the International 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 coalitions 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 manoevrings

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AGAINST DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY!

U.S. Midterms: Inter-Bourgeois Power Struggle and Democratic Fascism

As the U.S. midterm elections wrap up and America takes another huff of that intoxicating democratic gas, suspicious eyes dart back and forth between the Donkeys and the Elephants. For this time around, accusations of fraud, cheating, and manipulation haunt the electoral machine, threatening to destroy their precious gilded democracy. The proletariat, all too familiar with the experience of what the bourgeoisie only accuses each other of, lay indifferent to this distant struggle between whichever master holds the chains of their shackles.

The failure of Mr. Trump in pushing through legislation like the SAVE Act in order to truncate votes to support a Republican victory has limited his options in preventing a likely Democrat victory. Thus, legal challenges through the courts and successful state-level redistricting have become key to the Republican strategy.

All the while, Democrats hue and cry over violations of sacred democracy, while furthering their own gerrymandering schemes. The only reason they seek to remove restrictions on voting is because it cynically gives them an edge in their own game and reinforces the democratic mythos.

An emboldened Democratic left wing representing the less wealthy bourgeoisie alongside its nominally socialist allies mobilize for a defense of classic bourgeois values, supported by significant contingents of the petty bourgeoisie.

At the opposite end, a Republican right wing representing the wealthier bourgeoisie, flirtatious with outward fascists, seeking to outmaneuver the courts and lay the groundwork—that the Democrats will no doubt continue—of a further centralized State that is capable of greater violence and ready to combat the coming proletarian revolt.

The proletarian Party charts its own course against these brigands and especially combats the confusion perpetrated by bourgeois ideology in regards to the fascist advance being perpetrated by both parties.

Do We Defend Democratic Rights & Civil Liberties?

Opportunists of all shades love to pretend that they are so different from the bourgeois left, shouting about defending a unique form of democracy or inalienable rights. These cretins harken on about how it is them who are the true torchbearers of real democracy.

All too familiar are the demands for a free press, equality, the right to vote, and self-determination. Maybe even the brave nationalization of a few companies are also inscribed on their banners! Whatever the case, allow us to confidently condemn this grotesque hodgepodge and say quite clearly: bourgeois-democratic—and national for that matter—slogans and demands are obsolete and reactionary all across the world now that capitalism is fully entrenched everywhere.

Even the demand for self-determination of the nationally oppressed can no longer be useful! That is sure to ruffle some feathers, but worry not, the proletariat will instead struggle for the abolition of all national discrimination through "direct" communist revolution.

We absolutely reject any defense of the right to vote—as is being pushed by opportunism today—or any other democratic right.

But, does this mean we must abstain from the struggles in which workers' rights are given and taken? No, dear reader, we are entirely against such indifferentism. For "right" simply means the State granting the "ability to do". We do, however, eschew rights entirely from our agitation so that workers are not fooled by the fiction of obtaining

(continued on page 2)

DATA CENTERS

The Latest in Opportunism and Overproduction

While the approval rating of Congress remains steadily underwater at less than 20% (an average figure since the Great Recession), a life preserver has appeared for any of the flailing contestants quick enough to take it. Eager to once again deceive the working class, Democrats and Republicans clamor to be one with the people! Just tell them what they want to hear: "No more data centers!"

Though distrust of data centers has been simmering for the past year, a populist movement against them exploded over the summer, the hottest in American history. Much of the activism has been local in practice, but national in its influence, largely utilizing legalistic means in appeal for the State to halt construction.

Nonprofits and activist groups are taking an early victory lap. Along with the rapid change in public opinion, they cite the growing number of contract cancellations and moratoriums as a sign of hope.

But these victories are short-lived.

The vast majority of these moratoriums are set to expire within a year. In the meantime, the bourgeoisie and their political operatives are taking note, plotting on how to take advantage of the situation as they weather the storm until a new issue takes center stage.

A Public Relations Disaster

History shows that the Democrats are favored to win at least one chamber of Congress simply by being the false opposition. Hoping to mitigate this outcome, Republicans scrambled for a narrative to distract voters from the historic unpopularity of the Trump administration and all that it represents: Epstein, the Iran War, and stubborn inflation.

They realized that the issue of data centers is quite important for their

(continued on page 7)

THE PROLETARIAT'S MISERY FUELS BOURGEOIS PROFITS

On the Cost of Living Crisis

Profits are up, the stock market is booming, and even real median household income has reached a record high! A cacophony of adherents to the Republican administration exclaim that "The people must be doing well!" while the Democratic false opposition now takes its turn as the anti-establishment carnival barker, pretending to give a voice to those who suffer, engaging in its classical populist demagoguery about "corruption", "greed" and "monopoly".

Despite the reformist promises of the Democrats, the rapid immiseration of the working class and proletarianization of the middle classes continue in the homeland of old man Uncle Sam, while the bourgeoisie find themselves increasingly stuck between a rock and a hard place looking toward a horizon rumbling thunderously in anticipation of the next hurricane of economic crisis and proletarian revolt.

Inflation

Inflation has become one of the biggest concerns facing U.S. workers, as prices for consumer goods have increased by more than 30% since 2019. However, this figure must also be understood alongside the wages received by American workers and how much purchasing power those wages actually provide.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, real (inflation-adjusted) wages have grown by only approximately 2.4% since 2019, an average annual increase of just 0.3%. This already facile growth conceals periods of outright decline. In 2022, as inflation surged, real wages fell by approximately 2.8%, wiping out much of the purchasing-power gains workers had previously made. Although real wages subsequently recovered as inflation moderated, this recovery has been slow and uneven. Even over the past year, from September 2025 to September 2026, real wages declined by another 0.7%, despite inflation having fallen considerably from its 2022 peak.

In other words, while workers' nominal wages have increased, their actual purchasing power has barely improved over seven years. This

(continued on page 2)

INSIDE

- Chinese "Socialism" 3
- Oil Worker Struggle 4
- Conflict of Med. Oil 5
- Cattle Capital / ICE 4
- Keynesian Illusion 7
- French Rebellion 8
- AFD in Germany 8

NEITHER NIHILISM, PACIFISM, NOR ACTIVISM WILL SAVE U.S. SOLDIERS!

The ongoing inter-imperialist conflict bathing the Persian Gulf in rocket and missile fire, drone swarms, ruined military and civilian infrastructure, shipwrecks, burning oil, and billions upon billions of dollars in lost energy revenues has ripped the proverbial lid off of a glaring problem that the Russo-Ukrainian War of 2022 has also helped to expose: the enormously prohibitive cost of modern warfare. Even the opening moments alone inflicted a staggering siphon from the United States, the primary belligerent.

The U.S. government spent about $5.6 billion on munitions in the first two days of strikes alone, and administration officials estimate the war cost over $11 billion in its first six days, with Congress preparing potential supplemental funding requests approaching $50 billion to sustain operations and rebuild military inventories just a week later. One month in and the Pentagon is also preparing plans for a request of $200 billion to sustain operations in the region.

According to United States Central Command (CENTCOM), as of September 3rd, six months out from the initial American-Israeli barrages of February 28th, total expenditures for the endeavor equal out to roughly $45 billion; in comparison, the entire cost of the 2003-2011 hybrid war/counterinsurgency waged by the U.S. led Coalition against the Ba'athist Iraqi government and subsequent insurgent movements extracted over $800 billion, not to mention $2.3 trillion from the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan from 2001-2021.

On the present course, total military costs per-year for this conflict would amount to around $90 billion by February's end next year, a similar annual average to Iraq, though less than the ~$115 billion of Afghanistan. For its part, as of mid-2026, the conflict in Ukraine (by estimation, as it is difficult for international observers to accurately calculate any precise figures) has cost the Russian state

(continued on page 5)

LABOR MISLEADERS

FALSE ANTI-IMPERIALISM, INTERNATIONALISM, AND OPPOSITION TO WAR IN THE MEETING BETWEEN LEADERS OF THE HARBOUR UNIONS IN ISTANBUL

On May 18 and 19, representatives from various dockworkers' unions met in Istanbul, hosted by the Turkish union Liman-İş. Participants included USB from Italy, CGT Ports and Docks from France, Enedep from Greece, LAB from the Basque Country, and ODT from Morocco.

The meeting followed on from the relationships established last February at a gathering in Athens, which was followed by another in Genoa the following September, and ultimately led to the first international strike by dockworkers against the war and "for Palestine" on February 6 of this year, which we covered in "Strike Against the War Distorted by the Anti-Proletarian Nationalism of the World Federation of Trade Unions," published in the March–April issue (No. 438) of this newspaper.

The manifesto approved at the conclusion of the meeting in Istanbul, while marked by a certain vagueness and ambiguity to accommodate the differing positions of the leaderships of the unions involved—some of which we noted in the aforementioned article—clearly tends to identify only "Western" imperialist forces: the United States, the European Union, and Israel—and to place the sole responsibility for the conflicts in the Middle East on them. "Imperialist aggression in the Middle East is expanding. The genocide of the Palestinian people by the murderous state of Israel continues with the support of the U.S., NATO, and the EU. The U.S.-Israeli attack on Iran, the flare-up of war in the Strait of Hormuz, the attacks on ships, the blockades, and the militarization of maritime passages—all of this demonstrates that the peoples and workers are being pushed ever deeper into the abyss of war."

The proletariat of the Middle East, in this view, are not victims of a clash between opposing fronts of imperialist countries—which divide up the entire world among themselves—and,

(continued on page 3)

Cornell Seven Exposes Oppression of Women & Lie of Bourgeois Justice

Innumerable cases of massacre, rape, and all other forms of violence are par for the course under this putrid and decaying capitalism.

The oppression of women was the first class oppression of humanity, stretching back much further than just capitalism. Engels states in chapter 2 of The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State that "the first class opposition that appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression coincides with that of the female sex by the male." Capitalism inherits the patriarchal property relations inherent within the family and intensifies them.

Today, women continue to be oppressed not only within the family through menial housework and economic dependence on the male (a phenomenon that, yes, continues even in the great United States and is even worse in the peripheral countries), but also through the commodification of their bodies and the alienation of wage slavery. Unrealizable beauty standards, the "male gaze", and outright prostitution are some notable physical manifestations of converting human women into commodities. It is precisely the profit generating marketplace of modern day capitalism and familial domination of man over woman that determine machismo culture that feeds right into the abuse of women.

Treating women as objects to be acquired shapes how men see sexual access. Intimacy becomes something to be won or conquered.

And, we should add, anti-woman sentiment and alcohol are destructive and counter-revolutionary to the proletarian struggle. During the early days of the October Revolution, alcohol disoriented the Red Guards and handicapped their effectiveness at maintaining proletarian power at its most crucial moments. Prejudice towards women actively prevents and discourages their full and absolutely essential participation in the class struggle. The scale of the problem shows what is at stake.

It is a phenomenon that affects all sexes and all classes, but disproportionately affects poor proletarian women. Women from the lowest income brackets receive 12 times as much sexual victimization compared to the highest brackets. There is thus a double oppression in being a worker and a woman.

"The relationship between the sexes is completely and utterly broken."

Women are angry. And dammit they should be! It is essential, however, to remember that salvation lies not in the interclass "girlboss" feminism of the CEO (sorry, fans of Taylor Swift!) nor in the "power" of voting, but rather in linking arms with fellow proletarians of all races and genders in the class war. Women must unite in class unions to wage strikes against their bosses for their most essential needs and join and lead within the Communist Party to take power and finally end their oppression themselves. Only the pursuit of communism goes beyond mere punitive measures and fixes the problem at its roots.

So long as there are classes, markets, commodities, and especially the family, women will continue to experience their gross oppression. We want to abolish the family by ending the material dependency of woman upon man and the property relation of parent over child. It means socializing housework and the absence of coercion in relationships that ought to be driven solely by love and not constrained or forced with the influence of money. Ultimately, it will be the "abolition of the monogamous family as the economic unit of society" (Engels).

The false solutions presented by the bourgeoisie are just a series of decapitating blows against the regenerating heads of the capitalist Hydra. By eliminating once and for all social classes and the family unit that have tainted humanity for several millennia, communism will deliver, in one fell swoop, the decapitation of all its heads while the flames of revolution will cauterize the stumps and damn the beast to Hell!

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AGAINST DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY!

(continued from page 1)

"guarantees" from the State as well as not directed into alliances with the petty-bourgeois and pseudo-workers parties that line up in defense of them.

Ultimately, the principle we adhere to is that if such and such demand increases the proletariat's strength and better prepares it for the wider battle for communism, we support it. What matters is the political independence of the proletariat from other classes.

Concessions to workers are commonly framed as rights in order to lure them onto the terrain of thinking there is a common interest between them and the bosses, achieving social pacification. Other times, the demand for certain rights may arise organically within the class in order to genuinely advance the class struggle. We only support any "rights" so long as they allow and give the proletariat capacity to grow its strength.

Only the real balance of forces of the class struggle determines the "ability to do", not legal schemes. The hypocrisy of rights in general is always exposed so that the workers detach from their stupor of dependence upon the State.

Attacks on "rights" are inevitable and recurrent as the bourgeoisie faces its class enemy in pursuit of revolution.

Any united effort with bourgeois currents demanding the restoration of constitutional guarantees, of rights, or any other democratic anti-fascist nonsense is completely excluded. The proletariat cannot depend on freedoms and rights, as illegal actions are unavoidable in order to not only defend workers' living standards, but also seize power. The State will never simply allow its class enemy to increase its strength, unless it is at a truly weak moment.

Any defense mounted for rights or privileges granted by the State can be likened to the protection of fake promises.

The democratic bourgeoisie wants to convince workers that they have something to defend in this decrepit society. They seek to fool workers into believing legal falsehoods and "guarantees" that are routinely violated. To this we say, workers have nothing to lose but their chains! Attack and conquest, no defense!

To the Rabid Defenders

Some of the stalwart defenders of democracy sit in the ranks of the petty-bourgeois activist circles from the DSA to the Stalinist and Trotskyist milieu. These members of the opportunist left carry programs full of incomplete political demands for general and electoral agitation. Trotskyists pull a sleight of hand and call it "transitional", others say "minimum" or "immediate".

Included are reformist demands for universal healthcare, progressive taxation, and debt cancellation. The more "radical" proposals include democratizing the workplace (electing the boss?), nationalization, and full employment. They may even pay lip service to the abolition of classes, money, or wage-labor, but only as a long term goal somehow irrelevant to workers in normal agitation.

It is hoped by these opportunists that by placing these intermediate goalposts in front of workers, their consciousness will move forward by means of exposing the State's failure to accomplish their democratic goals or by the slow conquest of it. Either way, socialism is diluted to a process of reforms or concessions that allegedly culminate in something greater.

The workers are deceived by bourgeois and opportunist workers parties that adopt these aims, insofar as the capitalist State is able to enact these policies—which reinforces faith in capitalism—and the real policies to be put in place during the proletarian dictatorship are falsified and replaced with bourgeois-democratic demands.

They ultimately claim that the democratic revolution in various countries is not yet complete and must be finished by the proletariat in order to advance to socialism. The communist revolution becomes a continuation of the bourgeois revolution, transformed into a conquest of vague democracy and rights.

This sends the proletariat straight into a worthless alliance with the petty-bourgeoisie activists. Thus, they rally with and support the NGO activist apparatus that protests for democratic reforms and funnels support into the Democratic Party. Even when opposition to these groups is claimed, their same demands lead workers in the same direction.

What we have here is a grotesque and eclectic monstrosity of certain proletarian tactics appropriate during a permanent or double revolution combined with the most heinous and cowardly parliamentarianism. We don't need to descend to the democratic mood of the masses and contribute to the grand illusion.

The only program needed by the working class is the program of full communism, and immediate measures upon attaining full power are a necessary feature of this.

Our "stepping stones" which the Party points towards are only immediate demands which work to increase the fighting capacity and strengthen the proletariat in preparation for its final battle with the bourgeoisie. They are well known demands that center increases in wages and the reduction of the working day among a few others that are achieved through class organizations founded upon long established tactical directives such as the need for reforging class unions, their unison behind a trade union united front from below and the general strike.

Going hand in hand with opportunist tactics is entrance into the electoral arena.

Parliamentarianism Throughout History

In certain historical epochs in specific countries, the demand for bourgeois-democratic privileges like universal suffrage and voting rights and parliamentary participation had a genuine place in the workers movement. One can harken back to the 1832 Days of May unrest for a push of the English Reform Bill, or the events of the July Revolution in France during the 1820s and 1830s where the denial of suffrage not only to the laboring masses, but also to the bourgeoisie sparked genuine mass uprisings.

These were times when the bourgeoisie still had a revolutionary role to play against the old reactionary feudal classes. Times when alliances between the bourgeoisie and proletariat were still historically justifiable and useful. Capitalism had not fully cemented itself, and the parliamentary tribune was a battleground between different classes.

After 1871 and the Paris Commune, the electoral arena was still utilized albeit with any alliance or acceptance of ministerial posts being rejected by those on the revolutionary path. Throughout this period, reforms and concessions were extracted and class unions, especially in Germany, grew in size and influence. At the same time, reformists and revisionism took hold of the international Party as imperialist capitalism settled in.

World War I began, and it was Lenin, the Italian Left, and others of the Zimmerwald Left that fought this disease. From 1914 onwards, history had definitely disproven for the proletarian Party that reforms should be pursued in parliaments everywhere. The Italian Left added that in countries with fully mature capitalism, parliamentary activity is to be fully abandoned.

This was not because of an alleged indifference to electoral results, a refusal to compromise, nor an a priori principle. It was because parliamentarism made it impossible to break with centrists and reformists to create iron-clad communist parties.

Lenin's use of democratic agitation and parliament were historically justified due to commanding a double revolution. To the proletariat and poor peasantry, democracy signified the very antithesis of the State's oppression and only carried a revolutionary meaning to the masses. The Russian Duma was a battleground between backward Tsarists, liberals, and communists. Essentially, a far cry from the emptiness and democratic theatrics of today. As we have stated before, the methods appropriate in Lenin's time are no longer applicable anywhere in the world.

Let us finally return to the United States.

Don't Forget, The Democrats are "Fascist" Too

It is no accident that the Democratic Party has historically been the preferred instrument of American imperialism for the preparation of World War and the subordination of the proletariat to the demands of national capital. It was under Democrat Wilson that the United States entered the First World War, under Roosevelt that American capitalism mobilized its immense productive apparatus for the second imperialist slaughter, and under Truman that the postwar machinery of military occupation, atomic terror, and permanent counterrevolution was consolidated.

In each case, the bourgeoisie required not merely armies and armaments, but the political and ideological regimentation of the working class: the incorporation of the unions into the state, the suppression of independent class struggle, and the transformation of proletarians into obedient producers and cannon fodder for the national war effort. The democratic mystification has proved no less indispensable to imperialist war than the openly authoritarian methods of fascism.

Indeed, the American bourgeois state long ago assimilated the essential economic and political functions of fascism: the integration of labor organizations into the machinery of capitalist administration, the growing centralization of economic and military command, and the subordination of every sphere of social life to the preservation of bourgeois rule.

The difference between democracy and fascism is not that one represents peace and the other war, but that they constitute different political forms through which the same capitalist dictatorship organizes its domination over labor. They need each other and operate as two sides of one unitary system of class dictatorship which opposes and subsumes class pressures in different proportions contingent on the ruling class' needs.

A Democratic victory in November, or again in 2028, would therefore signify no historical reprieve from the supposed advance of fascism, no postponement of the catastrophe toward which capitalism is driving, but another stage in the preparation of American imperialism for a new general slaughter.

The rotten imperialist colossus of the United States, whose democratic institutions have long since digested the most consequential methods of fascist state organization, does not require a Mussolini in the White House to regiment its proletariat, discipline its unions, expand its military apparatus, or prepare its population for sacrifice upon the altar of national capital.

The invocation of the fascist menace serves precisely to bind the workers once more to the democratic state, to make them defend the institutions of their class enemy as their own, and to prepare their ideological enlistment in the next illusory crusade for "democracy." It was beneath this same bloodstained banner that American imperialism devastated Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and countless other territories, and beneath it that untold millions were killed, displaced, and immiserated in the service of capitalist domination.

Against the bourgeois fraud that democracy must be defended today so that fascism may be defeated tomorrow, the communist position remains unchanged: the proletariat has no fatherland to defend, no imperialist camp to support, and no interest in choosing which political administration shall organize its exploitation and prepare its conscription for the coming war. Its only historical road lies outside and against every faction of the bourgeois State, in the recovery of independent class struggle and the revolutionary defeat of capitalism itself.

The Fate of the United States

Ultimately, the democratic tension within the bourgeois State gives it elasticity and fuel to pull the workers into this or that bourgeois faction's camp while overall preserving capitalism. Conflicts escalate between vying bourgeois factions as the contradictions of capitalism sharpen and individual capitals become ever the more desperate to impossibly escape the vortex of overproduction.

The bourgeois State will continue to advance deeper into fascism through its strongest weapon: "Democracy".

Social-democracy will once again come to the rescue and justify the next slaughter.

To all proletarians, throw away your ballot!
Break with the defenders of democracy!

THE PROLETARIAT'S MISERY FUELS BOURGEOIS PROFITS

(continued from page 1)

stands in sharp contrast to the enormous growth in productive capacity, technological development, and labor productivity under capitalism. Workers are producing more with increasingly advanced machinery and technology, yet the gains from this development are not being reflected in comparable improvements in their real wages.

The bourgeoisie frequently make use of statistics like these to "disprove" workers' concerns about the rising cost of living. After all, a 0.7% decline in real wages might not sound particularly significant, and a 2.4% increase since 2019 can even be presented as evidence of progress. But when we look a little deeper, we find that real wages measure workers' ability to purchase a broad basket of commodities in general.

The picture becomes considerably less rosy when we examine the prices of specific essential goods, particularly housing, food, healthcare, and other necessities that consume a substantial portion of working-class incomes. Essentials like medical care services, daycare and preschool, and rent have outpaced the standard Consumer Price Index (CPI) since the early 2000s.

Oil is the key commodity driving inflation in the consumer sphere. From January 2026 to September 2026, the CPI shows a whopping 50.33% increase for gasoline of all types, 16.9% for airline fares, 10.9% for public transportation, 6.4% for vehicle maintenance and repair. The current war in Iran and blockade of the Strait of Hormuz is ultimately to blame for these spikes.

As we have reported in previous issues, the imperialist war with Iran serves U.S. Capital by carving out a larger space in the oil and gas market—recall that the U.S. is now the world's largest oil and gas producer—to sell its commodities at higher prices, increasing the price of oil for importers like China, and slowing the demise of the U.S. dollar's financial dominance. This is all at the expense of the proletariat who must bear the heaviest burden of war by not only sacrificing their lives, but also their wallets.

Even when ignoring volatile commodities like gas and food, inflation according to the standard government measure is still increasing at a higher than normal rate. The Federal Reserve is in a bind as it will be forced to increase interest rates to cool inflation. Unfortunately for them, this slows spending and economic growth, the lifeblood of capitalism. In the context of generalized overproduction and colossal debt, we can expect inflation to continue and for the Fed to eventually increase interest rates, but to no avail as the inevitable economic crisis reveals itself.

Momentary or Long-Term Decline?

For much of its history, American capitalism was distinguished by wages substantially higher than those prevailing in Europe, a historical advantage rooted in the relative scarcity of labor, the abundance of land and natural resources, and the extraordinary expansion of American industry. This superiority persisted into the twentieth century and was reinforced by the unprecedented accumulation of capital that followed the Second World War, when the United States emerged as the dominant industrial power of the capitalist world.

Between 1947 and 1973, the average real hourly earnings of American production and nonsupervisory workers rose from $10.67 to $18.74 in constant 2011 dollars, an increase of approximately 76%, or 2.2% annually. Yet this prolonged expansion came to an abrupt end in the 1970s. By 1995, real hourly earnings had fallen to $17.08, nearly 9% below their 1973 level, and even by 2011 had recovered to only $19.47, scarcely 4% above the level attained almost four decades earlier.

Although real wages have subsequently registered modest increases, these slow and often minuscule year-on-year gains do not contradict their historical stagnation. Stagnation does not imply the absolute immobility of wages, but the disappearance of the sustained and substantial increases characteristic of the preceding period.

While American real hourly wages grew by approximately 2.2% annually between 1947 and 1973, their growth averaged scarcely 0.1% annually between 1973 and 2011, even as capitalist accumulation and labor productivity continued to advance. Between 1979 and 2026, labor productivity increased by approximately 93.7%, compared with only 32.7% growth in the real hourly compensation of production and nonsupervisory workers.

Between 2001 and 2022, inflation-adjusted median rents increased by approximately 21%, while renters' median incomes rose by only 2%. To this must be added the enormous expansion of household indebtedness, which, although already developing during the postwar boom, subsequently assumed proportions unknown in the preceding period. The growing dependence upon mortgages, consumer credit, and student loans has increasingly supplemented wages as a means of sustaining consumption, binding future earnings to the repayment of accumulated debts and interest.

As the Party demonstrated in its 1954 study, Volcano of Production or Swamp of the Market?, the Malthusian character of the price structure under American super-capitalism consists in the encouragement of abundant consumption of industrial commodities alongside the restriction of essential consumption through comparatively elevated prices. The rising costs of housing, healthcare, and childrearing increasingly compel workers to pledge their future wages through credit merely to maintain their present conditions of existence, while simultaneously discouraging household formation and the reproduction of the next generation. The resulting decline in fertility and slowdown in natural population growth express, in part, the contradiction between the immense productive capacities of modern capitalism and the increasingly prohibitive conditions governing the reproduction of labor-power.

One of the most vulgar distortions of Marxism holds that capitalism necessarily depresses the living standards of the proletariat to an absolute biological subsistence minimum, requiring real wages to decline continuously. This conception belongs not to Marx, but to the doctrines of Lassalle and Malthus, who respectively advanced the so-called "iron law of wages" and attributed poverty to an alleged inevitable excess of population over the means of subsistence.

Against these mechanical formulations, Marxism recognizes the historically determined character of the value of labor-power. The "quantum of the means of subsistence which is absolutely requisite to keep the laborer in bare existence as a laborer," described in the Communist Manifesto as the basis of the average price of wage-labor, is not a fixed biological quantity, but rather develops alongside the productive forces and the historically established requirements of proletarian existence.

Capitalist development continually expands the mass of commodities entering into ordinary consumption, while simultaneously transforming what were once luxuries into socially necessary means of subsistence. Consequently, an increase in real wages or the material consumption of workers does not, in itself, signify an improvement in their relative position within bourgeois society, much less the overcoming of capitalist exploitation.

The recent inflationary surge, intensified by disruptions to global production, energy markets, and imperialist conflict, therefore cannot be understood as evidence of an inevitable long-term decline in real wages. Indeed, real wages may rise during periods of capitalist expansion, just as they may fall during crises. But does this mean that the standard of living of the proletariat is constantly improving?

The answer cannot be found in the movement of average real wages alone. Even as industrial productivity expands the quantity of commodities available to workers, smart phones, high-speed internet, automobiles and a litany of commodities that were once luxuries now become essential costs workers must forward for employment. The increasing expense of housing, healthcare, retirement, and the reproduction of the family may absorb a growing portion of their incomes, while indebtedness and economic insecurity deepen their dependence upon capital.

The contradiction is not that capitalism necessarily produces fewer means of subsistence, but that its unprecedented capacity to produce material abundance remains subordinated to the requirements of profitable accumulation. The proletariat may consume more commodities than previous generations while confronting greater insecurity in the fundamental conditions of its existence. Thus, the development of capitalist wealth does not abolish proletarian impoverishment in its relative and social dimensions, but reproduces the antagonism between the accumulation of capital and the conditions of existence of the working class.

The Real Meaning of Rising Wages & The Standard of Living

Since 1847, Marx has shown that the subsistence minimum necessary to sustain a worker is relative to historical and social conditions. Another great thesis: the remuneration of the working class relative to the capitalist class decreases, and the social chasm between the two widens even as real wages rise, social wealth grows, and the material position of the worker is made better. Profits and relative wages are locked in inverse proportion, and the middle classes are destined to shrink as society polarizes as the relative wages of the proletariat falls.

In chapter six of Wage Labour and Capital, Marx defines the dynamism of a subsistence minimum stating, "Our wants and pleasures have their origin in society; we therefore measure them in relation to society; we do not measure them in relation to the objects which serve for their gratification. Since they are of a social nature, they are of a relative nature."

In chapter seven, the inverse proportion, "A rapid growth of capital is synonymous with a rapid growth of profits. Profits can grow rapidly only when the price of labour – the relative wages – decrease just as rapidly. Relative wages may fall, although real wages rise simultaneously with nominal wages, with the money value of labour, provided only that the real wage does not rise in the same proportion as the profit."

Marx also answers to the opportunists—specifically modern Stalinist parties—who claim the workers have a stake in economic growth in chapter eight: "To say that 'the worker has an interest in the rapid growth of capital', means only this: that the more speedily the worker augments the wealth of the capitalist, the larger will be the crumbs which fall to him, the greater will be the number of workers than can be called into existence, the more can the mass of slaves dependent upon capital be increased."

And today, we not only have precise data proving this, but even the ideologues of our time are forced to admit such a trend.

Most illuminating is the data of the share of household income from 1967-2025 and the labor share of gross economic output. Since 1967, the bottom 20% of households have lost 1% of aggregate income. While this seems small, it is actually a 25% decrease from before. In almost the same way, households in the 20% to 40% range lost 24.07%. The decrease becomes smaller until the trend reverses with the top 20%. They managed to increase by 20.18%. Much more severe in change is the top 5% who increased by a massive 36.63%.

In terms of income, then, we have a constantly widening gap.

A crude measure of relative wages can be shown with "the fraction of economic output that accrues to workers as compensation in exchange for their labor" (BLS) going from a high of 66.2% in 1960 to 52.8% in 2026.

In a chaotic fashion, a fairly consistent decrease in peaks is observed until around 2002, where more dramatic falls occur.

Our opulent bourgeoisie will scoff and say that so long as the material position of all people is growing alongside their profits, then nobody has anything to worry about. The workers are buying more things and not resisting. Thus, we have the "greatest economy ever" and all is well. The assumption that workers must be more happy and more satisfied with their lives because they own more is ridiculous. Little do they

(continued on page 5)

For the rebirth of the class union outside of and against regime unionism! — To unify the demands and struggles of the working class, against submission to the "national interest"! — For the establishment of the Communist Party's leadership within the institutions defending the economic interests of the proletariat, with the aim of the revolutionary emancipation of workers from capitalism!

FOR THE CLASS UNION

PROGRAMMATIC BATTLE PLATFORM OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY

LABOR MISLEADERS

(continued from page 1)

above all, of their own state, which leads them into war and forces them to defend the interests of the national bourgeoisie and the capitalist systems with which it is allied, under the pretext of "imperialist aggression" from outside.

Every bourgeois party and regime presents workers with a specific interpretation of the aggressor-victim war: not the deep-seated economic and class-based reasons from which conflicts arise—which are far more decisive than who fired the first shot.

What the unions gathered in Istanbul propose is a bourgeois, anti-proletarian, and anti-internationalist form of anti-imperialism: they do not even mention the slogan "Workers of all countries, unite," which is reduced to the defeatist conclusion that "the enemy of the proletariat is within its own ranks" — that is, its own capitalist regime— from the perspective of the international proletarian struggle, all the way to revolution, to stop the war. Instead, it identifies with a select group of capitalist states hailed as "better than the rest"—generally accepting the propaganda rhetoric of each of them— as "anti-imperialist."

For opportunism, the clock of history is stuck in the era of bourgeois-democratic revolutions— which ended a century and a half ago in the West and at least half a century ago in the rest of the world—and in their principles of "national sovereignty" and, worse still, "peaceful coexistence among nations," demolished by Marxism, which emerged in 1848 at the juncture between the twilight of the bourgeois revolutionary era in Western Europe and the dawn of the proletarian one. While capitalism, from its very inception, tramples on these principles every day, opportunism posits their impossible realization as a necessary preliminary stage to the revolutionary class struggle for communism.

It should be noted, however, that for the political groups leading the trade unions gathered in Istanbul, the ranks of the oppressed peoples do not include the Kurds in Turkey or the Baluchis in Iran, nor the countless others crushed by "anti-imperialist states."

War, cast out the door in words, comes back in through the window: if Hamas is not a bourgeois party in the pay of the capitalist regimes of Iran, Turkey, and Qatar, but rather a force fighting for "Palestinian liberation"; if the Iranian regime is not itself bourgeois, nor a pawn of Chinese imperialism—which vies with the U.S. bourgeoisie for a share of global profits—then their war turns out to be "just," because it is "defensive" and "anti-imperialist," and the proletariat of the whole world must support it.

And in the future, China's war against the U.S.—that is, World War III —will be "just." It is no coincidence that in August a delegation from the political group leading the USB traveled to Beijing, where it was received by the Chinese Communist Party. At the end of the visit, it issued a statement: "In a context of a profound crisis of capitalism and an increasingly pronounced trend toward war, we believe that the example of the CCP and the development achieved at all levels by the People's Republic of China are a source of inspiration and an inescapable lesson for all communist forces operating at the heart of the European imperialist citadel."

The definition of "defensive war" easily blurs and turns into its opposite: Russia invaded Ukraine to defend itself and to defend Russian-speaking minorities; On October 7, 2023, Hamas invaded Israel to defend the Palestinian right to self-determination; Iran launches missiles and drones throughout the Middle East to defend itself against U.S. and Israeli aggression.

On this basis, correct—albeit generic—statements contained in the manifesto are undermined: " Workers cannot place their trust in those union forces that accept the objectives of the war economy through compromise, that present involvement in wars as 'development,' 'jobs,' or 'the national interest,' and that call on workers to make sacrifices for profits and wars, to line up behind the demands of governments, shipowners, monopolies, and imperialist alliances."

The practical and striking confirmation of this false opposition to imperialist war—presented as proletarian but bourgeois in nature—lies in the very organization of the meeting. USB, CGT Ports and Docks, and ENEDEP are militant unions that oppose the regime's unionism in their respective countries. Yet they have formed an alliance—to the point of being hosted—with a union—Liman-İş —whose parent confederation, Hak-İş, is the second-largest pro-regime union in Turkey after Türk-İş and rivals it in being the most pro-government and reactionary. Founded as an Islamist alternative to the other labor confederations in Turkey, it has been an integral part of the government apparatus ever since Erdogan's party came to power. It is, among other things, extraordinarily wealthy. While pretending to compete with Türk-İş, it actually complements it in the oppression of the working class; a regime-aligned union, in Turkey as elsewhere in the world, is a fundamental tool in the hands of governments.

Hak-İş excels at avoiding strikes as much as possible. The last strike organized by Liman-İş dates back to 2015 and lasted four hours. Prior to that, it had taken part in—or rather, had failed to prevent its members from participating in—a couple of one-day strikes during the general unrest of 1995. The strike on February 6 of this year was purely symbolic, a declaration on paper with no effect on the movement of goods.

In the bitter struggle of the 2,000 female textile workers at the Sık Makas factory in Tokat—in north-central Turkey—when, at the end of last year, they resigned en masse from Öz İplik-İş—the textile federation of Hak-İş—and 400 of them joined the militant union Bİrtek-Sen, the local leaders of the pro-government union handed their names over to the company, which proceeded to carry out over 1,000 layoffs. Several workers who joined Bİrtek-Sen were also targeted by Hak-İş in a smear campaign regarding their moral character.

News of that struggle reached Italy through Sudd Cobas, which primarily organizes workers in the "ready-to-wear" sector in the Prato district. On April 6, Sudd Cobas organized a solidarity rally alongside the women workers of Sık Makas and Bİrtek-Sen, whose leader—Mehmet Türkmen— was imprisoned for 92 days because of this struggle.

Liman-İş, incidentally, is not even the only union organizing port workers in Turkey: there are in fact two militant unions in the sector, DGD-Sen—which in January organized a 23-day indefinite strike by the 5,000 workers at Migros logistics warehouses—and Limter-İş, affiliated with the DİSK confederation, whose most militant federations (such as Birleşik Metal-İş for metalworkers) are comparable to a union like the USB.

How is it possible that unions such as the USB, ENEDEP, and the CGT dockworkers' union agreed to associate their names with such a pro-management union and to be hosted by them?

The answer lies in the above: the Turkish bourgeois regime's proclaimed support for the Palestinian cause. Of course, this support—just like that from Iran—is completely bogus: the Turkish bourgeoisie exploits the blood of the Palestinian proletariat —in words and by hosting and financing the Hamas leadership—both to divert its own proletariat from the class struggle by shifting its attention toward an external enemy, and to counter Israel in the struggle over the division of capitalist profits in the eastern Mediterranean and the Near and Middle East. As is well known, Turkey's economic and military reach extends as far as Libya and Somalia, passing through northern Syria and Cyprus, and it would like to gain a foothold in Gaza, in part as an anti-Egyptian measure.

But according to opportunism— which holds that imperialism is not fought through class struggle within and against all capitalist states, but rather by allying with some of them against others—all bourgeois states that are enemies of Israel and the United States would be anti-imperialist.

The practical corollary—which concretely reveals the anti-proletarian nature of this approach—is that within these countries, the class struggle should be set aside and their regimes supported in this struggle "against imperialism."

This is why, for example, the World Federation of Trade Unions—to which the USB, ENEDEP, and CGT Ports and Docks belong—includes trade union organizations that are offshoots of the Iranian regime—the Khane-ye Kargar (Workers' Houses) and the Shora-ye Eslami (Islamic Councils in Enterprises)—a regime that periodically massacres thousands of young people and proletarians who rise up in revolt.

Class struggle is thus subordinated to the confrontation between states, which inevitably leads to imperialist war. Opportunism claims that this stems from the "aggression" of one of the two "sides," when in fact it is the inevitable outcome of capitalist competition, exacerbated by the inexorable advance of the global economic crisis, which cannot help but spill over into military conflict.

If, for example, a bourgeois party were to come to power in Italy that withdrew from NATO, supported Hamas, and allied itself with China and Iran—as various fascist groups also advocate, and this is not a far-fetched scenario given that the Italian bourgeoisie changed sides in both world wars—and weapons were sent to these new allies, the political group leading the USB would no longer organize "anti-war" strikes; it would no longer block the shipment of weapons —on the contrary, it would encourage it to support the "anti-imperialist war." Concealing the fact that this is merely one imperialist bloc seeking to supplant the dominance of another, it would call for strikes as little as possible, so as not to weaken the new government and to prevent the return of "right-wing" political forces, which are instead supported by the Western international bloc.

In fact, for now, militant unions have been hosted by a union loyal to the Turkish government—Liman-İş— with that government's approval, since their international stance aligns with the interests of Turkish imperialism. This is a despicable bourgeois policy that exploits the outrage of workers around the world over the genocide of the Palestinians.

Solidarity among workers and among unions from different countries is an irreplaceable aspect of the class struggle, which becomes increasingly necessary as the struggle intensifies. It is also true that international workers' solidarity can be effective against imperialist wars. Nothing, however, betrays this solidarity more than unity between "genuine" unions and government bodies that pretend to be unions. By joining forces with unions like Liman-İş, international solidarity among proletarians is trampled upon—not only because this merely plays into the Turkish bourgeois regime's exploitation of the blood of Palestinian proletarians to pursue its goals of regional capitalist power, but also because it betrays the Turkish proletariat, who are oppressed precisely because of unions like the one with which the USB, the CGT dockworkers' union, and ENEDEP have united, while workers and activists of authentic class-based unionism are being fired and arrested.

The sensitivity of dockworkers in various countries regarding the genocide in Palestine and their willingness to act in their defense is certainly commendable, but the political groups leading these unions channel this anger into support for one of the fronts of the global imperialist war that is unfolding.

The path to building genuine international solidarity among the working class, through authentic class-based unionism, is a different one: it shows workers in every country that no capitalist state is better than another to ally with, nor worse than another against which war is justified; that the workers' enemy is first and foremost their own bourgeois regime; and that the workers of the world have no friends but themselves. Only under these banners is an international strike truly internationalist and opposed to imperialist war.

The International Communist Party follows this path.

The May conference led to the decision to organize a second international dockworkers' strike, which was ultimately set for October 30. Our party's practical stance toward this initiative is not defeatist. For workers, a strike is always an act of struggle against the bosses and their own bourgeois regime. Its international character has a value that is not negated by the opportunist leadership of the unions or by the character they impart to the initiative. As we did on February 6, we will intervene by providing the striking workers with genuine internationalist and proletarian guidance against imperialist war.

GENERAL STRIKE LEAFLET

Handed to workers in Italy on October 30th

Dying capitalism is preparing for war, Only the working class can stop it, by fighting to defend its living conditions, united across national borders

The **INTERNATIONAL DOCKWORKERS' STRIKE**—organized today by USB in Italy, by other militant unions such as CGT Porti in France, ENEDEP in Greece, VER.DI at the Port of Hamburg, and by dozens of other unions around the world—is of the utmost importance because it demonstrates **the international unity of workers in strike action as the path to opposing imperialist war.**

The incurable cancer of capitalism and its profit-driven economy is **overproduction**, which has plagued the so-called "Western" capitalist systems since the mid-1970s. China—along with other once-young national capitalist systems—has propped up the global capitalist economy for nearly 40 years, thanks to the low wages of its working class. Now that it, too, has entered a crisis of overproduction, **capitalism is approaching economic collapse.**

This is the material cause of capitalism's march toward World War III. **War is the only lifeline for dying capitalism** because it destroys the surplus commodities that hinder the growth of capital: factories, infrastructure, cities, and above all, the commodity of labor power—the proletariat.

It is capitalism that leads to war, not the "mad" tyrant or the regime in power—an explanation used by the propaganda of all bourgeois regimes to convince the working class that war is instead provoked by an external enemy, whom they must fight if they wish to return to peace.

These lies seek to trap workers in the sterile "aggressor-victim" logic. But to the bourgeoisie of all countries, it matters not who starts the war: what matters is that it develops and breaks out. **The only true victim is the international proletariat!**

In fact, all national bourgeoisies engage in **lucrative business deals among themselves right up until the day before the conflict—and often even during it**. China supports Iran, which supports Hamas, yet it is Israel's leading Asian trading partner. Qatar supports Hamas but hosts the largest U.S. military base in the Middle East. The web of business interests is inextricable and reaches far higher than the despicable militarist propaganda.

While **the hypocrisy and infamy of the propaganda of Western imperialisms**—American, Israeli, and even European —are evident, we must not believe that war is looming solely because of this one side of the imperialist camp. The U.S. is waging preventive wars against **Chinese imperialism**, which is rapidly arming itself, preparing to send its own working class to die for identical objectives: for the profits of Beijing's industrial and financial groups, to seize control of world markets—exactly as all bourgeois regimes do, in proportion to their power. **There are no anti-imperialist states or friends of the working class!**

Equally important for today's day of struggle is the USB's decision to extend the dockworkers' strike to all sectors, turning it into a **NATIONAL GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST WAR AND REARMAMENT, FOR HIGHER WAGES AND PENSIONS, AND IN DEFENSE OF SOCIAL SPENDING.**

The effects of these conflicts reverberate across the working class in every country, with rising inflation eroding real wages, while rearmament programs entail new cuts to healthcare, education, transportation, and other social services, exacerbating the assault that has been ongoing for decades. **The only social and political force capable of preventing or stopping imperialist war is that of the working class, because it is the only one capable of putting the national regimes of Capital in a stranglehold by paralyzing the vital nerve centers of profit-making through strikes.**

Fighting today to defend the living and working conditions of the working class—by rejecting any sacrifice in the name of a nonexistent national interest—means setting out on the path that will lead tomorrow to stopping the war through strikes in the workplace and among soldiers, refusing to sacrifice the lives of the proletariat in the name of defending the homeland.

THE DECISION BY NEARLY ALL THE GRASSROOTS UNIONS TO JOIN TODAY'S STRIKE WAS ALSO VERY POSITIVE, despite the fact that the USB leadership ignored them and insisted on acting alone. Although the USB is the largest grassroots union, unity of action with other grassroots unions can only strengthen the strike and must always be pursued. **Grassroots unions must also propose a united strike to the CGIL, as happened on October 3 of last year with the strike against the war and genocide in Gaza.**

We must **"DO AS IN FRANCE"**, where general strikes are called by an inter-union body. In the current crisis of capitalism, united strikes can only shift the rank-and-file membership of the establishment unions (CGIL, CISL, UIL) toward class-based demands and methods of struggle.

It is no coincidence that the CGIL leadership and its apparatus were quick to dismiss **the united strike of October 3, 2025** against the genocide and war in Gaza as an exception not to be repeated: they know that a practice of united strikes with grassroots unions is incompatible with the unity of the regime-aligned trade unionism among CGIL, CISL, and UIL and would ultimately split the CGIL itself, marking an acceleration toward **the increasingly necessary rebirth of the class-based union, outside and against the regime-aligned unions.**

FROM FRANCE, THE WIND OF STRUGGLE BRINGS WITH IT A POWERFUL NEW DEVELOPMENT: finally, **the young proletarians of the suburbs** are taking to the streets, and the student movement is aligning itself with the workers' demands. In Italy, this example has been taken up by a youth that knows how to look beyond its borders, and the initial demonstrations on October 17 were followed by larger ones on Saturday, October 24. **The grassroots unions immediately expressed solidarity with the young people who took to the streets against the high cost of living**, while the head of the CGIL rushed to express solidarity with the police, and the Milan branch of the CGIL organized a demonstration for "social cohesion," calling for more funding for law enforcement.

These young people will channel their energy into class-based unionism, sounding the death knell for the collaborationist, regime-aligned unions. This is what terrifies the bourgeois regimes, which react by unleashing police violence against the demonstrations. They know that the reborn class-based labor movement will lead the working class to reconnect with the **Party of the Communist Revolution**, putting an end to the regime of capitalist barbarism.

For a united class-based labor front!

Workers of all countries, unite!

Massacres of Miners and the Lie of "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics"

On May 22, deep within the Liushenyu coal mine in Shanxi Province, the profit-driven greed of capital struck the Chinese miners.

At 7:00 p.m., underground sensors detected levels of carbon monoxide and methane far exceeding safety standards. The evacuation order failed to prevent the catastrophe: at 7:29 p.m., a massive explosion rocked the shafts while 247 miners were still underground. The blast—with extremely high temperatures, massive cave-ins, and carbon monoxide saturation—left 84 of them with no chance of survival.

The propaganda machine of Chinese capitalism sprang into action immediately. President Xi Jinping ordered a "comprehensive investigation into responsibility," in an attempt to pin the massacre on individual fault. Instead, the investigations had to admit that the explosion was "entirely preventable" and that responsibility lay with the corporation that owned the site.

It emerged that more than half of the victims were "invisible workers"— undocumented laborers who had never been officially registered: the company employed them in "clandestine" tunnels omitted from the mine's official blueprints. Everyone knew this, and the authorities were aware of it. As early as 2024, the facility had been included on a list of 1,128 structures classified as posing a "very high safety risk," but, like most of them, it had been allowed to remain in operation.

This prevented emergency crews from locating and reaching some of the collapsed areas. This was also because many of the "ghost workers" were not equipped with tracking devices.

This massacre of workers adds to many tragic events in recent years: in 2023, a collapse at an open-pit mine in Alxa, Inner Mongolia, claimed 53 lives under entirely similar circumstances, involving systematic violations of safety regulations. The trail of blood continued in December of that same year at a mining site in Jixi, in Heilongjiang Province, claiming 12 lives. In March 2024, a gas explosion at the Xieqiao mine in Huainan claimed 7 lives, while in September of that same year, a collapse at the

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PROGRAM OF THE PARTY

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Dongbaoshan facility in Lüliang claimed another 3. These figures, though incomplete, confirm the dire situation in China's mining sector.

The Jinjiang Massacre

From the depths of the earth in Shanxi to the assembly lines of light manufacturing, the ruthless logic of capital remains the same. On July 9, in the Jinjiang industrial district of Fujian Province, a fire engulfed a five-story factory. Inside were 237 workers. The flames, which broke out on the ground floor, spread rapidly, fueled by the highly flammable materials used in footwear production: resins, toxic solvents, chemical adhesives, and rubber. The fire laid bare the criminal safety practices typical of capitalist accumulation: escape routes and fire escapes were blocked by piles of materials crammed in to save every centimeter of space, turning the building into a death trap.

A massive column of black, toxic smoke engulfed the factory, forcing dozens of workers to desperately take refuge on the roof or jump from windows in an attempt to escape the blaze. The final toll included at least 28 dead workers and a number of others who were poisoned or injured.

Here, too, the bourgeois regime in Beijing set the propaganda machine in motion; Xi Jinping promptly expressed his "condolences" and called for the usual "thorough investigation." The owners and executives of Huiteng Shoes were arrested and the company's accounts frozen, but this display of state firmness serves to exonerate the economic system by shifting all responsibility onto individual owners or executives, while portraying the state as a neutral arbiter.

The living and working conditions of Jinjiang's shoe workers reveal the true nature of "China's industrial superpower." Jinjiang is hailed as the "world capital of shoes," a cluster of over 5,000 factories that produce more than one billion pairs of shoes (mostly "athletic shoes") per year—about 20% of the world's total production. This megalopolis is home to a massive concentration of workers, largely migrants from China's poorest inland provinces.

Deprived of residency rights and access to social services due to the discriminatory hukou system—which ties healthcare, pensions, and children's education solely to their rural municipality of origin—these workers live in conditions of extreme vulnerability. Without legal protections, losing a job means losing factory housing and the right to remain in the city. This institutionalized precariousness forces the vast majority of migrants to accept starvation wages and a total lack of safety regulations. Their daily lives are marked by grueling 12- to 14-hour shifts, with piece-rate wages, in environments saturated with harmful fumes and lacking personal protective equipment. Employers often force workers to live in overcrowded dormitories within or adjacent to industrial complexes. Here, proximity to piles of materials and machinery creates a constant fire hazard.

Capitalism Tinted Red

Whether capital resides on the boards of directors of Western multinationals or disguises itself in the standard red of the Beijing bourgeoisie, its nature and the exploitation of the workforce remain unchanged.

The Shanxi massacre and the Jinjiang fire are not exceptional events but the manifestation of the economic laws of Capital. It is therefore necessary to refute the narrative—propagated both by the Western bourgeoisie in an anti-Chinese vein and by many on the left—that China is home to a form of "state socialism" or at least a "transitional" stage away from capitalism. Reality shows that there is no structural difference between the capital based on Wall Street and that operating in Beijing. Marxism teaches us that socialism is not defined by formal symbols or the color of the flag flying over government ministries, but by the actual relations of production.

Chinese wage earners are formally separated from the means of production just like a miner in the Congo, Russia, or Brazil, or a worker at Fiat in Italy, Volkswagen in Germany, or Tesla in the United States. Labor power in China is a commodity. Wages are regulated by the law of supply and demand within the domestic market. Of the 800 million proletarians, 300 million are immigrants—ruined small farmers transformed by capital into seasonal laborers or a workforce subject to exploitation on construction sites or on assembly lines in factories or mines.

The entire Chinese economy is obsessed—just like the European or U.S. economies—with the growth of industrial production and GDP, corporate profits to be reinvested for the frenzied expanded reproduction of capital. When a sector ceases to guarantee an adequate rate of profit, the system undergoes brutal restructuring through plant closures and layoffs. In the automotive sector, dozens of manufacturers had invested billions in electric cars, leading the sector to saturation by 2024–2025. With production capacity exceeding domestic market demand, smaller brands went bankrupt, leaving workers without wages, while at the surviving giants, the pace of work was pushed to the limit.

In China, too, the law of value—the determination of the price of commodities based on the socially necessary labor time required to reproduce them—governs the entire economy. Chinese goods compete in foreign markets because their production costs are competitive, thanks to the intensive exploitation of the working class. To prevent the capital invested in machinery and robotic assembly lines from coming to a standstill, companies have unleashed a cutthroat price war. This is the anarchy of the market economy, where production is not driven by real needs but by the need to realize the value of commodities, beat the competition, and perpetuate the cycle of accumulation. Since the domestic market cannot absorb this immense mass of goods, Chinese capital is forced to flood the markets of Europe, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

The mistake many make is to confuse nationalization with socialism. Engels already made clear in *Anti-Dühring* that when the state takes over industries, it merely transforms itself into the ideal collective capitalist. In China, too, production units—from giant enterprises to the smallest family-run businesses—whether state-owned (such as certain banks and steel mills) or privately owned or held by shareholders, operate on the domestic and international markets as independent companies: they are run by boards of directors, compete with one another, and issue shares on financial markets. The state guarantees their freedom to operate under capitalist management principles. The state does not abolish capital, but rather defends it, by mandate of the ruling class.

On the stock exchanges in Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Hong Kong, and in the futures and derivatives markets, money is not merely a means of distribution—such as the labor certificates Marx envisioned for the first phase of socialism—but rather autonomous financial capital, a value that degenerates into speculation and the creation of fictitious capital.

Even the use of land, formally owned by the state, is sold at auction on the market for 50 or 70 years to private or public real estate giants. The capitalized rent thus goes to the state, but the profit remains with the company, with the capitalist.

The housing market in China has followed the exact same trajectory as in the West, generating massive speculative bubbles and forcing workers to go into debt with banks for thirty years just to have a roof over their heads—and facing eviction in the event of default. In major cities such as Beijing, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and Shanghai, prices have reached astronomical levels, exceeding those in New York, Paris, or London when compared to average wages. Through the off-plan sales system, buyers begin paying their mortgages years before the property is even built. With the recent collapse of Evergrande and other giants, millions of working-class people find themselves paying installments for homes that do not exist or are reduced to nothing more than reinforced concrete frames.

Meanwhile, a small elite of capitalists is amassing immense fortunes; hundreds of Chinese billionaires top global wealth rankings, with a chasm separating them from the working class

Beijing's foreign policy is taking on distinctly imperialist contours. As Lenin theorized, imperialism is characterized by the primacy of capital exports over commodity exports. The New Silk Road responds precisely to this economic need: China exports financial capital in the form of loans to Africa, Asia, and Latin America to bind local economies to itself, ensure that its multinationals control certain strategic raw materials such as lithium and cobalt, and find commercial outlets for its industrial overproduction.

In fact, China today suffers from the classic capitalist crisis of overproduction described by Marx. It produces more steel, electric cars, and solar panels than the markets can absorb. To avoid a collapse in the rate of profit, companies wage a ruthless trade war against American and European competitors through dumping—selling below cost to destroy rival industries.

The Chinese state acts as the enforcer of capital, protecting the factory order and defending the profits of the bourgeoisie—whether private, multinational, or state-owned—against the demands of the proletariat. Only one state-controlled union is tolerated in the country, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), whose task is to ensure social peace and productivity, while any attempt by workers to organize into independent unions is brutally suppressed through arrests and trials.

The "ghost workers" of Shanxi and Jinjiang who dig in clandestine tunnels are nothing more than the product of the pursuit of maximum profit—an ironclad necessity that forces companies to cut costs on safety and labor in order to survive competition. If there were even the most rudimentary foundation of socialism in China, production would be geared toward meeting the individual and collective needs of society, and the lives of the working class would not be systematically sacrificed to the accumulation of capital.

The ruling party in Beijing is indeed building the "foundations" for socialism through a rapid phase of capitalist development. But it is not the party of the working class; it is the party of the capitalist class. Its program does not call for a transition to socialism, but rather the opposite: the preservation of the capitalists' power and the economic and social system of capitalism. The liberation of socialism requires a revolutionary political class break, the destruction of bourgeois state power, and the leadership of a genuinely communist party. Capitalism does not "evolve" spontaneously into socialism. Not even through centralized state management.

The lesson of Shanxi and Fujian is unequivocal: the Chinese working class has no business defending its own nation against others—"Western imperialism"—nor can it hope for internal reforms promoted by the state. It finds itself in the same condition of exploitation as the world proletariat, with which it must unite—by recognizing the true Communist Party—in a single struggle to overthrow the wage system and destroy the capitalist mode of production in every corner of the planet.

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ENGLISH ESPAÑOL

INTERVENTION REPORT

The Party's action at an immigrant day laborer's rally in Portland, Oregon

In late September, day laborers organized within Voz, a nonprofit that serves and organizes day laborers and other immigrant workers, held a rally and march at the Home Depot at Mall 205. This Home Depot has served as a place where day laborers gather to be hired and picked up by employers to complete jobs for the day, often short-term construction, landscaping, and other manual labor.

The rally and march were meant to put pressure on a shopping mall's property management, which recently began enforcing a ban on day laborers gathering in the Home Depot parking lot to connect with employers. The ban pushed day laborers onto nearby street corners alongside busy roads, leaving them more exposed to dangers including immigration police and heavy traffic.

The mall's property management justified the ban on the basis of an official policy forbidding solicitation. It used aggressive private security to end the informal sale of day laborers' labor that had taken place throughout their long-term presence in the parking lot. Security enforced the ban through intimidation, surrounding workers with vehicles and recording and photographing them. Through Voz, the day laborers' primary demand was a meeting with the mall's property management to negotiate their safe return.

Day laborers, Voz staff, volunteers, supportive area residents, union workers, a smattering of opportunist political groups, and bourgeois local politicians were in attendance in addition to Party members. We distributed our Party's newspaper, putting forward our communist program in opposition to what some speakers at the rally called for.

These speakers included local "socialists" and Democratic Party politicians who presented themselves as pro-worker while campaigning for votes. These politicians presented ICE as the sole enemy, obscuring the bosses and the capitalist system that generate and benefit from ICE's work. They presented voting and legislation, such as local sanctuary city policies that leave ICE free to attack immigrant workers, as the answer to the issues immigrant workers face. All of this serves to divert workers away from action that attacks the enemy, the bosses, and into ineffective legalistic and electoral channels.

Day laborers also spoke, demanding the ability to work and take care of their families in safety. One worker reminded the crowd that every immigrant worker has a family depending on them, and that none of them should have to live in fear. Another described how day laborers have long been pushed to the margins, yet have kept working and kept fighting throughout. It is positive and encouraging to see day laborers coming together to take collective action in defense of their conditions, which is no easy task given the repression and precarity they face as some of the most exploited members of the working class.

If immigrant workers (including the day laborers who gather at Mall 205) and the working class in general are to defend themselves and fight their enemy, the ruling class and capitalism, they must resist those who seek to tie their struggle to the ruling class' order and the state it controls.

These forces neutralize the struggle by diverting fighting energy into electoralism and easily revocable legal decrees made in the name of human rights. The supposed rights workers have are revoked and violated a million times over under capitalism, often quietly. This has been the case over this past summer, as ICE arrests and deportations have continued in service of the ruling class, just without the dramatic confrontations and media coverage, while many activists and others have moved on, placated by the unfolding elections or still celebrated so-called "victories" from single day protests.

Workers must also resist those misleaders who want labor peace with the bosses and seek to facilitate the sale of their labor-power. Ultimately, these misleaders work to stabilize the capitalist system that exploits the working class and its labor rather than fight it.

Instead, immigrant and native workers must unite in a fighting class union movement demanding increased wages and a shorter working day with no loss of pay. These demands aim to raise the general social average of wages and shorten the working day for all, a fight that benefits every worker and unites the working class. The ruling class and capitalism generate the attacks immigrant workers face. And such a class union movement would truly strike at the heart of both by diminishing the profits the ruling class aggressively seeks to maintain at all costs. It needs those profits to keep capitalism going, a system inexorably plagued by crisis and doomed to crumble.

Despite all that is stacked up against them, the day laborers pushed off the Mall 205 parking lot have shown that even the most exploited and repressed workers can come together and fight. That fight needs to be moved forward and united with the struggles of all workers against the class that profits from their exploitation.

Oil Workers in Struggle Amid Imperialist War and Rising Energy Prices

Across the United States, Venezuela, Britain, and Iran, petroleum workers have entered into struggles over wages, working conditions, and the attacks of the oil monopolies, even as the imperialist war against Iran drives energy prices upward. In the United States, approximately 800 workers at BP's Whiting refinery in Indiana have been locked out since March, while workers at Marathon's Martinez facility in California struck in April. In October, Phillips 66 locked out approximately 385 workers at its Bayway refinery in New Jersey following disputes over wages, healthcare, and safety. While the disruption of international oil supplies has contributed to rising prices and refinery margins, the oil companies continue their offensive against the workers whose labor sustains their profits.

In Venezuela, petroleum workers and retirees in Zulia launched protests in October against starvation wages, unpaid pensions, and deteriorating conditions, with demonstrations spreading to other oil-producing regions. In Britain, more than 160 offshore workers employed by Apache voted for strike action at seven North Sea installations, rejecting a real-terms wage cut. In Iran itself, petroleum workers have continued their struggles despite war, sanctions, and state repression. In September, employees of Pars Oil and Gas Company demonstrated across offshore platforms and facilities in Assaluyeh and Kangan, demanding higher wages, the removal of salary caps, and payment of outstanding benefits. Workers on Iran's national gas network also struck at Bidboland and Ahvaz, while earlier protests by refinery workers challenged layoffs and unpaid wages. These actions have occurred amid soaring inflation and the devastation of the economy by imperialist war.

The present struggles continue a long history of militant action by petroleum workers, from the American refinery strikes of 1945–46 and 2015 to the great Iranian oil strikes of 1978–79, which helped paralyze the Shah's regime, and the mass strikes of Iranian contract oil workers in 2020 and 2021. Their significance lies in their connection to the broader rebellions of railway workers, dockers, miners, nurses, and industrial proletarians against declining real wages and worsening conditions. In Iran, oil workers' protests have unfolded alongside struggles by teachers, healthcare workers, retirees, and transport workers. As imperialist war intensifies competition over energy resources, workers on every side are called upon to sacrifice for the national economy. Yet these struggles reveal the common antagonism between labor and capital across national frontiers, and the material possibility of uniting scattered workers' rebellions into an independent international class movement against capitalist exploitation and imperialist war.

Cattle Capital Exposes Its Achilles Heel

During September, ICE presence rose in southwest Kansas, hitting part of the heartland region of the beef industry, in places such as Liberal, Dodge, and Garden City. Unsurprisingly, workers employed in processors, feedyards, dairies, feed and grain firms, and transportation hubs have opted to stay at home for fear of deportation.

The result has been a delay to processors with a loss of revenue in the millions due to the shortage of labor, according to a joint statement released by the Kansas Livestock

Association, Texas Cattle Feeders Association, and Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association on September 24th.

In their open letter to the Department of Homeland Security, the cattle barons respectfully scorn the approach with which the Department of Homeland Security has conducted their operations, that is, without the cooperation of local law enforcement and their political structures to conduct such actions in a "lawful, orderly, and transparent manner". They note that these harmful effects to their businesses are expected to last several weeks after the end of the ICE operations. In short, they mourn the loss of their profits, not the deportation campaigns.

It is no secret that the cattle processors and by extension the meat and poultry industry, in the United States, exploit the most vulnerable sections of the working class: immigrants and minorities. A study by the Economic Policy Institute estimated that this industry comprises around 500,000 total workers with approximately 268,000 employed in the meat sector in 2018. Of the half million workers, 37.5% are immigrants, more than double the national average of 17.1%. Only a third (29.1%) are naturalized citizens while 70.9% are non-citizens.

The reason for such an inclination in hiring workers from other countries becomes clear: the average wage of workers in the animal slaughtering and processing industries stands at $30,500 a year versus the national average wage of $36,000, an 18% difference from the national average. As such, 8.8% of active workers (not including unemployed) in the meat and poultry industry are below the poverty rate in contrast to the 7.2% national average. However, this data does not dive into the distribution of wage differentials by a worker's citizenship status; we can only assume that it is the undocumented and minority worker that is paid even less.

Working conditions are despicable, but par for the course in the American treatment of the working population feeding the nation. A forty-hour workweek, twelve-hour shifts, and minimal safety equipment can be expected. During the COVID pandemic, the top five large meat companies alone had 60,000 confirmed infections and 298 deaths occurring within the ranks of the workers. The communities in proximity of the meat plants fare no better, with an additional 310,000 infections and 5,200 deaths or roughly 7% and 3.5% of infections and deaths, respectively. All preventable, but alas the altar of profit has deemed the sacrifice necessary!

This economic reality is what underpins the current wage-labor arrangement in the meat and poultry sectors and in other related industries that are attached to this productive apparatus, such as soybean farming, dairies, logistics, etc. One that depends on cheap immigrant labor-power in industries that are finding themselves in conditions that reduce their competitiveness on the market, including but not limited to high fuel prices, low cattle herd stocks due to historic droughts, tariffs on exports to Asian markets, and lower demand after the pandemic. Conditions that bring the class struggle to the forefront as capital will no doubt increase the immiseration of the proletariat to prevent the fall of the rate of profit.

After 40 years in the meat industry, an episode of the class struggle manifested at Greeley, Colorado back in March when workers went on strike against the Brazilian multinational meat processor, JBS, who were demanding higher wages, safety equipment, and a stop to harassment from management. The multi week militant effort by thousands of workers, some of whom hailed from multiple foreign countries and spoke 57 different languages, based in the plant responsible for 8% of the daily meat production in the US, was able to wrestle wage increases, safety equipment allowances and lower healthcare contributions, albeit at an inferior pension plan than the rest of the plants represented by the current union apparatus of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). If the willingness for workers to strike was present and far reaching, so too was the collaborationist UFCW there to compartmentalize the struggle and prevent it from reaching its maximum strength to overcome the collusion between employers.

The UFCW now pivots workers to fight on the parliamentary terrain in

(continued on page 5)

the hopes of winning legislation to protect workers, forgetting that it's the class struggle that makes law not the other way around.

What these developments show us is the clear and only path workers in the meat and poultry industries and by extension the agriculture sector must take. Both the inadvertent effects of deportations and the strike at Greeley have once again illuminated that the surplus value where profits are derived come from the exploitation of the proletariat's labor power.

Workers therefore must regain their most powerful weapon, the strike, and coordinate it across the industries and surpass the limitations imposed by collaborationist unions and parliamentary tricks to meet their demands. Only then in this process, will their recognition as a social force, under the leadership of their Party, be able to mount a real battle against the ICE terror imposed by capital.

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THE PROLETARIAT'S...

(continued from page 2)

know, workers do not experience reality like the capitalists in their mad frenzy of accumulation.

Another great thesis of Marx: the greater the relative wage gap of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, the greater the alienation and power of Capital over the worker. The more profound and obvious their "bare existence" becomes despite the ostensible standard of living increases.

The "Bare Existence" & Alienation

The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 speak for themselves.

Essentially, the text stipulates that an increase in production of objects is accompanied by an increase of an "alien" power that dominates people. This power is none other than the impersonal force of Capital. Every new product is not created to directly satisfy a social need; it first must be sold on the market to realize a profit.

Profit to the worker is something that benefits the parasitical and unproductive class. As it grows in quantity, the power of the worker and their own money is reduced as their neediness, i.e. longing to live as a species-being without classes and profit, grows.

The results of alienation are the unstable existence of workers and specific dialectical movement of a greater sophistication and amount of needs and means of satisfaction in life, yet the reduction to the most simple and machine-like existence for the worker. While the bourgeoisie enjoys all the fruits of the latest technology and culture, the proletariat is left to watch as they flaunt their opulence.

The crushing mechanical nature of the capitalist division of labor, lifetime careers in a single pointless job, false happiness in consuming more and more goods while producing solely for the profit of society's bloodsuckers defines the great misery in the face of massive wealth.

The abstract action of consumption does not produce fulfillment and neglects the necessity of conscious and diverse human activity that satisfies the individual and species.

Marx writes, "The less you eat, drink and buy books; the less you go to the theatre, the dance hall, the public house; the less you think, love, theorise, sing, paint, fence, etc., the more you save – the greater becomes your treasure which neither moths nor rust will devour – your capital. The less you are, the less you express your own life, the more you have, i.e., the greater is your alienated life, the greater is the store of your estranged being."

Mindless zombified consumers are what capitalism generates. All a person's passions are subjected to the holy consideration of "How much will that cost me?" as they barely salvage enough to survive.

This meager and precarious existence is proved by taking a look at some key figures: 63% of Americans are living paycheck-to-paycheck (the number rises to 81% for households making under $50,000 annually). Of which, 90% reported having less than $500 left each month after expenses. About a quarter cannot fully pay their bills as debt increasingly piles onto this as people borrow to sustain themselves.

Capitalism's Necessary Poverty

Instead of eliminating poverty, capitalism needs it. During boom and bust cycles, a relative surplus population of unemployed and hyper-exploited proletarians are funnelled in and out of the labor market, hence immigration control. This pauperism exists only because of how productive capitalism is and its thirst for profit, in conflict as the forces of production break the social barriers imposed on it.

For capitalists to accumulate profit, relative wages must decrease and workers must generate as much surplus-value as possible.

This class society does not care about the plight of the working class and continues to invest more and more heavily into the means of production until too many goods are produced for consumers unable to buy. It imposes rent and the "law of the worst land" that artificially inflate the price of food. Producing luxury goods meant for the exclusive consumption of capitalist leeches continues to suck mass amounts of labor-power into socially useless parasitism.

The next economic crisis will necessitate the decrease in absolute living standards and material position of the worker that spurs them to action.

When the death knell of Capital sounds, the class will reconnect with its Party and overthrow this regime of property.

The Imperialist War

FOR THE MILITARY DEFEAT OF ALL NATIONS, AGAINST THE "DEFENSE OF THE FATHERLAND"! — FOR THE FRATERNIZATION OF SOLDIERS ON ALL FRONTS!
FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF IMPERIALIST WAR INTO REVOLUTIONARY CIVIL WAR! — TOWARDS WORLD PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP LED BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY!

NEITHER NIHILISM, PACIFISM, NOR ACTIVISM WILL SAVE U.S. SOLDIERS!

(continued from page 1)

approximately $550-$750 billion for its four-and-a-half year duration. The American-Israeli war with Iran involves no long-term troop deployments of on-the-ground forces, but is overwhelmingly fought using high-end weaponry and aerial warfare; the intermittent waves of strikes has incurred a long receipt, spent on long-term naval deployments, base repairs, Patriot and JASSM-ER anti-drone interceptors, relocated THAAD batteries, and Tomahawk missiles.

The monetary costs of spent arms, ammunition, equipment, administrative investments (and embezzlements), veterans' care, etc., as well as the staggering global losses in oil and fuel resources which our Party covers regularly, are in no way, shape, or form the only casualties incurred by this grisly war; those proletarians in all countries ordered to conduct the fighting, and in some cases outside the belligerent countries altogether, regularly face the alienating horrors of modern warfare. Electronic targeting systems, some "assisted" with artificial intelligence, have bathed many thousands of Iranian soldiers and civilians in fire and shrapnel, including schoolchildren. Civilians run for cover in air raid shelters as warning alarms sound from Iran through the Fertile Crescent to the Arabian Peninsula, shortly before explosive projectiles rain down upon them.

The war takes place amid the chaos and devastation of the genocide inflicted on the Gaza Strip by the bourgeois Israeli government and the capitalists within and outside its borders whose interests it serves. Official estimates predict well over 70,000 deaths in the ravaged Strip over the past three years, though the true death toll is almost certainly guaranteed to be far, far higher. Life in the barren territory resembles the most gruesome and deprived of any given war-torn country as Palestinian proletarians struggle to procure basic necessities while falling prey to drone flyovers, snipers, and the hell of modern urban warfare. All the while, the nakedly bourgeois American government issues its lethal orders without fear of class reprisal, having entirely repudiated even the negligible measures which past governments' contradictions permitted to stave off revolution.

Gone are 1945's sweet promises of social-democratic welfare measures reaped and plundered by the spoils of war, replaced only with raw, empty nationalistic platitudes and the Trump administration's warnings of nuclear weapons, yet devoid of substance. Atop the political costs, the material conditions on board these vessels have deteriorated drastically since the war's beginning; malfunctions aboard the USS Gerald R. Ford in March included a laundry room fire and plumbing failures that caused catastrophic flooding, forcing the vessel to make port in Crete ahead of schedule for repairs and resupply.

The USS Abraham Lincoln, present in the Persian Gulf since before the conflict began, spent a record 311 days in a naval combat zone and endured strained crew fatigue and external damage, including a significant amount of rusting, before it was relieved by the USS George Washington in late August. These incidents are likely to cost tens of millions of dollars in repairs and resupply stocks alone, not to mention the price of the weapons they have fired.

It is in this environment that dozens of American soldiers, unable to either resolve the contradictions of continuing to fight a bourgeois war for blatant resource exploitation or, as a class, consciously formulate a response to them, have chosen to commit various acts of nihilistic, legalistic, or otherwise petty-bourgeois and individualistic rebellion in lieu of class organizing. Military health and support organizations have reported surges in applications for "conscientious objector" status as these soldiers witness the rotten fruits of inter-imperialist war. A 25 year high in these applications was even reached as a result of the deep unpopularity and obvious moral quandaries of striking civilians.

March through to August saw multiple instances of the use of graffiti on U.S. military bases' bunker walls, ship hulls, and naval aircraft disparaging the Trump Administration and the State of Israel for their hands in the conflict; and earlier in September, eight U.S. sailors attempted to commit suicide, two of them by throwing themselves off of their ship. Thus, we see the beginnings of a spontaneous defeatism among rank-and-file soldiers that must be encouraged and directed toward proletarian ends.

Outside of the armed forces, the usual protests organized and orchestrated by the bourgeois socialist and "communist" parties continue to intermittently spring up in urban centers and street corners across the U.S. during certain flashpoints, but even these events appear infrequent enough to have worn out their welcome. The run-up to the Iraqi conflict saw enormous, sustained gatherings regularly boasting strength in the hundreds of thousands; the February 15th, 2003 "global day of action" turnout exceeded 6 million participants alone, possibly reaching as high as 11 million according to some reports. In comparison, the No Kings protests of March 28th saw around 8 or 9 million protestors of all classes turn out to voice their displeasure for one single day, more against the Trump administration than the war itself, and without this outlier, the total number broadly drops to the tens of thousands at most.

Needless to say, these self-aggrandizing displays of activism have produced exactly zero results, despite the insistence by activist leaders of their importance in "raising awareness". In fact, they have only generated political confusion and disorientation that serves reaction and opportunism. See the symphony of electoral appeals to the "rule" of international law or outright pacifism.

It seems that any shadow of power of the old petty-bourgeois displays of interclass political dissidence so common to the Vietnam War era onward has completely faded away, their dismal track record amid "the most unpopular war in American history" a shrine and testament to their sheer ineffectiveness. While limited in scope, courageous and effective examples of American defeatism existed with the soldiers uniting against their officers and "fragging" them—threatening to or actually throwing a live grenade—inside their tents.

So, let us not even begin with the common attitude among these petty-bourgeois "organizers" that certain soldiers are irredeemable servants of imperialism and thus useless. They would do well to remember that it was the soldiers and sailors who formed the critical backbone of Bolshevism, while it was a significant portion of the students that formed the counter-revolutionary White movement and fought in the Junker Mutiny. And to those who uselessly beg for disarmament and peace, we do not want the State to disarm and demobilize the soldiers; we want—and need—them to be the gravediggers of capitalism and take up arms against the bourgeoisie.

What we are witnessing is the current inability of the proletariat in the United States to act as a class for itself. Alienation plagues every aspect of the working class' lives in all countries during this segment of the century-long counterrevolution, entirely absent any organizational outlet or connection to a strong class Party to guide their actions. Per Marx in The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, in its section on Estranged Labor, we understand the root cause of the acuity of this alienation which takes place within the armed forces, which strips each worker financially coerced into its ranks of their relationships to their products and the act of production, yes, but also and especially from their species-being, from the other coerced workers within the ranks, and most obviously, from those workers whom they are told to kill and subjugate for the capitalists of their own countries. What soldiers are forced to produce, imperial state power and the defense of bourgeois geopolitical and economic interests, is not only not immediately and viscerally stripped from them, it was in fact never theirs to begin with.

All the benefit a combatant sees from their labor is reappropriated by the capitalist class to further their own interests in resources and labor from the conquered territories. This has become even easier to witness in an age of instantaneous global communications and social media, as soldiers can now see with their own eyes in real-time that their efforts amount to nothing more than slain Iranian workers, wrecked cities and oil fields, and profits for American, Israeli, and Gulf capitalists. Yet without consciousness, without organizing, and without a Party, their options to take material action are effectively nonexistent, leading inexorably toward the ineffective actions we have witnessed in the last few months. All the protests, objections, threats of desertion, and interpersonal gripes have done nothing to stop or even slow the bourgeoisie's relentless drive toward war.

Individual gestures, despair-induced abstention, and interclass pacifism are each a dead end. Graffiti is simply washed away; soldiers lost to wartime casualty or suicide are "mourned" and casually replaced; words are easily ignored. The class-collaborative mass marches of the "democratic opposition" and opportunist parties, which beg the bourgeoisie to be "less warlike" and appeal to its elections, courts, and Congress have never stopped an imperialist war and never will. War is the necessary outgrowth of capitalism in its imperialist phase, a cycle of construction, production, and destruction, the blood and refuse of exploitation staining its floors, walls, and machinery every step of the way, and it will end only when capitalism is ended.

To achieve a world without war, workers in uniform must understand that their enemy is not the Iranian worker in the opposite base or ship, but the ruling class that sent them both there; the main enemy is at home. Their interests are one with the Iranian, Israeli, Arab, and American workers who pay for this war with their lives and their wages, and with the workers whose domestic living standards are sacrificed to fund it. Thus, the American and Iranian worker and soldier must recognize their common interests, cease fighting, fraternize, and unite under the Party's banner of proletarian revolution.

Revolutionary defeatism, the defeat of "one's own" bourgeoisie in its imperialist adventure, is the only path to proletarian self-emancipation, toward the necessary civil war between classes, toward the overthrow of the exploiting class by the exploited class, a class for itself united under its Party, and toward the birth of a new world free of the material forces which inflict death and despair on proletarians the world over.

The Conflict of Gas and Oil Flows Over the Mediterranean

The complex situation in the Mediterranean, stemming from the dirty imperialist politics aimed at dominating the region, has become even more intractable in recent years.

The region is a battleground for mega-projects involving the extraction and transit of gas and oil, as well as trade: the "India-Middle East – Europe," in which Italy and the European Union are participating alongside India, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, France, and Germany, was launched as a counterweight to China's "Belt and Road" initiative, but instability in the region is hindering its progress.

The "Iraq-Europe Development Route" is a project that, passing through Turkey, would open Iraq to the world while bypassing the Suez Canal.

The "EastMed" gas pipeline is expected to connect Israel to Greece via Cyprus.

The Israel-Egypt gas pipeline will supply Egypt, while "TransMed" will supply Italy.

"Greenstream" transports gas from Libya to Sicily, and the Morocco-Europe gas pipeline—currently closed due to the dispute between Morocco and Algeria—would supply gas to Spain. Instead, the "MedGaz" gas pipeline carries gas directly from Algeria to Spain.

An alternative pipeline in the eastern Mediterranean via Turkey is currently in the planning stages: the proposed route runs through Israel, Southern Cyprus, and Turkey toward Europe, but no progress has been made due to Greece's veto.

Electricity generated in Africa originates in Egypt, passes through Southern Cyprus, and reaches Greece, from where it is distributed throughout Europe.

The Suez Canal is also of crucial importance for the export of LNG from the Gulf states to Europe.

These are just a few of the major trade routes that now cross the Mediterranean and have brought it back to the center of international disputes.

There is fierce competition underway for the exploitation of the region's resources. Libya occupies a central position, serving as the gateway for trade from the Sahel to the Mediterranean, and is one of the largest producers of oil and gas—both of excellent quality. It could not escape the grip of imperialism.

Following the collapse of the central state after the fall of the Gaddafi regime, power is currently divided among armed groups backed by various imperialist countries.

The European Union intervened in the post-2011 Libyan civil wars through "Operation Sofia" and, since 2020, through "Operation Irini." It trained and supported an armed group that presented itself as a provisional government, while the other group, led by Khalifa Haftar, received support from Russia and Egypt. The European Union's operations were largely led by Italy. France, competing with Italy, did not shy away from supplying weapons to Haftar's government in Tobruk, despite the arms embargoes.

The Turkish government took advantage of this uncertain situation. Turkey, as the country with the second-largest army in NATO, sided with the Tripoli government. This alliance led to the signing of a Military and Security Cooperation Agreement and an Agreement on the Delimitation of Maritime Jurisdiction Zones, both concluded in 2019. These agreements have granted Turkey numerous privileges in the Mediterranean—ranging from the exploration and sharing of marine energy resources to cooperation between the two militaries—but have displeased other coastal states, such as Greece, Cyprus, and Egypt.

Turkey's plan is to expand its influence in the eastern Mediterranean in order to take control of the energy flow from the region. In a context leading toward world war, the Turkish bourgeoisie seeks to combine its military potential—already considerable thanks to its advanced arms industry—with its energy potential. But in this band of brigands, everyone shares Turkey's ambitions.

The Turkey-Libya electricity cooperation, currently in the planning stages, aims to shift the energy balance in the eastern Mediterranean. Green hydrogen (produced using renewable energy) from North Africa to Europe would travel through existing gas pipelines—which would be retrofitted—and reach Europe via the Mediterranean seabed. There is great potential for hydrogen production in Libya and the Sahel region. The export of other valuable commodities from the Sahel takes place via Libya and Algeria. The influence of the Russian Wagner Group is evident in their sale.

In this context, the plane crash in Ankara—in which the Libyan Chief of Staff and other high-ranking generals lost their lives, and which received little media attention—has a deeper significance than it appears. It was likely not an accident but an attack. The downing of the French Falcon 50 aircraft could, in fact, be a warning for Libya to take a step back from the close ties it has established with Turkey.

For Turkey, on the other hand, it would serve as a warning to stay in its place—a demonstration that it is unable to guarantee security even on its own territory.

The steps Turkey has taken to become a major player in the Mediterranean are making the great imperialist powers—whose commercial and military networks have been intertwined for many years—uneasy.

International relations between states, much like those between rival mafias, mean that various governments, on the one hand, brand armed organizations that do not serve their interests as "terrorists," while on the other hand, they secretly fund them to secure their support or even legitimize them by granting them legal status, as in Syria, Afghanistan, or Libya itself. Their activities, whether legal or illegal, are essentially the same: a series of political and military operations aimed at carrying out dirty dealings in the name of profit.

For the working class, there is no peace anywhere—there is only blood and tears under this regime! The working class, reduced to begging even for the crumbs left over after the divisions among armed bandits vying for the world's increasingly limited resources, can act in its own interest and that of the world only through class struggle. The proletariat throughout the Mediterranean region—with its land and its sea—is subjected to terrible violence; one need only think of the people of Gaza or the many imprisoned in Libya's detention camps. The workers of the Mediterranean countries—all of whom are exploited—have the power to put an end to this appalling suffering. Through a general strike, it is possible to shut down the ports, halt the arms trade, and stop the oil tankers! Let us oppose the war between imperialist powers, organize the class struggle by strengthening class-based labor unions, and promote the agenda of the International Communist Party.

General Meeting of the Party

May 23-24, 2026 no. 155

The party's hard work builds the arches of the bridge connecting the social science proclaimed in the Communist Manifesto of 1848 to the critique and exposure of today's obscene capitalist decadence, and to the sound guidance of the working class's unceasing struggles aimed at tomorrow's revolution.

Iran: The Failure of Modernization

In the 1970s, the severe economic and social crises of the preceding decades culminated in the definitive fall of the Pahlavi dynasty and the Ayatollahs' seizure of power—a regime no less repressive than the monarchy.

The "White Revolution" of the previous decade, with its reform agenda aimed at modernizing and Westernizing the country and the definitive transition to a capitalist economy, failed to achieve its goal, generating anger and discontent among the commercial petty bourgeoisie, poor peasants, the emerging industrial working class, and the Shi'ite clergy—which was tied to the interests of small-scale pre-capitalist production and those of the feudal agrarian aristocracy.

The Shah's revolution had plunged agriculture into the hell of the capitalist system, dragging peasants into poverty—both those who struggled to make a living on their own plots of land, burdened by debt, and those who had been turned into wage laborers. Many had been forced to seek employment in the big cities.

The monarchy remained by far the largest investor in agriculture. At the end of 1973, taking advantage of the tripled price of oil, reforms were imposed without regard for their effects on the majority of the population. Unemployment rose, production contracted, and vast areas became desertified. Between 1959 and 1972, production growth was barely higher than population growth, with a decline of up to 40% in the dairy sector. The "revolution" led to the abandonment of natural resources such as water and pastures, the importation of cattle in place of sheep, and the replacement of small nomadic herds with large-scale food imports—all to the benefit of multinational corporations and to the detriment of the public debt. The "transition to capitalism" resulted only in enrichment for a minority and poverty for the masses in industrial cities and rural areas.

As long as the oil windfall continued to flow, the contradictions between the ever-richer and the ever-hungrier were mitigated, often through the repressive measures of the SAVAK, the secret police established in '57. But as the crisis intensified, even the urban middle classes rose up alongside the industrial proletariat. Only the classes that had built their fortunes on oil revenues remained in support of state power. A small caste of loyalists to the imperial family controlled all industrial and agricultural activity. The military accounted for 27% of the state budget, while landowners and the commercial bourgeoisie together made up 20% of the population and consumed over 60% of the national income.

The agricultural sector, despite accounting for 50% of the Iranian population—most of whom were illiterate—contributed less than 10% to the gross domestic product in 1977 and was unable to meet the country's domestic needs.

From 1972 to 1976, in fact, imports rose from 3 to 18 billion (30% of GDP), consisting of luxury goods, foodstuffs, and weapons, leading to a corresponding increase in debt. Inflation reached 30% in 1977.

The modern Iranian industrial bourgeoisie was too weak, excluded from oil revenues and tied to the plundering carried out by the Shah and foreign companies. Industrial production grew by 16% annually from '71 to '73, peaking at 22% from '74 to '75, before falling to 17% in '76–'77, but it accounted for only 18% of gross domestic product. At the time, the sector employed 2 million people, mostly in construction, while large industrial firms employed 450,000 workers. However, approximately 60% of industrial activity was concentrated in the non-durable goods sector—textiles, food, etc.

The Shi'ite clergy had been severely disadvantaged by the fragmentation of their feudal estates during the "White Revolution" of the 1960s, which was hostile to the newly emerging bourgeois property relations. Its opposition to the monarchy stemmed not so much from the goal of Westernizing and secularizing the country as from class interests. The clergy represented the strata of small-scale pre-capitalist production and agrarian feudalism, which were totally opposed to the centralizing power of the monarchy combined with the changing economic landscape.

The role of the bazaar merchants was significant; the bazaar was an economic structure on which one million people employed in retail and wholesale trade depended. The merchants became a class inextricably linked to the Shi'a clergy, a convergence of bazaar-mosque interests in which merchants paid the alms tax (zakat) to the clergy rather than to the state—a parallel financial network that would provide significant support for the uprising against the Shah. They organized nationwide business closures and strikes, providing transportation, food, and shelter to protesters fleeing persecution by the SAVAK. Mosques became the operational and ideological hubs of urban centers. The only exception was the organization of strikes by oil sector workers, who maintained a certain degree of organizational autonomy—albeit for a very brief moment—even after the fall of the monarchy.

The commercial middle classes—still tied to pre-capitalist forms but integrated into the market—the peasants impoverished by agrarian reform aimed at freeing up labor for an industry that was still backward, and the underclass that had poured into urban centers, joined forces with the discontent of the bourgeois strata, strangled by the overwhelming power of multinational corporations and the lack of infrastructure that the centralizing Shah was unable to build.

The Shah, the Middle East's enforcer, maintained internal repression to protect Western interests, keeping Chinese and Russian interference at bay. But as the crisis and protests intensified, and given the inability to resolve economic contradictions, support from American bosses was called into question. "Le Monde" wrote in August 1978: "The U.S. has invested too much in Tehran over the past 25 years to afford to keep betting on a loser." It was not the first time the U.S. had stabbed one of its allies in the back to switch sides and save its own interests.

As the death toll reached several thousand amid an increasingly tense and repressive climate, the army collapsed amid mass desertions and mutinies; soldiers executed their officers and joined the uprising.

On January 4, 1979, a civilian compromise government, led by the liberal Shapour Bakhtiar, attempted to curb the uprising and steer the country toward a liberal democracy. But Khomeini appointed his own provisional government headed by Medhi Bazargan. Both the clergy and the secular components of the "revolution" immediately reassured the Americans that the armed struggle and strikes would be contained. The new Bazargan government immediately plotted a betrayal against those who had borne the brunt of months of struggle: the petty bourgeoisie and the working and peasant classes.

We wrote in issue No. 55 of 1979: "The absence of a class-based organization prevented the working class, in defending its own interests, from uniting with the poor peasants and the urban underclass—and drawing the petty bourgeoisie in its wake—on the basis of a program that was not merely 'democratic' or, worse still, 'Islamic'—a term that merely conceals the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie by the church."

"The workers want the Councils; even some military officers want the army to be governed by the Councils," lamented Engineer Bazargan—the new Kerensky—in an interview at the time. The Tudeh, a fake communist party tied to Russian capitalism, also suspended the strikes. The Stalinist party remained in the wake of the National Front and the clergy.

Even the Mujahidin, the armed group of Maoist descent, moved in this direction.

The young industrial proletariat fought to the very end with the only weapon at its disposal: the general strike, waged in the most courageous manner.

Bakhtiar's transitional government had served to buy time to reach an agreement among the various bourgeois factions: the clergy, linked above all to the old feudal agrarian aristocracy; the National Fronts and liberation movements, which were expressions of nationalist bourgeois classes; and finally the army, the true armed wing of the U.S. and guarantor of American interests—an institution created, organized, and trained by the U.S. itself, on which it also depended for supplies.

These dynamics within the forces of capital—all aimed at securing hegemony over economic affairs—were directed at suppressing the class struggle, against the upheavals of the oppressed masses and against the young, combative proletariat. Both were victims not only of the power struggles among the various bourgeois factions but also, and above all, of a vacuum left by a dormant Western working class.

The complex picture of the 1970s, with its upheavals, shifts, and power vacuums, demonstrates that there is no liberation for workers within bourgeois regime changes; for these are not steps toward emancipation, but merely a means to set back the development of the class's strength, to the detriment of the true revolution, and they lead to the same outcome of defeat and exploitation.

A lesson more relevant than ever today, in 2026 in Iran as in every single infamous nation of the capitalist world.

Property and Capital

To resume our study of Marxist economics, we have presented a summary of our 1948 study "Property and Capital."

Property laws are expressions of the underlying economic and productive relations, not independent forces in and of themselves. Marx states this in the Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, where "forms of production" and "property relations" are identified as two designations of the same reality. The institution of property is neither natural nor eternal. It arose historically when population growth and the development of production techniques created scarcity and conflicts over resources. Primitive communities managed resources in common; property emerged only when goods ceased to be freely available to all.

Slavery, feudalism, and artisanal production each generated distinct property structures, which arose at different historical moments. The ownership of movable property and slaves preceded the ownership of land. Capitalism is not simply the latest version of a universal system of property, but a historically specific mode of appropriation. Legal scholars define property as the right to use and dispose of a thing in the most absolute sense. In its place, we offer a dialectical reformulation: property is the power of a person or group to prevent another person from using a thing. This grounds property in power relations and social organization rather than in an abstract right. The socialist demand to abolish private property is therefore incomplete unless specified in terms of the particular relations of production under capitalism, which requires an economic analysis rather than a legal one.

The rise of capitalism was the destruction of property rights previously held by small producers, not the establishment of new ones. The historical process of primitive accumulation was the systematic expropriation of artisans and peasants from their tools, raw materials, and products. Workers who previously owned the tools and fruits of their own labor were deprived of them and reduced to wage laborers.

Legal ownership of the factory or machinery is not the defining characteristic of capitalism. What defines capitalism is not who holds legal title to the physical facilities, but three conditions: workers must purchase all necessities on the market and cannot provide for themselves directly; workers cannot own or sell the products of their own labor; workers receive wages lower than the value they add, with the surplus directed toward the accumulation of capital.

Fundamentally, the new form of capitalist appropriation is not necessarily individual or personal in nature. Even when production is organized collectively, or when legal ownership belongs to a company or a legal entity rather than to an individual, the capitalist relationship remains fully intact as long as the product is taken away from those who produced it. This distinguishes the Marxist analysis of capitalism from any interpretation that equates it with individual private property, nor does collective or state ownership of the means of production constitute a break with capitalism.

The capitalist's appropriation of the entire product is a social fact rather than a merely personal one. The fundamental relationship is between the capitalist class and the working class. According to the Marxist law of accumulation, capitalists must invest an increasing portion of surplus value into new capital—a dynamic that cannot be reduced to individual enrichment or consumption.

Socialism accepts and builds upon the productive advances of capitalism: large-scale cooperation, the division of labor, and mechanization. Any proposal to fragment these concentrated productive forces by returning to small workshops or individual production is reactionary. The capitalist separation of workers from their individual tools and products is historically definitive. But what was previously at the individual disposal of the free artisan and has passed to the capitalist will in turn pass to the class of producers as a whole, in a system where the means and products of labor are at the disposal of society, rather than of a single class.

The socialist demand calls for the abolition of three forms: private ownership of the products; the monetary and market economy; and the organization of production into competing enterprises.

A socialist economy exists only when corporate accounting, double-entry bookkeeping, monetary profits and losses, and corporate balance sheets no longer exist. This stands in contrast to a community economy that produces according to collective need without internal accounting of exchange values.

Under feudalism, land was not a commodity; it could not be freely bought or sold, nor could it be expropriated to settle debts. Capital emerged historically as money, in the form of mercantile capital and usurious capital, in direct opposition to feudal land ownership.

The bourgeois revolution abolished the feudal restrictions that prevented capital from acquiring land. Land became a commodity.

Ground rent, interest on money, and corporate profit are three forms through which capitalists appropriate unpaid labor.

A capitalist who owns neither land, nor factories, nor money of his own can realize enormous profits solely through ownership of the enterprise. Corporate profit is therefore identified as the most modern and virulent form of capitalist exploitation, quantitatively dominant over the two older forms. Industrial capitalism does not require real estate ownership, and confusing the factory owner with the landowner—or targeting one while leaving the other untouched—means misunderstanding the structure of bourgeois domination.

The bourgeois revolution revived the principle of Roman law, extending legal equality to all citizens. But in practice, this means that only those with sufficient capital can acquire property. The very legal system that, in principle, applies to all citizens applies, in fact, only to the class of property owners.

Peasant ownership of small plots is structurally unstable under capitalism. Small landowners lack capital, cannot adopt modern techniques, and accumulate mortgage debt. Fragmented land tends to recombine into large estates, reverting to the very distribution that redistribution sought to break up.

The value of urban land rises because capitalism concentrates masses of workers and productive facilities in cities. This increase in value is a social product, generated by collective urban activity, not by the investment of any single landowner. The owner of a building lot performs no labor, invests no capital in production, yet sees the value of the land rise continuously as the city grows around it.

The rental of residential housing is not a capitalist relationship in the strict sense. In capitalist production, the employer purchases labor power, which is applied to raw materials to produce commodities; the difference between the value produced and the wage paid constitutes surplus value. In a lease agreement, no labor power is applied to raw materials, no commodities are produced, and no surplus value is extracted.

The relationship between landlord and tenant is a commercial exchange of equivalents. Rent controls and programs to turn tenants into homeowners are not socialist measures. They do not undermine the capitalist mode of production. Such a proposal is reactionary given the development of large-scale industry. The housing shortage is a necessary institution of capitalism. Every bourgeois solution to the housing problem fails because of the structural antagonism between city and countryside, which only the abolition of the capitalist mode of production can resolve.

Under bourgeois law, movable property belongs to whoever possesses it. In capitalist production, this means that the entrepreneur owns and disposes of all the products that come out of his enterprise. The factory building, the machinery, and the land on which the plant stands may or may not be legally owned by the capitalist. What defines capitalism is control over what is produced and where it ends up.

When socialists call for the abolition of private ownership of the means of production—expressed as the abolition of ownership of factories and plants—the true substance of this demand is the abolition of the capitalist's monopoly over the products. Any measure that limits property rights over the workplace, the plant, or the machinery, while preserving the control of individuals, companies, or the capitalist class over the products and their distribution, is not socialism. Nationalization, state ownership of enterprises, and cooperative management that still operates within a market economy all fall under this assessment if the products continue to circulate on the market as commodities regulated by corporate accounting.

Recent Events in Mali

On April 25, JNIM, al-Qaeda's affiliate in the Sahel, launched its most coordinated and significant attacks in Mali since at least 2012, in collaboration with the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA), a Tuareg separatist group. The offensive was nationwide in scope; JNIM and FLA fighters captured Bourem and the regional capitals of Gao and Kidal in northern Mali, storming a base in Bourem and trapping the Malian Armed Forces (FAMA) and their Russian allies.

In southern Mali, JNIM fighters simultaneously launched commando attacks, killing several high-ranking junta officials and targeting the airport on the outskirts of Bamako, as well as the main army base and nearby residences of high-ranking officials in nearby Kati. These attacks involved improvised explosive devices on suicide vehicles and armed drones, as well as assailants disguised as Malian soldiers. The attacks targeted junta leader Assimi Goïta, who was seriously wounded—possibly fatally—and intelligence chief Modibo Koné, and killed Defense Minister Sadio Camara.

After the initial assault, the rebels consolidated their gains. JNIM claimed to have captured the Hombori base in central Mali and to have taken control of two checkpoints near Bamako, after previously threatening to completely besiege the city. Four major military camps in the north of the country are in the hands of armed groups, and the FAMa have offered no resistance. Shortly thereafter, armed fighters took control of the city of Tessalit; a video verified by Reuters showed the fighters driving through the city and raising the FLA flag.

The loss of Kidal carries particular significance. Faced with the city's encirclement, the Africa Corps—which now operates under the Russian Ministry of Defense, replacing the Wagner Group—negotiated a safe-passage agreement with the invaders to evacuate its personnel. Videos have emerged of Tuareg fighters mocking the departing Russian convoy. The fall of Kidal has overturned what had been Russia's most significant symbolic victory in Mali, achieved in 2023 when Russian mercenaries and the FAMa recaptured the city after nearly a decade of rebel rule. Russian imperialism has yet to achieve any substantial success since its shift toward the Sahel; its efforts appear inadequate to address a deeply rooted crisis.

The JNIM's objectives, however, do not appear to extend to total conquest. JNIM likely seeks to engage the new authorities in Bamako—over whom it can exert significant influence—rather than assume direct control over all of Mali. The group has approximately 6,000 fighters spread across Burkina Faso and Mali, a number that pales in comparison to groups like HTS or the Taliban, which have succeeded in overthrowing governments.

A further danger lies in the security vacuum that is emerging in the north. The control exercised by JNIM and the Islamic State's Sahel Province (ISSP) over their respective areas in northern Mali increases the risk of a transnational threat, with the ISSP having already exploited the situation by seizing a key position on the Mali-Niger border following the withdrawal of the FAMa and Russian forces.

It is likely that the junta will concentrate its remaining forces on defending Bamako and Gao, abandoning the outskirts and leaving northern Mali increasingly under the control of the JNIM-FLA alliance. The long-term survival of the junta's regime remains uncertain.

Nationalism Against Proletarian Classism at the Green Party Congress in Great Britain

In England, the Green Party—a party of the radical petty bourgeoisie—shows a lamentable (intentional?) ignorance of the historical interests of the working class, and acts as a poison to the British workers movement.

It is a party which claims to defend a generic and ill-defined "Palestinian people", without highlighting that a bourgeoisie is clearly present and rules in Gaza, which became very obvious when at the height of the massacre perpetrated by the Israeli State, it bloodily repressed the courageous protests against the Hamas government, aka the Islamic Resistance Movement.

At the Green Party Congress in early October, a motion was carried which backed a "single democratic Palestinian State in all of historic Palestine", condemning Zionism as an ideology which supports "an ethnonational Jewish State". Thus, they effectively threw their support behind the bourgeois program of Hamas, which doesn't recognise the State of Israel and ultimately seeks to replace Israel as the region's gendarme.

Israel's foreign ministry immediately responded, calling it "a clear anti-semitic text". This was done to once again purposefully blur the lines between Zionist supporters of the Israeli State and followers of Judaism.

However, despite foreign journalists being barred from entering Gaza, it has become an urgent need for those who every day see apocalyptic scenes of destruction and the desperation of the victims to talk about it and do something.

Gaza today has the largest number of child amputees as a proportion of their population in the world, and in the West Bank we witness the nasty process of ethnic cleansing unfolding before our eyes with colonists, flanked by Israeli soldiers, intimidating Palestinians live on TV.

Opportunism utilizes these tragedies to channel anger and resistance into maintaining capitalism.

It is impossible not to compare the oppression, apartheid, and genocide in Palestine with Northern Ireland and the struggle there between coloniser and colonised, stretching way back into the past. Even today, hundreds of years after the colonists from England and Scotland stole, or forced the sale, land from its previous occupants, an entrenched bitterness still remains which is channelled into forms of nationalist expression broadly expressed under religious banners. In Israel, those banners brandish the symbols of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity whereas in Ireland it is Protestant and Catholic.

The anger at being ousted from the land to create Lebensräume for Jewish settlers will become deep and entrenched and be passed down the generations as in Ireland.

The authentic communist position is that controversies of this type will never be resolved under the capitalist

(continued on page 8)

DATA CENTERS

(continued from page 1)

campaigns.

Now, both parties are spending millions of dollars to brand each other as friends of Big Tech and data center development. True to form, these politicians are putting on a performance to disguise their role as agents of Capital. They've learned their lines and are now auditioning before the nation.

"Good Neighbors"

While AI developers claim to keep the interests of residents, this is patently false.

In response to the blowback, hyperscalers like Amazon, Google, Meta, and Microsoft along with other independent developers are trying to turn over a new leaf. By donating to non profits, "paying their own way" for energy, and supposedly adding to local tax bases, these companies are committed to being "good neighbors." However, the resounding response from these communities: "Not in my backyard!"

As of writing, there are over 506 "active restrictions" against development, spawning largely from cities and counties across 46 states; this number includes statewide executive orders from 12 governors to pause or slow development (Electric Choice). As mentioned earlier in the article, most of these moratoriums are set to expire within a year, while the most "radical" statewide orders tend only to end tax exemptions for developers or halt the construction of data centers with a capacity above 25 megawatts (MW). While these restrictions are feeble, the fact that they exist at all speaks to the political importance of the issue.

For context, due to El Niño and the ongoing climate crisis, North America endured an unprecedented "heat-dome" this summer. In the US, this led to record high utility bills, with 1 in 6 households already late on their payments before the event. In July alone, nearly 200,000 households were disconnected from these services while 70 deaths can be directly attributed to the heat wave. Both figures are likely a vast undercount as most states are not required to report this data. In the same month, data centers consumed nearly 20 terawatt-hours (TWh) of electricity, equivalent to the monthly consumption of around 21 million households according to a report from the International Energy Agency (IEA).

Additionally, it has been widely publicized that data centers are demanding more from the grid than they can hope to supply. In Texas for example, the state's utility operator reports that data center developers have requested 474 gigawatts (GW), more than five times the state's peak electricity demand. Last year, Texas was only able to increase its nameplate capacity by over 20 GW, largely thanks to solar power and battery storage. As said by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, "Realized output is always significantly less that [sic] nameplate capacity," with renewables like solar only capable of generating 24% of this capacity (natural gas has an actual output of 57%). This mismatch prompted the Republican governor, who formerly celebrated Texas as the "epicenter of AI development", to order a statewide moratorium and audit of the proposed projects.

In an effort to "pay their own way" and bypass the moratoriums, these companies are creating on-site power. But, this false promise of "paying their own way" ignores the knock-on effects of their insatiable hunger for energy, namely creating a global shortage of natural gas turbines which are backordered for the next five years.

Residents living near data centers powered by these turbines say they cannot think, sleep, or breathe due to the constant hum and pollution. So much for "good neighbors!"

Greenwashing

AI development is fundamentally incompatible with "eco-friendliness".

The hyperscalers' claim that they are designing these facilities with the environment and communities in mind. They cite their state-of-the-art edge cases like Google's heat pump data center in Finland, which uses seawater for cooling and distributes any excess heat to the neighboring town, or Microsoft's biomimicry initiative which seeks to make projects "blend into the natural landscape."

But, behind all the greenwashing lies the dirty truth that these companies will power their facilities by any means necessary. By 2030, renewables and natural gas will each contribute a third of all electricity generated for data centers globally (IEA). Though the cost of renewables per kWh is cheaper than natural gas, the aforementioned limitation of "realized output" vs. nameplate capacity and the output per acre (natural gas only needs a fraction of the land required by solar and wind) necessitate that developers also utilize fossil fuels.

Tarnishing their green veneer, these companies are flocking to the Lone Star State to fuel their ambitions. There, Amazon is financing the construction of a natural-gas plant capable of generating 7.65 GW of power, set to be not only the largest plant in US history, but also the nation's single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. Biomimicry cannot camouflage Microsoft's partnership with Chevron to create 2 GW of an off-grid power supply sourced from natural gas.

For as long as AI infrastructure expands, fossil fuels are here to stay.

Unplanned Obsolescence and Imperialism

In the decades before the AI boom, the vast majority of data center development took place in urban clusters. Take Northern Virginia AKA "Data Center Valley" or China's hubs in Beijing, Shanghai and the Pearl River Delta. Buildout is continuing in these clusters due to their proximity to established power plants, transmission lines, and fiber optic cabling. Proximity to urban centers crucially provides low latency data transfers for these areas of concentrated, high-volume demand.

However, since the public release of ChatGPT in late 2022, priorities have changed. The data centers of old have become obsolete. AI-focused data centers require new and sprawling infrastructure to be erected for its gargantuan task of training and running these models.

GPUs and their parallel processing are a necessity for any viable facility. The architecture of GPUs allows them to outperform CPUs by trillions more computations per second. As a result, an individual AI server rack draws more than 10x the amount of energy than its traditional, CPU-focused counterpart, generating heat that cannot be cooled with air alone. As said bluntly by TSCS, a market research firm, "You cannot cool a 100 kW rack with air. It is physically impossible. You would need a hurricane-force wind blowing through the server room," making liquid cooling the only option.

The hyperscalers, hungry for cheap land and power, are therefore looking west. In the US, the most prominent new cluster is forming in West Texas, which is on track to replace Northern Virginia as the data center capital of the world by 2030.

Like a mirror image, China has pursued its "Eastern Data, Western Compute" initiative which seeks to build out data centers in energy-rich and less densely populated sections of the country such as Inner Mongolia.

As with any boom cycle, the appetite of an imperialist country can only be satisfied beyond its own borders. American hyperscalers have descended upon Mexico, funneling billions of dollars into the drought-stricken region of Querétaro for development. Chinese companies, struggling with a glut in their own market (evidenced by low utilization rates of their data centers) are investing overseas, competing with the US in major markets like Malaysia, Brazil, and Saudi Arabia.

The Overproduction Crisis

When the bubble inevitably pops, what will become of the industry? The fallout of the pandemic may have some answers.

While millions of workers around the world were sacrificed to reopen the economy and "build back better" in America, Big Tech emerged victorious and flush with cash. Trudging over this mountain of bodies, the titans of industry stood in awe at the opportunities before them: the rise of remote work, e-commerce, and of course, cryptocurrency.

With Big Tech at the forefront, the American bourgeoisie gleefully plunged head first into these various endeavors, spending billions of dollars to construct data centers to expand cloud capabilities and crypto mining operations along with fulfillment centers and warehouses.

Though, this mania did not last long. Supply-chain bottlenecks and the Russian invasion of Ukraine brought inflation in the US to levels rivaling that of the 1970s, dampening consumer spending. This led to an inventory glut, which eventually raised warehouse vacancy rates. With energy prices and interest rates on the rise, cryptocurrencies came tumbling down accompanying the high profile failure and fraud of exchanges like FTX. The crypto miners were lost; OpenAI gave them salvation.

An array of crypto miners already in possession of GPUs began appealing to hyperscalers and AI companies for contracts. In fact, CoreWeave, one of the largest, publicly traded data center operators in the world, got its start as a crypto miner back in 2017 but quickly transitioned to cloud computing and eventually AI after the 2018 crash of Bitcoin.

Amazon and Alibaba, the largest e-commerce companies in their respective countries, are at the same time the largest cloud providers; both companies have pivoted toward the data center gold rush. Warehouse demand is on the rise yet again as these companies need storage to support the buildout.

What made this such a seamless crossover? Fundamentally, data centers are warehouses. Like any warehouse, they provide storage and logistics for commodities, in this case: packets of data. Though they need only a fraction of the work comparatively, they still require labor-power for upkeep: security guards, sanitation workers, engineers. Whereas warehouses convey commodities to and fro via roads, trains, planes, and ships, data centers use fiber optics both underground and undersea.

These new investments decrease the socially necessary labor-time of the production of their information commodity.

With LLMs like ChatGPT, DeepSeek, or Claude, this has been the case. In TICP 66, our party highlighted that formerly safe white-collar jobs are jeopardized by the output of these models. Developers who kept their jobs amidst the ongoing mass tech layoffs since 2022 experience burnout as the automation of AI has only accelerated their exploitation.

Earlier this year, the Trump administration bought vacant warehouses at a premium to quickly get online its own fulfillment centers, each capable of holding thousands of people at a time. The former acting director of ICE said they want to run operations like "Amazon Prime for human beings." All but two of the warehouses were constructed in the past five years, during the e-commerce boom.

However, local opposition and skepticism from new leadership at the DHS forced the federal government to shrink its portfolio by offloading or outright selling 7 of the 11 facilities. This is in line with the agency's new strategy to be more discreet in its deportations, following the debacle of Operation Metro Surge. ICE still plans to use the remaining facilities, with one in New Jersey already acting as a staging ground for deportations, according to NPR.

These plans echo the early ad hoc camps of the Nazis when deportation was used to fix German capitalism's surplus population. One of the first and most infamous Nazi concentration camps, Dachau, was the site of a vacant factory.

Treating people like dead stock is nothing new under capitalism. Like any commodity, whether its labor-power or graphics cards, once it is oversupplied, the bourgeoisie finds the cheapest way to dispose of it.

As said by Marx in his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, "The demand for men necessarily governs the production of men, as of every other commodity. Should supply greatly exceed demand, a section of the workers sinks into beggary or starvation."

When the AI bubble does pop, especially if accompanied by a surge in climate refugees or the impending World War, it should be of no surprise to anyone to see the sellers of this "peculiar commodity" temporarily "stored" in some hollowed-out data centers and vacant warehouses.

NIMBYism

This new NIMBYism ("not in my backyard!") will not stop the spread of data centers; it merely delays and displaces it.

Ultimately, the reason why the movement against data centers is doomed to fail is because of its inter-class nature. While there is no doubt that workers suffer the most at the hands of Big Tech, the struggle against data centers is led by the middle class and its advocates. From the jump, it was compromised with petty bourgeois ideals, meekly asking tech companies to "pay their fair share."

Politicians and non-profits are happy to stake out a deal while they compartmentalize the symptom from the disease of capitalism. In this worldview, everyone is but an aggrieved individual who has sacred and inalienable rights.

The effects of data centers are centered around the property owner. They center the homeowner whose property value plummeted after a data center moved in or the farmer who is losing access to water and arable land. They speak about taxpayers, ratepayers, and "the people."

Write a letter to your representative.
Get angry at town hall.
Sabotage a data center.

No matter the action, these are done through individual acts of the atomized citizen. It makes no difference whether someone is a vigilante or a voter, the State and Capital remain unscathed.

The revolution will not be sparked by random acts of violence, carrying out the work of the Unabomber or Luigi Mangione. The revolution will result from a generalized crisis that severely worsens the standard of living, and which compels the working class to act.

While we cannot say exactly when this day will come, our Party continues to point out the traps laid for the working class and guide it in its historic mission in anticipation.

The Keynesian Illusion of Shared Prosperity

"Democratic Socialism" & Fascism's Love Child

For the liberal bourgeois economists and their reformist disciples, the deterioration of workers' conditions is explained not by the laws of capitalist production, but by the abandonment of Keynesian policies that supposedly guaranteed prosperity for all during the decades following the Second World War.

According to this narrative, the neoliberal turn beginning in the 1970s and 1980s, characterized by deregulation, privatization, attacks on organized labor, and the dismantling of social protections, destroyed the alleged harmony between capital and labor. The solution, we are told, is to return to the golden age of American democratic capitalism, when strong unions, progressive taxation, welfare programs, government intervention, and even employee stock ownership apparently allowed workers to share in the fruits of economic growth.

This is the nostalgic ideal underlying much of the program of Bernie Sanders and the progressive "democratic socialist" wing of the Democratic Party. For these reformists, the fundamental problem is reduced to the unequal distribution of the social product, so called economic "inequality", as though exploitation could be abolished by granting the proletariat a greater share of the value it produces.

Keynesianism seeks to stabilize capitalism through state expenditure, deficit spending, taxation, and monetary policy to stimulate investment and consumption. Far from overcoming the antagonism between capital and wage-labor, it seeks to preserve profit rates while offering the petty-bourgeois illusion of a more equitable capitalism in which the classes might peacefully share in the proceeds of exploitation.

In reality, American capitalism never truly abandoned Keynesianism; it merely discarded those aspects of it that were no longer compatible with the immediate interests of capital.

The postwar Keynesian consensus served to stabilize capitalist accumulation, contain working-class militancy, and preserve the existing relations of production. Once profitability came under pressure during the crises of the 1970s, capital increasingly turned toward "neoliberalism", dismantling social protections, attacking organized labor, deregulating industry, and restoring profitability through intensified exploitation.

Yet the American bourgeoisie never renounced state intervention itself. Deficit spending, monetary intervention, public subsidies, military expenditure, and state guarantees for private capital remained essential features of the American economy.

But what exactly was this celebrated period of shared prosperity in the heyday of Keynesianism?

The tremendous expansion of American capitalism following the Second World War was made possible by definite historical conditions: the destruction of productive forces during the war, the unrivaled industrial supremacy of the United States, and the enormous expansion of the world market with the U.S. as the unrivaled dominant imperialist power.

Under these exceptional conditions, the bourgeoisie could concede higher wages and social benefits to sections of the working class without relinquishing its control over production or interrupting the extraction of surplus-value. The fundamental relation between capital and wage-labor remained unchanged. Even the distribution of company shares to employees, presented as the democratization of capitalist ownership, did not abolish the proletarian condition.

The postwar expansion was not the triumph of Keynesianism over Marx's economic laws, but the product of exceptional historical conditions. As these conditions disappeared and profitability came under pressure, the postwar compromise entered into crisis, exposing the limits of state intervention and redistribution.

Already in 1954, in Volcano of Production or Swamp of the Market?, our Party demolished the economic foundations of the bourgeois conception of shared prosperity, particularly the welfare economists' fantasy of a society in which capital belongs, in some measure, to everyone.

According to this conception, workers would receive not only wages but also a share of capital income through savings, investments, and company stock ownership, supposedly overcoming the antagonism between capital and labor. But the text demonstrates the absurdity of this model through the very calculations of the bourgeois economists themselves: even imposing savings rates of 12%, 16%, 20%, or 25% upon workers' incomes, the resulting annual growth of social capital would amount to a miserable 1%, or approximately 2% when accounting for productivity increases.

At these rates, capital would only double or triple over a century at 1% growth, or increase roughly sevenfold at 2%, entirely inadequate to explain the enormous historical expansion of capitalist production. Marx's model, by contrast, demonstrates that accumulation proceeds principally through the reinvestment of surplus-value appropriated by capitalists, not through the savings of workers whose wages are overwhelmingly consumed in reproducing their labor-power.

The text illustrates how the reinvestment of 15% or 30% of profits and rents could generate annual accumulation rates of 5% or 10% in its simplified model, revealing the real foundation of capitalist expansion: the exploitation of wage labor and the concentration of accumulated wealth in the hands of the bourgeoisie. The welfare economists' imaginary society of universal shareholders therefore conceals the class relations upon which accumulation actually depends. Herein lies the fundamental contradiction of the Keynesian dream of shared prosperity: capitalist accumulation requires the extraction and reinvestment of surplus-value, while the promise of an increasingly equitable distribution of wealth obscures the antagonism between wages and profits.

The liberal explanation turns the historical movement of capitalism upside down. Instead of explaining changes in economic policy through the contradictions of capitalist accumulation, it attributes the deterioration of workers' conditions to the triumph of mistaken economic ideas.

Neoliberalism thus becomes the villain of history, while the capitalist mode of production itself is absolved of responsibility. These tendencies operated throughout the supposed golden age of Keynesian capitalism, just as they operate today. State spending, progressive taxation, public investment, and the stimulation of consumer demand may temporarily sustain accumulation or alter the distribution of income, but none abolishes wage-labor, surplus-value extraction, or the tendency toward overproduction. Capitalist production is not regulated by the satisfaction of human needs, but by the possibility of realizing profit.

Today a renewed Keynesian and welfare state program as proposed by the democratic socialists is nothing other than pure utopianism as it would confront the same contradictions that undermined the postwar compromise. The democratic socialists distinguish themselves from the open defenders of free-market capitalism by demanding a more equitable distribution of its proceeds. But insofar as they propose to overcome capitalist inequality through redistribution, public ownership within a market economy, and state management of investment while preserving wage-labor and commodity production, their program remains within the bourgeois horizon.

The historical experience of Germany provides an illuminating example of the relationship between these reformist economic immediate programs, social democracy, capitalist crisis, and imperialist war. Following the revolutionary upheavals of 1918–1919 and the defeat of the revolutionary workers' movement, the Weimar Republic, under the decisive influence of social democracy, preserved capitalist property relations while attempting to reconcile the antagonism between labor and capital through collective bargaining, social insurance, and state intervention.

The revolutionary movement was defeated, and the social democratic promise of a gradual transition toward socialism remained confined within the limits of bourgeois society. When the world economic crisis shattered the foundations of this class compromise, the Nazi regime inherited an advanced industrial economy and institutions of state economic administration, redirecting them toward militarization, rearmament, and imperialist expansion. All of this was essential policy to maintain the labor aristocracy which was developing under social democracy and crumbling under the pressures of global economic crisis. War and the Nazi's liquidationist policies allowed the social democrats' social policies an extended life under Nazi rule. A raw truth was exposed that would later be reaffirmed through Roosevelt's New Deal: that the policies and programs of social democracy can only sustain themselves through a wave of nationalist chauvinism and the brutal expansion of imperialist slaughter.

The ascendancy of a social democratic faction in the Democratic Party, and a resurgent Democratic Party to power in the halls of Washington amid a capitalist economic system steam rolling towards cataclysmic crisis and inter-imperialist war will have no different outcome than it has in the past.

All within an extremely debt saddled American economy facing a growing overproduction crisis, the petit-bourgeosis reformists electoral promises of expanding social welfare and a new arraignment between labor and capital can only fund itself, while sustaining continued capital accumulation through intensifying imperialist banditry.

The alternative would be to accept the necessity of communist revolution and the need to destroy wage-labor, mercantile exchange and the profit driven firm as the basis of all social life. The "intermediate" programs and demands of the false socialists only guarantee and demonstrate their continued support and compliance with their supposed fascist opponents in the bourgeois camp.

This is all out in the open today, from the occasional expressions of admiration for Nazi economic programs by America's billionaire cockroaches to the far more widespread enthusiasm of petty millionaires, small-business owners, and other such little parasites for the social-democratic "progressive" wing of the Democratic Party.

As the Democratic Party prepares its triumphant return to the administration of bourgeois power, the opportunist workers' parties and "anti-fascists" of every stripe prepare themselves for yet another messianic outburst of democratic enthusiasm, rivaling the liberal hysteria that accompanied the election of Obama, when the supposed salvation of American democracy was proclaimed against the supposedly exceptional fascism of Bush.

Unlike those who perpetually rediscover the class character of the bourgeois State only after suffering its blows, the communist movement,

(continued on page 8)

faithful to its invariant program and the lessons of its historical struggles, has never entertained the illusion that the emancipation of the proletariat could be entrusted to any faction of the bourgeoisie, however democratic, progressive, or anti-fascist its disguise.

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The Rebellion of Young Proletarians in France

In France, too, the working class is becoming impoverished as a result of capitalism's economic crisis. The attacks launched by the ruling class and its political regime to intensify exploitation have sparked robust protest movements of growing strength, some of which have been successful:

- Twenty years ago, in 2006, the movement against the *Contrat Première Embauche*—a precarious contract under which workers could be fired without just cause and which applied to young people under 26—prevented its passage;

- in 2010, the struggle against Sarkozy's pension reform—which included 14 general strikes over 9 months—failed, however, to stop the raising of the retirement age from 60 to 62;

- In 2016, with 14 general strikes in 11 months, the movement against the *Loi El Khomri*—promoted by the Socialist government—failed to stop the reform aimed at expanding precarious employment;

- Between 2018 and 2019, the *Gilet Jaunes* movement emerged, rooted in the petty bourgeoisie, but whose radical actions would influence subsequent struggles of the working class;

- In 2023, the most recent movement in defense of pensions took place, featuring 14 general strikes over 6 months and the passage of the law by circumventing a parliamentary vote; this "Pyrrhic victory" led to a freeze on raising the retirement age from 62 to 64, within the context of parliamentary maneuvering.

- Finally, last September saw the *Bloquons Tous* ("Let's Block Everything") movement against the government's austerity policies, the least powerful of those mentioned, which emerged outside the unions through so-called social media platforms, with the most militant factions of the French labor movement (sections of the CGT and SUD) supporting it; it was characterized by more radical methods of struggle, including unauthorized marches and blockades.

Two processes have overlapped with these attacks on the working class and the defensive movements in response.

On the one hand, the French public debt crisis—similar to that of many other countries afflicted by capitalism's global crisis of overproduction, but exacerbated by the crumbling of the postcolonial empire. Debt has reached 119% of GDP, and the deficit for 2026 is projected to stand at 5.4%. French government bonds have surpassed the cost of Italian and Greek bonds. This debt crisis makes it increasingly urgent for the French bourgeoisie to freeze pension reform and proceed with other measures to drastically cut social spending, such as freezing housing subsidies and reducing funding for healthcare, education, transportation, and other services.

"When President Emmanuel Macron faced massive 'Yellow Vest' protests in 2018–19, he was able to allocate billions of euros to quell them. Today, that is no longer possible. France spends too much and grows too slowly—at just over 1% per year under Macron. This fall, lawmakers will struggle to pass a budget that reduces the deficit by a meager 0.4 percentage points, bringing it to an unsustainable 5% of GDP" (The Economist, October 24).

Compounding this is rising inflation, a consequence of the explosion of conflicts sparked by the economic crisis—first in Ukraine and then in the Middle East—which have added to the inflation already caused by the post-COVID-19 pandemic recovery in production.

Inflation has eroded the purchasing power of wages—which in France had held up better than in other countries in previous years—thereby exacerbating the social crisis in the country.

The movement spurred by these developing conditions this time had high school students as its main actors—not only from general high schools but also from technical and vocational schools: in fact, students from the working-class suburbs of Paris mobilized.

The first incident occurred on September 17 at a school in Créteil, in the southeastern suburbs of Paris. Importantly, however, it was the workers at the St-Exupery school in Créteil who were the first to go on strike, supported the following day by the students. The strike, jointly called by the FSU, CGT Education, and SUD Education, was organized in protest against the lack of a school nurse, the shortage of teaching staff, the dilapidated building, and the overcrowded classrooms.

In the days that followed, the movement spread to Seine-Saint-Denis, in the northeastern suburbs of Paris, which became the center of the national movement. Seine-Saint-Denis is the poorest department in France—with 27.6% of the population living below the poverty line—and also the youngest: 42% of residents are under 30 years old. By September 27, the movement had reached national proportions. On October 1, student protests were affecting nearly 900 of the 3,770 schools nationwide.

The situation in public schools in France's urban suburbs is now dire. In dilapidated, unheated buildings—which turn into ovens in the summer and iceboxes in the winter—infested with rats, with malfunctioning restrooms and damaged walls, ceilings, and windows, students spend eight hours a day in what has become a sort of prison.

The problems also extend to workers' conditions. Last year, the government eliminated 4,000 tenured teaching positions, and this year it had planned to cut an additional 1,600. To reduce overall payroll expenses, it is increasing workloads to unsustainable levels. Teachers spend 10 to 12 hours at work, facing increasingly severe difficulties and a burden of emotional stress that all too often leads to psychological and physical breakdowns—all while tasked with shaping "French citizens" who are docile and loyal to bourgeois institutions.

The involvement of young people from working-class neighborhoods and the appalling working conditions of teachers have given this movement a character and role distinct from those of the past.

The demands are largely the same as those of workers: improvements to school facilities, hiring to reduce the student-to-teacher ratio, and, in general, increased funding for social spending—in contrast to rising military spending. In terms of scale, this was the largest student movement in French history since May '68, with the difference that the earlier movement originated in and was centered on the universities. The university students of '68, when they were not already middle class, had the prospect of individual social advancement into the ranks of the ruling class. The vast majority of today's working-class youth in compulsory education will remain working class.

On September 29, the first national union action took place: a public-sector strike against Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu's decision to freeze the value of the "index point" (which regulates civil servants' salaries) for 2027. The strike was called by the inter-union coalition comprising the CGT, FO, CFDT, UNSA, FSU, Solidaires, CFE-CGC, and FA-FP. Participation in the education sector was high, according to the unions, averaging 40% nationally. However, the number of schools closed was higher due to the combination of student blockades and a strike by security staff. The contribution of healthcare workers and firefighters was also significant in the strike and demonstrations.

French unions have reported that as many as 862,000 public employees in France now earn less than the national minimum wage (SMIC), further confirming that wages can only be defended through struggle and not "by law"—and that, therefore, as seen in Italy, the struggle to abolish anti-strike laws should play a far more significant role in the labor movement than the struggle for a statutory minimum wage, which is an obsession of the bourgeois left and the opportunists.

On October 6, a general strike involving all sectors—once again called by the inter-union coalition—took place. The demands, in addition to the unfreezing of the "index point," included wage increases, including the minimum wage, and solidarity with the movement and the demands of school workers and students. In Paris, nearly 100,000 people marched in a massive demonstration.

On Tuesday, October 13, a fifth day of national student mobilization took place alongside a third national strike by school unions, with strong participation—an average of 5% nationwide according to the ministry, and 40% according to union sources in Paris. The CGT and SUD extended the strike to certain sectors of the public sector.

On that day, although not yet officially confirmed, the inter-union coalition set November 5 as the date for a second general strike, following the extended closure of French schools from October 19 to November 1.

On Saturday, October 17, the movement reached—to date—its peak with massive street demonstrations in all major French cities. In Paris, the march drew an estimated 200,000 people. The FSU, SUD, and CGT once again called for a strike by school workers. The violence of the clashes also reached a peak. In the days that followed, the government imposed curfews and bans on nighttime demonstrations in central areas of several cities.

But neither the media campaign of fearmongering following the clashes and looting of October 17, nor the school closures, prevented the demonstrations the following Saturday, October 24, from matching the size of those a week earlier—composed of contingents from the unions, the student movement, and the *Gilet Jaunes*.

A new national day of mobilization is scheduled for Saturday, October 31. We are also awaiting the general strike on November 5.

Generally speaking, the leaderships of the two major pro-establishment unions, the CFDT and the CGT—despite being aligned with different political parties—are steering the working class's struggles toward the parliamentary quagmire by waving the specter of a far-right electoral victory. But even the militant minority within the CGT and the grassroots union SUD end up lending credence to this diversion, since the democratic ideology that dominates them inevitably conflicts with the needs of the class struggle.

Furthermore, the leaderships of the CGT and CFDT refuse to set the goal of an indefinite general strike lasting more than a single day, and they dilute the workers' militancy by spreading it across separate days, which prevents the action from spreading and becoming more radical.

In certain sectors or workplaces, the unions do in some cases lead indefinite strikes—such as in the chemical and transportation industries—with more militant unions—SUD and minority factions within the CGT—promoting so-called "renewable" (*reconductibles*) strikes, extended each day by workers' assemblies.

The diversion of the workers' struggle into the electoral quagmire and the sidestepping of the issue of indefinite strikes are clearly the work, within the trade union movement, of opportunist parties, first and foremost *Le France Insoumise* (LFI), which is the largest political force within the *Nouveau Front Populaire,* a front of bourgeois left-wing parties—moderate and radical—formed in 2024 to oppose the right-wing *Rassemblement National*.

The fragility of the social situation in France has been highlighted by the bourgeois regime's reaction. Against young people between the ages of 15 and 18—who took to the streets by the hundreds of thousands—the state unleashed disproportionate violence, with thousands of police officers charging, beating, and firing pepper spray, tear gas, and stun grenades. This led to long and fierce street clashes and the largest wave of arrests in the history of the Fifth Republic: nearly 8,000 people, 85% of whom were minors. During the Yellow Vests movement, there were 10,000 arrests over the course of an entire year. What a valuable lesson in democracy for this new generation of proletarians!

In response to police violence, most teachers' unions (FSU, CGT Education, SUD Education) immediately took a stand in defense of the youth, and in several cases formed human chains of workers during the marches to protect them.

The French state's disproportionately violent reaction to the student demonstrations stems from the bourgeoisie's fear and desperation. It is a clear act of intimidation against all proletarians: if we beat up kids like this, just imagine what we'll do to adults!

Capitalism has nothing left to offer the working class—not even crumbs. It must proceed to take bread from the tables of proletarian families. This is unleashing the class struggle, which will once again forcefully emerge as the protagonist and driving force of history—a reality denied for decades by the hacks of the press and the verbose pundits of capitalist television.

The fear of the French ruling class, as in every country, is that the working class will take up the struggle, for only it can strangle capitalism by blocking the vital nerve centers of capital's reproduction. What terrifies the bourgeoisie is that the participation of young proletarians, who are still students, tends to merge with that of the workers, united by the same demands, channeling them toward future workers' struggles and infusing the veins of class-based unionism with youthful energy, radicalism, and enthusiasm.

If today the proletarian youth has stopped remaining on the sidelines and detached within the "student movement," tomorrow it will rediscover that fundamental weapon of social struggle—the union—and, through this path, the weapon of political struggle—the party. The bourgeoisie has every reason to be deeply concerned.

The AFD in Germany: Another Bourgeois Illusion

Due to its explicit and overt references to Nazism, the statement by Alternative für Deutschland has sparked concerned reactions among the other political parties, both in Germany and abroad. We—taking the opposite approach, which does not place much weight on "statements"—offer several observations.

The democratic mechanism—which, according to bourgeois ideology, is supposed to be the means through which the will of the people—the sovereign people—is expressed—is a formidable tool for imposing the arbitrary will of a very small circle of bourgeoisie, of the oligarchs of capitalism, both international and national. The electorate is steered in the direction dictated by the bourgeoisie. It sets the "agenda" for the "political debate": security, immigration, national sovereignty (which is, of course, undermined), democracy or fascism, Russia or America, etc.

This is achieved through the extremely powerful tools of propaganda—the mass media—which are controlled by large industrial and financial conglomerates. The Internet, which was supposed to promote "free information," has inexorably become a key cog in this infernal machine. In newspapers, on television, and on social media, big capital floods the public with propaganda to impose the prejudices that keep the working class subservient to the will of the ruling class.

On the electoral front, the bourgeoisie is invincible.

Instead, we can investigate what is being plotted in each country among the bourgeoisie against the workers, or among rival bourgeois states. What happened this time in Germany?

In one of the 16 federal states, Saxony-Anhalt, the "far-right" party, the AfD, achieved a stunning result of 44% of the vote in the September 6 election, doubling its 21% share from 2021 and winning 39 of the 83 seats in the state parliament.

But the AfD is not an "anti-establishment" force, as both right-wing and left-wing parties claim; it is as bourgeois and conservative as the rest, aligned—despite its apparent differences—with the single agenda of the state and capital, behind its verbose demagoguery about "security" and against immigrants.

It says it is against the war and sending weapons to Ukraine, and in favor of restoring relations with Russia, but it supports national rearmament—clearly at the expense of the welfare state—and mandatory conscription.

It is funded by U.S. capitalists and supported by the State of Israel.

Furthermore, the AfD continues to lead the Zentrum union, through which it helps redirect workers' discontent toward comrades with a different skin color.

It's for "remigration," in a contest of demagoguery with all the parties, just as in Italy and the U.S., where "right-wing" governments have deported fewer immigrants than "left-wing" ones. In Spain, Sánchez boasted of blocking more immigrants than Meloni. Not to "protect domestic workers," but to allow capitalists to better exploit wage earners by pitting workers of different ethnicities against each other in a race to the bottom—and by keeping them out of the country when their numbers become excessive.

During a period of counterrevolution, workers are easily lured into the deception of bourgeois "alternatives." In the absence of a strong class movement, they are driven—along with the petty bourgeoisie, terrified by their rapid proletarianization—into nationalist illusions, into the apparent "lesser evil" among their oppressors,

In Germany, amid the deepening crisis—marked by factory closures, announced mass layoffs, and cuts to social welfare and pensions—votes from the working class have plummeted for all the remaining parties, which are enthusiastic supporters of this impoverishment, as well as of rearmament and support for the war in Ukraine.

Will a "black wave" sweep across the West, as Democrats and liberals fear? As long as it can, the bourgeoisie has an interest in concealing its dictatorship behind parliamentary rhetoric. In the absence of genuine, widespread, and organized workers' struggles, the capitalist class prefers the lie of democracy, which remains, in Lenin's words, "the best wrapping paper for capitalism." Precisely—a cover—to delude the proletariat into believing it can "choose" and "participate" in reformist policies and in overcoming the economic crisis.

In the absence of organized struggles by the working class, bourgeois propaganda succeeds in diverting the working class's passions toward the defense of a nonexistent democracy that is supposedly "under attack," concealing from workers the true causes of economic crises and the role of capitalist institutions, and steering workers' consciousness and struggle—from both the right and the left—toward conservative policies.

But despite all the transformations of the single party of capital, the bourgeoisie always keeps the fascist option at the ready. It knows that the crisis will deepen and that it will have to further worsen workers' conditions, and it is already preparing, by means of democracy, repressive decrees and increasingly stringent political restrictions.

When the workers' struggles intensify, the bourgeoisie will hand over the government of the state to an openly fascist regime—as was the case with Mussolini in 1922 and Hitler in 1933—which will win, democratically, a vote of confidence in parliament. Fascism does not enter through the window but through the front door of the democratic state.

In this political maneuver, election results mean nothing—it's just a game of percentages designed to keep "political commentators" employed.

Democracy and fascism are not two opposing but rather complementary forms of capitalist government in certain economic and social phases. It will not be the AfD, the CDU, or the SPD that decide this, but the industrial and financial giants that finance and control them.

Nor will votes for the bourgeois left stop the inexorable trend toward open dictatorship; only the social struggle of the workers against the dictatorship of the bourgeois class—which hides behind democracy—will do so.

The way to dismantle the bourgeois propaganda machine and set out to destroy its political regime lies—outside the electoral system and parliamentary cretinism—in the defensive class struggle—the trade-union struggle—of wage earners and the proletariat, which is destined to evolve into a political class struggle as the economic crisis of world capitalism deepens.

In the absence of a vibrant labor movement—that is, a strong class-based union—workers are ensnared in the hollow bourgeois "political debate," which seeks to direct their discontent against a nonexistent internal enemy—immigrants—and against an external enemy—the coalition of states with which the national bourgeoisie is in conflict over the division of the world market.

A class-based union fights to organize the most exploited segments of the working class, including immigrants and the unemployed.

Other paths remain illusory dead ends that lead to new defeats.

Nationalism...

(continued from page 6)

regime. And worse still: the enduring bitterness and hatred they produce will constantly be exploited in proxy wars and used to drive a wedge between workers.

But it is not always the case, as in for example, the Belfast strike of 1907, in which Catholic and Protestant dockers and porters stood side by side to achieve common class goals. This firm placing of class solidarity before nationalist and religious allegiances filled the bourgeoisie with existential dread. And as a consequence the latter set about exacerbating the "Communal" tensions between the traditionally opposed religious camps, and as an extension, between the colonised and the coloniser to be used as an instrument of division and domination over the workers.

We certainly do not underestimate the difficulties that workers have to face when creating cross border alliances between workers on opposed sides, especially during war, but any solidarity of this type that is created, however small to begin with, is a seed that will bear fruit in the future. The horrible war propaganda of warring States is well rehearsed, but the working class must learn to resist it. Its loyalty is to its own class. And to the Party that protects and preserves the knowledge of its historical role; a Party which explains the class' past, present, and its future, and which helps it avoid the pitfalls which the bourgeoisie is constantly placing in its way.

We can only continue to repeat relentlessly that the workers have no country. The State is not neutral; it is in the service of the bourgeoisie, which in turn serves one God, the God of Profit, a God that is thirsty for blood.

Comrades, we are pleased to invite you to our...

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