pesos.

The occupations of service workers will be located from group I to VI (from 2100/ 2910 pesos to 2660/2415 pesos); those of administrative workers, from group III to VII (from 2300/2090, to 2810/2555 pesos); and operators, from group II to VIII (from 2200/2000, to 2960/2690 pesos). Obviously, most of the salaried population will fall between wage groups I and VI.

In the case of technical positions, they will be from group VII to XXV (from 2810/2555 pesos up to 6610/ 6010 pesos); and the cadre positions from group XVII to XXXII (from 4610/ 4190 up to 9510/ 8645 pesos).

Then there is a set of provisions for different specificities of work situations that complement the 32 salary groups.

But the task of the regulation is not only limited to establishing a single exchange rate and a wage scale. The Cuban government has announced the elimination of subsidies and the adjustment of prices. First, "the gradual elimination of excessive subsidies and undue gratuities". "The policy is to subsidize people and not products, to avoid the egalitarianism that we sometimes have in society." Secondly, "to maintain the salary as the main source to finance the consumption of workers and their families, and to eliminate salary distortions to stimulate the incorporation to employment and promotion to management positions." In other words, the Cuban government abandons the control of prices of goods and services which, according to them, stimulated a supposed egalitarianism, and emphasizes what all workers know: that they only count on their salary to meet the cost of living. Of course, the government stated that the established minimum wage covers the cost of the reference basket of goods and services (CBSR=1,528 pesos). But what the government does not say is that with these economic measures the amount of the CBSR will move rapidly and will put the workers with a very weak salary to be able to cover their needs and those of their families. And in an environment of worker demobilization and repression, wage changes will continue to depend on centralized decisions by the Cuban government.

Like other opportunist governments, which declare themselves "left" and "socialist," the Cuban government claims that this is not a neoliberal adjustment. But it is evident that the Cuban bourgeois government seeks to get ahead in the framework of the economic crisis, with a declining tourist sector, with the loss of economic support from Venezuela, with at least 40% of the state enterprises operating at a loss. The Cuban government is betting on increasing the opening to the world market, on giving viability to some merchandise export opportunities and on lowering the operating costs of transnationals setting up in Cuba,

mainly labor costs, which is one of the cheapest in the region, surpassing only Venezuela's salaries.

The demons of speculation, hoarding and shortage of goods are unleashed. The price of 80 grams of bread alone, which every Cuban receives through the rationing card, has multiplied 20 times since January. The 11.2 million resident Cubans receive that bread daily, whether they are communists or opponents, working or unemployed, at a price that used to be 5 cents Cuban pesos (CUP), a tiny cost if expressed in dollars. Now, as part of the economic adjustments announced by President Miguel Díaz-Canel, bread will cost one peso, or 4 cents, according to information published in the Official Gazette. The prices of basic services (water, gas, electricity, transportation), notary fees and taxes also increased.

One of the immediate consequences of these measures will be an estimated inflation of three digits, which has also been recognized by the Cuban government in its announcements.

In an attempt to contain an inflationary process, the prices of agricultural products will be regulated by the municipal and Havana provincial governments; but we know that these controls will fall at the mercy of market dynamics.

The minimum wage in Cuba went from 400 to 2,100 Cuban pesos (from 17 to 87 dollars). The average wage increase was 450% and 500% in the case of pensions.

But workers will be harassed by inflation and the fall in real wages, and in the street the dispute for the acquisition of dollars in cash will become more acute and it is expected that transactions in this currency for the acquisition of basic necessities will increase. The black market in foreign currency will have a "license to kill" and the salaried workers will be the main ones affected.

As in the entire capitalist world, Cuban wage policies are oriented to protect the profits of public and private businessmen. Although it is foreseeable that the Cuban government will implement new wage adjustments and apply some price control measures for some goods and services, the trend of falling real wages and growing unemployment will continue. In Cuba we will see the same anti-worker policies applied by different bourgeois governments around the world. We will also see the flexibilization of the workday, casual labor, hourly work, overtime work and all the labor modalities that allow the capitalists to economize on their wage payments. The Cuban government seeks to make Cuba attractive for transnational investment, at the cost of the over-exploitation of the workers.

Neither Cuban wage earners, nor wage earners around the world, should be fooled by this false socialism. Sooner rather than later, the Cuban proletariat must react by resuming its class struggle and united action for the improvement of its wages and working conditions, breaking with the calls for the defense of the "socialist homeland".