

# The Communist Party

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

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## Class Struggles Win. Elections Don't

Four years ago, we observed that “the election of 2016 represents the true contemporary nature of capitalism” (The Communist Party no. 5). That November night seems much further than four years in the past, after the Muslim ban, the trade war against China, the abduction of migrant children, the threat of war against Iran, the protests for George Floyd and Breonna Taylor; after Charlottesville, Pittsburgh, and Portland. Now, facing the worst months of the worst pandemic in a hundred years, we find that the same thing is true all over again: the election of 2020 represents the true contemporary nature of capitalism.

Every political decision is only a reflection of the prevailing social conditions. At some points in time this becomes especially clear. Now the real magnitude of capitalism's failure is apparent for all to see in the form of the pandemic, and the techniques of repression developed through imperialist wars are on open display in U.S. cities. The president has publicly mused about a coup. The crisis of capitalism has come home.

Against this backdrop, the political decision itself could not be duller. If only their politics are compared, Donald Trump and Joe Biden might be mistaken for the same person. Both are rightists and imperialists. Both came to political prominence through race-baiting. Both are spineless opportunists, willing to change positions in an instant to promote their own personal interests.

Despite these similarities, the Republican and Democratic parties claim that this election is a matter of life and death. The Republicans say that Trump is the only bulwark against an anarchist cabal, lurking in the shadows behind Biden, who will destroy white America unless the president is re-elected. The Democrats claim that Trump is out to destroy the beauty that is American democracy, and that only voting for Biden will save it.

In truth, there is no decision to be made in this election. The bourgeoisie will win either way – this is true democracy! The real decision in this moment is not between Trump and Biden, but between capitalist exploitation and communist freedom.

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The history of the Democrats' response to the Trump presidency has been one of defeatism and opportunism. The Democrats have latched onto every petty-bourgeois slogan in order to funnel the energies of that threatened faction of the ruling class into that party's traditional careerist channels. The proletariat has been absent from this particular movement, despite the Democrats' attempts to use it for their own ends.

Their first promise, immediately after the 2016 election, was to form a “resistance” against Trump. The term referred back to the historical myth of European resistance to fascism. But the resistance of 2016 had less to do with the example of those earlier movements than the sentiment contained in its memory. And sentiment was its only characteristic. The promise to resist meant only through legal and “respectable” means. It dressed the old, oppressive democratic institutions in revolutionary costumes. But the defense of the working class was never really the goal – in fact, what the Democrats' resistance demanded was a return to “normal,” to an imagined civil past. The resisters' outrage at the property damage that accompanied early anti-Trump protests (to which they responded with chants of “peaceful protest!”) and their open fraternization with the police were the first indications of their real sympathies.

The emphasis on legal means was a method to channel the energies of the left-leaning part of the petty bourgeoisie, slowly moving further left as its economic status deteriorates, back into institutions controlled by the big bourgeoisie. The Muller investigation and the impeachment were the clearest expressions of this official resistance's desire to confront Trump only through the bourgeois legal system. These efforts, as we know, amounted to nothing.

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The proletariat is the only force that really fought back in the past four years. It is the only force in society that Trump – and Biden – really fear. Now acquitted in his impeachment trial and with the Republican Party completely behind him,

he has nothing to fear from any of the bourgeois factions. He understands that their noble speeches mean nothing in practice. By contrast, the uprising in May and June of this year shook the bourgeoisie to its core. The entire ruling class felt the need to respond with a show of force and a crass appeal to religion that embarrassed even the military. The protests compelled it to take a sharp rightward regarding civil liberties, recruiting the Department of Homeland Security as a paramilitary organization. Trump began to publicly muse about postponing the election, and refused, until a few days ago, to acknowledge a future without him in the White House. We can see now that this was all theater from a desperate man and a desperate class, trying without success to rectify disorder of its own creation. The pandemic played a central role in Trump's calculations: as president, he assumes responsibility for capitalism's inability to handle the viral threat, so he invented an alternative “anarchist” threat and claimed to have the cure.

The protests that erupted this year are inter-classist, not proletarian. They do, however, have significant proletarian components. We see this in the huge numbers of working-class people, many black but also from other races, who came out to protest despite the pandemic and the real threat of persecution. The rank and file of several trade unions participated, and in some cases they marched as distinct blocs of workers from certain occupations. The proletarian components of the uprising carried out its most effective actions – for example, the Juneteenth walkout of port workers in the International Longshoremen and Warehouse Union, and the Transport Workers Union's refusal to drive arrested protestors to jail.

Covid-related strikes are a related phenomenon. These had been the most effective measures to protect the workers from the pandemic when all levels of government are unwilling to act. Amazon warehouse workers won higher pay, employer-provided protective equipment, and better cleaning procedures. Agricultural workers in Yakima, Washington, most of them immigrants from Latin America, won higher pay and forced employers to recognize their union, *Trabajadores Unidos por la Justicia*. Teachers in Chicago prevented the city from resuming in-person classes just by voting to strike. These life-saving victories were won by the workers themselves, against a bourgeoisie and a capitalist state who could not care less about workers' lives.

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Covid-19 has made obvious what was already clear: the conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is a life-and-death struggle, a war all the time, and if the proletariat is to survive we must take action in unity as a class. The well-wishes of the bourgeoisie and their political hacks will not save us. This was true before the pandemic and will still be true after.

This election is no different. Trump and Biden represent the interests of the same bourgeois class. Biden has a record of repression and mass murder to rival Trump. During his first decade in the senate, he made a name for himself through his opposition to busing for school integration, the hallmark of racism in the 1970s. He said in 1977 that busing would send white children into a “racial jungle.” He was an enthusiastic supporter of the War in Iraq, using his position as chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to push through legislation allowing an invasion. At least one million Iraqi people died as a result. During his time as vice president, he was part of an administration that committed a long list of atrocities abroad: the 2013 military coup in Egypt, the violence in Syria and Libya, the partition of Ukraine (while his own son was doing business with Kiev oligarchs), and, most infamous, the murder by violence, disease, and starvation of 250,000 people in Yemen. Joe Biden is personally responsible for conflicts that have killed millions of people. If there were to be a Nuremberg-style trial for American war crimes, both Donald Trump and Joe Biden would stand accused.

Neither has Joe Biden has shown himself to be an enemy of repression within the United States. He supported Patriot Act spying law in 2001, and to establish the Department of Homeland Security (which forms Trump's secret

police) in 2002. We can be sure that the “anti-extremism” initiatives of Donald Trump and Attorney General William Barr will continue under a Biden presidency, if for no other reason than to appeal to the right wing of the Democratic Party and to disaffected Republicans. They are already preparing to blame extremists for any electoral difficulties they face on November 3.

So this is the choice democracy presents to the working class, a choice between two killers, two racists, two rich men. For Biden political power led to money; for Trump money led to political power. One is embedded in politics, and the other is embedded in commerce. They represent only one class, the bourgeoisie. They are united in their opposition to workers' power.

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The proletariat cannot come to power democratically. As Marxists, we understand that revolution means an oppressed class becoming the ruling class. This cannot happen without the suppression of the old oppressors, who will inevitably try to regain their lost privileges. In the proletarian revolution, this means the complete exclusion of the bourgeoisie from political activity for as long as they remain a class. To do so is completely undemocratic, because it rejects the abstract equality of all citizens (equality under the law) that forms the basis of democracy. The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot give equal status to the members of the bourgeoisie until their old social class ceases to exist.

In addition to suppressing the old powers, a new ruling class must form its own characteristic forms of government, its own state. In the French Revolution of 1789, the bourgeoisie abandoned the feudal Estates General to form the democratic Constituent Assembly. In the Russian Revolutions of 1917, tsarist absolutism gave way first to the bourgeois Provisional Government and then, in the Bolshevik uprising, to the proletarian rule of the soviets. The communist left recognizes that the soviets (workers' councils) was the real form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the realization of what Lenin called the commune-state.

The International Communist Party supports nothing less than the formation of a world workers republic, and has no interest in political projects that lack this end goal. The parties of democracy reject this aim and reaffirm their commitment to maintaining the bourgeois state. These are the enemies of the communist party! We have nothing to gain from collaboration with them except an easier path to infiltration and repression. The “leftist” groups who chase after bourgeois democracy are only fraternizing with the enemy. The repression against the Communist Party of America in the late 1940s, following its enthusiastic support for the Democrats during the popular front period, is just one of many examples of this failed strategy.

Now is not a revolutionary moment. The working class is not yet organized in its own political party and class unions. Despite this, communists continue to act outside and against the bourgeois state and its political henchmen. We must tell every class-conscious worker that democracy is a system oriented against our class, that the proletariat has the right to rule, and that in unity it holds the power to do so.

Our party is guided by a single body of theory and practice stretching from the present back to the publication of the Communist Manifesto in 1848. All of our activity is in agreement with that long political line. This is what we mean when we call our theses invariant.

No one is sure when the results of the 2020 election will become clear. There are already court challenges in the works, not just for the presidential election but also for congressional, state, and local elections, which may drag on into the winter. But whenever the results become clear, whoever wins, we can be certain of what our party will be doing – still fighting for workers' power, for revolution, for communism.

## War in Armenia and Azerbaijan

For the fourth time since the last century, Armenia and Azerbaijan are once again at war with each other over the territory known as Nagorno Karabakh, or Upper Karabakh Mountains. Considering the war bulletins from both sides, the lives of over 5,000 thousand soldiers have been lost so far. A figure with every probability hyperbolic, especially if we consider only the military, and certainly due to the respective war propaganda apparatuses of both countries. But however we know with certainty that in about ten days of fighting the military and civil victims are already counted in many hundreds.

Let us therefore take a brief look at the history of Nagorno Karabakh. Although almost 90% of the mountainous territory of Karabakh was inhabited by Armenians, the plain saw the prevalence of the Azerbaijani element, so this region was integrated into Soviet Azerbaijan in 1921, while obtaining the status of an autonomous oblast. During the decades of the so-called “communist” and Soviet government in the region, the ethnic Armenian component of the population decreased to about 77%. However, in 1988, the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh declared independence by proclaiming the Republic of Artsakh (the Armenian name for the Karabakh region) and the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan centered on this territorial dispute became the first in a series of events leading to the dissolution of the Eastern bloc. The republic obtained no official recognition from any country, not even Armenia, and remained de facto independent at the end of the war in 1994. In 2005, following “ethnic cleansing”, almost all inhabitants of the Artsakh Republic were Armenians.

There are conflicting accounts of who launched the first attack in the current conflict. Regardless of this, both sides have clearly prepared for another war. Some reports point out how members of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) have intervened on the Armenian side and how soldiers of the “Syrian National Army” headed by the Turkish president Erdogan, are lined up on the Azerbaijani side. Although these reports are rejected by Armenian and Azerbaijani officials, it is not difficult to believe that both sides benefit from the hardened mercenaries in their ranks. According to a report by the Syrian Center for Human Rights (an organization whose statements are not always taken literally), Turkey sent 1,200 Syrian fighters to support Azerbaijan's armed forces. The same source claims that they would receive between 1,500 and 2,000 dollars per month.

In any case, not only has Armenia lost many villages, but both nationally and internationally it is outdated by Azerbaijan. Like his father Nazar Aliyev, who was his predecessor to the office of president, Ilham Aliyev leads Azerbaijan's totalitarian democracy with the support of a substantial part of the country's population also thanks to the state's considerable income from oil revenues. The latter has enabled Azerbaijan to purchase arms in various countries including Turkey and Israel.

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## In Belarus, Behind the Scenes a Strong Working Class keeps on Pushing

Protests have been held in Belarus in recent weeks and a strike movement has developed. The trigger was the umpteenth electoral "victory" of President Alexander Lukashenko, re-elected for his sixth term despite his low popularity, worn down by 26 years of uninterrupted power.

Lukashenko, initially considered the "savior of the republic", has recently adopted neoliberal policies, including the privatization of many state enterprises, the reform of the pension system, the introduction of zero-hour contracts, etc.

Now most Belarusian workers live in worse conditions even than their Russian and Polish neighbors.

The first protests were repressed by the police, who arrested thousands of demonstrators. This did not put an end to the protests and soon the workers of the country's major factories, characterized by a very high degree of industrialization, went on strike.

If the spark for the protests was the election, which the opposition claims was rigged, their real origin lies in the decline of living conditions in recent years.

For many years, energy agreements with Russia have ensured the Belarusian state an income to buy social peace and ensure a certain political stability. A breakthrough made by Russia in the energy supply policy of Central and Western Europe has diverted part of its investments from Belarus, exacerbating the economic crisis in this satellite country. To cope with the difficult situation, the government led by Lukashenko has tried the path of greater autonomy from Russia, hinting at some dialogue with the United States and the European Union, threatening to shift the axis of its energy policy.

Meanwhile the conditions of the Belarusian population have suffered a drastic deterioration, also due to a decline in state support for industry and social assistance.

The onset of the coronavirus has helped to show the reality of a government policy determined to pursue the interests of the Belarusian bourgeoisie, still largely nestled in the maze of the high state bureaucracy. The government, constituted through the traditional paternalism of "socialist" assistance, has brazenly flaunted its obedience to the interests of capital, ignoring the health of workers and the population in general. Like governments and employers' associations around the world, the Belarusian state has forced factories to stay open, exposing workers to the contagion.

Production above all! This is the motto of the government of capital in Belarus, a country that, out of 10 million poor inhabitants, has 5 million employed and 2 million workers in industry. Proletarians, locked up in wage labor prisons with the threat of contracting the deadly virus, and forced to produce in the name of profit, have also suffered cuts in their wages, which in some cases have even reached 20%.

This proletarian anger was expressed in strikes, which did not back down despite the vain promises of the government, unable to restore order with sermons. Thus began the state response to the workers' struggle: the strike committees were dissolved with a wave of arrests and the government ordered a lockout on August 24.

The so-called "liberal" forces, which express the aspirations of the petty bourgeoisie, despite being all aligned against the current regime, are divided between those who rely on the help of Russia and those who side with the European Union or the USA. These liberals, so much praised by the Western media, are not at all on the side of the workers, and would like privatizations at an even faster rate than the current regime.

Meanwhile, some of the more combative fringes of the trade union movement are trying to advance the demands of the working class, not only economic but also political. For example, the workers of the large Belaruskaliy chemical factory are calling for a generalized revision of collective agreements.

Regardless of the fate of the President, the strike movement must lead to the formation of an independent trade unionism, separate from both the state and from the movements and parties of the petty bourgeoisie, whether pro-Russian or pro-Western. Workers need an organization capable of defending the living conditions of their class. And a communist party needs to be reborn, rich in the experience of centuries of struggle, to represent the proletariat, not only in Belarus but the whole world.

## Letter From Turkey:

Miners from Soma, Manisa, where the workplace murder of 2014 claimed the lives of 301 workers according to official figures, and Ermenek, Karaman, have been trying to march on Ankara, capital of the country. Organized in Bağımsız Maden İş (Independent Mine Workers Union), a base union in the orbit of the Umut-Sen (Union of Hope) syndical activist collective, the workers bring back the memories of the massive Zonguldak miners' march of 1991 while demanding to be paid their more than a year old unpaid salaries and better security measures taken for the coronavirus and in general. The workers have been attacked multiple times by the military but the attacks have not deterred them so far.

In the meanwhile, the strike of Soda Industry, Şişecam Kromsan ve Salt Enterprise workers in the cosmopolitan Southern cities of Adana and Mersin, organized in Petrol-İş (Petroleum, Chemical and Tyre Workers Union), member of Türk-İş, the largest confederation of regime unions in the country, has been "postponed" by president Erdoğan for "threatening general health and national security". The 550 workers are now officially on unpaid leave.

## Letter From Wisconsin

The Presidential family, and a cohort of administrative higher ups visited the state of Wisconsin on a campaign PR trip this day, October 13th 2020. This visit is but one of many that both ruling parties in the US have conducted across the country; and a tradition for bourgeois candidates who participate in the electoral process of bourgeois democracy. These visits are applauded by regime unions and employers alike. However, in the background of the cordial photo shoots and hopeful speeches, the working class toils away, thrown into the background with the rest of the machinery they work.

The inertia of electoral motivations compels the brain-dead bourgeois political figures to make visits to various locations across the country. Team Industries, a military contractor for the Navy and fabricator of piping systems used in petrochemical and power plants in Kaukauna, Wisconsin has been the most recent of these to opened its doors to presidential candidates and a procession of officials and staffers. This visit of course does not benefit the working class that exhaustively works within the confines of the production floor, and many facilities across the state, as the production managers and business owners mingle with such high profile personalities. Both the Republican and Democratic candidates' only goal with these visits is to celebrate the continued increase in production capacity that companies like Team Industries have experienced despite the toll this takes on the working class; and in the current situation, despite the dangers that are introduced by the pandemic.

Production facilities in Wisconsin have been lax to casual in how they deal with one of the most severe COVID-19 outbreaks in the country. Despite the fact that industrial companies have forbidden a majority of their office staff from coming into the building, this does not minimize the risk of infection for the working class that must remain in the facility to fabricate the actual products that each company makes to sell on the market; who are pushed to death at work every day the government and employers push the problem down the road. Ultimately Employers and politicians see the working class for one thing, its ability to increase the value that the company produces and the investors this vigorous production attracts.

Even with prominent political figures getting infected with the virus, bourgeois candidates and those who invest their energy to the 4 year electoral pageantry haven't stopped from continuing to shout the top of their lungs about the need to keep the economy going. They mingle with the corporations and industrial production that has continued and remained prosperous at the expense of the health and safety of the working class across the country, while these candidates speak to the need to honor and celebrate the necessary workforce they have gambled with to save the economy; because in this world of class subjugation the federal government's only duty is to industrial capital. The visits to Wisconsin, and to Team Industries, is nothing more than a publicity stunt, and an irresponsible poorly thought out one at that.

The actions and decisions to continue like nothing happened is, sadly, rather typical for a gang of capitalists who benefit from the sisyphian push for the working class to produce more and more. Sacrificing their own bodies and health for the prosperity of private companies, and the investors that

prop them up through an economy forever trapped in crises of overproduction. So it is no wonder that bourgeois politicians, after callously defending capital over the working class from SARS coronavirus, would visit the steadfast production of a state that has equally ignored the damage this outbreak has had on the working class.

What this pomp and circumstance hides is that the working class is not being appealed to with these visits. The photo shoots that come out of this affair are done to show how supportive the candidates are towards the production of commodities and reaffirms their dedication to the expansion of capital that drives that production. The working class is not the target audience as politicians walks through a production process they know little to nothing about. What the government and the candidates see is the production of more capital and a strengthening of the economy, which for them shows their commitment to the success of the United States economy. These clowns and actors of the bourgeois ruling class with their egotistical irresponsibility endanger the working class who has worked steadfast through the pandemic; they make personal visits to the production process of companies and over look the class that animates that production! Rather than feeling warm and fuzzy about a visit from these patron saints of capital production, the working class can reaffirm its existence through the united struggle of the class itself.

## ARMENIA/AZERBAIJAN WAR (CONT)

The Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian, on the other hand, is brought to power by a popular rebellion and still faces the challenge of the elections, even though for now he seems to enjoy some popular support as well. Although states and organizations such as the United States, Russia, the European Union and the United Nations have called for peace, Aliyev enjoys strong and open support from Turkey and Pakistan, as well as some military support from Israel. This last aspect is presented as an apparent paradox: the Jewish state in anti-Iranian function is on the side of Turkey dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood, the one to which the Palestinian movement Hamas belongs, which has always been considered by chatter as the worst enemy, or rather it would be better to say as the best enemy. The structure of regional alliances means that Azerbaijan can count on decisive air superiority. Turkish warplanes took part in the aerial duels by shooting down two Armenian Sukhoi-25s, while Turkish and Israeli-made drones help to tip the balance of power in favor of Azerbaijan. Even France, whose leader, Macron, expressed criticism of Turkish involvement in the war, does not support Armenia as energetically as Turkey and Pakistan support Azerbaijan. For its part, Russia is traditionally an ally of Armenia, but Pashinian is opposed by Putin who has no reason to appreciate him as a pro-Western politician. However, Moscow would certainly not allow a country like Azerbaijan, supported by Turkey, to threaten the existence of Armenia, but it could also allow Azerbaijani forces to advance as much as possible in Nagorno Karabakh. The two truces reached by the parties in conflict with the Russian mediation did not stop the fighting and bombing even against civilian targets causing numerous casualties. In reality it was only a matter of propaganda diversions to waste time and return to hostilities with renewed vigor.

Regardless of who will be victorious, the proletarians of Armenia and Azerbaijan will still lose because they have nothing to gain from this war. Although it looks like a war between the Armenian and Azerbaijani nations, this is actually a war between the capitalist states for the division of the proletarian class and for dividing up and seizing the markets. Therefore, considered small, it is an imperialist war. The correct proletarian policy in facing such a conflict is to invite the working class soldiers on both sides to transform the imperialist war into a revolutionary civil war. Without this appeal, which can only be launched by a true communist party, the proletarians of the region have no hope of claiming their historic victory which has been lost because of the Stalinist counter-revolution.

At one time, the Caucasus was home to a lively workers' movement and an established Bolshevik tradition that led to the formation of powerful communist parties. Today, our International Communist Party, heir to the tradition of the Communist International to which these parties belonged, does not exist in the Caucasus. Nevertheless, tomorrow our call for proletarian internationalism and revolutionary defeatism will reach the Caucasus and beyond to spread everywhere.

## Against Political Fronts And Reformist Illusions

*A leaflet distributed at strikes in Rome and Milan, by the ICP Saturday October 24, 2020*

The global economic crisis of capitalism, which has been going on for decades, has been accelerated by the COVID crisis and will lead to a serious worsening of the living conditions of the working class.

The only way for workers and all wage-earners to defend themselves is to return to the struggle, with the strike, joining progressively above the divisions between factories, companies, territories and categories, with common actions for their immediate interests: defense of wages, reduction of the day and working life, against the increase in workloads and rhythms, for the raising of the redundancy fund to 100% of wages for all, for full wages for unemployed workers, Italians and immigrants.

In order for this to happen, the role of trade unions is unavoidable. The regime's trade union confederations (CGIL, CISL, UIL) are collaboratorist with the ruling class and its political regime. For this fact they will always oppose the struggle of the working class in a generalized and united way. For example, in these weeks they are conducting negotiations for the renewal of national collective agreements for more than 10 million workers (metalworkers, logistics, procurement, wood industry, agribusiness, entertainment, public employment ...) each for themselves.

For A Combative Trade Unionism – the rank and file unions as well as the class opposition in CGIL – were born in the late 1970s in reaction to the definitive class betrayal of CGIL.

But these organizations are led by opportunist leaders who wage a miserable ongoing war against each other, in separate and competing strikes, hindering the already difficult task of getting the workers' movement back on its feet.

The fundamental task of the combative proletarians is therefore to fight for the UNITED FRONT OF ALL MILITANT UNIONS AND WORKERS with the goal of forming, to the detriment of the current union leaderships, a UNITED CLASS FRONT.

The Rank and File (COBAS) unions need to organize strikes united on all levels - corporate, territorial, category and inter-category – so they can intervene in a unified manner in the rare strikes proclaimed by the regime trade unionism - such as the one on November 5 by the 3 metal workers' unions (FIOM, FIM AND UILM) - to show the majority of workers remaining in those unions the methods of struggle and the demands of class unionism.

Only this kind of serious, methodical and lasting action will encourage a rapid return to working class struggle and, when this finally happens, it will make it possible to have trade union organizations less compromised by opportunism, more likely to follow a genuine class union approach and therefore able to decisively strengthen the workers' movement.

It is necessary to resolutely avoid confusing a needed United Class Union Front and the various attempts at political fronts between political groups which the preferred terrain of opportunist workers' parties. A tactic which identifies them as such and in which they are left to agitate helplessly.

To confuse political fronts with the Workers' United Front only condemns any attempt in this sense to the asphyxiated life of a small inter-group monster.

The re-establishment of a strong minority of the working class around revolutionary communism will never take place through mergers between different political groups, which can only occur on the basis of temporary and hypocritical renunciations of important elements of the programs of each organization. On one hand, political unity can only occur on the basis of a return to mass proletarian direct action in defense of immediate needs. On the other a clear, defined and party-based presentation of the theory, a program, and a tactical direction of action.

The Communist and Revolutionary Party does not conduct political fronts, an operation that is resolved by proposing so-called "Transitional" political objectives before the conquest of political power by the working class - such as nationalizations - in the frivolous illusion that they bring it closer to revolution, and that they do nothing but reinforce the influence of reformism on it.

The Communist and Revolutionary Party, on the other hand, commits the forces of its militant workers to the reconstruction and strengthening of the labor movement and denounces all the failures of capitalism and its political regime, reaffirming that every step, every transition to socialism, will be possible only after the revolutionary conquest of political power by the working class.

## Lockout at Jean Coutu: ICP Leaflet in Quebec Oct. 2020

**Lockout at the distribution center**  
The 680 workers at the Jean Coutu Drugstores distribution center, located in Varennes, Quebec have been without an employment contract since December 31, 2019. On September 24th, they faced closed doors as the employer decided to end negotiations using a lockout to try to undermine the morale of the workers. The Jean Coutu Pharmacy Warehouse Workers Union (CSN) deplors this contemptuous maneuver by senior management since the employees were ready to negotiate and a conciliator had even been added to the file to facilitate the process.

Among other things, the workers at the center are concerned about the call for subcontracting and the non-respect of seniority clauses since the Pharmacies Brunet joined the Jean Coutu "family". And for good reason, the era is one of multiple work restructurings, of cheap jobs and a decline in the living conditions of the proletariat as a whole, the class that works and produces social wealth. They would like to sell us all the idea of bracelets in order to track us down, like at Amazon, where this bourgeois bureaucracy is today experimenting with ever more sophisticated methods of exploitation.

### The lockout, this employer violence

While today all workers can no longer even use the strike as a means of pressure, with decrees and other special laws coming out of the government's pockets as soon as shareholders' profits are attacked, the bosses can still legally use the lockout to break our movement. Indeed, it is the right of capital to use its employees as it sees fit. For example, in 2018, the Bécancour aluminum smelter did the same thing with its workers for 18 months, pushing them into misery and financial stress. How do we escape?

### The problem of corporatist unionism and regime unions

Nowadays, trade union centers are increasingly becoming bodies of employer co-management. They are called regime unions because they collaborate with the employers to preserve the health of the national economies and the capitalist regime. Also, despite the good will of the union locals and their leaders to lead the struggles in order to make gains, these unions unfortunately come up against a structure that does not favor our social class, let alone the struggle. We are thus grappling with the bourgeois legal structure, its laws, its decrees and especially its financial interests which it tries to protect at all costs. Thus, this legal - and trade union - structure confines us to carrying out our struggles in isolation. For example, two neighboring factories, which would fall into struggle at the same time, will lead the struggle each on their own side. Two different factories, two different labor contracts, two different struggles, sometimes even at the same time? This is the reason why workers are unable to protect their working and living conditions.

### Solidarity, the workers' only lever

The working class is numerically very large. It is the working class that produces the work on which the whole of human society is articulated, and it is therefore the working class alone that is essential. Those who manage production and profit are only parasites that gorge themselves on our blood. The bourgeoisie effectively forces the proletarians to overproduce and generate economic growth in order to create the wealth it monopolizes. This small class holds the means of production and reproduction of our work and it is this class that forces us all to destroy our environment and condemns us to exploitation and misery. Workers are the artisans of the world. The working class represents work - which is the center of our society - and therefore society as a whole. The whole of this class shares the same social interests, the same class interests; interests that are diametrically opposed to those of the bourgeoisie. It is therefore necessary for it to join forces and show solidarity. This is the only way it can have a real impact and make the bosses tremble. Whether it be all public sector workers, represented among others by teachers and nurses, daycare workers, grocery clerks, longshoremen and employees of the Jean Coutu pharmacy distribution center. The workers are in perpetual combat. When it's not their workplace that is locked out, it's their brothers and sisters at a local grocery store who are being harassed for taking two minutes too long on a lousy coffee break.

Don't remain isolated and don't rely only on your union executive to lead the struggle. Organize as an Autonomous base committee; seek the support of other struggling workers, other combative union locals or workers' organizations like the Immigrant Workers Center, which recently fought alongside the employees of Dollarama; also call on solidarity unions like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), which knows how to fight offensively and victoriously.

It is numbers and unity that are the real weapons of the workers in struggle.

*The International Communist Party*

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