

# The Communist Party

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## The Growing Crisis of the Capitalist System Pushes It Towards War

Covid-19, as we have repeatedly said, did not cause the economic crisis but aggravated it, exciting the tension between imperialisms. The crisis in world trade caused by the pandemic, the so-called breakdown of production chains with the shortage of some components essential to production, such as semiconductors, and of some raw materials such as rare earths, the contest for the production and distribution of vaccines, mutual accusations of responsibility for the spread of the virus, etc. they made evident the contrasts between the states and their weaknesses.

The approaching economic crisis will be more devastating than that of 2009 and will occur in this context of growing international tension. Hence the tendency of states to increase their commitment to rearmament, despite the budgetary problems deriving from the decline in the reproduction of capital.

This global tension was confirmed in June by the new US President Biden's first trip abroad to participate in the G7 in Cornwall and subsequently at the 14th NATO summit. Biden's goal was to announce that "the US is back" and to reunite the alliance with the major industrialized countries to oppose the threats coming above all from China and Russia. But things did not go according to his wishes.

Not even the subsequent G8 summit, attended by the United Kingdom, Italy, France, Germany, Japan, Canada, the United States and the European Union and, demonstrating the interest shifted to the Pacific, to which Australia, India, South Korea, South Africa and the sultanate of Brunei were invited, did not give the desired results, that is, the unanimity under the US umbrella that Washington set out to achieve. Despite the inexistence of a common EU foreign policy, it highlighted the differences between the US and the major European states.

Germany, on the strength of its economic ties with China, the primary destination for its exports, declared that "it is better to be in favor of something than against", and even France did not seem willing to follow the US in this new cold war against China.

In response to the conclusions of the G7 China affirmed that the days are over when "a small group of countries could decide the destinies of the world". In the meantime, with the unofficial approval of the government, a cartoon has circulated on digital channels, which imitates Leonardo da Vinci's fresco "The

Last Supper", depicting different animals, each representing one of the world powers, intent on transforming toilet paper in dollars and sharing a cake in the shape of China. The central place is occupied by the American eagle. Trials of the cold war in preparation for the "hot" one.

The various strategic visions in the Western field also emerged in the subsequent NATO summit. The US imposed its agenda by dedicating much of the final document to condemning Russia and expanding the Alliance's action to the Pacific Ocean and China's borders. However, nothing has been decided regarding the nearby and increasingly warmer Mediterranean. In the same document, after heated negotiations, it was declared that China represents a "systemic challenge" for the West, while Washington would have liked it to be openly defined "an adversary".

### Despite The Crisis, World Military Spending Continues To Grow

Data on world military spending published in April 2011 by the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London and the International Peace Research Institute Stockholm confirm that these diplomatic and trade tensions have prompted most of the major states to expand military spending. In fact, both Institutes agree in their analyzes that in 2020, despite the worsening of the economic crisis and the spread of the pandemic, spending recorded a sharp increase in the world as a whole, unlike what had happened in the previous crisis of 2009.

According to the calculations of the IISS in 2020, while global economic production fell by 3.5%, there was a 3.9% increase, in real terms, in world spending on armaments. In proportion to GDP, it went from 1.85% in 2019 to 2.08% in 2020. In absolute values, it would have exceeded 1,830 billion dollars.

According to SIPRI estimates, global GDP would have decreased by 4.4% while world military spending would have increased by 2.6%, reaching as much as 1,981 billion dollars. The increase would be the largest since 2009, at the end of the last global economic crisis.

It must be acknowledged that the rule of capital, in its catastrophic and destructive imperialist phase, despite the economic and health crisis, is spending more and more money on cannons and less and less on "butter". We

Marxists are not surprised.

In 1915, after the outbreak of the First World War, Lenin made ours the famous phrase of General Von Clausewitz, "War is the continuation of politics by other means". The concept could be clarified by stating that war is also the continuation by other means, by violent means, of the economy, commerce, finance. Militarism is an inseparable part of capitalism and it is an illusion in the capitalist regime to hypothesize the possibility of universal peace, of long-term collaboration between states. For the regime of capital, there is no other way out of the economic crisis than war, the generalized and planned destruction of goods and means of production, including millions of proletarians, to "rejuvenate" and start a new cycle of accumulation. So it happened with the first and, even more so, with the second imperialist war. From this awareness derives the fact that in the programs of the decision-making centers of the military apparatuses of the various states there is a demand for enormous resources to keep the armed forces efficient and ready for use.

The size of the expenditure naturally reflects the global power hierarchy.

### United States dominates, China follows

It is still the United States that distances itself with a far greater commitment than all other states by maintaining and strengthening their formidable arsenal. In 2020, US military spending rose for the third consecutive year after seven years of slight decline. Reduced due to the crisis of 2009, it has not yet returned to the highs of that time: in 2009 and 2010 it was 4.9% of GDP, then it dropped to 3.3% in 2017 and 2018, to then rise again. At 3.4% in 2019 and 3.7% in 2020. This year, spending exceeded 778 billion dollars, with an increase of 4.4% compared to 2019. It is an effort aimed at confirming control over entire planet and to maintain strategic superiority in the first place over China, identified as the first global opponent.

US military spending alone contributes 39% of the world total. And this has been happening at least since 1989, the year of the collapse of the USSR. Despite all the crunches and lost positions in the economic, financial and commercial spheres, the US maintains a clear supremacy in the military sector.

### 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**

But their supremacy comes from afar. Already in 1931, in full economic depression, Trotsky in an interview with the "Manchester Guardian" observed: "The potential preponderance of the United States on the world market is much greater than that of Britain in the brightest days of its world hegemony, gross way in the three quarters of the last century. This potential force will inevitably have to transform into a kinetic force and one day the world will witness the explosion of American aggression in every sector of our planet. The future historian will write in his books: "The famous crisis of 30-33? It was a turning point in the entire history of the United States, as it imposed such a reconversion of the spiritual and political goals that it transformed the old Monroe doctrine" America to the Americans "America to the Americans" in that "The whole world to the Americans".

The second country that spends the most on armaments is China, which in 2020 invested 252 billion dollars, about one third of the United States in absolute value. to 1.7% of Chinese GDP against 3.7% in the US. After a few years in which Beijing's spending in absolute values had increased by 4-5% every year, in 2020 it increased by about 2% According to SIPRI: "The continued growth in Chinese spending is partly due to the country's long-term military expansion and modernization plans, in line with the declared desire to catch up with the other major military powers.." Traditionally a continental power, has now clearly expressed its will to oppose the dominant position of the United States and its allies in the Pacific, the ocean on which its ports open and through which the country trades most of its goods. Beijing aspires to the role of maximum economic power but its capitalists are aware that the acquisition of that role cannot take place if it fails to compete with the other powers on the military level, and with the USA in the first place. For this reason,

Arabia (57.5), Germany and France (with 52.8 and 52.7 respectively) and finally Japan (48, 1) and South Korea (46.0).

It should be noted, in reading this ranking, how India, despite competing with China for the number of inhabitants and despite having atomic weapons, on the military level is still a medium power and, above all, dependent on imports from abroad for the main weapon systems, although in recent years it has been making great efforts to achieve autonomy in various sectors, especially the army and air force, minus the navy.

Russia reduced its military spending from 3.9% in 2009 to 3.4% in 2011, before rising to 5.4% in 2016. It subsequently fell again to 3.7% in 2018 and to 3.8% in 2019 to grow to 4.3% in 2020. Although spending is significant compared to GDP, in absolute values it remains comparable to that of a medium power, denying Putinian patriotic rhetoric that would aim to restore the glories " imperial ". However, Moscow has a tradition, diplomatic ties, a technological level and a network of military industries that allow it to be in second place worldwide as an arms exporter, surpassed only by the United States.

In the last three years, despite being waging a bloody, and costly, war in Yemen, Saudi Arabia has greatly reduced its spending on armaments, also due to the fall in the price of oil which has cut state revenues. This allowed Great Britain, which instead continued to spend more and more, to earn third place in the group, leaving France and Germany behind.

It should be noted that France, despite its relative modest spending, last year gained third place in the world ranking of arms exporters.

Obviously, all countries export unscrupulously despite declaring that their sales are conditioned by respect for "human rights" by buyers: it is not for nothing that one of the states that is among the largest buyers is Egypt. Pecunia non olet!

South Korea is also engaged in a decisive rearmament process that has accelerated in recent years, also under the pressure of the US, to keep both North Korea and China at bay. Seoul is also trying to reduce its dependence on imports by adopting domestically built weapon systems that appear to have given excellent results in both the aeronautical and maritime fields.

The total expenditure for the ten states cited so far is about 1,464 billion dollars, 74% of global military spending.

### Minor But Well-Armed Powers

After the two main ones, there is a third group of powers that we can define as minor: Italy (28.9 billion dollars), Australia (27.5), Brazil (25.1), Canada (22.7), Israel (21.7), Turkey (17.7). Sipri has no data available for the United Arab Emirates but they certainly rank in this group.

These three groups of powers, 17 states in all, account for about 82% of world military spending.

We can therefore confirm what Lenin wrote a century ago: a small group of imperialist and militarist states dominate the world.

### Only The Non-Pacifist Proletariat Is Anti-Militarist And Anti-War.

But the extent of the expenditure on armaments, the number of aircraft ships or soldiers, are not enough to define the effective war strength of a state.

At the end of the 1980s we witnessed, without a single cannon shot being fired, the disintegration of one of the most powerful armies in the world, that of the Soviet Union, which the new Russian state had to reconstitute almost entirely . Of the approximately 3.4 million Soviet soldiers, only about 2.7 million entered the ranks of the Russian armed forces, only to be reduced to about a million at the end of the century as immense quantities of armament were abandoned.

The Armed Forces are efficient if the state works, if the economy and politics work, if society as a whole supports them. This is why the bourgeoisie attaches so much importance to propaganda in favor of the military, trying to disguise its function of defense of the bourgeois state, and for this reason the action of the Communist Party and of the class unions in clearly opposing militarism and war is so important, above all by refusing any class collaboration for the defense of the bourgeois fatherland and its national economy.

After the fall of the "Soviet" empire and the drastic reduction in military spending by Russia and the satellite countries, the United States also began to reduce spending, which fell from 6.1% of GDP in 1988 to 3.1% of 2001. This temporary reduction in the arms expenditure of the then two major powers was used by the bourgeois left and the pacifist movement to sow the illusion that a general

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### Party Meetings in the US

**Minneapolis:** First Saturdays at  
Hard Times, 1821 Riverside Ave,  
Minneapolis 3-5pm

**Portland, OR:** First Saturdays  
at Neighbors Taproom on 13th  
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welcome.

#### Meetings also in:

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# AUKUS

## A new war pact between imperial powerhouses of Capital

At the inauguration of the new American president, the Democrat Joe Biden, we wrote in our press that very little would change in foreign policy compared to the Republican Trump and his motto "America First". Well, in recent days we have had a new blatant confirmation of this.

Biden announced a new strategic, military and security alliance with the United Kingdom and Australia in the Indo-Pacific area. The new pact, called Aukus, aims at a greater exchange and integration of defense capabilities and information and to provide Australia with a substantial fleet of nuclear-powered submarines, openly in anti-Chinese function.

Until now, the technology necessary for the construction of nuclear submarines was shared only between USA and UK and this gives the measure of the seriousness and strategic importance of the agreement.

China responded immediately denouncing the agreement as "extremely irresponsible": "Cooperation between the United States, Britain and Australia on nuclear submarines seriously affects regional peace and stability, intensifies the arms race and undermines international efforts for nuclear non-proliferation". Clear words that show once again that Beijing is not willing to give up its ambitions in the Pacific and that Washington and its allies are willing to do anything to counter them.

But the agreement also has heavy repercussions on Europe, and France in particular. Australia in fact in 2016 had signed the "contract of the century" with Naval Group, a French industrial group 62% owned by the state and 35% by Thalès, for the supply of 12 diesel-electric propulsion submarines for an amount of 32 billion euros, later revalued to as much as 56. The submarines would be built by 1,800 workers in shipyards in Australia.

The Aukus pact implied the immediate Australian cancellation of the contract with France. Obviously

Paris took it badly: not only was its diplomacy not invited or consulted for the agreement but it suffered a very serious damage to its military industry. The Minister of Foreign Affairs spoke of a "stab in the back" while the Minister of Defense said: "in geopolitics and defense policy this decision is serious and clearly shows how the United States treats its allies".

But the entire European Union has felt "betrayed", kept in the dark just as it was about to present its own plan of intervention in the Pacific area: US diplomacy has elaborated the new pact without mentioning it to the representatives of European capitalists, not caring about their clamors. It's the second time in a few weeks, after the way of the hasty flight from Afghanistan, that Washington shows it doesn't take into account the interests of the European bourgeoisie when it comes to defend its own. This is how it goes in relations between thieves.

The French rooster, pricked by the right-wingers, has recalled the ambassadors from Washington and Canberra "for consultation", but, strangely enough, not from London. Paris thus seems to want to shift the major responsibility to Australia.

European governments sympathize with Paris, recall the billions they pay to NATO and complain about US "selfishness". Aware that they cannot expect Washington to defend the interests of their capitalists, they withdraw the question of common European defense from the drawer. A pious illusion! A European army presupposes a political unity that bourgeois Europe will never achieve. In Europe, each state goes its own way and when the time comes for general war, it will have to side with one or the other of the two great imperialisms, trying to sell the blood of its proletarians in arms to the highest bidder.

The proletariat will have only one way to save itself from a new useless slaughter on the lands and on the seas, to turn the guns against its own brigand bourgeoisie, to oppose the war between states to the war between classes!

## Andrea Rovere - RIP

Andrea became acquainted with the Communist Left when he was a high school student. Living on the Roman coast of Italy, when the next new "Iskra Collective" was being formed, he instinctively recognized their activism and mistrusting the little youth groups would avoid them. That same instinct led him to recognize our Party as the correct one. He joined the ICP while in Canada, where he had moved to pursue a doctorate in physics. There he participated in our young North American section.

Andrea was a communist. Our Roman and French-speaking comrades will remember him for his great modesty and his very fraternal way of being.

He died at only 31 years old, run over by a truck while cycling. It was not a tragic fatality, but a further demonstration that the road system in cities is not on a human scale. For capitalism, the delivery of goods comes before people's lives. Only by subverting and destroying the bourgeois property relations will it be possible to redesign cities by putting the needs of man at the center.

The whole party gathers around Andrea's comrades, friends, and family.

## Crisis Continued

...war was now averted forever and that an era of peaceful relations was opening up between the states. This reactionary illusion did not last long, and now the US is once again defining Russia as an enemy, openly declaring that China is the global strategic opponent, and Moscow and Beijing are responding in kind. The same parties of the parliamentary "left" boast their nationalism and incite rearmament, as the head of the Labor Party in Great Britain did recently, perhaps justifying it with the fight against "terrorism", with the protection of the national economy and with the defense of jobs in the war industry.

It is only the proletariat, organized and self-conscious, framed in its class unions and with the leadership of its party, which can oppose militarism and imperialist war by preparing its class war against the regime of Capital.



# UK truckers fight back against lousy pay and conditions

On August 23 heavy goods vehicles (HGV) drivers working for many different firms organised, through a private Facebook group, a stay-at-home strike across the UK among a flurry of concern from logistics managers, retailers and wholesalers and the bourgeois media over supply chain disruptions and shortages of goods.

The stay-at-home action went ahead, contrary to claims in the media that the strike had been called off. Who initiated this attempted sabotage of the strike is not clear, but it could only have been in the interests of the bosses.

The reason why there are too few lorry drivers is obvious to members of the profession. For decades, wages have been suppressed and conditions worsened in every possible way, meaning that 46% of license holders to operate heavy goods vehicles choose not to work driving lorries.

This is a chronic problem for capitalism across Europe, though it has become acute in Great Britain due to European workers returning home during the pandemic and then being confronted with tougher immigration rules after Brexit.

The Facebook group regularly debunks news articles in the tabloid press about how drivers are paid and looked after extremely well when the conditions and wages for the profession have steadily been eroded for the last few decades.

Around the time of the strike military personnel were put on standby, the prospect of using HGV license holders who are out of prison on day release to deal with shortages was discussed and the media itself has been putting the blame on Brexit in cutting off the supply of cheap drivers from Europe.

Shortly after the stay home strike “Unite” suspended a planned strike for GXO drivers, responsible for 40% of all beer deliveries in the UK, for a derisory 4% pay increase. When tax and National Insurance is taken out of the pay rise the increase will be well below the rate of inflation, i.e. a pay cut in real terms.

This action was met with anger and mockery in the stay-at-home strike Facebook group, with many comments on how unions have long ignored and been useless for truck drivers.

Later on into this supply chain crisis it has been possible for “Unite” to secure a 30% pay increase for Manchester-based Argos workers a move that was met with celebration in the group and comments on how bosses will drag their feet until it's too late.

## Fuel crisis

Then on 23 September there were reports that BP was having difficulties supplying filling stations with petrol and diesel. This caused a rush of for drivers to fill up their tanks at the following weekend, causing up to 90% of filling stations to run out of at least one grade of fuel. This came shortly after the scare stories about empty food shelves in supermarkets, also as a result of a shortage of drivers.

Although there was no shortage of fuel as such, the “just-in-time” supply chain network is collapsing. Moreover, it is in the nature of capitalism that individual capitalists will try to exploit the situation, jeopardising the system as a whole. For example, the UK’s second largest petrol refinery claimed it was “on the brink of collapse” in the middle of the fuel crisis, in order to pressure the government into making tax concessions. This added to the panic buying.

Some companies have offered higher pay and signing-on bonuses for drivers. However, for the most part, this just shifts the problem as workers move from one badly paid job to a slightly less badly paid one, or from one sector (e.g. refuse collection or the fire service) to another (e.g. supermarket deliveries).

The Government rushed through proposals to an approval of 5000 temporary visas for European drivers in a U-turn on its anti-immigration policy. However, the visas will require them to be sent packing on the day before Christmas – they are being treated with complete contempt. Edwin Atema, of the Dutch FNV Union, summed it up perfectly: “The EU workers we speak to will not go to the UK for a short-term visa to help UK out of the shit they created themselves.”

The issues to be weighed up for the drivers are not just about the pay; they would also need to secure short-term accommodation. There are restrictions on drivers sleeping in their cabs when not involved in deliveries and in any case, who would want to be stuck in cab on the road or in budget hostels for weeks on end?

The next stay-at-home strike was organised for 5 November, traditionally celebrated in the UK as “Guy Fawkes Night” with bonfires and fireworks.

## Safety issues

In its desperation to “solve” the crisis, the UK government has relaxed the rules on maximum working hours, a clear safety hazard as drivers are more likely to doze off at the wheel. It has also proposed making it easier to qualify as an HGV driver. Incredibly, this includes removing the requirement to prove you can reverse an articulated truck, and that you can uncouple the cab. This is bound to present a risk of accidents and a danger to both the drivers themselves and other road users.

Moreover, the Ministry of Transport is telling workers in test centres to increase their productivity, i.e. test (and pass) more drivers per day. There is also a huge backlog of driving tests needed for private drivers. In protest at the extra workload, members of the Public and Commercial Services union (PCS) at the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) backed strike action by 92% on an 80% turnout in a ballot announced on 24 September.

## Workers-Toilers' Rally in

### Istanbul:

## A United Front from Above is Not the Solution

On October 24, a “Worker-Toilers' Rally” was held “For Our Labor and Freedom” in Kartal Square. This was not a demonstration organized by regime trade union confederations. In the conditions of Turkey, where the working class has been suppressed heavily, meeting in such a rally has undoubtedly been a source of hope and resistance for the workers who want to fight against the worsening economic conditions.

The speeches and demands expressed at the rally were on a class line. The problems of different segments of the working class were mentioned, calls were made for an organized struggle against capital, demands were expressed against subcontracting, harassment and mobbing at workplaces, and pressures against union organization. Workers talked about their experiences and struggles.

Well, is this rally really a big step for the struggle of the working class in Turkey?

Unfortunately, we have to answer this question in the negative. The reason for this is related to how the rally was organized. Looking at the list of organizers of the rally, on the one hand, grassroots unions, some sections of DISK (Confederation of Progressive Workers Unions), various workers' organizations and struggling workers from small resistances, on the other, various parties and organizations of the radical bourgeois left, mostly Stalinists, stand out.

Such a form of organization means the imposition of a political united front, formed from above by political formations with different approaches, to the radical unionist base that attended the rally, no matter how much initiative the union base took in the process. Thus, a situation emerges where the rally couldn't cover all of the grassroots unions outside not only the regime unions confederations but DISK and KESK (Confederation of Public Employees Unions), which we can consider to be on the edge. Moreover, it should be stated that public workers did not take part in the rally to a large extent. The radical leftist political formations, which are among the organizers of the rally, as well as moderate leftist political formations that did not support the rally but ignored it and kept their supporters away are both to blame for this situation.

Of course, we cannot expect the parties and organizations of the radical or moderate bourgeois left to stop polishing themselves and trying to get their names heard for the sake of the interests of the working class. The most important thing is that the working class, especially those in grassroots unions, move towards establishing a trade-union united front from below, which will ensure unity against capital, instead of a political united front from above with unprincipled bourgeois diplomacy and political competition in the background.

The International Communist Party is also a political party, but we think that it is the class interests of the proletariat before

# Workers Struggles in Tuscany, Italy

## GKN Workers as an Example of a Combative Unionism

The struggle against the redundancies at GKN in Campi Bisenzio has taken on national importance in these months of struggle following the closure. This result was achieved thanks to the pugnacity of its workers who, in a process that began some time ago, have been able to increase their unity and fight on class union positions, obtaining better working conditions than those, worse, accepted over the years, even by FIOM, despite the fact that almost all - workers, delegates, connection delegates - are part of this union, framed in the area of internal opposition.

With the acceptance by CGIL - and CISL and UIL - of the release of layoffs, last June 29, GKN was one of the first companies to announce the closure, on July 9. As constantly reiterated by the Permanent Assembly of workers and their Factory Collective, the struggle at GKN is not a case in itself but one of hundreds of disputes against layoffs, to which must be added the 870 thousand jobs lost - according to ISTAT - since the beginning of the pandemic, despite the freeze on layoffs, just by virtue of the non-renewal of fixed-term contracts.

Every struggle against layoffs is a piece against the attack on the living conditions of the entire working class and demonstrates its spontaneous resistance to the pressure of world capitalism which, in order to slow down its inexorable decline and sink into the crisis of overproduction, pushes for an increase in unemployment on the one hand and in the exploitation of the employed on the other.

In order for this resistance to be more effective, it is clear that it would be necessary first of all to unite the struggles against the layoffs, overcoming their isolation within the confines of the company, and then these with those of the employed and already unemployed workers.

The workers of GKN in these two months have been very committed in this direction, meeting with workers from other companies and categories, supporting workers in the struggle even if they belong to other unions, starting with the workers of Texprint Prato organized in the SI Cobas, or those of the former Alitalia with Cub and Usb, organizing a tour of assemblies throughout Italy, from Naples to Milan, and reaffirming their desire to fight so that their struggle follows a different path from the failed one of many previous ones.

In fact, the unions of the regime (CGIL, CISL, UIL) have not only been signing for decades worsening contract renewals, not only in the middle of the summer they have given the gift of the release of redundancies to the industrialists: in addition, they have always kept isolated within the walls of the factory every fight against layoffs, wearing out the anger and resistance of workers in illusory and useless institutional tables.

The union of the workers' struggles cannot be achieved by these unions collaborating with the bosses and their political regime, but only by opposing their conciliatory policy. It is grassroots unionism that should be a candidate to carry out this essential task, but to be up to it, it must first of all promote the most rigorous unity of action of all the combative unionism.

It is not a question of placing here and now the workers of the GKN and the other workers in struggle who still belong to CGIL CISL and UIL in front of the problem of their exit from

these collaborationist trade unions. The class union will be reborn outside and against the unions of the regime, but to take a step in this direction, today, in the condition of serious weakness of the working class, it is necessary to work to unite all the forces of combative unionism in the action of struggle: the areas of conflict within the CGIL and groups of combative workers also present in CISL and UIL, with all the rank and file unions.

The general strike of October 11, proclaimed by all the grassroots unions for the first time in many years, in a completely unified way, is an important step in this direction.

But, in order to succeed in involving as large a number as possible of workers still organized in the regime unions as well as unorganized workers, the strike must be prepared as hard and as unitedly as the proclamation.

The failure of the unitary organization of the national assembly that was scheduled for Sunday, September 19 in Bologna was a step backwards, an important missed opportunity to involve workers from all ongoing struggles. It is the confirmation of the fact that the unitary general strike is not a result acquired definitively but revocable at any time because of the opportunism of the current leadership of the grassroots unionism. It is only the workers and combative delegates who can impose on these leaders the indispensable unity of action of combative unionism.

Conflict unionism must act unitedly to give effective support to the battle at the GKN, and with it all workers' struggles, and the workers of the GKN can make an important contribution in helping the forces within conflict unionism work to overcome the obstacles to its unity of action.

However, the strength that the GKN workers have built up in such an exemplary way in the factory over the years will not be enough to win this struggle. The workers know this, and that is why they continually emphasize that what is needed is to change the balance of power between the owner class and the working class. The best way to use this strength, for themselves and for the entire working class, is to put it at the service of uniting the struggles of the workers.

Uniting the struggles against layoffs is a necessary first step. The workers of GKN would certainly have the authority - for example - to convene a national assembly of workers struggling against the layoffs, as a basis for joint mobilizations. But it is necessary to take this first step in the knowledge that sticking to the defensive line of rejecting the layoffs is neither sufficient nor sustainable in the long run because the capitalist economy, due to the crisis of overproduction, is destined to increase the mass of unemployed, which it will be essential to organize.

It is necessary to give the trade union movement claims that unify them between employed and unemployed, between workers of large and small companies, between workers with fixed-term and permanent contracts, and that free them from reformist political perspectives that propose failed plans to save the capitalist economy.

The goal of a law against relocations is illusory because no one can regulate the capitalist economy. It demoralizes the workers because it does not meet their needs and bogs

them down in the maze of parliamentary politics. Even if it were accepted, it would lead them towards the politics of the defense of national industry, of nationalism, the favorite terrain of the ruling class, as well as of fascism, in its awareness that the only bourgeois political perspective for the exit from the crisis of overproduction is war. The same applies to the claim of nationalizations.

The occupation of the factory may be a contingent necessity of the struggle - as is happening at the GKN - but if taken as a general method of struggle it does not favor the unification and strengthening of the union workers' movement, because it once again closes the workers in the factories instead of uniting them outside of them, in the streets, in the union and political venues, where only the motto "let's rise up" can become concrete. Nor is it true that it brings them closer to an understanding of the necessity of struggling for political power, deluding them into believing that it is possible to achieve possession of the means of production without replacing the bourgeois state machine with the proletarian one.

If the capitalist economy, because of its inexorable contradictions, has been in decline for years and will collapse tomorrow, in order to rise from the struggles company by company to a general movement the workers must be organized to fight not to keep open at all costs the factories that the capitalists want to close, but in defense of their needs, demanding satisfaction - together as a social class - to the bourgeois political regime.

What proletarians need to live is wages on the one hand and time free from exploitation on the other. The elementary demands that unify the working class are those that give satisfaction to these needs: wage increases, full wages to the laid-off, layoffs at 100% of wages, reduction of working hours for equal wages and working life.

A genuinely class-based trade union claim plan and the united action of confrontational unionism that supports it are the factors that can create the most favorable conditions for the rebirth of the trade union and political workers' movement. But this prospect can only be opened up by the political struggle against the opportunism of the many workers' political parties and groups, some of which lead the combative union bodies, a struggle that only the authentic communist party can lead.

Typical of opportunism is the frantic search for the construction of the party through political fronts and, playfully, the subordination to this illusory goal of the necessary construction of a single class union front. In a completely idealistic way opportunism believes that it is the conscious element, the political party, that can set the union workers' movement in motion again. Instead, the workers' movement of struggle will arise from their elementary needs - economic, union - not from the development of the higher level of struggle, political.

That is why militant workers in workers' political groups - and all combative workers - must put themselves at the service of building a single class union front. This is a fundamental ground on which the difference between trade union-political opportunism and the authentic revolutionary communist party is measured.

October 11 2021

## Workers Struggles in Italy - ICP Leaflet

### **HURRAY FOR THE RANK AND FILE UNION GENERAL STRIKE!**

**For a Class Union Front in defense of the immediate interests of the working class.  
For the rebirth of the One Big Union: outside and against the regime unions.**

Working class living conditions have been deteriorating for years: real wages are falling, reduced by recent increases in inflation and due to increased overtime, effectively increasing working hours and reducing free time from wage slavery; workers everywhere toil to the bone, with increasingly heavy workloads and production rates;

A growing share of workers - a majority among young people - is hired with fixed-term contracts, aggravating its extortion by the bourgeoisie; the retirement age was raised, and the pension allowance decreased, to levels that guarantee that old age is difficult and, for the sake of the coffers of the bourgeois state, short.

Confirmation of this increase in exploitation comes from the increase in deaths at work. The increase in deaths at work confirms this increase in exploitation. While the ideology of the ruling class propagates the lie that the working class no longer exists, every day workers are sacrificed on the altar of profit.

The immiseration of the working class:  
- is desired by industrial, finance, and landed capital - national and international, with interests indissolubly intertwined - in defense of profits and rents, eroded by the crisis of overproduction which advances like a cancer condemning the world capitalist economy to a certain future collapse;

- is implemented with perfect continuity by governments of all colors - regardless of false distinctions - because in the present, capitalist political and economic order, there can only be bourgeois governments: behind the fiction of democracy - of universal suffrage, of popular sovereignty - stands the regime of capital;

- is endorsed by the regime unions (CGIL, CISL, UIL) which do not organize the workers' struggle, and only lead the workers - keeping control of them with a thousand tools and by reason of the support guaranteed to them by bossed and their state machine - from defeat to defeat, signing contract renewals always at a loss and not opposing subsequent anti-worker legislation.

Against all this, today base unionism has finally reached the proclamation of one united national general strike of all its organizations.

The divisions, the competition, the contrasts between the organizations of base unionism are one of the factors which have hitherto prevented it from questioning the control over workers of collaborationist trade unionism. Today's

strike is a first step in the opposite direction, that of unity of action of conflictual unionism, and has already shown its first positive results, with the adherence to the day of struggle of several groups of combative workers in large metalworking factories still controlled by the CGIL, first of all the workers of the GKN of Campi Bisenzio (Florence), of the Workers' Committee at Piaggio of Pontedera (Pisa), of the RSU of Perini di Lucca.

This path must be pursued: all the organizations and forces of conflictual unionism - base unions and class militants still within the CGIL - must strictly adhere to the principle of unity at all levels of trade union activity - company, territorial, category, inter-category - and call workers in the struggle not for a distant and illusory reformist policies, typically presented with the formula of a "different economic policy", but for measures that give immediate satisfaction to their needs:

- wage increases, higher for the worst-paid categories, unifying the struggles for contract renewals;
- reduction of working hours for the same salary;
- lowering of the retirement age and return to the remuneration method;
- full wages for dismissed workers;
- single redundancy fund for all workers raised to 100% of the salary;
- free and availability of social services - health, school and transport - proceeding to massive hiring.

All these claims can clearly be satisfied only in part, and always in a revocable way, in this political and economic regime, in which the very large part of the wealth produced by work must necessarily turn into profits and rents, keeping wages at the level of survival.

Nevertheless, they are the only demands able to:

- on the one hand, concretely alleviate the condition of suffering of the working class, not demoralizing it in anticipation of future and illusory reformist policies;
- on the other hand, provide concrete proof that "the struggle pays", to bring together all their efforts, to bring them to the ground of the struggle, to a direct confrontation with the political regime in order to obtain satisfaction from it, and therefore to elevate the economic struggle to a revolutionary, political struggle for power.

A permanent and organic unity of action of conflictual unionism, which leads to the formation of a Unified Class Union Front and the rebirth - outside and against the regime unions - of the Class Union, can only be pursued by the workers and

combative delegates at the base of the trade unions.

The present leadership of the rank-and-file unions have for years subordinated the indispensable unity of action in the trade union struggle to divisions on a political or trade union level. Most of them suffer the delusion that they will be able to keep under their control the rebirth of the class trade union movement from the first steps of today's small organizations until it is powerful again. It is this short-sighted, opportunist vision which prevents unified action, as the union leaders fear that they would benefit the factions that control other unions. The limits in the unitary preparation of today's strike confirm this

Authentic communism is distinguished from opportunism in this too: because it invokes and fights in a coherent and consequential way for the development of the unity of action of all trade unions, militant to the maximum degree, as an indispensable factor to achieve the maximum degree of unity of action of workers,

in the certainty that the more united and stronger the workers' union struggle is, the more the conditions will be favorable for the affirmation of the positions of revolutionary communism.

Rome, Monday 11 October 2021



# FOR A CLASS UNION

The ICP argues for a class union, dedicated to protecting the economic interests of the entire working class. The class union organizes workers across employers, industries, and national boundaries. It encompasses all occupations no matter if “skilled” and “unskilled”, “blue-collar” and “white-collar”. It promotes the unity of action of the entire working class. It maintains a completely combative position against the bosses, never collaborating or cooperating with them under any circumstances. It pays no respect to the laws that protect the bourgeoisie, especially those that limit the workers’ right to strike. The class union should be as widely-based as possible. In this respect it differs from party-unions and parties in place of unions, which are both promoted by the various opportunist factions. This is not to say that it should be apolitical, but it is not a partisan goal. Not every worker is willing or able to join the communist party at any given time. Even so, they can still be of great help in workers’ struggles.

## **The IWW: ONE BIG UNION OR CLASS UNION?**

For the most part, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) is mired in the anarchist and “libertarian socialist” ideologies which failed so badly in the post World War One revolutions and, more importantly, the Spanish Civil War. The concept of “autonomy” of local unions, individual workplaces, etc was alien to the classic IWW and abandoned the industrial outlook of the Original IWW. So they “unionize” individual workplaces, which no longer seek unity with even other workplaces in identical industries.

The ideology of autonomy means the IWW currently lacks the ability to capitalize on its strengths. For example, its membership amongst workers in Education is not insignificant – 1300 across the US. Members in the “Educational Workers Industrial Union #620” – were leaders in the 2018 West Virginia School Strike. IWWs also took lead in an important Grad Student Workers wildcat at the University of California

Santa Cruz) in 2020. But there is no strategy for turning isolated groups of IWW militants into an organization fighting for the unity of all workers and unions. As long as it holds onto localist autonomy it cannot become the power it should be. Instead of unity of actions, there are small handfuls of Educational workers working on their own individual and local agendas.

“Local Autonomy” also encourages IWW projects like the “Burgerville Workers Union” – a union of fast food restaurant workers in Portland, Oregon in one business. It encourages them to think it is ok to negotiate a No Strike Clause in their contract with employers, even though such a clause is in direct contradiction to the IWW’s constitution. Instead of attempting to spread their occasional successes to other restaurants, the duplicate autonomous unions for every workplace – a different burger chain is a separate and isolated union. One donut shop in a business of 10 shops (Voodoo Doughnuts Workers Union). As well as a bar going out of business! Each union is a little more tenuous and isolated for the collective power of workers to be effective.

The failures outlined above don’t mean that the IWW should be written off. It still does many good works despite the above weaknesses. For example, it’s organized militants within a number of major Canadian unions encouraging workplace actions which have won significant workplace improvements in a very hostile political environment.

## **TURKEY (continued)**

the name of this or that group is written on a list of organizers that is decisive on the long road to another world, emphasized by many workers speaking at the rally. «Communists have no interests apart from those of the entire proletariat». Our Party’s effort is to «point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality (...) [i]n the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries», and to «always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole (...) [i]n the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through» (“Communist Manifesto”).

## **SOUTH AFRICA (con’t)**

The auto industry directly employs 110,000 workers in South Africa and accounts for nearly 7% of the country’s GDP, while the steel industry along with metallurgy accounts for nearly 15% of GDP, about \$ 44 billion. The largest steel producer is ArcelorMittal - South Africa.

Striking steelmakers will have the concrete help of millions of workers who will participate in a strike day called by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), to put pressure on the government of the African National Congress.

With this strike, COSATU will probably try to give vent to what promises to be a growing movement of the South African working class. As we know there were widespread riots in July, triggered by the detention of former President Jacob Zuma, but fueled by the growing anger of the working class at rising prices, the crisis over the coronavirus pandemic and decades of unfulfilled promises from the bourgeois regime of the ANC.

Bheki Ntshalintshali, COSATU secretary general, said the strike’s goal is to call for “urgent action by government policy makers and private sector officials to end targeted attacks against workers.” Bheki also complains that companies that had received financial incentives from the government for the Covid pandemic were “hoarding or exporting money out of the country” rather than investing it in South Africa.

The usual illusory demands of the regime trade unions which lead one to believe that the conduct of the capitalists can be regulated in favor of the working class. COSATU together with the African National Congress and the Stalinist South African Communist Party are part of the government.

The memory of the 34 miners massacred by the bosses’ henchmen in Marikana in 2012 is still alive in us, in a strike in which the COSATU miners’ federation, NUM, openly acted in favor of scab-shooting.

# Strike at John Deere

10,000 workers at John Deere have been on strike since October 14. It is a massive strike by U.S. standards, and the first to hit the agricultural machinery manufacturer since 1986. It occurs against the wishes of the regime union, the United Auto Workers (UAW), which claims to represent the workers.

The factories involved in the strike are in small cities and towns in Iowa, Illinois, and Kansas. This part of the world is reviled by what passes for the “left” in the U.S. To the progressives, the workers now in revolt are “flyover men” – ignorant and insignificant people who are out of touch with the culture of polite society (and what a grand culture it is!). The “radical left”, who are mostly petty-bourgeois kids playing make-believe, do not care about the John Deere strike because there is nothing romantic about building tractors. And besides, class struggle is so old-fashioned!

It is understandable why workers in those places are fighting back now. The locations of the John Deere strike are generally minor cities and towns that exist to serve farming activity in the surrounding rural areas. They were hit hard by the wave of deindustrialization in the U.S. in the later years of the 20th century, and by the general impoverishment of small cities and towns in the same period. Manufacturers started to show a renewed interest in those places in the past two decades, as a way of escaping the complications of outsourced manufacturing and the higher wages in urban areas. This occurred at a time of acute labor weakness. At the same time, agriculture became more industrialized, and thus agricultural laborers became proletarianized. The result was a renewed level of industry and a greater number of immiserated workers.

This history, which is really the bosses’ strategy, is clearly visible at John Deere. One of the reasons for the strike was the company and the UAW’s plan to eliminate pensions for new hires. The company and its union already gutted pensions for newer workers in the past, so this would introduce a third, even lower tier to the workforce. In the past, the bosses could buy off the more senior workers in exchange for selling out their newer comrades. This does not work anymore. It is now clear to the whole working class that economic opportunities for younger workers have disappeared. This has been going on for such a long time that these workers are not so young anymore, and they are now quite numerous. Even retirees understand that there will be no future for their class unless they act.

In this whole story, it is clear that the UAW acts as an instrument for John Deere and other employers like it. Our party stated decades ago that the regime unions are “a special police force deployed against the workers” (Towards the Rebirth of the Working Class Trade Union, 1992). The UAW does everything in its power to collaborate with employers and sabotage the workers’ struggle. It holds meetings in secret with the bosses, it prevents workers from seeing the contracts it has negotiated, it issues joint statements with the bosses, it intimidates militant workers, and it cozies up to bourgeois

# FOR THE CLASS UNION

## news and interventions of the class struggle

politicians. Union bureaucrats at other UAW companies have taken bribes from those companies to the tune of millions of dollars. The UAW bureaucracy pressured the workers at John Deere to accept the latest contract, which ceded their interests to those of the bourgeoisie. 90% of workers who voted on the contract rejected it, choosing instead to fight for their class interests in a strike. The strike is therefore an action against the regime unions as much as it is against John Deere.

The workers at John Deere, and at so many other companies, show us that there is a class opposition within the regime unions. The next step in the struggle is for this class opposition to coordinate its activities in different unions across and between industries, while also coordinating with militant workers who are not yet unionized. This coordination is the precursor to the class union, which mobilizes all workers to fight for the interests of our class.

## Militancy in the Building Trades

The building trades unions of the AFL-CIO are seen as some of the most class backwards in the union movement. There are many justified reasons for this. Historically the building trades have been “old boys clubs” of white men inheriting their father’s membership. Until the 1990s few Blacks, Hispanics and Women have been allowed in the clubs. Minority/Women membership all too often came from lawsuits for membership not from consciousness from inside the union. Those demographics have changed somewhat, but most of the best paying work is still 98% white men.

The Building Trades Unions – [UBC - Carpenters, UA - Painters, IBEW - Electrical Workers, Roofers, Elevator Engineers, Plumbers, Operating Engineers, Teamsters and other smaller crafts] usually hold working contracts with contractors and act as job agencies for the best jobs in an industry. The “Trades” have provided well paid work for only a small segment of the North American working class. For example the Carpenters control major construction, so high rises, some infrastructure projects, etc. But they have abandoned residential construction to non-union contractors and minimum wage immigrant “Mexican” labor.

No surprise to us communists, their position in production means when they do move, the Building Trades Unions shake capitalism. Recently two regional struggles in the Pacific Northwest have shown the power of rank-and-file organization can accomplish.

## Painters Union - Portland, Oregon

During the summer of 2020 Painters’

Union members in Portland took creative efforts against the employing contractors associations. Contractors fresh from a \$20 million stimulus from the Trump administration offered 25¢ an hour raises for Painters. With solid rank and file organization and support from the local leadership, the union enacted a strategy called “Summer of Chaos” where they would shut down as many worksites as possible for short periods of time – for an 8 hour shift, or several. Occasionally a couple days. With support by other trade unions refusing to cross picket lines and timed to best mess up work, delivery of supplies, etc. The strategy worked with the contractors agreeing to \$7+ an hour wage increases over a 3 year period.

## Carpenters - Seattle

The Carpenters’ Union leadership is notoriously class collaborationist while members are often confrontational. The Seattle local leadership tried to do what collaborationist do – trying to push through a crap new contract because supposedly the Carpenters Union works with employers.

But the Carpenters are working on huge projects by companies such as Microsoft, Amazon and Boeing. The proposed raises have been a pittance compared to the profits their work will create. The proposed contract was voted down 3 times and followed by a strike authorization vote

We’ve rejected those deals because in the Seattle area and western Washington the cost of living has risen astronomically in the last ten years, and carpenters’ wages have not kept up with the other mechanical trades. Most carpenters do not live in Seattle anymore. We’ve been priced out of the city. They have to commute from farther and farther away, and many of them can no longer afford to buy houses anymore at all.

Not only have our raises not kept up over the years, even though we’ve had the biggest construction boom in the history of the region, but health care costs continue to rise, and our pension system has not met members’ expectations. It has been underfunded for years, and last year we actually lost \$200 million out of our pension funds. The pension system has been taking hits for at least five or six years.

It has just been kind of a downward spiral. Wages aren’t keeping up with the cost of everything: the cost of parking, the cost of housing, the cost of health care. We just feel like enough is enough. These are some of the most skilled carpenters in the country. Many of my friends and I have worked on mansions for millionaires and billionaires, and these are places we’ll never get to afford to live anywhere near.

Unlike Portland’s Painters the Seattle Carpenters leadership is closer to the contractors than to their membership. The Local union leadership was so close to the contractors that in late October the International Headquarters took over the Seattle local for corruption. So the rank and file Carpenters did



what the West Virginia School Teachers, fast food workers, meat packers, etc have done over the last 4 years. Militants started social media co-ordinations to push the workers' agendas upon both the employers and any recalcitrant union leaders. In Seattle the rank and file group formed on Facebook named after IBC founder Peter J. McGuire. The following is the group's platform:

1) *We support the rights and dignity of all workers free from discrimination, harassment or assault based on race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, and religion.*

2) *We want strong wages that keep up with inflation and the cost of living. We want a maintenance of benefits clause. We want to protect our benefits.*

3) *We want leadership that is politically and financially held accountable to working carpenters. We want leaders to make a carpenter's wage.*

4) *We want transparency. No more secret bargaining.*

5) *We believe our class interests as workers are opposed to the class interests of business owners.*

6) *We want the right to strike by simple majority. We want to remove no-strike language.*

7) *We want workers organizing! A strong focus on Bottom-up organizing!*

8) *Leadership must reflect the membership. We want to end conflicts of interest in leadership. We will not support or endorse anyone who makes over foremen scale into any council office or council paid position.*

9) *We want labor history education. Carpenters' history, and general labor history both for new apprentices and journeymen.*

10) *We want all retaliation and harassment within the union against dissent to end! We will stand up for PJMG members!*

11) *We want everyone to go to union meetings.*

12) *We want other working carpenters' organizations to affiliate with us and adopt our platform. We want to organize the organized, and the unorganized.*

The McGuire group has succeeded pushing UBC leadership to authorize some more pickets at worksites.

...the union leadership is in a bit of a bind. The negotiations were not gridlocked between the union leadership and the contractors; they were gridlocked between the membership and the union leadership. The membership has not wanted to approve these tentative agreements. [Its] not totally certain what made the leadership decide to give us a strike, but ...the thinking was, "Okay, you can have your strike, but it's going to fail." Because the entire strike, so far, the leadership has set us up to fail. They've done what they can to ensure that it's not going to work...

The rally started off kind of like a pep rally. But when it came down to it, a brother from the Microsoft job began pushing for the leadership to allow us to picket the Microsoft job. Other brothers joined in and got behind him to push for the Microsoft job, which became kind of a

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shouting match. And it looked like it was going to get ugly....something was thrown. The argument ended with [Carpenters Council head] Evelyn Shapiro conceding that the Microsoft job would be added as a fifth job to the picket list. But it was only after the members really demanded it and it looked like there was almost a physical fight.

The council leadership has been really trying to keep us from fighting the significant jobs. One of the sites selected was a lay down yard, one was a hole in the ground. Empty buildings were selected.

### A local newspaper wrote:

The Peter J. McGuire group, a group of rank-and-file carpenters, is especially sick of the union bargaining team not delivering. These carpenters want good family wages, paid parking, and a \$15 raise over three years. The last failed contract offer, which the membership rejected in a 56% to 44% vote, included a 20.4% increase in wages and benefits over four years, stronger harassment and discrimination protections, and more parking reimbursement – some areas only being reimbursed \$1.50 per hour.

A "vocal minority" of about 100 carpenters who were displeased with this offer went rogue last week and picketed over 13 unsanctioned construction sites in two days, shutting down those sites and drawing strong condemnation from union leaders. Many sites are under no-strike agreements, so those wildcat strikes could put the union in legal and thus financial trouble, union leaders warned.

### Shared in the McGuire FB group:

It is a fact that in many of the sites where we have pickets, the other building trades unions will wait about an hour after the picket is dissolved and waltz onto the site. No visible picket means the trade (in their mind) is not crossing the line. Some of the second shift pickets barely have a presence. It is imperative that we also support the second shift. It is also imperative that we document these Trades waltzing in after the line is dissolved and make it public knowledge. On the larger more valued sites, sites that have a major construction footprint, sites with crane activity or high valued sites like Microsoft, Google, Amazon, that we shut these job down PERIOD. We need your support and help with the second shift at various locations, especially Microsoft.

There are over 400 Carpenters that work at Microsoft Redmond (MSCM). Yet, the most we have been able to attract is about 40 carpenters morning shift and way less the second shift. This is the highest valued site on the West Coast. ...[M]any of the Carpenters live outside the area. But we don't need a hundred Carpenters present at a low value site, even though it is conveniently located near your home. ...[It is] the 11th hour of this strike and we need to make an economic impact on the

largest jobs NOW! ...We need your Solidarity and Presence here at Microsoft.

### Seattle Teamster Concrete drivers:

At the same time as the Carpenters were on strike, Teamster concrete drivers (who work at the very same contractors with the Carpenter concrete forms workers) negotiated aggressively and like the Painters above, won a 15% increase over the next 3 years.

### Another major Strike of South African Steel workers

There are reports of a major strike, which starting on 5 October, in South Africa which, according to some sources, involved more than 150,000 workers in the steel industry and their demands for increased wages.

The strike was called for an indefinite period until demands were achieved, and was called by the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA), which was the largest trade federation of COSATU, the regime trade union confederation, from which it was expelled in 2014.

Thousands of workers have filled the streets of Johannesburg and other cities in powerful demonstrations.

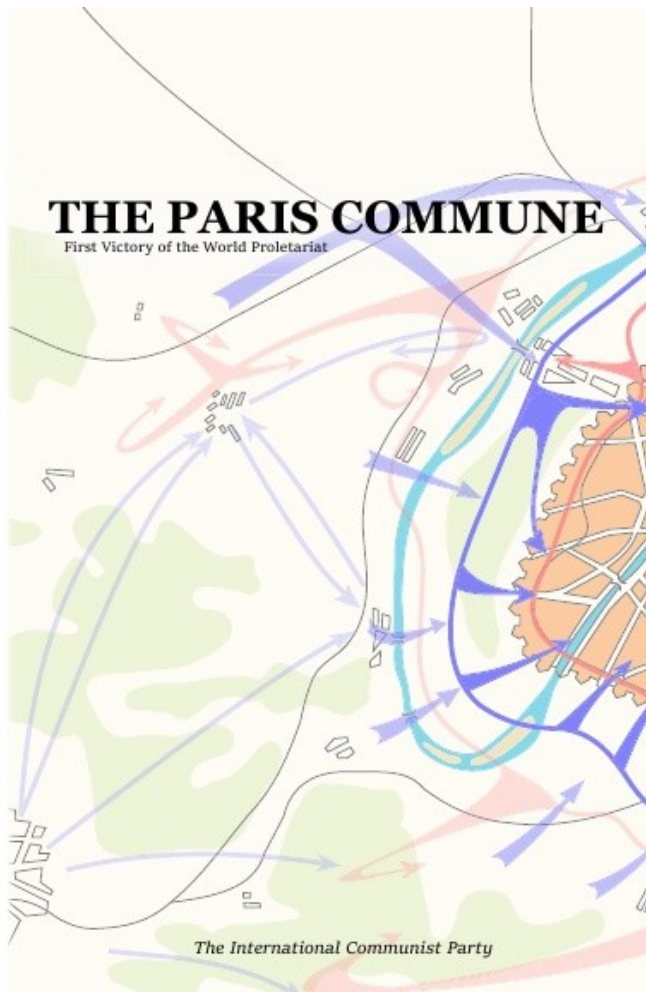
The owners did not stand by and watch. In Boksburg North, 50 kilometers east of Johannesburg, they unleashed their private security guards who shot and injured a striking worker. Other clashes against the strikers took place in Booyens, south of Johannesburg, where police opened fire with rubber bullets on a group of workers demonstrating in front of a factory.

These strikes have spanned five of South Africa's nine provinces, and are expected to involve up to 300,000 workers, organized by Numsa and other allied unions.

The demands of workers are for an 8% wage increase in the first year and another 2% in the next two years, plus the rate of inflation (taking into account that the official rate of inflation of consumer prices last August was 4.9%): a 22% increase would be reached in three years.

The masters of the South African Federation of Steel and Engineering Industries (SEIFSA) responded with an offer of a 4.4% increase for 2021, plus 0.5% above the inflation rate in 2022 and plus 1% in 2023.

For this reason, the strike continues and seems to be 100% in steel mills and metallurgical plants across the country, so much so that the executive director of the National Association of Manufacturers of Automotive Components and Allies, Renai Moothilal, has made it known that the automotive industry it will soon be affected.



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## **The Italian Left and the Communist International.**

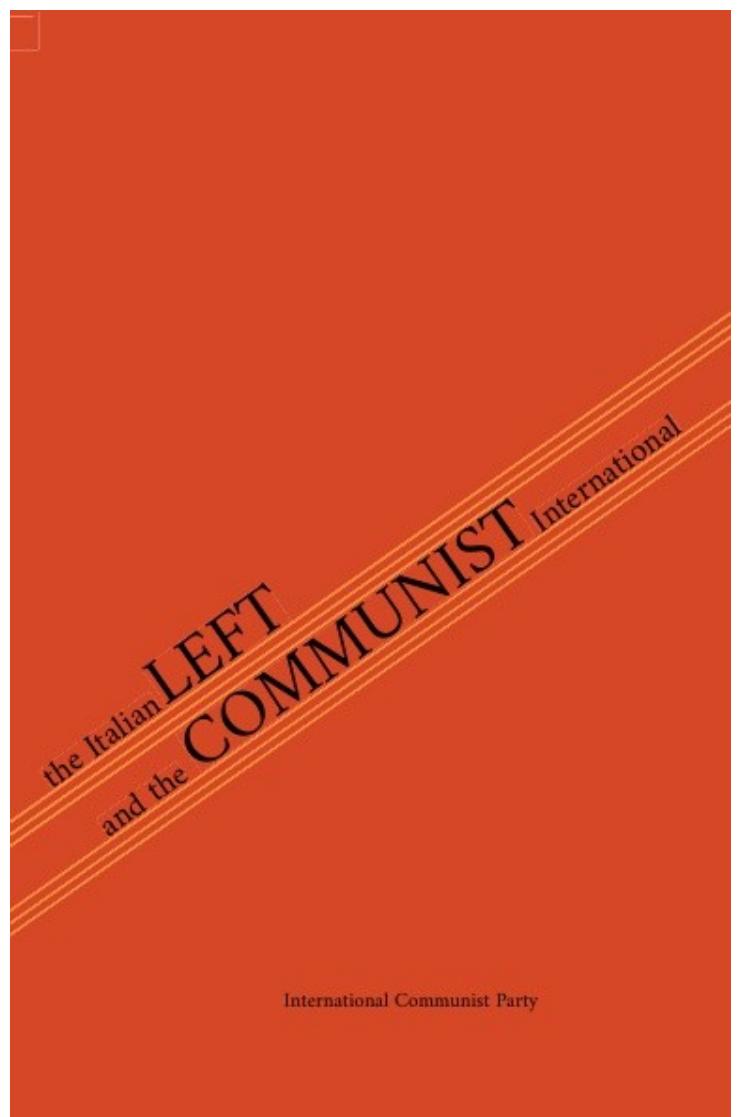
The Other Left Opposition: The Italian Communist Left (aka the Promoteco group or the Bordighists) has been slandered and misrepresented by the other dissident communist currents making up the so called "Left Opposition." Consisting of a 12 part collection, written over the course of two decades, this work provides a clear history of the creation of the Third Communist International (Comintern), the formation of the Communist Party of Italy, and the genesis of counterrevolution in Russia. Included in this volume is a collection of the many foundational theses by the Communist Left. As the last vestiges of Stalinism fade into history, readers will find the admonitions of the Italian Communist Left about the burgeoning calamity of counterrevolution ring true today.

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# IATSE: Kill the Proposal!

## IATSE Members!

The struggle for better working and living conditions is crucial, not only in production but in all sectors of the economy. As workers, we have enormous power when acting collectively and in a concerted manner. The bosses are afraid of what we are capable of if we stand in solidarity with our fellow workers and comrades.

The strike presents us with a unique opportunity to connect with other workers and comrades. The union leadership wants to roll out a lengthy and compromising agreement with the AMPTP, but we don't have to wait! for them to make decisions that will affect *our* livelihoods.

We are facing nearly unprecedented adversities at work and home. There is a pandemic, unemployment, homelessness, uncertainty and generalized insecurity. When we work together, we are stronger. When workers organize within their industry, but also with the rest of the labor force at large, we are capable of accomplishing more. We call this the **class union**.

The leadership has shown itself unable to protect the interests and gains of the rank and file. Why else would they immediately call to go back to work? Do they really have *our* interests in mind? Rushing into an agreement with the AMPTP risks compromising our safety and a steadfast position at the bargaining table.

The recent death on set of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins and injury of director Joel Souza is a tragedy and illuminates the need for better protections of film crews. While many employees had walked off that very set earlier that day over, among other things, these exact concerns shows that production companies and the bosses will do whatever they can to increase their profit margins at the expense of workers. Rather than meet with the union's reasonable demands, producers would rather hire scabs. The bosses would rather cut corners than prevent injuries. Sadly, this unacceptable violation of workplace safety is not an isolated incident, but a link in a very long chain of injuries and deaths in the industry.

Across the US, and indeed the world, workers have attempted to create better working and living conditions for themselves; yet, at every step of the way, our bosses, their lackeys in state and federal governments and the bureaucrats in the **regime unions**, all work together to keep us down.

We need to expand our struggle. Vote **NO** on compromising with the bosses. It's time to **STRIKE!**

**There are also other IATSE members who are inspired by your threatened strike actions because they endure similar conditions to yours. Bring them with you! Make the industry a better one.**

In deciding that we no longer need to put up with being put down, we are part of what workers everywhere are realizing: we don't have to stand for this treatment. We are the ones that create the wealth of this world, and we deserve fair and safe working and living conditions. Hold strong, and broaden the struggle!

We have a world to win!

## **International Communist Party**

**international-communist-party.org**

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