

Amazon Labor Union

On April 1, workers at the JFK 8 Amazon warehouse in Staten Island, NY voted to unionize with the Amazon Labor Union (ALU). The result was rather unexpected by most outside observers. Indeed, no other union has yet managed to organize Amazon workers despite multiple attempts. Let's examine the origins of the ALU to illuminate the reasons for its recent success.

Origins

The story begins two years ago when, in the early weeks of the coronavirus pandemic, a small group of Staten Island Amazon employees were disciplined by the company for organizing labor actions demanding health protections. The common experience of repression brought these workers together and forged within them a clear consciousness of the irreconcilable antagonism between the worker and the boss, as well as an iron, righteous will for retribution against the company. On the ALU website, there are two pages titled "Amazon vs. Workers" and "Amazon vs. Society" that offer a glimpse of their perspective:

Amazon is a deliberately anti-worker employer: Jeff Bezos has stated on the record that he thinks workers are inherently lazy, he prefers that those at the bottom don't stay long, and he disparages workers who expect fair pay, calling them "mercenaries."

[...]

Amazon is not only a destructive force in the lives of workers, it is a destructive force in the lives of everyone, advancing dystopian plans for domination through its lucrative military and surveillance contracts, rampant ecological devastation, and monopolizing business practices.

The everyday struggle of workers against capital, exacerbated by the global economic crisis, pushed forward natural leaders from among the masses, ready to fight for their class interests by whatever means necessary and well-aware of the conditions of the struggle.

Witnessing the abortive certification drive by the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union at an Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, AL, these worker-leaders recognized the limitations of top-down organizing by bureaucratic national associations and opted for a strategy based on grassroots organizing of an independent, rank-and-file association instead. One of the original founders personally travelled to Alabama to observe the campaign:

First of all, you know, they're an established union with a limited amount of Amazon workers that are actually organizing. [...] So we felt like there was a lot of missed opportunities – just them, like not really communicating with the workers as much as we thought they should. [...] So, you know, when we took our organization efforts on, we just decided that, you know, Amazon workers need to organize other Amazon workers.

As the movement grew, organizers also took lessons from the rich history of the American labor movement – in particular, IWW and CIO organizing in the early 20th century – and put their newfound knowledge to use in action. According to an ALU organizing committee

member and employee at JFK 8:

We studied the history of how the first major unions were built. [...] We read William Z. Foster's Organizing Methods in the Steel Industry (a must-read, seriously). [...] I think this union shows the true possibility of what is before us, as a labor movement—if we just remember how to do it.

The result was the Amazon Labor Union. A great achievement indeed!

Appraisal

Even from the brief, incomplete account presented above, it is clear what is praise-worthy about the ALU:

- Its passionate proletarian culture, united around ambitious goals and fierce opposition to the bourgeoisie.
- Its strong spirit of self-reliance, with initiative emanating from the rank-and-file becoming desire for action on a strict class basis.
- Its humble eagerness for education through the experience of one's contemporaries and historical forebearers, in addition to one's own experience.

The following are some suggestions for the future:

- Work with other unions to organize Amazon, despite their shortcomings – RWDSU and especially Teamsters – including unions and their members in other countries where Amazon is already organized.
- Coordinate labor actions with workers from other unions, companies (e.g., BNSF, USPS), countries, etc., particularly in the logistics sector, perhaps starting with contracts that expire at the same time.
- Employ the methods of class struggle (e.g., generalizing strikes as much as possible), even forms of civil disobedience (e.g., mass and disruptive picketing, workplace occupations), and never forfeit those weapons, as for instance through a no-strike clause in a contract.

Amazon's behavior is certainly reprehensible, but it is not beyond explanation. The owners and managers are ruthless because economic competition is a powerful force encouraging people to treat other people (and themselves) as objects to be exploited for private interests, rather than as human beings. Everyone is a participant in this competition, so it shouldn't come as a surprise that the same phenomenon is at work across the nation and the world, as evidenced by the recent struggle of BNSF workers against the "Hi-Viz" attendance policy. Unification of these and all similar struggles is key to the victory of the workers. In conclusion, therefore, we repeat to Amazon workers what we wrote in the last issue of our party press to the railroaders:

- BNSF railway workers should build a strike together with the dockers and all the workers of the supply chain.
- Railroaders, dockers, truckers, warehouse workers and postal workers: all of these industries are, bound together, essential to the smooth functioning of capitalism. When workers of these sectors act alone – in isolation – they are powerless to confront the might of the capitalist class and its state apparatus. United, however, they have the strength to resist the repressive machinations of the state and bourgeoisie.

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 expelling the revisionary doctrine and the party organ, in contact with the working class, outside the realm of personal politics and electoralist manoeuvres

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It is an imperialist war Towards a general war

After years of non-stop crises, overcome only to relapse into even deeper ones, after two years of a pandemic which has contributed to block the gears of production, of transport, of the realization of surplus-value, world capitalism turns to its infernal ritual of war in order to survive. Faced with the historical and contingent failure of its mode of production, war, destroying every rule and value, resetting debts and credits to zero, is the final resource of capitalism to resolve all its slopes, its crises, and to begin again its monstrous cycle, a bath of youth.

The armed world war between capitals is already being fought today on the Ukrainian front.

It has been decided and prepared for a long time and all the states of the world are involved in it: in agreement they stir up a frenzied chauvinist propaganda and multiply the allocations for rearmament, as if what is already deadly in the world arsenals was not enough.

It still looks like a local war, by proxy, but in reality it opposes, in the old and exhausted bourgeois Europe, two imperial fronts, made of states, financial consortia, military apparatuses, centers of accumulation.

All indiscriminately bastions of counter-revolution. Because the real and only enemy of the states, of all the bourgeois states, is the working class, is the international communism that materially, in things themselves, is pressing to be born.

U.S. imperialism, which boasts of the strongest and most trained war machine, has once again gathered under its

command and suddenly brought back to order the recalcitrant components of that fictitious supra-state unit that is the European Union.

But this array of thieves, which seems inspired, solid and definitive, is not necessarily so at the final test. For the bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie of big industry and big global finance, it is important, necessary, to make war, with whom and against whom is a secondary matter. In every state the propaganda of war will meekly adapt to any reversal of the front.

That is why the Communist Party will not be moved nor will it push the international proletariat under one flag or another, nailed to the lie of defending its country, its "fatherland".

The end of the Russian empire

The end of the badly called Soviet Union - which was capitalist long before - dates from the first days of December 1991. At the end of that December, the agreement that sanctioned its dissolution was signed: Russia, Ukraine and Belarus were the signatories. From that moment on, a crucial turning point in the history of Europe began, and a more complex and deadly game between the most powerful imperialism in the West, the USA, the States of the Eastern bloc area, which were returning to their European matrix, and the Republics of the defunct USSR.

The game of the Cold War changed its rules, along with some of its players, and swept into other, wider scenarios: the chessboards of the clash between imperialisms

widened. In the meantime, a new formidable competitor, China, arose and the Euro-Asian one was reduced in size.

NATO, the armed arm of the USA in Europe, which at that point should have been dissolved due to exhaustion of its functions, since the main opponent had imploded, reducing its military and political raison d'être, had instead new development, gradually incorporating the old states of the defunct Warsaw Pact. Woe to the defeated.

Ukrainian ambiguity

The process of dismemberment did not initially affect Ukraine. However, the former republic had been a black beast for the USSR and had always maintained an anti-centralist tendency in its structure, with nationalist connotations. In the initial phase of the Second World War, after the invasion of the Wehrmacht, large strata of its social body had held a cooperative attitude with the Axis forces, and often hindered the Red Army with an asymmetrical warfare "on three fronts".

This ambivalence has always characterized the Ukrainian bourgeoisie: from 2000 until 2014, pro-Russian and anti-Russian presidents alternated in government, according to the oscillations of the opportunity of the moment.

A pro-Russian president twice was elected then kicked out "by popular vote," at least according to the Western vulgate, first, in 2004 by the so-called "Orange Revolution," then in 2014 by the so-called "Euromaidan

Movement," which developed from December 2013 to February 2014 that, depending on pro-Western or pro-Russian readings, has been described as a people's insurrection or as a coup d'état by paramilitary organizations inspired and funded by the US to destabilize in a pro-Western sense an already complex and difficult situation of balance, with episodes of frenzied violence, culminating in the Odessa massacre, passed over in silence but perpetrated by Ukrainian paramilitary militias.

The Russian and Ukrainian bourgeoisie - called "oligarchs", as if they were different from the big and powerful bourgeois of the West - are twin brothers of the same class, even if they are, temporarily, on different sides of the front. Like the Russian and Ukrainian proletarians, forcibly forced onto enemy fronts.

The Donbass

Even in the two Ukrainian areas to the east, on the border with Russia, the so-called separatist Russian-speaking republics, there are equally bourgeois linked to their Russian brothers, and Russian-speaking proletarians oppressed by bourgeois who speak their language.

The alleged "irredentist" insurrection of those territories wanted to connote it as a national movement to be recognized as autonomous states. There was a bloody local war fought for many years. Two ceasefire agreements were drawn up between Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, under the aegis of the OSCE in Minsk in 2014 and 2015. However, the clashes never ceased.

At the end of February 2014 with a military coup Russia regained the Crimean peninsula which was incorporated into the Federation. Which for the two separatist areas of Donbass and Lugansk did not happen.

There was no formal recognition of these two new republics on the Russian side either, although the arms supplies did not cease.

NATO pressure

The Ukrainian state, having undergone the amputation of Crimea, in its shiny new democratic regime born from the "popular movements" of 2014, has never ceased the violent political repressions against Russian-speaking people, but also against parties of the parliamentary arch, up to their outlawing, with the repression of any organization opposed to the government, whether legal or illegal. These are the wonders of the new democracy, similar to the West.

The Ukrainian bourgeoisie, no better than the others, has found it convenient to sell itself to the Americans. And more than that, on its way to the West, it sold the underpaid labor of its proletarians to the capitalists of Europe. Then it demanded entry into the European Union.

But above all, the American "protectors" demanded NATO membership, which, among other corruptions, would have guaranteed a bulwark against the bulky neighbor. At least these were the unspoken hopes. For the soggy bourgeoisie of Ukraine, the Western one was an obliged choice.

After all, in an official way, until 2014 NATO had a constant presence in the organization and training of the ruined Ukrainian army. It is clear that they were working on a widening of the clash from local for the separatist republics to an open and general conflict.

The presence of Western military structures is an important Atlantic outpost in Ukrainian territory, even if temporarily outside the alliance. In more recent times even making it an operational zone of NATO exercises, under the presidency of the docile former actor Zelensky (years 2020-21), provocative operations to put pressure on the Russian neighbor.

Against the proletariat in Ukraine

The proletariat, artificially distinguished into Russian speakers and Ukrainian speakers, is suffering, along with the petty bourgeoisie, also overwhelmed by economic crisis and nationalist drunkenness, all the effects of this choice of field when, at the invasion of the Russian army, the Ukrainian bourgeoisie decided on a hysterical call to arms, to resist to the last man, calling for a partisan war, a people's war against the invader.

In reality the working class of Ukraine would have nothing to lose from an immediate surrender of its bourgeoisie in the face of the Russian invasion. Symmetrically the workers of Russia have nothing to gain from a victory of their own state in Ukraine.

But the bourgeoisie of Ukraine wanted the war, just as their Western "protectors" want it, and just as the Russian bourgeoisie wants it.

All the bourgeoisies at stake, Russian, Ukrainian and the others, are aware of and responsible for the terrifying consequences of that decision, which has shifted the theater of war to the cities, where the impossibility of identifying the front provokes indiscriminate massacres, where every building can become a point of resistance, forcing the attacker to bring death and destruction.

Horror becomes an instrument of propaganda for the side that is in defense, and for those who support it safely far from the bloody fronts. Hysterical propaganda to excite the spectacular western public, or to orient it to a war of wider proportions, to stimulate the infamous alternative "either with Putin or with Ukraine".

The internationalist task of the communists

The media fury of the West – quite similar to that the Russian Motherland – has no equal in this war, where each of the two imperialisms attributes to the other every horror and responsibility for the slaughter.

Every war between states is a war against the proletariat, national and international, to whom go the grief, the misery, and finally the slave labor for the

The Rearmament of the German State with the Support of Parties and Trade Unions

The German economy is one of the most exposed to the repercussions of the war in Ukraine.

For now, the negative effects on the EU of sanctions are limited, but if they were extended to oil and gas, or if Russia cut off supplies, the effect would be greater. The Economist Intelligence Unit predicts that in 2022 the war in Ukraine will reduce German GDP by 0.8%, compared to 0.7% in France and 1% in Italy.

In Germany, the global surge in commodity prices is already being observed: in February, the wholesale cost of energy increased by 130%, gas prices tripled and food supplies are also at risk. Inflation is expected to rise to 6.2%, while wages will not keep pace: thus, as elsewhere in Europe, the working class will be hardest hit.

Germany is Russia's second largest trading partner for imports (first is China): it receives 10% of Russian exports. It is 40-50%

reconstruction of the economy of capital, within states which, victorious or defeated and dismembered, always remain the instrument of bourgeois domination.

But the war of the capitals could give to the international proletariat the opportunity to stop the bloody madness of the bourgeoisie: by destroying capitalism, in a solitary lifting of the workers of all countries.

The Party of the Revolution, therefore, denounces the imperialist war. The solution is not with any of the contending imperial parties, but against one and the other.

To the world proletariat, which today watches astonished at the unfolding of the deadly convulsions of the mode of production based on capital, we once again point out the way to its redemption: against war between states for war between classes!

This is the way, marked and certain.

dependent on Russia for hydrocarbons: industry and domestic consumption depend on cheap Russian gas. In addition, an increase in bill prices could lead to claims for wage increases. Thus, the German bourgeoisie is reluctant to accept the imposition of more sanctions on Russia, as demanded by the Ukrainian government and the United States.

It is considered unlikely that Russia will cut off gas supplies. Shifting sales to third parties, particularly China and India, would mean accepting a large reduction in price, and thus revenue. However, on March 29, the German government announced contingency plans in case of a severe reduction or blockage in supplies.

The Federal Republic's relations with Russia date back to Willi Brandt's "Ostpolitik" in the seventies of the last century, when an attempt was made to ease tensions within the divided Germany and reduce German dependence on the USA.

Meanwhile, the German bourgeoisie, behind the current "red-green-yellow" government, is taking advantage of the geopolitical situation to increase military spending. Before the invasion of Ukraine this decision would have been unacceptable to large sections of the population. At the end of February, Chancellor Olaf Scholz (SPD) announced that the military budget will be tripled: the largest German rearmament plan since World War II. The goal is to bring it to at least 2% of GDP. The decision to buy dozens of F-35 stealth bombers is now followed by a plan for national missile defense. A delegation of politicians went to Israel to negotiate the purchase of the US-Israeli long-range system Arrow 3. The German bourgeoisie has a clear intention to establish itself militarily, replacing Britain and France as the leading military power in Europe.

A May Day against War

To Workers of all Countries

Over the past eighty years separating humanity from the last world war, conflicts have never ceased. They have been fought, often "by proxy", on the outskirts of the great imperialist metropolises, in other regions and continents, so that the strongest capitalisms could seize agricultural, mineral and labor resources, and markets for their goods.

The working classes of many young nations – in Africa, in the Middle East, in Asia, in Latin America – have fought in these wars in pursuit of the emancipation of their countries, which would also mean better living and working conditions. These hopes were often drowned in the blood of new oppressions and dictatorships, perhaps cloaked in the usurped name of "socialism".

But today, world capitalism has been in crisis for decades, suffocated by overproduction, which blocks the factories and prevents their immense accumulation. It is a mode of production that sinks and writhes now in its agonized phase.

It can only survive by destroying. That's why it needs the general war: it's not a choice of insane or evil men but an ineluctable economic necessity.

War, which destroys every norm and value, together with commodities, which resets debts and credits to zero, is the penalty for the failure of capitalism. But it is also the final resource for resolving its debts and then trying to start a new monstrous cycle of accumulation.

That's why global capitalist high finance has coldly decided to unleash the now two-months-old war on Ukraine, with the heavy direct involvement of one of the economic and military giants, and indirect involvement of almost all the others, together with the deafening and ubiquitous interventionist propaganda.

At the command of global high capital, all vassal states have been subjected to the discipline of war, and even in the most democratic states a dictatorial discipline has been imposed on the media and parliaments. A regime as absolute as it is without apparent constraint.

As in previous world wars, all states are forced to re-arm and will soon throw the best forces of the working class into the furnace of war. This class which, with its

social presence alone, threatens, as soon as it finds its communist leadership, to bring down the power of the bourgeoisie and clear the way for communism

The war will cost many hundreds of millions of dead, sacrificed to maintain the flow of profits to the world's capitalists. For capital "there are too many of us!"

It will be mainly workers who will have to bear the grief and suffering of the war. Even though not directly sent to the front. Already wages are being reduced due to the rise in prices, and especially of primary goods in the countries that are most dependent on grain imports.

The regime of capital already started, years ago, to make the proletariat pay for its wars by spending immense resources on destructive armaments. The annual world expenditure in armaments is two trillion dollars. Material resources that, under communism, would be otherwise employed to allow a dignified existence to all the people of the world.

The working class must oppose all this!

It will not give its blood for the war of its masters!

Only the working class can prevent war.

In every country the workers must shake off the grip of the rampant militarist and nationalist propaganda of the bourgeoisie, which spreads hatred between proletarians of different countries, and organize their class strength.

In every country, class unionism must be strengthened or, where it does not yet exist, its rebirth must be fought for. Only by organizing can the working class demonstrate and employ its great strength.

But this strength, in order to rise to its historical dimension, needs a guide, its party, which has made its own, in its more than secular life, the tradition of struggle of the workers for their political, social and economic emancipation, not only in one country but in the whole world: the communist, internationalist, revolutionary party, the only one that shows, through its program, in its tradition of struggle, the necessary path of the proletarian class, of the workers, for their liberation from exploitation, from need, from war.

Un Primero de Mayo contra la guerra

A los trabajadores de todos los países

En los últimos ochenta años, que separan a la humanidad de la última guerra mundial, los conflictos nunca han cesado. Han estado combatiendo, muchas veces "por poder, en la periferia de las grandes metrópolis imperialistas, en otras regiones y continentes, para que los capitalismos más fuertes se apoderen de los recursos agrícolas, mineros, laborales y de los mercados para sus mercancías.

Las clases trabajadoras de muchas naciones jóvenes -en África, en Medio Oriente, en Asia, en América Latina- han combatido en estas guerras con la esperanza de que la emancipación de sus países significará también mejores condiciones de vida y de trabajo. Estas expectativas a menudo se han hundido en la sangre de nuevas opresiones y dictaduras, tal vez envueltas en el usurpado nombre de "socialismo".

Pero hoy el capitalismo mundial está en crisis desde hace décadas, sofocado por la sobreproducción que bloquea las fábricas e impide la desmesurada acumulación. Es un modo de producción que se hunde y se retuerce ahora en su fase agónica.

Sólo puede sobrevivir destruyendo. Para esto necesita de la guerra general: no es una elección de hombres locos o malvados sino una necesidad económica ineludible.

La guerra, que destruye, junto con las mercancías, todas las reglas y valores, que elimina las deudas y los créditos, sanciona el fracaso del capitalismo. Pero también es el último recurso para resolver sus problemas y para tratar de iniciar un nuevo ciclo monstruoso de acumulación.

Por eso, la guerra de dos meses desatada contra Ucrania fue firmemente decidida por las altas finanzas capitalistas mundiales, con la fuerte implicación directa de uno de los gigantes económicos y militares e indirectamente ya de casi todos los demás y en la ensordecedora y venenosa propaganda intervencionista.

Al mando del alto capital mundial en todos los Estados vasallos se activó la disciplina de guerra, incluso en los más democráticos se impuso una disciplina dictatorial a los medios y a los parlamentos. Un régimen de tiranía tan absoluta como sin arrepentimiento aparente.

Como en guerras mundiales anteriores, todos los Estados se ven obligados al rearme y pronto arrojarán las mejores

fuerzas de la clase obrera al horno de la guerra. Esa clase que, con su sola presencia social, amenazará, en cuanto recupere su dirección comunista, derrocar el poder de la burguesía y abrir el camino al comunismo.

Muchos cientos de millones de muertos costará la guerra, inmolados para mantener a los capitalistas el flujo de las ganancias.

¡Para el capital "somos demasidados"!

Los que soportarán el luto y el sufrimiento de la guerra serán principalmente los trabajadores, incluso aquellos que no hayan sido enviados directamente al frente. Los salarios ya se están reduciendo por el aumento de los precios y sobre todo de los bienes primarios en los países que más dependen de las importaciones.

El régimen del capital ya ha comenzado durante años a hacer pagar sus guerras a los proletarios gastando enormes recursos en armamentos destructivos. El gasto mundial anual en armamentos es de 2 billones de dólares. Recursos materiales que, en el comunismo, utilizados de diferentes formas, permitirán una existencia digna a todos los hombres del mundo.

¡A todo esto debe oponerse la clase obrera!

¡No debe dar su sangre a la guerra de sus patrones!

En todos los países la clase obrera debe liberarse de las garras de la rabiosa propaganda burguesa, militarista y nacionalista, que difunde el odio entre los proletarios de diferentes países, y organizar su propia fuerza de clase.

En todos los países es necesario fortalecer el sindicalismo de clase o, donde aún no existe, luchar para que renazca. Sólo organizada puede la clase obrera demostrar y emplear su inmensa fuerza.

Pero esta fuerza, para elevarse a la dimensión histórica que le es propia, necesita una guía, la de su partido, que ha hecho propia, en su vida más que secular, la tradición de lucha de los trabajadores por su emancipación política, social y económica, no en un solo país sino en el mundo entero: el Partido Comunista, internacionalista, revolucionario, el único que señala, en su programa, en su tradición de lucha, el camino necesario de la clase proletaria, de los trabajadores, por su liberación de la explotación, de la necesidad y de la guerra.

when the coming battles planned. Turkey has already assumed an important role in the imperialist war between Russia and Ukraine by playing the mediator and saving face for both countries as well as itself, while preparing to better position itself for the conflicts of the future.

From the Archive of the Left

The Dilemma Is Not War or Peace But War or Revolution

By the American Fraction of the Left Communist International (1950) Initially published in the Autumn-Winter 1950 issue of The Internationalist, a publication of the Italian communist left in the U.S.

Public opinion is preoccupied at present with a great question: When will the next world war break out?

The possibility of a new international conflict is not denied by anybody. Everybody is concerned about it. They understand in a situation of this kind that the politicians who speak of a right to capture the masses for peace, already feel their skin burnt from the effects of atom bomb radiation. Everybody hesitates to take a position in favor of a new war.

Demagogic propositions are advanced to conjure away the coming conflicts: disarmament, outlawing the atomic bomb, mutual appeasement, peace movements, or strengthening the U.N.O. (United Nations Organization). For the working class to think of opposing war by these methods is equal to the practice of magic, but certainly not the basis of the struggle against war.

It is clear that Russia and her allies are not fighting against war. They simply aim to neutralize the military and economic force of their adversaries. Only in that sense does Stalinism operate all over the world. It is not against the use of the atomic bomb. This would then sanctify their use of it second,

in retaliation. On the other hand, neither do they take the peace movement very seriously, the aim of which is not the transformation of the capitalist social order, but simply to maintain conditions as they exist at present.

The genuine Marxists must not pose the problem in the questions: Will there be a New World War? To the genuine Marxists, the conflict is inevitable as long as capitalist society exists. They, the Marxists, are the unique workers for peace through the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the proletarian revolution. They reject, therefore, the hypocritical and false pacifist crusade, denounce it and refuse to join with it in any manner whatsoever. The claim that it is possible to secure peace or conjure away war is the refuge of all "the men of good will" and therefore also, of the bourgeoisie. Such a claim is true to and proof of the abandonment of the interests of the working class.

The work of political clarification that qualifies as revolutionary must be based on the following:

1. It must anticipate the end of the period in which the workers are forced to fight for that or that imperialist antagonist. It must assert in a most explicit manner that the working class will not fight for any of these, and refuse in every case to yield to the deceit and trickery of Imperialist war.

2. They do not support any victor, but profit from the crisis of the world bourgeoisie in order to prepare and lead to the revolutionary struggle. The proletariat recognizes the two adversaries only as their class enemies and in both cases, there is only one kind of politics to follow behind either fronts: revolutionary defeatism.

3. In face of the attempt to line up the masses physically and spiritually for the war, the Marxists call upon them to refuse to shed their blood a for the cause of any Imperialism whatsoever, and to work instead not for the bloody victory of this or that brigand, but for the victory of the revolutionary proletariat. There is no greater task for the real revolutionary than to make clear to the workers that they have nothing to defend in

capitalist society, and that they should not seek to support this or that Imperialism that permits a more easy life. To the proletariat, whoever gives support to the war betrays their cause. The proletariat has no interest in defending anybody in this conflict, or any other Imperialist conflagration. It has only one interest: to conquer the peace by the only possible method: Revolution!

Un 1er Mai contre la guerre

Aux travailleurs de tous les pays

Au cours des quatre-vingts dernières années, qui séparent l'humanité de la dernière guerre mondiale, les conflits n'ont jamais cessé. Ils se sont déroulés, souvent "par procuration", à la périphérie des grandes métropoles impérialistes, dans d'autres régions et sur d'autres continents, afin que les capitalistes les plus puissants puissent s'emparer des ressources agricoles, minérales et de travail, ainsi que des marchés pour leurs marchandises.

Les classes ouvrières de nombreuses jeunes nations - en Afrique, au Moyen-Orient, en Asie, en Amérique latine - ont combattu dans ces guerres à la recherche de l'émancipation de leurs pays, qui signifierait aussi de meilleures conditions de vie et de travail. Ces espoirs ont souvent été noyés dans le sang de nouvelles oppressions et dictatures, éventuellement recouvertes du nom usurpé de "socialisme".

Mais aujourd'hui, le capitalisme mondial est en crise depuis des décennies, asphyxié par la surproduction, qui bloque les usines et empêche leur immense accumulation. C'est un mode de production qui s'enfonce et se débat maintenant dans sa phase d'agonie. Il ne peut survivre qu'en détruisant. C'est pourquoi il a besoin de la guerre générale: ce n'est pas un choix de fous ou de méchants mais une nécessité économique inéluctable.

La guerre, qui détruit toute règle et toute valeur, ainsi que les marchandises, qui remet les dettes et les crédits à zéro, sanctionne l'échec du capitalisme. Mais elle est aussi l'ultime ressource pour résoudre ses dettes et tenter ensuite d'amorcer un nouveau cycle monstrueux d'accumulation.

C'est pourquoi la haute finance capitaliste mondiale a froidement décidé de la guerre contre l'Ukraine, qui dure maintenant depuis deux mois, avec la lourde participation directe de l'un des géants économiques et militaires et la participation indirecte de presque tous les autres, et dans le cadre d'une propagande interventionniste générale assourdissante.

Comme lors des précédentes guerres mondiales, tous les Etats sont

contraints de se réarmer et jetteront bientôt dans la fournaise de la guerre les meilleures forces de la classe travailleuse. Cette classe qui, par sa seule présence sociale, menace, dès qu'elle trouvera sa direction communiste, d'abattre le pouvoir de la bourgeoisie et de frayer la voie au communisme.

Face au commandement du haut capital mondial, tous les Etats vassaux ont été soumis à la discipline de la guerre, et même dans les Etats les plus démocratiques, une discipline dictatorialle a été imposée aux médias et aux parlements. Un régime absolu sans contrainte apparente.

La guerre coûtera plusieurs centaines de millions de morts, immolés pour maintenir le flux des profits des capitalistes.

Pour le capital "nous sommes trop nombreux" !

Ce seront principalement les travailleurs qui supporteront le chagrin et la souffrance de la guerre ; même ceux qui ne seront pas directement envoyés au front. Déjà les salaires sont réduits en raison de la hausse des prix, et notamment des produits de première nécessité dans les pays les plus dépendants des importations de céréales.

Le régime du capital a déjà commencé depuis des années à faire payer ses guerres au prolétariat en dépensant d'immenses ressources en armements destructeurs. Les dépenses mondiales annuelles en armement s'élèvent à 2000 milliards de dollars. Des ressources matérielles qui, sous le communisme, employées autrement, permettraient une existence digne à tous les hommes du monde.

La classe travailleuse doit s'opposer à tout cela !

Elle ne donnera pas son sang pour la guerre de ses maîtres ! Seule la classe travailleuse peut empêcher la guerre !

Dans chaque pays, les travailleurs doivent se défendre de l'emprise de l'ignoble propagande bourgeoise, militariste et nationaliste, qui répand la haine entre les prolétaires de différents pays, et organiser leur force de classe.

Dans chaque pays, il faut renforcer le syndicalisme de classe ou, là où il n'existe pas encore, lutter pour sa renaissance. C'est seulement en s'organisant que la classe travailleuse peut démontrer et employer sa grande force.

Mais cette force, pour s'élever à sa dimension historique, a besoin d'un guide, de son parti, qui a fait sien, dans sa vie plus que séculaire, la tradition de lutte des travailleurs pour leur émancipation politique, sociale et économique, non seulement dans un pays mais dans le monde entier: le Parti Communiste International, révolutionnaire, le seul qui indique, dans son programme, dans sa tradition de lutte, le chemin nécessaire de la classe prolétarienne, des travailleurs, pour leur libération de l'exploitation, du besoin, de la guerre.

This rearmament policy has the support of the entire parliamentary spectrum. Even the "left-wing" party Die Linke, which is losing support, has jumped on the war bandwagon, so much so that its founder, Oskar Lafontaine, has resigned in protest. But in general, all "leftist" parties and groups have abruptly swerved towards militarism and in support of the war: even the Foreign Minister, Annalena Baerbock, of the Greens, who flaunted feminist and climate and human rights positions!

In the lower echelons, as in 2015, there was an attitude of compassion and welcome toward Ukrainian refugees, some 300,000 of them, most of whom arrived by train to Berlin via Poland, only to be sorted across the country, many in temporary housing.

But unlike in 2015, this outpouring of solidarity is accompanied by poisonous pro-Ukrainian nationalism - yellow-blue flags fly everywhere on public buildings - and anti-Russian animosity. The bourgeois media and the state apparatus work at full capacity to channel the common instinct of solidarity towards nationalistic resentments. The reception of refugees falls largely on the spontaneous efforts of the population, but are taken up by politicians and businesses. Celebrities participate in events of ideological propaganda, for "democracy" and "freedom", if not for explicit commercial interests. Authorities of the Ukrainian state, sports champions, television comedians, and pop artists appear on video, all of whom suddenly and shamelessly removed "the flowers from the cannons".

In spite of this smokescreen, aimed at getting the working class to accept rearmament, the Ukrainian government, obedient spokesman for the American master, called the visit to Kiev of German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier "unwelcome", as he would have been too friendly to Russia. Indeed, which side will Germany ultimately take? However, certainly, against the proletariat, first and foremost German.

According to a recent poll (for what it's worth, but in the meantime they let it be

known...) still more than half of Germans would oppose a total embargo of fuel imports from Russia, despite the incessant propaganda that they would "finance Putin's war machine." The reality is that the working class knows that, one way or another, it will end up bearing the brunt of the crisis.

The main industrial unions, IG Metall, IG BCE and IG Bau, have asked the government for emergency funds, not for the working class but to protect energy-intensive industries such as automobiles from bankruptcy. They see the lack of liquidity and reduced competitiveness of companies compared to other countries as a serious threat to jobs.

In Ford's international restructuring there is already conflict between the union at the Saarlouis plant in Germany and the one in Valencia: the increase in energy prices puts the Spaniard at an advantage.

The German trade unions are thus playing their traditional role of ally of national capital and enemy of the international proletariat. Of course, they are also concerned that the rising cost of living will lead their members to demand more combative action.

In Russia... God, Homeland and Family

The Russian Patriarch Kirill, head of the Orthodox Church, regarding the invasion of Ukraine, said in a sermon that it is a patriotic war (and we did not doubt it), and also a crusade against the danger represented by the West and its gay lobbies. The Patriarch of All Russia, with his Church, thus stands as a defender not only of the homeland of the Russians, but also of their sexual inclinations.

The relationship between Church and State in Russia has gone through various phases. If after the October Revolution the Russian Orthodox Church, an integral part of Tsarist power, showed horror for atheistic and materialistic communism, as well as confiscator of its

immense lands and other wealth, after the prevalence of the Stalinist counterrevolution, to better mobilize the population, during the Second World War the alliance between throne and altar was reconstituted, in the name of the homeland, where the throne commanded and the altar obeyed, all to mutual advantage.

Today, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, already a country with full capitalism, but unable to withstand Western competition, this alliance has taken on different traits due to the different balance of power between the parties: now the Church has recovered all its function and we see the "little father" Putin, atheist and former national-communist, lavishing himself in prostrations and signs of the cross in countless religious ceremonies, possibly next to the patriarch. Paraphrasing Henry IV, Moscow is worth a mass.

We have nothing to say to the patriarch, who performs his function of reactionary ideological cement of Russian patriotism, its capitalism and its imperialism.

After all, the responsibility of spreading such high words is entirely ours, of the working class, which has not yet reached the strength and determination to beat up those "in the guise of rapacious wolves". Dante Alighieri, in the Canto XXVII of Paradiso, apostrophizes "those who furr on earth my place... fassh' dal cimitero mio cloaca del sangue e della puzza". After the proletarian seizure of power there will be no freedom of expression for the coryphaeus of capitalism, with or without caskock.

The Starbucks Campaign: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Much has been made lately of the news of the seemingly unstoppable juggernaut that is Starbucks Workers United which, in stark contrast to the 0-2 record of the Retail, Wholesale and

Department Store Union's efforts to unionize Amazon, has enjoyed success after success. The giant coffee chain is known for being one of the better food-service retail outlets, at least in terms of pay and benefits, and tries to maintain an image of being a worker-friendly company. Nevertheless, not all is as it seems.

The Good

First, it is important to recognize the fact that Starbucks Workers United has been doing extremely well. Since beginning their campaign last summer, in the space of approximately six months, they have successfully unionized 21 of the 23 Starbucks facilities at which they have held elections. At one location, the vote was definitively against, and at the other, the NLRB was unable to call the election. Approximately 200 stores have petitioned for an election so far this year. SWU's successes are not limited to regular Starbucks stores, either —at least one Roastery has also joined the union.

Moreover, having a union is often positive. The union is the proletariat's vehicle for economic struggle against the bourgeoisie, and is capable of extracting concessions such as increased wages, more time off, benefits, etc. While none of these things mean the end of capital, they are nevertheless positive goods. The struggle over these issues, furthermore, teaches the proletariat how to fight as a class; it demonstrates that it is only through combined struggle that the proletariat is capable of exercising its power, and lays bare the antagonism between proletariat and bourgeois. It is the school of the proletarian revolution.

The fact that SWU is doing so well is clear proof of the lie that Starbucks spreads about itself. It constantly cries that it wants a direct relationship between itself and its employees, as if a corporation, an impersonal force, could have a direct relationship with anyone. It seeks to conceal the fact that the wages and benefits it offers were won through previous struggle. It's also evidence that SWU is not simply treating the workers as

passive observers, and is engaging them in the struggle.

The Bad

Starbucks has no intention of taking this lying down. The CEO has been sacked and Howard Schulz is now back in command, for the third time. Schulz has had success in beating unionization campaigns in the past.

The company is no stranger to union-busting. It has defeated both the UFCW and IWW, through characteristically ruthless tactics. It has fired workers, brought in scabs at higher wages than its current employees—with the clear implication that the workers joining the union are ungrateful and could be getting more if they would just stop—and spread anti-union propaganda. Efforts to buy off workers by offering more perks, and perhaps a small raise, would not be unprecedented, either.

Moreover, SWU is known to employ salts, union organizers who get jobs for the sole purpose of organizing a workplace, typically with no intention of maintaining their employment once the shop is organized. This can weaken the campaign as it has a strong potential to undermine workers' confidence in the union, and lowers the actual number of workers on board with the union. Indeed, salts exist for the purpose of providing leadership within the shop to unionize, and, once a salt leaves or gets fired, leadership disappears. Organic leadership developed from workers whose intention to keep the job is not tenuous and tied specifically to their ability to organize there provides a solid foundation for lasting power.

The Ugly

Now we must turn to the heart of the question: is SWU the kind of union that will struggle for the workers that make it up, or is it merely capitalizing on discontent with no real intent of leading the struggle? Starbucks appears to be a particularly hot shop currently, which SWU is exploiting for its parent union, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), a union notorious for its top-down approach to unionism,

and the recently-departed President, Andy Stern, has established his own union-busting consulting company. Stern was notorious for showing terrible contracts down members' throats, a practice which has not significantly abated since his departure. SEIU is perhaps the model of the American regime union, a labor cop, acting as an agent of the state in imposing capitalist work discipline on its members.

The commitment of SWU to the shop-by-shop bargaining approach, the scheme envisioned by the most conservative forces of American labor and endorsed by the bourgeoisie, allows fissures between shops to persist and grow, divisions that can and will be exploited by the bosses. By allowing workers to bargain piecemeal, their combined power cannot be wielded against Starbucks, leaving them weaker than if they all spoke with the same voice. By permitting unequal treatment between shops, they leave themselves open to defeat in detail.

Moreover, the approach of unions such as SEIU is to sign away the power of workers to withhold their labor, the most powerful weapon they possess. The rule in such unions is "work now, grieve later," which, all too often, translates into "just work and stop complaining." While pursuing grievances with the NLRB is not intrinsically wrong, this process is byzantine, the domain of bureaucrats and lawyers, and cannot stop ongoing abuses, much less prevent future ones. Workers who interface with this process quickly become aware of this fact, and by signing away the right to strike or take other shopfloor action (the law effectively contemplates any concerted action as a strike), they become helpless in the face of their bosses' willful and continuous disregard for the law.

Regime unions such as SEIU also divert workers' struggle into the swamp of electoralism. Joined at the hip with the Democratic Party, they seek salvation through the very state whose laws bind them to servitude and degradation. Proletarians are

aware that the Democratic Party cannot be trusted, and is just as much an enemy of their class as the Republicans Party. This encourages a false image of the state as a neutral actor, which can be made more friendly to them by electing the right people to office, rather than revealing it for what it is, namely the executive committee of the bourgeoisie.

As union density continues to decline through this historic relationship of subjection to the interests of capital, the labor lieutenants of the captains of industry fatten themselves at the expense of those whose interests they purport to represent. Avid seekers of labor peace, they actively restrain the struggle of the worker to better his condition. Where the opportunity presents itself for these piccadors to advance the interests of the working class, they choose the opposite.

The Solution

As we have consistently maintained, such organizations must be dismantled and destroyed. We repeat again that unions are vital organs of economic struggle for the proletariat, but regime unions are worse than useless for this struggle. They are impediments, obstacles along the march to victory that must be removed. No more can we speak of these individuals' acts as a siren-call. We must now speak of a cacophony. The purpose is not to draw us onto a different line of march, but to drown out the clarion call of the correct line of the class union.

Only by seeking each other out and amplifying our voices together can we defeat the bourgeoisie and fulfill our historic destiny. Under the leadership of the class party, united into a class union, victory is possible. Communism will

—communism must—win.

Ukraine and the Question of Fascism

A phantom is haunting Europe...

Both sides of the War in Ukraine use fascism in various ways to serve their own ends. Ukraine is not a fascist or Nazi state in any reasonable sense (it is a bourgeois national state, and even has a Jewish president), but it uses the influential Ukrainian fascist movement to its own ends. The Ukrainian National Guard contains an explicitly Nazi unit, the Azov Battalion (which has actually grown into a regiment). Azov began as a fascist paramilitary organization during the 2014 protests that brought down the Yanukovich government. It was incorporated into the official National Guard, which is the Ukrainian gendarmerie, when the pro-NATO regime was constituted. It continues to do the state's dirty work in Eastern Ukraine, while appealing to the fascism, latent or explicit, that permeates Ukrainian nationalism.

Russia uses the same strategy. There are significant fascist and Nazi elements in contemporary Russian nationalism, along with a current of antisemitism that has survived since the Tsarist period. Russia also provides clandestine support to fascist movements in other countries in order to destabilize them. At the same time, the Russian government would never be caught taking explicitly fascist positions because postwar Russian imperialism is tied up in the victory against the Nazis.

The United States is, of course, no stranger to supporting fascist movements as the situation requires. Following the Maidan protests in 2014, it promoted every chauvinistic nationalist movement that could possibly

take a pro-US slant. US journalists praise White Army pogromists and Nazi collaborators as Ukrainian national heroes. The US government previously provided weapons to the Azov Battalion, and has just decided to do so again. Yet the US government cannot possibly take a pro-fascist position for the same reason as the Russian government: the victory against Nazi Germany in WW2 is central to US imperialism.

Every player in the conflict uses fascist and Nazi comparisons to its own advantage. The Ukrainian government and its supporters compare the Russian state in 2022 to the Nazi state in 1938 (even as they use their own fascist regiment against the Russians). The United States and the rest of NATO use the same comparison to justify their role in escalating the conflict. Some have explicitly made comparisons to the Munich Agreement of 1938, stating that NATO cannot "appease" the Russians like the Allies appeased Hitler. On the other side of the conflict (to the extent that any bourgeois war has distinct sides), the Russian state attempts to justify its invasion of Ukraine under the pretext of "denazifying" the country and stopping a "genocide" of Russian speakers in Ukraine (entirely fictional, of course).

This propaganda regarding fascism is absurd. There is really no fascist threat in Europe in 2022. The Ukrainian, Russian, and US bourgeoisies do not need the tool of fascism now because the proletariat is weak. They only talk about fascism now because it is a convenient way to justify imperialism – any imperialism, as it turns out. Even German rearmament can now be justified by the fascist menace. O tempora, o mores!

Turkey as Mediator: the Regional Imperialist Power Tries to Turn a Diplomatic Crisis into Opportunity

The war in Ukraine has once again brought Turkey's role as a rising regional imperialist power to the fore

Turkey was one of the first countries to join NATO after the end of the Second World War, in 1952, despite the neutrality maintained by the Kemalist İnönü government during the second imperialist war and the ambiguous attitude towards Hitler's Germany. US diplomacy had understood the importance of Turkey in the Eastern bloc on the southern flank and thought it well to make it an ally. In turn, Turkey's new pro-Western Menderes government felt the need for NATO's protection against a possible Russian threat, and the alliance came with the cost of Turkey's participation in the Korean war with a total force of 35,000 soldiers, over 700 of whom died according to official figures.

Over the years, the Turkish army has become the largest within NATO after the US but military spending has always remained rather limited. Moreover, historically the army has been used above all in maintaining order within the complex country first against Kurdish rebellions; then through a number of coups, the most significant ones being against the Menderes government in 1960 and against the political chaos as well as increased workers' militancy in 1980, and afterward again to fight the Kurdish insurgency lead by

the PKK. In any case, aside from the invasion of Northern Cyprus in 1973 by the left-Kemalist Ecevit government and repeated "operations" into Southern Kurdistan, the Turkish army was for the most part not used as an instrument of aggression towards the outside.

In recent years, things have changed profoundly. The Turkish government lead by Erdoğan has started a policy of Islamic nationalism by putting itself forward as a regional imperialist power. At the same time it has successfully sought to build a national arms manufacturing industry by trying to free itself from the cumbersome presence of the United States, to seek a freer and more independent national policy.

The 2016 coup attempt lead by the Gülen cult, Erdoğan's former allies, for which Erdoğan implicitly blamed the United States, accentuated Istanbul's rapprochement with Moscow. The acquisition of the S400 anti-missile system from Moscow and the consequent refusal of the US to supply Turkey with the F35 fighters already partially paid for, has exacerbated tensions between the two countries.

Meanwhile, the Turkish government has been trying to expand its influence in Arab countries, Africa and the Mediterranean, alarming not only Egypt, but also Greece and France. Moreover, due to the fact that Erdoğan's Turkey opposed the Esad government in Syria and the Libyan National Army lead by Haftar in Libya, both Russian allies, its relations with Moscow remained contradictory.

The war in Ukraine has put Turkish diplomacy in a serious crisis. Despite finding itself on the opposite side in the regional conflicts mentioned above, the Turkish government has good relations with Moscow and, above all, trade between the two countries and the continued arrival of Russian tourists are very important for the Turkish economy. Russia not only supplies armaments but is building a nuclear power plant in Turkey and supplies gas. However, Turkey also has good relations with Ukraine with which it collaborates precisely in the strategic armaments sector.

A break in relations

with the Russian Federation would certainly create new problems for the Turkish economy, already plunged into a deep crisis and further aggravate the conditions of the proletariat severely affected by inflation. In fact, an increase in the price of energy could only accelerate the inflation process.

For now, Turkey continues to keep its feet in two shoes: it refuses to adopt economic sanctions against Russia and has not closed its skies to Russian flights, at the same time it continues to supply arms to Ukraine. The Turkish government has tried to get out of the corner by proposing itself as a mediator in the search for a peace agreement. Though an agreement between Russia and Ukraine seems quite unlikely for now, both countries have so far been eager to accept Turkey's role as a mediator, and Ukrainian leader Zelensky even proposed Turkey be a guarantor of peace if an agreement is ever reached.

An important point to be considered is that due to the increasingly worsening economic crisis, the popularity of Erdoğan's Islamist Justice and Development Party and his fascist allies are significantly dropping and the six party alliance lead by the Kemalist social democratic Republican People's Party and the dissident fascist Good Party are on the rise. Akşener, the leader of the Good Party has already openly condemned Erdoğan for not doing enough for Ukraine, and the social democrats are known to have much better relations with the United States, the United Kingdom and above all the European Union. As the United States tries to do all it can with the aim of weakening the Russian adversary as much as possible, Washington's side in the next Turkish elections, scheduled for 2023, seems clear. In turn, if the war between Russia and Ukraine is still going on by then, a new Turkish government lead by the current opposition will surely move firmly towards the West, and consequently against Russia, hoping that mending disrupted economic ties with the West will make up for disrupting economic ties with Russia.

If peace under capitalism is when the next war is being plotted, peace negotiations are

Life Of The Party: New Publications

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Party Meetings in the US

Denver First Saturdays at Terizo cafe, 2890 Fairfax St Denver, 11am
Minneapolis: First Saturdays at Jakeman's Pizzeria, 3555 Chicago Ave, Minneapolis - 3-5pm
Portland, OR: First Saturdays at Neighbors Taproom 1306 E Burnside 11am. All ages
Pittsburgh First Saturdays at 61C Cafe 1839 Murray Ave. 4PM

Meetings also in: Akron, Charlotte, Raleigh, Tampa, Yakima
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