

The Communist Party

Newspaper of the International Communist Party

WHAT DISTINGUISHES OUR PARTY – The line running from Marx to Lenin to the foundation of the Third International and the birth of the Communist Party of Italy in Leghorn (Livorno) 1921, and from there to the struggle of the Italian Communist Left against the degeneration in Moscow and to the rejection of popular fronts and 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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WAR IN GAZA

In the 75 years since 1948—when the Israeli state was born and pan-Arab nationalism suffered a crucial defeat in the Middle East, and maybe missed its last appointment with history—the Palestinian population has suffered deportations, massacres, terror and endless persecution.

Contributing to this national oppression imposed by the State of Israel were the other states in the region, which exploited the various Palestinian armed organizations in their own interests, but which, apart from hypocritical proclamations in favor of the "Palestinian cause," failed to save Palestinian refugees from persecutions and massacres.

In Jordan in September 1970, joint Jordanian and Syrian military forces put down an uprising resulting in several thousand deaths among Palestinian refugees. In Lebanon in August 1976, Phalangists, with Syrian complicity, killed thousands of Palestinians of all ages in the Tel al-Zaatar camp. In 1982, also in Lebanon, Phalangists, with the complicity of the occupying Israeli army, massacred thousands of Palestinians in the Sabra neighbourhood and the adjoining Shatila refugee camp on the outskirts of Beirut.

No one cares about the "Palestinian cause", no one is interested in the destiny of the Palestinian proletariat. Instead, today all governments care about is war, which is necessary for all bourgeoisies. But for every war a pretext, a casus belli is required.

The Israeli bourgeoisie will take advantage of the Hamas incursion to justify the imposition by force of internal discipline on all classes and bloody actions against the Palestinian proletarians.

Hamas as well, originally a pawn of Israel against the Palestine Liberation Organisation, must maintain its reign of terror over Gaza's proletarians. Meanwhile, the PLO controls the West Bank on behalf of Israel and is silent about the fate of its rivals in Gaza.

The outcome sought by all bourgeoisies is to provoke a new carnage in preparation for a regional and possibly a general war.

In the present general framework of its extreme rottenness, world capitalism is ready to unleash lethal weapons to terrorize and subdue millions of proletarians on all fronts.

As internationalist communists, we must expose the real terms of this threat, which is always concealed behind a nationalist, democratic, ethnic or religious cover.

We must tell the Palestinian proletarians not to be deceived by their own bourgeoisie, which has sold itself into the service of the regional powers, to immolate themselves as cannon fodder in wars that are contrary to their own interests. We must tell Israeli Jewish proletarians to fight against their bourgeoisie and against the national oppression of their Palestinian class brothers.

And we must tell proletarians throughout the world not to allow themselves to be seduced by the sirens of propaganda into siding with either of the two murderous bourgeoisies, locked into a sham struggle in Palestine and Israel.

The ongoing conflict will be used everywhere by the world bourgeoisie to intimidate the proletariat, to divert it from its vital interests, to justify measures which lower wages and require further sacrifices.

We communists must instead tell proletarians that the rejection of war starts for proletarians with the intensification of their trade union struggle for better wages and for a decrease in working hours.

The bourgeoisie will not be able to wage its war unless it can convince broad layers of the working class with its lying propaganda. We must counter that propaganda not only by responding with our truths to the lies of the ruling class; we must respond by directing the workers' struggle towards the material needs of the proletarian class, a practical experience in which the lies and fallacious arguments of the bourgeoisie and their servants in the workers' ranks become clearly evident.

The proletariat in the face of the constant worsening of its living conditions and the horror of capitalism's catastrophe will give birth to a gigantic season of struggles which will cross oceans and borders. For this new, great, no-holds-barred class war to emerge victorious, it is necessary to strengthen the essential organ of the world working class, the International Communist Party.

TURKEY: PROMINENT LABOR STRUGGLES IN OCTOBER

After August, which saw some heightened struggles on behalf of workers, October saw a relative intensification of class struggles in Turkey.

The first of these struggles was the factory occupation launched on October 5 by Bekaert workers, who had gone on strike despite the government ban in the first half of 2023 and had won a partial victory (see "Bekaert Strike Despite Strike Ban", *Komünist Parti*, n. 2). The workers of the Bekaert factory in Izmit, who are members of Birleşik Metal (DİSK), had been organizing protests for some time, recently demanding an additional raise. In response, the Bekaert boss gave an additional raise to the workers of the company's Kartepe factory who are members of Öz Çelik İş (Hak-İş) and did not protest, and fired the Birleşik Metal representative at the Izmit factory. In opposition, 200 day-shift workers occupied the factory. When 200 night-shift workers were prevented from entering the factory by the company, they started protesting outside the factory. Production in the factory came to a complete halt; however, the workers were forced to end the occupation on October 7 because the company prevented workers from accessing food. The workers returned to work on the same day, announcing that they would continue their struggle until their dismissed coworkers are rehired and their other demands met.

There were also protests in Izmir and Gebze on October 5 against the government's plan to cut workers' severance pay. In Izmir, some 2,000 workers gathered with the call of DİSK. In Gebze, 1,000 workers gathered at the call of the Gebze Trade Union Platform, which includes grassroots trade union confederations such as DİSK and KESK, as well as regime trade union confederations such as Birleşik Kamu-İş, Türk-İş and Hak-İş.

On October 6, Birleşik Metal workers in 42 factories owned by companies belonging to the employers' organization MESS (Metal Industrialists' Union) staged a one-hour strike demanding an additional 30% raise.

In contrast, the regime unions of the metal sector, Türk Metal (Türk-İş) and Öz Çelik İş (Hak-İş), consider the government's 3,000 lira raise to be sufficient. On October 13, Birleşik Metal members once again went on a one-hour strike and stopped working overtime until the meeting between MESS and Birleşik Metal on October 25. On October 20, United Metal members planned to once again go on a one-hour warning strike. They have continued these warning strikes every Friday.

Finally, on October 17, 10,000 İZENERJİ workers, members of Genel İş (DİSK), went on strike over unpaid bonuses from the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality. Izmir Metropolitan Municipality workers, especially İZENERJİ and İZELMAN workers, which employs employs 7,000 workers, have been struggling for their vested rights for months (see "A New Wave of Workers' Struggles in Turkey", *The Communist Party*, n. 3 and "August 16 Public Strike", *The Communist Party*, n. 5).

Unless the above-mentioned struggles lead to a more generalized and intense period of strikes in Turkey, they are unlikely to result in gains. In particular, the workers of DİSK continue to play a leading role in the class struggle in Turkey. But the strategy of the regime unions, as well as the opportunist leaders of grassroots unions like DİSK and KESK, to settle for one-hour or one-day warning strikes must be exposed. Moreover, the insipid platforms that bring together the rank-and-file unions and the regime unions do not promise any future for the class struggle, and rather than arousing the workers who are members of the regime unions, they give the leaders of DİSK and KESK, who are already prone to token or symbolic actions, an excuse not to take action. On the contrary, DİSK and KESK should give a shoulder to the grassroots unions outside their own ranks. These unions, though small today, are trying to organize in precarious sectors where DİSK has insufficient presence or none at all. Such an alliance, a united front from below, if it follows a consistent and courageous line of struggle, will also become a pole of attraction for workers who are members of the regime unions.

HALF A MILLION ON STRIKE IN CANADA - CLASS UNION NEEDED

The International Communist Party is calling on all workers in the Canadian public sector to stand together in their struggles against their governments' attacks! For unlimited strikes, and the class union!

QUEBEC

The striking workers in the Quebec public sector have done well to turn down the government's offers of a wage increase which does not even keep up with inflation. Such an offer is laughable in consideration of the sheer numbers presented by these unions in the strikes of the past month; nearly 600,000 workers across the whole public sector have taken action against the intolerable conditions the government has imposed on them, making this strike wave the largest in North America since the steel strikes of the 1950s.

The bourgeoisie insists, as always, that it's offering a "fair deal", that the workers' demands are unrealistic. The Quebec government has declared that these demands are too broad, that it's absurd for the workers to expect, all at once, improvements in pay, in working conditions, in staffing, in pensions, in parental rights, and so on. But the size of these strikes, and the existence of similar struggles all over the world, in every industry, prove that the only thing unrealistic about the situation is the demand of the ruling class, the demand that the working class should continue to tolerate giving its entire life over to capital.

The government is trying to agitate against the public workers by accusing them of not considering the impact the strikes have on their communities. It says the teachers need to put the education of the students first, that healthcare workers need to make sacrifices to ensure that essential services aren't disrupted. But workers know that this is only a performance by the bourgeoisie to attack their movement. Capitalist society has no room for the "community"; the only concern the ruling class has for the functioning of education and healthcare is the capacity of these institutions to provide and maintain able workers for it to exploit. To that end and no other, the bourgeoisie calculates the bare minimum it should invest in public services, which has been evidenced across the world throughout the economic crisis by the slashing of budgets for these services, and the demand for the workers to tolerate higher and higher workloads when it necessary to make up the difference.

In reality, as workers know, the quality of education, healthcare, and all other public services, is inseparable from the working conditions in these industries. But even when these conditions are improved, industry remains industry, operating for profit, for the production of wage labourers to meet the needs of capital. The interests of the workers and the capitalists are fundamentally antagonistic; only when the working class, led by its International Communist Party, puts an end to class society, will the "public" institutions be transformed to truly serve human needs.

In the present struggle, it is necessary that all the unions unite their efforts, and that the tactic of striking for a predetermined length of time is discarded. The strike is most powerful when it unites the whole class; the temporary strikes of different unions, at different times, are a favourite tactic of opportunist union leaders. The unlimited, general strike, including the greatest possible number of workers and the broadest range of industries, is the strike which strengthens the class. The education workers of the Fédération autonome de l'enseignement (FAE) have already taken the step of calling an unlimited strike; the rest, including the Front Commun of 420,000 workers, and the 80,000 healthcare workers of the Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ), have demonstrated their willingness to do the same. If the union leadership tries to cut a last minute deal with the government before this happens, the Front Commun and any unions in the same position should reject it so that the chance to strengthen and unify the class is not lost.

The brilliant show of strength by public sector workers in Quebec, of the past weeks and the coming days, proves the immense power the working class can wield by following the path of class unionism. All the workers involved in the strike, standing together against the bourgeoisie — not only as teachers, or only as healthcare workers, as educational support staff, as social workers, etc., but as the entire united public sector — are pointing the way for the struggle to expand to include the whole working class!

Workers across Canada are facing similar attacks. Right now in New Brunswick the provincial government is trying to strip away the pension plan it

agreed on following CUPE's 2021 strike. Across the country, healthcare and education budgets are being slashed, overburdening public workers everywhere. In the private sector, exploitation is no less rampant, especially as only 15% of these workers are unionised at all, in contrast to 77% of public sector workers. The whole class must link its struggles together, must organize into one class union, and turn all the individual strikes into one nationwide, unlimited general strike!

NEW BRUNSWICK

The New Brunswick provincial government is attacking the pension plans of 16,000 workers of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 1253 (school district workers, including bus drivers, custodians, and trades workers), Local 2745 (educational support staff), and the New Brunswick Council of Nursing Home Unions (NBCNHU). These plans were established by the agreements which ended the strike of 22,000 CUPE workers in NB in 2021. Local 1253 was the last to ratify the agreement due to the lack of clarity on this specific issue; only in March 2022 was an agreement finalised. Now the government wants to squeeze the workers more, by forcing them onto a "shared-risk" plan to limit the share it pays into their pensions. This time, as the union leaders have acknowledged, it will be impossible to keep the workers from taking what's theirs!

According to the government, the fact that there is an agreement in place already doesn't stop it from attempting to finish what it started in 2021: to claw away pensions from bus drivers, custodians, educational support staff, and nursing home workers; but they will certainly use the existence of the agreement as a reason to declare any defence mounted by the workers to be illegal, as they have already threatened to do. The government has clearly shown that the laws which restrict the class struggle on the side of the workers don't apply to the ruling class. A further evidence that the law is only a weapon of the bosses is the fact that the pension funds of the provincial court judges have been completely untouched by the bill, despite costing the province several orders of magnitude more; for a judge of 10 years, nearly a hundred thousand annually, for life; for 20 years on the bench, twice that amount, for a profession which already earns \$300,000 while working. But apparently these resources can't be spared for the workers who contribute to the bringing up of new generations and the care of the old. On the contrary, no doubt the government is trying to get back at the NBCNHU for its persistent legal challenges against the government's repressive "essential services" strike laws.

The opportunist leadership, who ended the last strike even before the last agreements were drawn up, have called for the workers to protest against the bill to protect their democratic rights against the corrupt Higgs government. But the opposition MLAs have done nothing of substance to protect these rights, and this is not an issue of one greedy premier; just last year, the Ford government invoked emergency measures against the CUPE education workers in Ontario — an act which, similarly, was met with a big show of disgust, but no action at all, from the federal liberals, and was ultimately only countered by a strike. All the capitalist parties of the provinces and the nation are united against the workers; the calls from the opposition for workers to protect democracy are only a distraction.

Workers must recognize that despite the protests of the bourgeois parties, despite the assertion by the opportunist union leadership that collective agreements are sacred and inviolable, they are in fact nothing but truces between the two great classes locked in a war — one that will not end until classes cease to exist! The provincial government has broken this truce, and the workers must retaliate by striking. The union leadership has presented itself as being friendly to the possibility of such an action, in the hope of maintaining control and limiting the scope of the strike. The workers should therefore be prepared to struggle against the leadership's attempts to limit the union's effectiveness in this fight. The entire union must show solidarity; if the government wants to rehash the events of 2021, if it isn't satisfied with the established agreements and is ready to throw the old truce out, CUPE workers should indulge them, and show them what the past two years of growing struggles have taught the working class!

The hundreds of thousands of workers now striking in Quebec, and only months ago in Ontario, are struggling against the same attacks by their bosses in government. It is time for the working class to unite its counter efforts, in order, today, to struggle effectively against capitalist exploitation, and tomorrow, led by the International Communist Party, to go on the offensive, all the way to the destruction of the whole rotten system!

AZERBAIJANI OFFENSIVE IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH IMPERIALISM CAN ONLY RESOLVE NATIONAL DISPUTES WITH WARS AND DISPLACEMENT

On September 19, Azerbaijan once again launched an offensive against the unrecognized Republic of Artsakh in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. Nagorno-Karabakh is an Armenian enclave in the larger region of Karabakh, the rest of which has an Azerbaijani majority. The Republic of Arstakh relied entirely on Armenian support although it was not even recognized by Armenia. Since December 2022, Nagorno-Karabakh was cut off from Armenia as the Lachin corridor connecting it to the rest of the world was blockaded by Azerbaijan and Russian “peacekeepers” permitting only limited traffic. Traditionally, Russia had safeguarded Armenian interests against Azerbaijan, backed by Turkey. This time, however, the Russians gave no support to Armenia, who in turn could give no support to the Armenian government in Nagorno-Karabakh. Consequently, the Republic of Arstakh was forced to surrender in a day and the region was occupied by the Azerbaijani army. While the short war left few casualties, over 100,000 Armenians were forced to leave their homes and move to Armenia.

A century ago, the revolutionary proletarians of the Caucasus intended to resolve the border disputes between the two nations on completely different terms. On December 1, 1920, two days after the victory of Soviet power in Armenia, Nariman Narimanov read the following declaration at the Baku Soviet on behalf of Azerbaijani communists: “Soviet Azerbaijan, which intends to appease the fraternal Armenian working people fighting the Dashnaks who have spilled and are spilling the innocent blood of our best Communist comrades in Armenia and Zangezur, declares that from this time on territorial issues will never cause bloodshed between two peoples who have been neighbors for centuries; the territories of the Zangezur and Nakhchivan uyezds are an inalienable part of Soviet Armenia. The toiling peasants of Nagorno-Karabakh are granted the right to complete self-determination”. The declaration made sense in resolving the issue on geographical rather than ethnic terms. Armenian communists immediately responded by recognizing the self-determination of Nakhchivan which had an Azerbaijani majority. Even then, however, the Russian Commissariat of Nationalities was in the hands of a faction who were more interested in advancing its own interests instead of the cause of proletarian internationalism. Thus, Narimanov’s declaration was falsified by Sergo Ordzhonikidze, representing Stalin, the Commissar of Nationalities, and printed in the press in a distorted way that claimed Nagorno-Karabakh too had been ceded to Soviet Armenia, sowing the seeds of distrust and hostility between Azerbaijani and Armenian communists. Thus, a situation arose which promoted “national communist” tendencies in both the Azerbaijani and the Armenian parties, while the internationalist left currents were forced into a minority. The dispute would later help weaken both the “national communist” right majorities and the internationalist left minorities, paving way to the domination of the Stalinist faction in both countries. Later, demographically larger and diplomatically more influential, Azerbaijan managed to hold Nagorno-Karabakh in its borders as well as to acquire Nakhchivan. Thus the issue was frozen for a few decades under Stalinism.

As the Soviet Union was disintegrating in the 1980s, the tensions previously kept low by Russian domination in the region reemerged. In 1988, the Nagorno-Karabakh parliament resolved to merge with Armenia. Soon, the conflict in the region grew violent, with the Azerbaijanis and Armenians accusing each other of massacres of civilians. In 1991, an independence referendum, boycotted by the Azerbaijani population of the region, was held and the Republic of Arstakh was established. By 1992, the dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh had caused a full scale war between Azerbaijan and Armenia, referred to as the First Nagorno-Karabakh War. By the end of 1994, Armenia had in effect won the war, establishing full control of the region. Russia brokered a ceasefire, and the conflict was over for the time being, leaving nearly 40,000 dead on both sides and over 200,000 Armenians from Azerbaijan and 800,000 Azerbaijanis from Armenia and Karabakh displaced, essentially cleansing Armenia and Karabakh from Azerbaijanis and Azerbaijan of Armenians. Armed clashes between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis in the region continued after the ceasefire, leading to 3,000 dead on both sides by 2009. The clashes between

2010 and 2019 were not as bloody, leaving only a few hundred dead. Eventually things culminated in the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War in 2020 where Azerbaijan, utilizing Turkish drones, made significant advances. Once again, Russia eventually brokered a ceasefire after the bloodshed which claimed almost 8,000 was considered to be sufficient. The ceasefire did not prevent border clashes in 2021 and 2022, eventually leading to the blockade of late 2022 and the recent Azerbaijani offensive which finally “resolved” the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh by cleansing the region of Armenians once more.

Certainly, the main reason the Republic of Artsakh could offer no resistance to the Azerbaijani offensive was that Armenia did not back it. And the reason Armenia could not back it was because Russia did not give it any support whatsoever. This was due to the fact that the Pashinian government in Armenia had been flying dangerously close to the United States, organizing joint military drills and signing agreements that would necessitate it to arrest Putin in case he set foot in Armenia. Accordingly, it can easily be assumed that the Armenian government sacrificed its unrecognized satellite republic in Nagorno-Karabakh like a piece on a chessboard. The “resolution” of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue will only lead to further wars, however, as now Azerbaijan has its eyes on the Zangezur, the capture of which will enable it to connect its lands with Nakhchivan and consequently Turkey. Armenia is not engaging in military drills with the United States for no reason.

In the Caucasus, as elsewhere, proletarians have nothing but displacement, destruction and massacres from local bourgeois governments and their regional and global imperialist backers. Only genuine internationalist communism can end nationalist disputes between the working masses of various nations as well as bloody national wars that serve no one but the bourgeoisie.

The International Communist Party is the sole heir of the tradition of internationalist communism espoused by the Communist International which once preached the unity of proletarians in all parts of the world. Consequently, only our party can resurrect the hydra of communist revolution and unite the working masses of the Caucasus and beyond, ending the vicious cycle of displacement, destruction and massacres.

THE HISTORICAL CAUSES OF ARAB SEPARATISM

FROM IL PROGRAMMA COMUNISTA NO. 6, 1958

This is not the first time we have dealt with the causes of the Arab split. Above all, we must remind the reader of the article ‘The Chimera of Arab Unification through Pacts between States’, which we published in this paper last year, in no 10. A few days before the anti-monarchist movement in Jordan had ended in bloodshed. We all remember the unfolding of those events. The success achieved by the Amman despot, supported by the U.S. VI. Fleet and the desert tribes against the Egyptian-backed Pan-Arabic movement not only marked a turning point in Jordan’s internal politics, as it caused an open split between the Arab monarchies (Jordan and, with it, Iraq and Saudi Arabia) and the republics leading the Nasserist agitation within Islam (Egypt and Syria).

The Latest Split
The split determined at the time of the Jordanian crisis became fully apparent in recent days with the proclamation of the United Arab Republic federating Egypt and Syria. And it was immediately countered by the Arab Federation that arose from the union of Iraq and Jordan. For those who follow events in the Middle East, new constitutional inventions are not unexpected. They serve to confirm that the Arab split continues more bitter and ruthless than ever.

Arab unification through pacts between states continues to be a vain chimera. To put it into practice it must change direction; it cannot rely on changes in the existing established order, but on the contrary on its total overthrow. That is, it must follow the revolutionary path.

The important question is to see which political movement is up to taking on the tremendous task of leading the Arab revolution. But we cannot, at least for now, deal with it, as first of all it is necessary to study the historical causes that have prevented the state unification of the Arabic-speaking peoples of Asia and Africa from being achieved.

In these few lines we do not claim to have exhausted such a daunting task, or even to have set out a complete plan of it, but only to have dealt, and not even in a definitive manner, with the considerable problems that are connected with it.

First of all, how should the question be posed? We think it can only be put in

these terms: “What historical factors prevent the formation of an Arab nation-state, by fostering the perpetuation of the nefarious sub-nationalism of today’s artificial Arab states, and acting against the unifying tendencies that flow from the commonality of language, racial origin and traditions that distinguish the peoples inhabiting North Africa, from Morocco to Egypt, and West Asia, from the Sinai Peninsula to the Persian Gulf?”

Those who believe they can answer this question by tracing all of the causes of the split which is tearing the so-called Arab world apart to capitalist imperialism give an incomplete view of the phenomenon. And one can well understand why, if one considers that the division and “balkanization” of the Arab nation occurred long before imperialism arose. Indeed, the ancient tribes that burst out of Arabia further to Muhammad’s social religious revolution and conquered their present locations in Asia and Africa didn’t to all practical purposes form a nation in spite of the ties of blood and culture. Only for a short time did the Caliphate succeed in imposing the authority of a central power over the vast Islamic empire. To say, therefore, that the division of the Arabs is an effect of imperialistic domination is not accurate. Instead, it is true that imperialistic domination has been able to pursue its ends precisely by exploiting the powerful historical factors which, since the 10th century, have prevented the unification of the Arabs.

In other words, in order to explain the immediate cause of the Arabs’ subjection to capitalist imperialism, we must have recourse to the infighting which manifested in the existence of numerous Arab states and statelets, which were different in size but equally powerless when it came to escaping the grip of imperialist exploitation and oppression. But to explain the disunity only by imperialist intervention would be to incur a tautology. In fact, the causes of Arab division are intimately linked to the epic Muslim conquest itself.

THE PAST CYCLE

Islam, codified in the Quran, was the ideology of the social revolution of the nomadic desert peoples, as dedicated to cattle breeding in normal times as to the exercise of raiding, who rose up against the powerful mercantile oligarchy prevailing in Mecca. Cattle herders—the Bedouins—and small farmers constituted, at the time of Muhammad’s preaching, the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula. Over them stood the class domination of the merchants of Mecca, who monopolized the maritime trade across the Red Sea and the caravan transports linking the hinterland with the ports on the coast, when they were not directly operating the junction of the overland route, along Sinai, with the trade currents from Europe and Asia. In their hands was concentrated all wealth, not excluding foodstuffs, which the nomadic tribes, when drought decimated their herds, were forced to buy at exorbitant prices. A not uncommon instance in the history of revolutions, Muhammad was a ‘fugitive’ from the ruling class who had passed into the revolutionary camp, having been—until the Hegira—a wealthy merchant of the powerful Quraysh tribe.

Because of the special historical conditions under which it took place, the Mohammedan revolution could only be an application on a collective scale of the Bedouin raid, that is, of a lower form of wealth expropriation. The Islamic “holy war” was originally a social war against usury and the arrogance of wealth. But the revolution, having emerged victorious from the social war, could only achieve its aims on condition it transformed itself into an agrarian feudalism, as the barbarian conquerors who had overthrown the Roman Empire had done in Europe. To this the natural conditions of the country themselves were opposed, much of it being desert. In the history of Islam, the desert plays a role of primary importance, which proves that it is material conditions that “shape the destinies” of peoples, as some like to express it.

The revolution that had ignited civil war among the Arabs didn’t come to a standstill after the Islamic hosts had conquered and unified, under the leadership of the “Prophet”, their atavistic homeland—Arabia. Since it could not achieve its aims internally, as many still remained, first-time revolutionary fighters and new converts, who were excluded from the spoils, it was obliged to smash the borders of the neighboring states. Thus, the Mohammedan “holy war” took on under his successors—the Caliphs—the forms of a barbarian invasion, which was impetuous and irresistible because along its path its ranks were swelled with all the oppressed and exploited. These converted enthusiastically to the new religion, an inflammatory revolutionary ideology that appealed to the humble and the poor and repelled with apocalyptic curses the rich

and the usurers. It was not very long before the tremendous social eruption had invaded and submerged the two great Empires which in the East traditionally perpetuated, against the “barbarians”, the function formerly performed by Rome in the West, namely the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanid Persian Empire. True “prisons of peoples” and centers of the most refined forms of class domination, they opposed Muslim conquest in vain. They are a formidable example of how mighty and ancient, but conservative, states can be bent by other states of recent or even nascent formation, made invincible by the revolutionary fury that drives them!

In just a few years, from 632, the date of Muhammad’s death, to 720, the Muslim conquest extended across an immense territory. From the Sind (the southeastern region of present-day Pakistan) it extended to beyond the Pyrenees. The Persian Sassanid empire had been destroyed by it, the Byzantine empire enormously mutilated. Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Roman Egypt, the Maghreb were lost to Byzantium. The Visigoth monarchy of Spain was wiped out and vanished into thin air, the centuries-old Sassanid empire, encompassing present-day Iraq and Iran as far as Amu-Daria, was thunderously collapsing, and its ancient cities, such as Baghdad, were becoming the centers of the new civilization of the Quran. An immense revolution was transforming the world. All the more surprising, reflecting on this, appears the inability of the Arabs, magnificent conquerors, to create a nation-state for themselves.

In this respect the Arabs perhaps represent a unique case among conquering peoples. The Mongols, for example, succeeded in founding empires much larger than the Muslim one, but they didn’t occupy the territories they had conquered for long, eventually withdrawing to their original homeland or remaining ethnically absorbed by the native populations. The Arabs, on the other hand, managed to superimpose themselves on the subjugated populations, indeed, to turn the conquered territories into their homeland; but they failed utterly in their attempt to overcome their barbaric particularism and give themselves a unified political government, a nation-state. This would enormously delay, as we can see today, the historical development of Africa and the Middle East.

To tell the truth, there was a time when it seemed that the unitary tendency would necessarily prevail in the incandescent Islamic world, the era, that is, which saw the Caliphate pass into the hands of the dynasty of the Umayyads (660-750). Under them, Islam reached its maximum territorial extent, then began its ineluctable decline.

The Umayyads, diverging somewhat from Quranic political orthodoxy, attempted to liquidate separatism, deeply rooted in the traditions of a people who had wandered for centuries in the desert knowing no other form of social coexistence than the nomadic tribe, unamenable to any form of constraint other than that exerted by the forces of nature. It was an experiment barely sketched out. The grand political design of a national, absolutist and hereditary monarchy, resting on a military and civil bureaucracy that would ensure that the center of power would have regular control over the vast empire, was to fail miserably. The forces of atavistic Bedouin anarchism were to prevail over the centralizing and national tendencies. Primitive tribal communalism, collectivist within and anarchic without, had enabled the desert nomads, herders of sheep and camels and relentless raiders of caravans and peasant villages, to overwhelm the merchant aristocracy of Mecca. It had provided the sustenance of fanatical faith and fabulous courage to the Mohammedan revolution. But it operated negatively when, after the Islamic militias had exited Arabia and conquered the immense empire, it was a matter of giving it a political structure that would ensure its continuity.

Some may marvel that we attribute to primitive Bedouin communism a certain negative influence. But for Marxists, communism is not an idol to which one can only sing hymns of praise. There exists a primitive communism that marks the exit of the human species from the bestial state of its existence, and as such it is a revolution of immeasurable importance, perhaps the greatest of all revolutions. By consociating, the anthropoid became man. What greater homage can Marxism pay to primitive communism? All that exists, and will still exist, between primitive communism and modern communism is, for the Marxist, an infamous but necessary parenthesis in the existence of the species.

The ruinous split between Shiites and Sunnis, that is, between the old guard of Islam that had accompanied the Prophet in his emigration (the Hegira) from Mecca to Medina and the innovators, was to cause the final collapse of the still fragile structures of the Arab nation-state. The Abbasid dynasty that seized the

Caliphate in 745, driving out the Umayyads, was soon reduced to the rank of those feudal monarchies which the overbearing power and remoteness of the feudal lords emptied of any effective authority. The Caliph was reduced to the rank of a mere head of the Islamic religion, almost devoid of temporal power. The dismemberment of the empire was rapid and irreparable. As early as a few years after the dynastic upheaval, the Umayyad exiles who had escaped the vengeance of the winning party took refuge in Hispania and founded an independent emirate there. Later, the Maghreb and Egypt also became virtually independent of the Baghdad government. By the turn of the century, the involution was complete. The Caliphate had been reduced to ruling over, and not even directly, Iraq alone; Islam was divided among numerous more or less independent dynasties; the Arab nation-state appeared less than a dream.

The lack of an Arab nation-state fashioned after the national monarchies that were being formed in Europe had historical consequences of colossal importance. It is easy to think that a firmly constructed Arab nation-state could have prevented the victories pulled off by the Crusades. Was it not after all from that era that Europe was opposed to it, and acquired supremacy over Africa? And if we consider that the blows inflicted on Arab power by the Crusader armies laid the groundwork for the ruinous invasion of the Mongols and, later, for the Ottoman conquest, we have a complete picture of the negative repercussions that the Arabs' failed unification had on the history of three continents.

Wishing to leave the field of conjecture and staying on historical terrain, a conclusion emerges, from the study of the historical cycle of the Arabs, that may seem almost obvious. Because of their inability to establish a nation-state, the Arabs turned from being conquerors to conquered, and were cut off from historical progress, that is, condemned to remain at the bottom end of feudalism while the states of Europe were preparing to emerge from it forever and thereby acquire world supremacy.

We can now easily explain the historical causes of the fall of the Arabs under the yoke of imperialistic domination. We know, that is, that two orders of causes contribute to maintaining the Arabs' present state of disunity and powerless, which is the condition for the perpetuation of imperialist exploitation: the centuries-old conservative traditions within, and the foreign interference from without. ***What does this mean politically? It means that the Arab world must take upon itself the tremendous task of a twofold struggle: social revolution and national revolution, revolt against the reactionary classes that hand down outdated traditions and against the foreign occupiers. Only victory achieved in both these camps can ensure the triumph of Arab unity from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf.

The Game of Imperialism

By following the path already taken, the "balkanization" of the Arabs will reach its extreme consequences. The Arabs will wall themselves off more and more within prefabricated states, that is, stat manufactured by imperialism and its agents, states poisoned by a depressing squalor, disheartened by insurmountable impotence, and which will consume their futile existence in infighting. At present who knows how many inter-Arab blocs there are. It now looks like the two rival federations vying for the accessions of the other states (the Syrian-Egyptians managed to get Yemen's vote, the Iraqi-Jordanians are still at the stage of courting the Persian Gulf sultanates), might be joined—and opposed!—by the Maghreb Federation, advocated by Muhammad V and Bourguiba, which is expected to include Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria when the latter gains independence. But it is already known from Bourguiba's anti-Nasserist speeches that the planned federation is oriented in favor of the West and against pan-Arabism. Then there are to be counted the double-dealing states such as Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and Libya that have one smile for the Arab League (why on earth do are they still keeping it going?) and two smiles for the State Department.

But imperialism does not sleep soundly. The alarmed invocations of the "Russian danger", the novelizations of "Russian infiltration" in the Middle East and Maghreb serve to hide the real fear. What the European bourgeoisies, and with them U.S. imperialism, really fear is the Arab unification movement making real progress. Think of the enormous consequences that the formation of an Arab unitary state would entail? It would mark the end of colonialist domination in the whole of Africa, not just in Arab Africa, but also in the rest of the continent inhabited by peoples of the black race, riddled with profound tremors

of revolt. The myths that the ruling class fabricates for itself aim to inculcate in the minds of the oppressed classes the prejudice of the pointlessness of struggling against the existing order. Well, who can measure the gigantic revolutionary impact that the collapse of the myth of the superiority of the white race will have?

Fragmented, divided by ignoble dynastic issues, devoured alive by the bloodsucking foreign capitalist monopolies who willingly cede large slices of the oil profits, entangled in the deadly military alliances of imperialism, the Arab states not only instill no fear in the various imperialisms but serve as pawns in their diabolical game. But what if the Arabs, having overcome their suicidal disunity, succeeded in establishing a nation-state embracing all of the African and Asian territories inhabited by the Arab peoples? Would we have only the awakening of the whole of Africa? No, we would achieve, all of us who militate in the field of communist revolution, much more. We would get to witness the final, irrevocable death sentence of old Europe, of this rotten, corrupt, deadly bourgeois Europe, tainted with reaction and more or less disguised fascism, which for forty years has been the inexhaustible hotbed of imperialist war and counterrevolution.

Therefore, we are for the Arab national revolution. Therefore, we are against the rulers of Arab states who either openly pursue separatist and reactionary aims (the Middle Eastern monarchies) or aim for superficial reformism and collaboration with the West (Bourguiba, Muhammad V). And neither can we, as the Moscow communists do, unconditionally support Nasser's pan-Arab movement, because there is too much reactionary ballast, despite the vain attempts of clever demagogic trickery to disguise it. The nation-state will not be founded by them. Each one of them likes to pose as a champion of Islam. But their Islamism is to that of Muhammad's comrades, as the Christianity of the Catholics is to that of the catacomb agitators.

FOR THE CLASS UNION! GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST LABOR REFORM IN GREECE

On September 21, a 24-hour general strike took place in Greece against a labor reform later adopted by its parliament, a government calloused to social protest. In July, the government passed a law that allowed working until the age of 74, seven years after retirement, in order to reduce unregistered work according to the arrogant and lying propaganda espoused by the bourgeois media. In reality, the government defends the reality of continuing to work, even after retirement, since workers must do so in order to (barely) survive. Moreover, it believes that in this way it can extort more surplus value from the proletariat through taxes.

The current reform follows the same path, foreseeing proletarians working up to 13 hours a day. These grueling 13-hour days can be achieved by allowing a second part-time job from a second boss in addition to a primary full-time job. The aim here is to legalize the disgusting reality of not being able to make ends meet with a single job, even with two income-earners. Additionally, an employee can be dismissed without notice and without pay within the first 6 months. The working week is being extended to 6 days, with a slight pay increase of 40% for only the 6th day. The reform also constitutes a serious attack on the freedom to strike by imposing criminal liability on strikers who prevent other workers from working and makes blocking roads and picketing during a strike punishable by a fine of 5,000 € and up to six months in prison. The government is aware that the social situation will worsen when the next recession arrives in the coming months and has dual motives; on the one hand, it is brazenly favoring the bosses and further increasing the exploitation of workers, and on the other, it is sharpening its weapons to respond to the resumption of class struggle which is expected to follow.

However, if the government and the bosses are preparing for conflict, the labor movement is in a very different situation because it has not been able to form a united front for trade union struggle, a necessary and indispensable tool to repel the frontal attack of the bosses. The various unions into which the working class is divided are still going their separate ways, and any talk of unity in the union struggle seems hopelessly optimistic.

The September 21 strike was attended by the public sector union ADEDY, the hospital workers' union POEDIN; the union confederation affiliated with the Greek Communist Party, PAME; various worker centers across the country; public transport and education unions; as well as dozens of

industrial unions. The private sector union confederation GSEE, however, did not participate. Additionally, the demonstrations in Athens were organized separately. The most shouted slogans were true: "either their profits or our lives", "the 8-hour working day has been and will be the conquest of the workers", "the bosses are drowning in profits, the people in mud". The day-long strike intimidated the parliamentary hall, worried the bosses, and made Greece itself uneasy. But despite the declarations of victory by the trade unionists, it was not the manifestation of proletarian power that was supposed to prevent the passage of this disgraceful law, which does not "take us back to the Middle Ages" as the opportunists say, but plunges us into the vortex of the most modern imperialist and warmongering capitalism in line with the dictates of the European Union.

This year the financial rating agencies are optimistic about Greece, and the bourgeoisie will certainly be happy about that, but 13 years later the country is deeply scarred by the wounds inflicted by unprecedented austerity policies, the heavy price paid by the Greek proletariat to avoid bankruptcy in 2010. Despite the EU forecasting 5.9% GDP growth in 2022 and +2.6% for this year, 30% of the country's population is at risk of poverty, wages are still below 2010 levels, public healthcare is increasingly depleted, and pensions are stretched thin. Rising inflation and constant attacks by capital are of course falling disproportionately on the working class. Despite official statements that the crisis will end, living conditions for many proletarians have turned into an endless downward spiral. The devastating effects of climate change (for which the capitalist economy bears overwhelming responsibility) that hit Greece with fires and floods this summer, the government's incompetence and corruption in awarding infrastructure construction contracts, the treacherous influence of political opportunism mainly represented by Syriza and the stalinized Communist Party (KKE), and the strengthening of petty bourgeois ideology that leaves the average worker unaware or, worse, indifferent to the real causes of their own suffering have all contributed to a deep crisis in the workers' movement. But the worsening of these contradictions is also an opportunity for the rebirth of real class unions and the strengthening of the proletariat's revolutionary and international communist party. Only a party with a program based on an intact Marxist doctrine can show the working class the way to destroy capitalism and eliminate this disgraceful regime based on the exploitation of wage labor.

PORTLAND TEACHERS STRIKE - IT'S TIME FOR OEA TO TAKE UP A STATE-WIDE STRIKE STRATEGY

TEACHERS NEED A GENERAL STRIKE ON THE SCHOOL, THE STATE AND CAPITAL

On Wednesday, November 1, 3,700 teachers with the Portland Association of Teachers (PAT) walked out on strike, closing 81 Portland Public Schools (PPS) serving 45,000 students. The historic strike was the first in the unions history. Teachers are fighting for wages that keep up with inflation, adequate planning and preparation time, class caps to manage overcrowding and safe working conditions that address poorly weatherized buildings as well as rat and mold infestations. Throughout the strike, school administration and local politicians have engaged in a blame game, pointing fingers at each other for alleged budget shortfalls while collaborating in their refusal to appropriate funding necessary to meet the teachers' demands.

Meanwhile a media feeding frenzy has developed in the capitalist press, smearing and vilifying the union at every turn. The depravity of the local school district was on full display when in the context of the recent imperialist bloodbath in the Levant, they likened teachers to "terrorists" in a lawsuit against the union. The district hypocritically justified their use of this bigoted dog-whistle by alleging district representatives were "traumatized" during a demonstration by educators. The naked lap-dog-ism of the bourgeois press is on full display when they circulate such pitiful claims while simultaneously minimizing the material impact and economic violence being perpetrated against educators and students in the form of real wage cuts and deteriorating working conditions. Today the Portland Association of Teachers (PAT) is engaged in a battle not just against their district administration, but against the State machinery of the capitalist class itself. Unfortunately, despite many more locals of the Oregon Education Association (OEA) existing within the city limits of Portland and the larger

Portland metropolitan area, PAT has had to strike alone. As a result, they already have been forced to cut back their original budget demands by \$121 million.

The opportunist and boss-linked leadership of the OEA and its parent organization, the National Education Association, comfortable with their cozy relationship with the Democratic Party and reluctant to shake up the status quo, has continued to refuse to seriously consider implementing a state-wide strike strategy that could develop a truly working-class force capable of challenging the regional conglomerates of capitalist class power that converge against teachers striking in major urban areas. Despite the efforts of rank and file educators to stress the importance of such a long-term state-wide strike strategy for several years at state-wide regional assemblies, the union leadership has continued to take the approach of having locals bargain independently of each other on dates that span the entire school year, reflecting a narrow craft union method and a strike strategy that can only produce watered-down deals at best; meanwhile unions such as the UAW have recently called for unified action by unions across the country to set expiration dates to May 1 in preparation of a potentially massive May Day strike in 2028.

Regardless of what the capitalist press, district administrators and local politicians would like us to believe, teachers' wages do not depend on the "generosity" of "the taxpayers"; nor do they rely on the benevolence of district administrations or local politicians. In reality, the labor of education workers is an indispensable and necessary component of all capitalist economies. Education workers, like all wage laborers, have a fundamentally antagonistic relationship with their employers, the administrators, district boards and the capitalist State itself, as all wage-laborers do. As schools are managed publicly, i.e., by the capitalist State, every teachers' strike is a strike against the capitalist class as a whole. Accordingly, teachers require the solidarity of the entire working class to join them on the picket lines.

As such, we are calling on OEA to mobilize all locals in the Portland area to join in with their fellow unionists in sympathy and solidarity strikes and to organize walk outs. Ultimately, teachers must dump the old practices of business unionism that have created weak unions prioritizing building rapport with Democratic Party politicians in favor of a class unionist model which centers solidarity and concrete strike action between locals both inside and outside of the union itself.

The Larger Economic Crisis, the Crisis in Education and the Education Worker Strike Wave

The PAT strike is occurring in the context of a wave of larger national teachers' strikes brought on by a growing global economic crisis and the pauperization of the education profession. In this context, mass class action is the key to victory.

Across the world, the inflationary economic crisis of the past few years has been met with a coordinated offensive against workers' living standards, organized via the fiscal policies of the Biden administration's Federal Reserve in the form of interest rate hikes intended to ward off the risks of hyper-inflation by slowing down economic growth and triggering the current recession. This maneuver also had the explicit goal of increasing unemployment, driving up the reserve army of labor, weakening workers' bargaining power and driving down wages in order to maintain a steady growth of profits for capital. As a result of the deepening social and economic crisis, urban school districts are facing declining enrollment as more affluent families flee to the suburbs, resulting in large swathes of teacher layoffs across the country.

The past several decades has seen public schools reorganizing themselves in the image of the corporation. As, the education profession has moved from a largely unregulated craft industry into one that is increasingly standardized and routinized, the workforce has also become proletarianized as the once "middle class" profession sees its wages decline annually. Meanwhile, educators are overseen and managed by ever growing ranks of administrators and bosses set to ensure educational "outcomes" are delivered with factory-like discipline, as teachers are expected to follow mechanistic codes of regulation and documentation.

As a result, education workers in many states have gone on strike in an unprecedented number over the last two years. In Los Angeles last spring, over 30,000 teachers with United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) went on a 3-day strike, quickly winning thanks to the sympathy strikes of 35,000 bus drivers, food service workers, teachers' aides, special education assistants, custodians and security aides under SEIU Local 99.

Just a few months ago, teachers in Camas and Vancouver, Washington also went out on strike at approximately the same time, simultaneously amplifying their power. In all of these strikes it has been shown that when workers organize and strike together, they win together.

The True Value of Education and Teachers' Wages

Teachers exist as wage laborers who perform a requisite role in the modern capitalist production process: the social reproduction of the next generation of labor-power.

“Everything that the working class consumes in order to re-new its strength has a value. Consequently the value of the necessities of life and the expenses of education represent the value of labor-power. Different kinds of commodities have different values. Different kinds of labor-power, therefore, have different values. The labor-value of a printer has a different value from that of his assistant” (ABC of Communism).

Just as all workers must purchase food and housing to reproduce their daily existence, in contemporary capitalist society public education plays a crucial role in the social reproduction of the next generation of laborers. For the capitalist class to maintain an uninterrupted production of surplus values, the masses of workers must be minimally trained in basic reading skills, mathematical skills, disciplinary routines and indoctrinated into the nationalist histories of their respective states to engender cooperation and participation. This is in order to be productively and profitably employed in the operation and navigation of the ever-complexifying social and technological machinery utilized in modern production processes.

Since it is the labor of educators which trains the next generation of workers in the necessary skills to operate the means of production currently in existence and produce the material necessities of life for the rest of society, it is a fact that for educators, as with all workers, the true value of their labor, as reflected in their contribution to the total surplus product created by all productive labor employed in society, is always much larger than the share they receive from their employers, the capitalist State, in the form of wages.

“The cost of production of simple labor-power amounts to the cost of the existence and propagation of the worker. The price of this cost of existence and propagation constitutes wages. The wages thus determined are called the minimum of wages. This minimum wage, like the determination of the price of commodities in general by cost of production, does not hold good for the single individual, but only for the race. Individual workers, indeed, millions of workers, do not receive enough to be able to exist and to propagate themselves; but the wages of the whole working class adjust themselves, within the limits of their fluctuations, to this minimum” (Marx, Wage Labor and Capital).

Teachers' wages, then, are determined on the same basis as all other workers' are. They are informed by two characteristics: the bare minimum of the total labor-value that goes into the training and material reproduction of the education worker itself, and, on the other hand, the relative degree of organization or capability of education workers to organize themselves in order to increase the purchasing price of their labor-value—in other words, unionization. Thus, teachers are not dependent upon the good graces of politicians who they must lobby to convince of the philanthropy and the morality of their profession in order to get them to appropriate funds out of the good graces of their hearts.

Education Funding

Wages are not set by the philanthropy of the capitalist class's politicians; neither is the overall funding of the public school system itself. Instead both are informed by the relative demand for educators' labor-power in the capitalist economy and the prevailing conditions in the labor market.

The bourgeoisie, its press and politicians would like teachers to content themselves to the budgetary “realities” of the capitalist economy. They claim that because the districts only maintain x amount of tax revenue, and because the schools are only filling x amount of seats, that educators can only possibly receive \$x in wages. Never mind the fact that the capitalist State dedicates exorbitant amounts of tax dollars to its military for imperialist initiatives, or any other such wasteful endeavor. Since adequate funds for education workers' wages have not been partitioned within the capitalists State's budget, we are told, the money for education simply does not exist. Teachers are thus asked to surrender themselves and their material well-being to the bureaucratic taxation regulations of the capitalist State, and its “democratic” process (which has set these rules and regulations completely on its own class terms). We are told that, in order to change our material circumstances, our best choice—the realistic option—is to join the capitalist political parties in their incrementalist maneuverings, to work toward taxation and political reforms that will somehow bring equilibrium to the struggle between labor and capital. This is the safe option for capital, not strikes and generalized class struggle, but rather collaboration between classes.

The manner in which schools are funded and budgets allocated in the United States has been designed to meet the capitalist class's demands of labor, and is well known to further the perpetual impoverishment of black and brown workers, trapping many in cycles of poverty and low-paying or dead-end jobs. Consequently, teachers unions should not accept and conform their wage demands to the budgetary “realities” set by the capitalist class on these grounds. In the United States, public schools are mostly funded by local property taxes with 90% coming from local and state governments. The local funding of schools in the United States, assists the capitalist class in keeping the cost of education low in poor neighborhoods, where they hope to maintain large labor pools of unskilled workers and correspondingly low wages.

In neighborhoods with low-value property markets, less tax revenue is generated for schools. Thus in areas where low-income, largely unskilled, workers can afford rents or mortgages, schools tend to be underfunded. Inversely, in neighborhoods with expensive housing stock and high property values, schools receive more tax revenue. In this way workers, who can only afford rents in low-income neighborhoods, typically receive substandard education, have lower graduation rates and less access to higher education. Thus these workers have less opportunities to leave their immediate circumstances, to elevate themselves out of manual or “unskilled” labor.

From the perspective of capital there is a good reason to maintain this status quo.

With fewer opportunities, workers are coerced into working for lower wages and to thus fill the ranks of the reserve army of unskilled workers in the labor pool, allowing capitalists to drive down wages even further. This is a trend we can see across the United States. In states where there is well-developed technological and cultural production industries, such as Oregon and California, capital has a demand for the labor of more highly-educated and trained workers, and thus, education tends to receive higher funding; inversely, in rural regions and states where production is oriented around agricultural industries, education tends to be relatively underfunded.

We can then see that capital's demand for labor has a correlative relationship with the funding and quality of education from region to region. Additionally, the relative demand for labor corresponds to the overall economic conditions of the total economy. In times of inflationary periods—when the economy is expanding—there is higher demand for workers. In periods of recession, as the economy is contracting and growth is declining, the demand for more workers to fill new positions declines. So too does the needs for more teachers, despite the fact they do not work in officially “private” capitalist enterprises but “public”, or state, institutions. The institutions of education expose themselves periods of recession, we tend to see education budgets slashed and teachers laid off in droves along with the rest of the class.

Under the capitalist mode of production, such inequalities can never be fully resolved—despite what the liberal or social democratic reformers would like us to believe. They can only be displaced to different groups of workers because it is on the basis of wage labor's exploitation that the power of capital is built and it is on the basis of the maintenance of capitalist accumulation that its brutal and murderous State apparatus exists.

PORTLAND'S PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM: A CAPITALIST ENTERPRISE

Portland Public School system, like all modern public school systems, operates and organizes itself on the model of the capitalist enterprise. In all capitalist enterprises a few basic characteristics are to be found: the purchase of labor power by the employer, commodity production, and the creation of a reserve fund for capital accumulation.

As wage laborers, we are alienated from the products of our labor, as it is the capitalist class who own the means of production and its product. Ultimately, we ourselves are objectified and our time and life energies quantified in the form of a numerical value, in money, a value which is subject to the myriad manipulations of the market by the capitalist class. As workers we exist as commodities, our labor power to be bought and sold like eggs, bacon, milk, or bread. As educators, we are involved in the production of a unique commodity, the next generation of labor power. Marx wrote in Capital, Volume I:

“In order to modify the human organism, so that it may acquire skill and handiness in a given branch of industry, and become labor-power of a special kind, a special education or training is requisite, and this, on its part, costs an equivalent in commodities of a greater or less amount. This amount varies according to the more or less complicated character of the labor-power. The expenses of this education (excessively small in the case of ordinary labor-power), enter pro canto into the total value spent in its production. The value of labor-power resolves itself into the value of a definite quantity of the means of subsistence. It therefore varies with the value of these means or with the quantity of labor

requisite for their production... the possessor of money does find such a special commodity on the market: the capacity for labor, in other words labor-power”.

Thus we can understand that public education within the capitalist economy functions as an industry like any other only its commodity is of a special type, that of labor power. Unique in that, unlike any other commodity, it can produce new values by itself becoming exploited labor.

Now we have shown clearly how the modern public school system meets two of our aforementioned criteria for a capitalist enterprise. Let's explore the third, the reserve fund for capital accumulation.

In all capitalist enterprises there exists a “hoard” or a reserve fund.

“The capitalist must not only form a reserve capital to cushion price fluctuations and enable him to wait for favorable buying and selling conditions. He must accumulate capital in order to extend his production and build technical progress into his productive organism.

“In order to accumulate capital he must first withdraw in money-form from circulation a part of the surplus-value which he obtained from that circulation, and must hoard it until it has increased sufficiently for the extension of his old business or the opening of a side-line. So long as the formation of the hoard continues, it does not increase the demand of the capitalist. The money is immobilized. It does not withdraw from the commodity market any equivalent in commodities for the money equivalent withdrawn from it for commodities supplied” (Marx, Capital, Volume II).

In the case of PPS, they call such a reserve fund the “contingencies” and “unappropriated funds” in their annual budget. As the district brags in many of their communications, they have carefully guarded this reserve, growing hoarding more year after year, just as any good corporate executive would brag about the growth of their annual profit margins. For them, expending these funds on teachers' wages is an horrendous prospect, because the funds, are only to accumulate in advance of the future expansion of their enterprise. The funds are intended to remain out of circulation and productive use, to sit stagnant as a growing reserve, only to be accessed when economic circumstances align. In short, it operates as a fund for the accumulation of capital, an essential feature of any capitalist enterprise.

The ongoing clash between the union and the district is largely to do with the district's attempt to protect and extend its reserve fund. The district would like to defend its ability to accumulate capital at the expense of its workers, as is the nature of all capitalist enterprises. The use of the funds to raise the existing workers' wages to minimize the effects of inflation and for the additional wage funds needed to implement class-size caps would not constitute an advance of the enterprise, it would not create more revenue for the enterprise, and so the district must fight tooth and nail against such proposals. While the district's “contingencies” fund is allegedly designated for “emergencies” they argue that the various social crises which have occurred over the last three years, a pandemic which took the lives of over a million workers and massive inflation which has seen costs of living skyrocket, do not qualify as an emergency.

The battle here of the union against the employer is the same for workers everywhere who are fighting against increasing exploitation and misery, against the capitalist drive towards profit and surplus-value accumulation. While the district claims workers must accept pittance wages to maintain the district's reserve fund, for workers to accept such a premise would only mean to shield the broader capitalist class from having to appropriate more funding through their State apparatus in order to keep the district afloat in subsequent annual budgets. It would mean to accept the logic of the necessity of capital accumulation at the expense of the living standards of the working class, to advance the priority of profits over the wages of the working class, to lead the working class to accept its self-sacrifice on the alter of the almighty powers of the regime of capital itself.

Despite the panic bells the district and capital's lackeys would like to ring, they simply cannot and will not allow a major public school district to completely collapse and dissolve; despite their veiled threats, the labor of educators is instrumental to all modern production processes.

IN EDUCATION, THERE IS NO “COMMUNITY” INTEREST

Public education under capitalism will always have one goal: to serve the interests of capital at the expense of the workers.

“The Communists have not invented the intervention of society in education; they do but seek to alter the character of that intervention, and to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class...

“The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie” (The Communist Manifesto).

Public education began to take root

in the wake of the civil war in the United States. The working-class masses of the period had made free public education its rally cry and its implementation was a concession by the ruling classes to quell working class discontent and put it under its control as the industrial army of the proletariat began to come onto the historical stage in ever greater numbers; however, far from being class-neutral “community” institutions, public education was created in the image of the bourgeois world to extend its class domination. Schools became institutions to discipline the human body, to elicit new “skills” needed for modern production such as time management, adherence to a schedule, focus and routine. They become a space to socialize workers into the values and worldview of the bourgeoisie—one of shallow individualism, crude chauvinism and merciless exploitation.

“The more cultured the bourgeois State, the more subtly it lied when declaring that schools could stand above politics and serve society as a whole. In fact the schools were turned into nothing but an instrument of the class rule of the bourgeoisie. They were thoroughly imbued with the bourgeois caste spirit. Their purpose was to supply the capitalists with obedient lackeys and able workers. ... We say that our work in the sphere of education is part of the struggle for overthrowing the bourgeoisie. We publicly declare that education divorced from life and politics is lies and hypocrisy.

“The bourgeoisie themselves, who advocated this principle, made their own bourgeois politics the cornerstone of the school system, and tried to reduce schooling to the training of docile and efficient servants of the bourgeoisie, to reduce even universal education from top to bottom to the training of docile and efficient servants of the bourgeoisie, of slaves and tools of capital. They never gave a thought to making the school a means of developing the human personality” (Lenin, Speech at the Second All-Russia Congress Of Internationalist Teachers, 1919).

So long as the capitalist class maintains its class dictatorship, there will be no “progress” in education; the school system itself cannot break out from under the prevailing conditions that define the totality of the present society. Public education is not designed on the basis of meeting human needs; instead, it has been designed first and foremost to meet the demands for labor required by capitalist production. Ultimately capitalism is not a system which exists in a neutral “community” somehow outside the conflict of classes. Administration, as the managers of the public school enterprise, have the role of managing this production process as cheaply and efficiently as possible while driving wages down and keeping them there.

While education workers themselves may aspire to contribute to the development of full and well-rounded, conscious and ethical youth with a bright future ahead of them, this hope is consistently slashed by budget deficiencies and curriculum mandates that prioritize the demands of the labor market, while education workers are pushed to the point of mental and physical exhaustion due to the exploitative nature of the prevailing economic and social system. Meanwhile the larger social crisis brought forth by this decaying mode of production has a deep impact on children in regards to escalating levels of traumatic experiences that come with increasing material immiseration of the working class, increased isolation, depression and other mental health challenges that come from the dissolution of the social fabric as capitalist social relations creep into all aspects of life. The deepening drug epidemic and the anguish of global imperialist wars are only a few of the daily realities children and families are navigating.

Educators are at the front line of the social crisis and thus, they have a duty to working class families, to educate themselves on the concrete reality of class struggle, abandoning the rose color glasses of class collaborationism and the education system as a “community” institution where workers and bosses have an illusory common interest. Such notions can only do harm by perpetuating an insidious lie about the true nature of social life under capitalism. The experiences of trauma, exploitation and oppression that the most disadvantaged students experience is often the result of the decrepit class society we live in. As educators we of course seek to end all these conditions to empower our students with the tools of knowledge of themselves and the world around them. To feed students lies would be to do them a disservice. It is in appealing to the wider working class that teachers' struggles will succeed, and it's on these grounds that we seek to transform our working conditions, for ourselves and for the working-class families we serve, as fellow proletarians.

A STRIKE FOR PAT IS A STRIKE FOR THE ENTIRE WORKING CLASS!

We again call on the OEA to mobilize its locals to take sympathy strike actions with PAT, be it through organized walk-outs or unfair labor practice pickets based on present disputes. Additionally, we call on all classified education-worker unions in the area to join with teachers and do the same. Beyond combating an isolated school board, PAT are striking against the capitalist class itself and are entering into a confrontation with a whole array of forces that require broader solidarity of the working class in the region in order to win. We, the International Communist Party, point to the need for a general strike of workers across the Portland metropolitan area to join Portland teachers on the picket lines. Beyond this, we echo the calls of the UAW for workers' unions to begin aligning their contract expiration dates to May 1 in anticipation of a potential general strike in 2028.

The larger economic crisis unfolding and the prevailing crisis in education have created conditions for a nation-wide strike wave. From Los Angeles, California to Vancouver, Washington to the "Red for Ed" movement in the American South, teachers' strikes have been winning where they have the broad solidarity of both licensed and classified education workers that strike together, and where teachers' unions in multiple districts have come out on the picket lines at the same time. These are important lessons for OEA to consider in the navigation of the Portland teachers' strike if educators want to walk away with the best deal possible. The manner in which education workers' wages are set and public education funded is all conditioned by class society. Capitalism has made education in its own image: an industry for producing workers for the labor market, instead of a "community" institution dedicated to enriching and improving the lives of future generations. Despite education workers' best efforts, the system continues to fail students and educators alike, as at its core it is designed to be exploitative and can ultimately only deliver results on the basis of capitalist economy and profit, not human need.

Education workers must recognize the real class antagonisms that prevail in the education system and generalized throughout class society. They must link arms with their fellow educators and the wider working class whose children they aim to serve, toward the goal of ending the rotten exploitative system that brings so much harm and destruction to the world. First they must work to reforge a class unionist movement, dumping the old defeatist practices of business unionism in favor of a type of union movement that recognizes the class nature of society and organizes itself around wide-spread, mass strike action of the entire working class.

ITS TIME FOR OEA TO TAKE UP A STATE-WIDE STRIKE STRATEGY! TEACHERS NEED A GENERAL STRIKE! LET'S STRIKE, LET'S FIGHT, WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

THE TUMULTUOUS PROGRESS OF INDIAN CAPITALISM BETWEEN BITTER SOCIAL TENSIONS AND ASPIRATIONS OF GLOBAL POWER

In our article "India positions itself among the powers of Asia", which appeared in our Italian paper *Il Partito Comunista* n. 417, we described the implications of the imperialistic quartet of China, Russia, India and the United States, and how New Delhi could afford it, thanks to material factors and objective objectives, a certain political autonomy capable of favoring one's own imperialist expansionism. This policy allows it to make agreements with the various imperialist fronts, through a profitable ambivalence that originates from the material basis of the expansion of Indian capitalism, increasingly determined to gain a leading role in the disputes of international capital.

The current year has confirmed this trajectory. With strengths but also limitations and weaknesses, the South Asian giant is trying to become an alternative manufacturing power to China, taking away from the latter the primacy of "factory of the world".

The Disputed Indo-Chinese Border Last December 9 troops of the Indian army clashed with the Chinese in the district of Tawang in the region of Arunachal Pradesh, which borders the north with China, east and south-east with Burma, west with Bhutan and south with the federation states of the Indian Assam and Nagaland. The greater part of the region is in contention with Beijing, which claims the southern part of Tibet.

According to Indian sources, Delhi's troops pushed back Chinese troops that had crossed the border (Line of Actual Control, or LAC) and that China has disregarded an agreement formed last September. Beijing has, on the contrary, said that the Indian troops had allegedly trespassed while a Chinese People's Liberation Army patrol was underway.

An escalation to be expected after the Delhi government's decision to increase the stationed troops in Ladakh, an Indian territory bordering between the mountains ranges of Karakorum and Himalaya. Even though the past clash retains a moderate intensity—only injured soldiers can be counted on both sides—it is however a clear expression that relations between the due giants of Asia remain very tense.

Clashes of this kind, which generally involve exclusively the use of bladed weapons, are nothing new. The previous skirmish occurred in January 2021 on the disputed border of the Indian state of Sikkim. In June 2020, on the other hand, in the Galwan Valley between Ladakh and China's Aksai Chin, clashes had resulted in the deaths of 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number on the Chinese side, as we described in issue n. 23 of this newspaper.

The disputes involved several border areas and, as early as 1962, resulted in a war ending in India's defeat; it was not followed by the conclusion of any peace treaty between the two countries, who are formally still at war.

The Sino-Indian border is about 2,200 miles long and involves as many as 12 regions. It consists of three segments, separated by Nepal and Bhutan. The first, to the west of Nepal, runs into the Himalayan range; a shorter section follows between the two small buffer-states; while to the east of Bhutan it extends to Burma. This long border is among the most heavily armed in the world, manned on both sides by tens of thousands of soldiers and heavy weapons, and sees new military infrastructure growing continuously. The most critical areas are Aksai Chin, granted by Pakistan to Beijing and claimed by New Delhi, and much of India's Arunachal Pradesh, claimed by China.

The past April 3, the Chinese government changed the Mandarin names of 11 areas within what China calls Southern Tibet. The *Global Times* newspaper, which is under the Communist Party of China, pointed out that five mountain peaks, two rivers, two regions, and two population centers were renamed. The toponym change has two precedents: in April 2017 it affected six localities and in December 2021 another 15. The Chinese document also announces a willingness to change the administrative status to two Tibetan border territories, Mainling and Cuona, still partly occupied by India, which would change from county to city, a condition that would allow the establishment of government buildings and barracks in those areas.

The Challenges of Indian Capitalism in the Present Phase of International Crises

According to various sources, including the projections of the United Nations, India has become the most populated country of the world in 2023, surpassing China. The official data of 2022 estimates 1.38 billion inhabitants against 1.41 for China. While a slight population decline is expected for China in the coming years, India's population continues to increase. This determines an increase of work force. Today around 30% of the Indian population is comprised of those between the ages of 15 and 30, a figure that puts India among the "youngest" countries in the world. The average age in India is 28.4 years, and in China about 10 years older. This demographic trend contributes to the expansion of Indian capitalism, which has long been positioned among the great powers of Asia and is on its way to compete with China in the manufacturing field as well.

Furthermore, for competing on the industrial plane with its powerful neighbor, India will have to first accomplish many transitions. In the first place, necessary massive investments to overcome the current fragile infrastructure by modernizing road, rail and telecommunications networks. In the second, it is going to have to eliminate the remnants of antique socio-economic formations, above all in the endless countryside, that still opposes capitalistic penetration and the transformation of millions of poor peasants into wage laborers, making the labor market more flexible.

In addition, the state will encourage the establishment of new companies through tax breaks, dismantling bureaucratic control defending state gigantism, attracting foreign investment, and ending traditional protectionism in industry.

While these ambitious goals in India's ruling class's agenda are not easy to achieve, especially in a short period of time, it should still be remembered that

Indian capitalism is not starting from scratch. India has become the fifth largest economy in the world after surpassing Russia, Brazil, Canada, Italy, France, and finally the United Kingdom since 2014. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF); by 2028, India is expected to become the third largest economy in the world, bypassing even Japan and Germany. The G-20 was hosted last September 9-10 in New Delhi where it emerged that India will be the fastest growing nation in 2023.

The central statistics office, for the statistics of New Delhi, paints a rise in industrial production. The past April there was a +4.2% increase on an annual basis, which is followed by a better figure in February, +5.6%, and in line with +4.3% of December 2022.

In the April-June quarter, manufacturing production increased by 4.7%. In the first eleven months of the fiscal year in India, which begins in April, industrial production increased by 5.5%, against the 5.2% estimated by economists.

Expansionary scenarios for Indian capital emerge from various economic indicators, largely determined by domestic demand. Steel production increased by 11.9% in the April-June quarter, while steel consumption increased by 10.2%. Cement production is also growing strongly, 12.2% more in the April-June quarter, while that of coal increased by 8.7%. Sales of commercial vehicles increased in the fiscal year 2022-23 by 34.3%, while sales of private vehicles rose by 18.7%.

THE INDUSTRIAL CONTENTION: THE DOMINATION AND SLOWDOWN OF THE CHINESE AND THE MOVES OF THE INDIAN GIANT

The course of capitalism over the decades has led to China's emergence as the world's leading manufacturing hub, an achievement made possible by several factors including the relatively low cost of labor and land, the presence of technologically advanced companies, adequate infrastructure for communications and distribution of goods, and the policies of the Chinese bourgeoisie, clumsily disguised as socialist, yet aimed at attracting and encouraging foreign capital investment.

However, the international crisis of the capitalist system, growing trade tensions with Washington, and the global Covid-19 pandemic have, at least partially, jammed the Chinese supply chain. During the most acute periods of the pandemic, there were several forced company closures in China with consequent impact on certain industries such as electronics, automotive, and pharmaceuticals. This chain of events has affected the market on a global scale. It is therefore no coincidence that the Chinese economy has fallen to its slowest growth rate in decades. Against the backdrop of the general crisis of capital, Beijing faces problems such as a high youth unemployment rate, crisis in the real estate sector, and scarcity of public financial resources.

It is in this scenario that several multinationals are diversifying their dependence on China for their supplies. At the same time, India seeks to accredit itself on a global scale as an alternative manufacturing hub to Beijing. This process has been underway for several years, if as early as the beginning of the 2020s when a Swiss financial institution claimed that India was becoming the preferred destination for capital seeking an alternative to China.

India has several advantages for international capital. According to some studies, the basic wage of Indian workers is about \$300 per annum while in China a worker with the same qualifications earns three times as much. In addition, operating expenses are lower than what a company would be required to incur in China, after the Indian bourgeoisie took steps to create "special economic zones" that offer, among other advantages, exemption from export duties and sustained incentives. In short, an environment conducive to the rapacity of capital.

Also to be considered are the positive trade relations that the Indian giant, unlike China, has with the U.S. *gendarme*.

On this trajectory, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched an investment plan called Gati Shakti, "speed force", in 2021, which includes a series of investments to make India's backward infrastructure more competitive. The plan to modernize logistics and connectivity has a long-term scope that will continue until 2040.

The central government has also adopted taxation favorable to the manufacturing sector. In 2022, the corporate tax rate was reduced for the first time in 30 years. In addition, new companies were able to take advantage of a reduction in taxation from 25% to 15%. This policy, which is expected to be replicated in the future, is intended to make India competitive with emerging economies in Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam, Thailand, and

Indonesia.

Always in an effort to attract foreign capital, last March the Indian government earmarked some \$6 billion to be allocated mainly to the electronics manufacturing sector.

APPLE'S CHOICES AND OBSTACLES TO CHINESE COMPANIES

We are thus facing an international framework that is subject to rapid transformation. Already, today a big multinational like Samsung has relocated production of much of its components outside of China. Apple has announced the initiation of production of the new series of iPhones simultaneously in India and China starting next fall. Apple has a large factory near Chennai, on the Bay of Bengal and capital of the state of Tamil Nadu in eastern India, where assemblies of various products are made. The factory was opened in 2017 by Foxconn, a Taiwanese multinational company and longtime partner of Apple that has become the world's largest manufacturer of electrical and electronic components.

The relationship between China and the Cupertino-based company is fruitful but complex. The Californian multinational cannot lose the huge Chinese market, but assembling its products in India responds to a number of factors including the blatant vulnerabilities found in the supply chain at the huge Chinese Foxconn manufacturing complex in Zhengzhou—the nicknamed "iPhone City"—and where during the Covid-19 pandemic, the workers' anger we described in issue n. 50 of this paper had erupted. For months the distribution of cell phones was slowed as a result, causing losses estimated at several billion dollars.

Foxconn's investments in India are also prompted by the problematic political and economic relations between Chinese and U.S. imperialism, exacerbated by tensions over Taiwan. It is no coincidence that, as we write, the Chinese authorities have begun checks for alleged tax irregularities on Foxconn subsidiaries in the provinces of Guangdong and Jiangsu.

The effects of this path were not far away: while India produced only 1% of the world's iPhones in 2021, in the fiscal year ending March 2023 it produced nearly 7%, worth more than \$7 billion.

The British multinational Nothing has also decided that from July its new Phone 2 will be manufactured in India. The California-based multinational Google has reportedly already contacted companies such as Lava, Dixon, and Foxconn, which had access to government incentives to promote local production.

What is significant, however, is what happened to the Chinese company Xiaomi, which suffered an asset seizure of nearly \$700 million, accused by the Indian side of making remittances to foreign entities disguised as royalty payments, thus exporting tax-free profits. The de facto seizure halted the Chinese company's operations in India. The same was repeated for the large Chinese company Vivo: Indian police raided 48 of its offices and froze 119 bank accounts worth about \$60 million. Included in the dock was also Oppo, another Chinese consumer electronics company that allegedly implemented tax evasion operations totaling \$551 million. The telecommunications leader, China's Huawei, was also accused of evading \$100 million in taxes and, along with ZTE, yet another major Chinese telecommunications company, had been ousted in 2020 from bidding on India's new 5G network infrastructure, a sale worth tens of billions of dollars. The Indian government has also banned several made-in-China apps including TikTok.

PRECIOUS MICROCHIPS

Diversification of the electronics supply chain is involving many Asian countries, including India and Vietnam, whose governments aspire to host some of the production in the high-tech sector that is now done in China.

In December 2021, India's ruling bourgeois gang passed a law allocating 760 billion rupees, \$10 billion, to finance the emergence of a domestic microchip industry. Some estimates predict that revenue from this industry will grow from \$20 billion in 2020/21 to \$63 billion in 2026.

There were no semiconductor manufacturing centers on Indian soil before several projects were implemented in 2022, financed 50% by the government and supplemented by incentives from regional states. India's Minister of Electronics and Information Technology reported that manufacturing in the country would reduce dependence on imports by avoiding slowdowns or production stoppages due to supply delays. Indian Premier Modi traveled to Washington in late June where several trade agreements were signed that, among other things, provide for microchip production in India.

Among the most important undertakings

is the one announced by Foxconn in alliance with Vedanta, India’s leading aluminum producer with interests also in the telecommunications sector. For the first factory, which is expected to be set up in Gujarat, the Taiwanese company would guarantee an investment of about \$120 million, to which would be added financial support from the government. The announcement by Micron Technology, a U.S.-based multinational company based in Boise, to build a new plant in Gujarat as well, that will enable the production of electronic memories to meet the growing demand of the markets, is recent. Micron’s investment, in several phases, will be more than \$800 million. The U.S. multinational will receive 50% tax relief from the central Indian government and 20% from the state of Gujarat. IGSS Ventures of Singapore plans to invest \$3.2 billion in a new plant in the southern state of Tamil Nadu. Another project is that of Elest, a subsidiary of Rajesh Exports, which plans to build a display factory in the southern state of Telangana with an investment of about \$3 billion.

But scrutiny of the requirements placed by the government for the disbursement of state grants is causing delays in the implementation of many projects, while others have already completed the first stages of agreed planning.

ATTACK ON THE CONDITIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS

To the possibility of concretely becoming a manufacturing alternative to China, snatching from it even fractions of its industrial output—equivalent in any case to billions of dollars—India’s ruling class has not been unprepared on the home front.

In the southern state of Karnataka, in an area with a population of more than 60 million, about 40% of whom live below the poverty line (itself a distorted bourgeois parameter that is insufficient to account for the real extent of poverty) partly as a result of pressure from some multinationals interested in bringing manufacturing there, a reform of labor laws has been adopted to better squeeze workers. In this state, home to much of the country’s technology industry, one of the most flexible labor regimes on the Indian subcontinent has been imposed. 12-hour work shifts will be allowed in factories, up from the previous limit of nine. Women will be “free” to work night shifts, emulating fellow women in China and Taiwan where they numerically dominate on the production lines of electronics factories. The maximum overtime limit rose from 75 to 145 hours in three months.

An Indian government official commented to the Financial Times, “India is set to become the next big manufacturing hub. When we compare India with other countries [...] we have to increase our efficiency by a big margin in terms of increasing labor productivity”, obviously on the skin, sweat and blood of the working class.

Mallikarjun Kharge, current president of the Indian National Congress and member of the Parliament of Karnataka, who emerged victorious in the local elections in May, said, “[i]f anyone wants to reduce dependence on China, we, Bangalore, the State of Karnataka, are his first choice. We are at the top of India’s innovation index, we have many white-collar workers and skilled workers, we are agile”.

Foxconn, one of the companies that dictated the rules of the game to the Indian government, welcomed this reform and promptly informed the Indian executive of its intention to establish a new iPhone manufacturing plant in this state as well, in addition to the one already in Tamil Nadu. It will be a complex on an area of 120 hectares, with a cost totaling \$700 million, near the Bangalore airport. A manager from the Taiwanese giant comments, “[b]eing able to run production with two 12-hour shifts, with plants running 24 hours a day is very important to us”. An estimated 100,000 workers will work in the new plant, numbers reminiscent of China’s hellish factories.

THE POSSIBLE AMBIVALENCE OF INDIAN IMPERIALISM

The Indian giant is, however, grappling with several unresolved internal factors, like the agrarian question, which is still crucial in some parts of the country, and which we will have to study in depth.

The Indian economy seems to give international capital some more assurance than other emerging countries. According to some estimates, India ranks second among the countries that contribute most to the growth of the world economy. It is no coincidence that

the IMF has reiterated that the Indian giant remains a “beacon of light”. For capitalist leeches, we add.

Of course, India is not comparable to the military might of the United States, nor can it yet compete with China’s industrial production, but its economy has reached the stage of full imperialist maturity, beyond the hogwash that many false communists propagate even within that country. For us and for Lenin, imperialism is a superstructure of capitalism, a material stage in the development of capital, and it is certainly not correct to reduce it to a political choice, to a subjective will expressed by the bourgeois ruling classes of each state. Every single bourgeois national State is drawn into the world imperialist system as competing “national trusts” (to quote Bukharin) that struggle to capture higher shares of surplus-value globally. A firm may be in debt or running on losses, but insofar it is a firm, it competes against other firms on the market. A capitalist State may be imperialized by a higher power, but insofar as it is a capitalist state it is necessarily imperialist itself, even if its power is extremely feeble relative to the other States. Such is the folly of all modern “anti-imperialism” abstracted from Marxism—it becomes merely a cover-up for yet another imperialism.

The United States cannot afford to lose Delhi as a key ally in Beijing’s containment strategy in the Indo-Pacific and therefore for the time being is forced to take note of the nonchalance and autonomy with which the Modi government acts, a non-secondary player on the international chessboard. At the same time, it would be wrong to think that India-U.S. ties have as their only common ground the contrast to China. Washington is today India’s leading trading partner. But if the United States is number one, archenemy China is number two, and alliances in the world of capital are by nature very fickle.

Certainly, reducing dependence on Beijing is a goal that the Indian bourgeoisie will pursue beyond the demands and pressures of its U.S. ally. And Modi’s visit to the States seems to have been very fruitful, particularly in the two strategic areas of technology and military, in which New Delhi lags far behind other major powers.

At the same time, to sustain the growth of its own industry, Indian imperialism needs to source a huge and growing volume of cheap energy products. So, beyond Modi’s statements in Washington, India will be interested in maintaining profitable relations with Moscow, and will continue to buy cheap Russian crude oil, and will continue to sell some of it back to Europe. The economic and political relationship with Russia allows India not to rely exclusively on Western powers and characterizes its present ambivalence, which for now rules out an alignment to a defined imperialist front. It is no coincidence that trade between the two countries during the current year was 20% higher than in 2022. And that is until the inevitable next generalized war of capital.

With its vast police and military, equipped with the most modern kinds of surveillance systems, one of the world’s largest navies and air forces, advanced satellite imaging and possession of nuclear weaponry, overseen by a towering network of centralized bureaucrats and a tightly-knit judiciary, India today is one of the most striking examples of the capitalist monster-state. The Indian giant looms as one of the major protagonists in the international bedlam of capitalism. But the deep crises of capital will come to abruptly interrupt the dreams of the Indian bourgeoisie, grappling with an increasingly numerous, concentrated, organized class of pure wage-earning proletarians. All they lack now only is the address of the reborn world communist party, that will guide the self-emancipation of the proletariat, not only in India but worldwide.

A SELF-MADE LABOR SHORTAGE PUSHES BOURGEOIS SOCIETY TO ABANDON ITS MORAL EDIFICE

Since the pandemic lockdowns were lifted, there have been ever more complaints from capitalist firms that there are fewer and fewer workers. 1.13 million people have died due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States alone. For the majority of survivors, working conditions were so terrible, compared to the pay and benefits received, that many up and left their jobs; the prospects of a better paying job with a better work environment outweighed the risk of losing nearly all of a worker’s income.

Despite the employers’ lamentations, the number of working people has not decreased since the beginning of the pandemic—even now the number of people registering for unemployment is at an all time low. The average age of the U.S.

population is also increasing rapidly: the number of people in the older generation is greater than that of younger generations. These older people are currently at the age of retirement from the labor market, preparing for their end-of-life experiences. Whatever the reason for this, American employers are not shy to sound the alarm that they aren’t generating as much surplus value as they’d like because there just aren’t enough workers to do the job.

This self-made problem is creating a desperate clamor in state governments to remedy the lack of labor power for firms, resulting in the loosening of child labor regulations. But this wasn’t just a quick change of mind—employers have been violating bourgeois law regarding child labor well before any changes were made. Packers Sanitation Services, Inc., a Wisconsin based company, was caught employing children at 13 meatpacking plants across the country in November 2022. In Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Tennessee and Texas, children were employed to clean meatpacking facilities for JBS and Cargill, everything from conveyor belts to industrial bone saw machines.

Packers Sanitation Services previously suggested underage workers could have misrepresented their age to bypass the company’s verification measures. Further, the company claims that any children or the managers who would have hired them no longer work for PSSI. The firm’s Vice President even claims the company has a zero tolerance policy on employing people younger than 18 years of age! But even with these moralist exclamations the Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division soberly stated:

“Make no mistake, this is no clerical error, or actions of rogue individuals or bad managers, these findings represent a systemic failure across PSSI’s entire organization to ensure that children were not working in violation of the law. PSSI’s systems in many cases flagged that these children were too young to work, and yet they were still employed at these facilities.”

In December of 2022, it was discovered that Alabama suppliers for Hyundai Motor Co. and Kia Corp. were employing children in their factories. Throughout the investigation, the companies alluded to supporting an Alabama task force set up to combat human trafficking. But when inspectors arrived at their facilities, they reported that workers were seen escaping out the back of the facility to avoid being questioned. Hyundai, in response, summarily reorganized their supply chains to stop receiving supply from these facilities.

In both these cases, the official response from the U.S. government was to issue monetary fines and deliver written orders to stop the employment of children—but monetary fines are nothing more than a slap on the wrist to capitalist firms. In the case of Packers Sanitation Services Inc. LTD, the Department of Labor fined the company \$1.5 million. With a reported revenue of over \$500 million, the effort of the State was merely to inform the company they violated the law.

The lax attitude of the state towards the employment of children across American capitalism has begun to take a new form as well in the degrading of child labor regulations. In Wisconsin last year, legislation passed which changed the latest time minors can work to from 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM on a school day and as late as 11:00 PM when the work day doesn’t fall on a school day. Senator Mary Felzkowski, who authored the bill, said it was aimed at helping small businesses deal with a nationwide worker shortage. The measure was backed by the State’s hotel, restaurant and grocery industries, who were affected the most by the so-called labor shortage. The Wisconsin Restaurant Association said in June 2022 that it supported extending workers hours for teens to help solve staffing issues.

This year, also in Wisconsin, legislation to lower the minimum age for a person to distribute alcohol has been proposed. Currently a person must be 18 years or older to distribute alcohol in the state, which the proposed legislation would lower to 14. The authors of this bill, Sen. Rob Stafsholt and Rep. Chanz Green, claimed that “the current age limit on serving alcohol causes workforce issues due to an establishment’s underage employees only being able to do part of their job.” A double-play by the bourgeois State in Wisconsin—restaurants and bars who benefit from minors working later hours now reveal the joy they’ll experience when children as young as 14 must

distribute alcohol to adults—after all, it was part of their job to begin with!

In Ohio, a similar bill, Senate Bill 30, is being considered, which would allow children as young as 14 to work till 9:00 PM. Children currently cannot work later than 7:00 PM during the school year, but both bills make it so working until 9:00 is an opportunity for which children can get a parent’s permission during the school year. According to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), during the school year, children can work no later than 7:00 PM. The law in Wisconsin avoids violating this standard by making the statute only applicable to employers whose sales volume is under \$500,000 or who conduct inter-state commerce; essentially, the new law only applies to workplaces not covered under the FLSA. The bourgeoisie of Ohio aims to request that the Federal government amend the FLSA so the state ordinance is permissible.

Legislators in Iowa have passed Senate File 542, which allows children 14 years of age to serve alcohol. The bill also permits children to work later than 7:00 PM. Brad Epperly, a lobbyist for the Iowa Grocer Industry Association, said during a state committee meeting that “everybody has a worker need right now, I think the latest statistics are young people from 16-24, the job participation rate is like 56%. It’s awful low.” The law also expands where children can work, letting teenagers do light assembly work in manufacturing plants and giving state officials authority to issue waivers so teens could work in other industries. This loophole includes any work environment as long as children work in connection with “work-based learning or a school or employer-administered, work-related program.” The bourgeoisie Iowa’s Democratic Party establishment are calling for the state’s governor to veto SF542 because of the contradiction, but the fate of this law remains to be seen.

In March of this year, the state of Arkansas eliminated the requirement for children who seek work to acquire a work permit, and made it so that employers no longer need to verify someone’s age or that a child has consent to work from their guardians. The Arkansas state governor, who pushed for the change, claims the provision was obsolete and created a burden on employers. The Governor’s Office claimed that “protecting kids is most important, but this permit was an arbitrary burden on parents to get permission from the government for their child to get a job.” This, however, means the state will not have a means of enforcing child labor regulations!

Minnesota Legislation HF260, which is currently in the state’s House of Representatives, would allow children aged 16 and 17 to work in and around construction and building projects.

In all of these cases, the supporters of the legislation claim it is to alleviate a tight labor market, where the price of labor is high, even in historically low-paying jobs like in restaurants or general labor. The reintroduction of child labor will decrease the price for labor across any category where it is allowed while subjecting children to dangerous working conditions, working long hours even during the school year. Whatever moral opportunity is being created is farcically dangled in front of the edifice of a quickly failing economy and a constantly dropping rate of surplus value. The capitalists of America have shown that no amount of progressive morals will keep capitalism from returning to its most primal behaviors, consuming as much labor power as possible to generate profits and reproduce the possibility to make more profit in the future. Like vampires, their intoxicating accumulation of profit must continue, and if that means abandoning more than a hundred years of progressive liberal regulation on child labor, so be it.

Bourgeois crocodile tears over losses in profits aren’t new; recall that in 1848, in the Manifesto of the Communist Party, Marx called out the capitalists for their rank outlook towards the next generation of humanity:

“Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form, this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among proletarians, and in public prostitution.

The bourgeois family will vanish

as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.

Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents? To this crime we plead guilty.

But, you say, we destroy the most hallowed of relations, when we replace home education by social.

And your education! Is not that also social, and determined by the social conditions under which you educate, by the intervention direct or indirect, of society, by means of schools, etc.? The Communists have not intended the intervention of society in education; they do but seek to alter the character of that intervention, and to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class.

The bourgeois claptrap about the family and education, about the hallowed correlation of parents and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of Modern Industry, all the family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labor.”

Since the 1930s, most child labor in the US was done away with through the New Deal, which, not even ten years after its passing, was slowly degraded by the bourgeoisie of the United States, and for what? Well, as was said in the Manifesto, for the benefit of Capital! For the private gain!

Even after this point, Marx’s investigation of capitalist production relations reinforces what was stated in the Manifesto. Here he introduces the cost of labor the capitalist must pay—the wage—and the need to generate surplus-value over an ever-increasing working day, or that which goes beyond the reproduction of the labor power which produces the commodity the capitalist sells. What benefit does the capitalist gain from employing children?

What justification did the bourgeoisie in England give for the employment of children in the mid-1800s? Marx, in section 3 of the first volume of Capital, simply quotes the reports of crown-sanctioned doctors and factory inspectors: “[i]f, on the one hand, Senior proved that the net profit of the manufacturer, the existence of the English cotton industry, and England’s command of the world’s markets depend on ‘the last working-hour,’ Dr. Andrew Ure, on the other hand, showed that if minors, instead of being kept the full 12 hours in the warm and pure moral atmosphere of the factory, are turned out an hour sooner into the heartless and frivolous outer world, they will be deprived, by idleness and vice, of all hope for the salvation of their souls”. Children are protected by the haven that is the factory, and what exactly are they protected from? Certainly not the hazardous environments that exist in factories, where heavy machinery and materials zip past humans who are just one misstep away from mortal disaster.

This wasn’t just a declaration by Marx—he shows that the plant inspectors of the time knew of the depraved conditions firms forced children to work in:

“The atmosphere of the flax mills, in which the children of these virtuous and tender parents work, is so loaded with dust and fiber from the raw material, that it is exceptionally unpleasant to stand even 10 minutes in the spinning rooms: for you are unable to do so without the most painful sensation, owing to the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, and mouth, being immediately filled by the clouds of flax dust from which there is no escape. The labor itself, owing to the feverish haste of the machinery, demands unceasing application of skill and movement, under the control of a watchfulness that never tires, and it seems somewhat hard, to let parents apply the term ‘idling’ to their own children, who, after allowing for meal-times, are fettered for 10 whole hours to such an occupation, in such an atmosphere.... These children work longer than the laborers in the neighboring villages.... Such cruel talk about ‘idleness and vice’ ought to be branded as the purest cant, and the most shameless hypocrisy....”

What the bourgeoisie of the 19th century displayed was the general attitude capitalists have towards the working class, when it comes to the profits their companies generate: if the duration of child labor is reduced to a full 10 hours, their morals— together with the net profits of their employers—will vanish, both being dependent on this last, fatal hour (See Repts., Insp. of Fact., for 31st Oct., 1848, p. 101). Their moral compass is obfuscating not a contempt for humanity, whom they very much depend on to generate their profits, but rather

their love of profit over the needs of other men whom they see as alien to their needs and wants.

Recall what was published in the Children’s Employment Commissioners Report of 1863:

“For my purpose it is enough to take, from the reports of 1860 and 1863, some depositions of the exploited children themselves. From the children we may form an opinion as to the adults, especially the girls and women, and that in a branch of industry by the side of which cotton-spinning appears an agreeable and healthful occupation.

“William Wood, 9 years old, was 7 years and 10 months when he began to work. He ‘ran molds’ (carried ready-molded articles into the drying-room, afterwards bringing back the empty mold) from the beginning. He came to work every day in the week at 6 a.m., and left off about 9 p.m. ‘I work till 9 o’clock at night six days in the week. I have done so seven or eight weeks.’

“Fifteen hours of labor for a child 7 years old! J. Murray, 12 years of age, says: ‘I turn jigger, and run molds. I come at 6. Sometimes I come at 4. I worked all night last night, till 6 o’clock this morning. I have not been in bed since the night before last. There were eight or nine other boys working last night. All but one have come this morning. I get 3 shillings and sixpence. I do not get any more for working at night. I worked two nights last week.’”

In this example, Marx shows that employers will sacrifice the wellbeing of children to increase profits, in this case by extending the working day to which these children are subjected. But whereas in the 19th century legal regulation was limited or non-existent, today in the US legal regulation is being modified to accomplish the exact same thing capitalists employed 160 years before. This is because the threat to the ruling class by the US working class is so low, and the oppression characteristic of the interests of capital has been overwhelmingly unchallenged since the New Deal was passed. So too has the strength of organized labor declined rapidly.

Today, that protection provided by the factory to children is an opportunity to be seen as a contributing member of capitalist society. The increase in the working day for children is said to be the solution to the lack of adult workers. In reality, as Marx’s work shows, these children are employed to squeeze every last amount of surplus labor-time as can possibly be squeezed from the population employed in today’s factory, to generate every last possible amount of surplus-value, and to have proof, at the end of the fiscal year, that the rate of surplus value from last year has been surpassed.

Certainly, the fact that the bourgeois outlook on children and their place in society has not changed over our shared global history and across the vast space between nations is soberly understood by the communist movement. Our Party has denounced the passive calls to change the way things are by liberal politicians in Italy when Lorenzo Parelli died on the job in 2022, participating in a school-work vocational training program, where the bourgeois regime used its time-tested role of making itself the promoter of debate on the issue. In the United States, and across the planet, this “debate” is something created by the regime—not about how to stop the employment of children, but how to make children “productive”, and the legality of their productivity. Nothing more, nothing less.

When the callous attitude of the Italian bourgeois regime brought about only civil discussion and debate on the matter, student workers took to the streets to protest the indifference they received. In a predictable response, the Italian State mobilized the police to suppress the protest. The national nature of this movement, and the swift punishments meted out by the bourgeois State, led the grassroots union organizations of Italy to stand in solidarity with the movement. Our Party welcomed the declaration, a step towards a united class acting to fulfill its needs against the demands of capitalist firms. However, these calls for solidarity foist children into a category separate from the rest of the working class. Our Party concluded as such:

“The so-called student movement, composed only of students who want to be made to fight for supposed student goals, sanctions this confinement, in a fictitious and transitory social condition. Equally, from its outside, it is propped up by union political opportunism, which calls for the “workers-students union” of the labor movement with the “student movement”, which is accorded dignity.”

Bringing students and children into the working class movement is no myth to be realized either, but something that has happened with great regularity in capitalist society. In 1912, Massachusetts passed a law which reduced the length of the working day for women and children from 56 hours a week to 54. The American Woolen Company of Lawrence, MA, naturally, increased the speed of their machinery to make up for

this loss of time. In response, workers at the mill, both adults and children, walked off the job in protest. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) came to the city to assist and began a program to transport children away from the increasingly physical conflict between striking workers, on one side, and the scabs and police, on the other, who protected the company. To save face in light of this turn by the workers, who were becoming more and more organized and centralized in their efforts, the city’s political leadership demanded that the striking workers immediately stop sending their children to other states. The workers refused, and so...

“[w]hen the next group of children prepared to depart the train station, they were met by police and soldiers. The police refused to let them board the trains and launched an attack on the group. A 7-year-old was given a black eye when she was picked up and thrown into a paddy wagon by police. Another witness testified to children being thrown around like rags. Citizens across the country were horrified by the events.”

The federal government in Washington launched an investigative hearing into this event, which brought attention to the employment of children younger than 14. Capitalist society compels adults to sell their children into wage labor, either through fraudulent means or by modifying the law so that their actions are acceptable and without punishment. But during the early 20th century the focus was, as it is today, on depriving children of an education.

Society follows through with the ever-increasing demand of capital to bring children into the toil of waged labor, yet again. As a powerful yet unintended effect on the fast-changing nature of today’s society, which the communist movement has embraced, the fusion of education and productive labor increasingly smashes the bourgeois myth that education must be done in isolation from the productive process. But we communists take this a step further, because, although these workers may still be learning their skills, they are nevertheless workers, and so their struggle must be brought into the class organizations of the proletariat! Where the student is disenfranchised from any compensation for their labor, it is the aim of the united class and its organs of economic struggle to ensure that these workers are reimbursed for their labor! Where that labor is reimbursed at the minimum rate allowed by society, but the length of that working day is subject to

constant revisions by capital, the united class economic organizations must put a stop to excessive working time in relation to learning time. It is through the unity of the working class, whose Youth Division is united in the proletarian struggle, that we will break away from the body- and mind-crushing conditions of capitalist society.

AGAINST WAR BETWEEN BOURGEOIS STATES! A PUBLIC MEETING IN GENOA FOR THE UNITY OF THE PALESTINIAN PROLETARIANS AND ISRAEL

The war in Gaza, like the one in Ukraine, is being waged on both sides in the interests of the local bourgeoisies and the regional and global capitalist powers that back them. The working masses are cannon fodder, driven to fight with massacres of the civilian population.

The conflicts in Ukraine, Nagorno-Karabakh and Gaza are connected, manifestations of the march towards a new world war on behalf of capital, pushed toward it by the global economic crisis of overproduction which threatens the profits of all bourgeoisies.

National liberation struggles—in a world that has reached the stage of the historical development of capitalism everywhere, and for decades—no longer have any progressive social content and can only be instruments of war between competing imperialisms. Even the Palestinian liberation struggle no longer has any possibility of resolution in the current context of growing inter-imperialist conflict, but is used demagogically to enslave the Middle Eastern proletariat and place it in one of the war fronts.

In all Arab and Middle Eastern countries the revolt of the proletarian masses has for decades been diverted by the national bourgeoisies against the duo of Israeli-American imperialism. The bourgeoisie needs the external enemy to prevent the working class from understanding that the enemies are at home: that the real enemy is the bourgeoisie, its parties, its regime.

The third world war can only be stopped by a revolution of the working class united across national borders. For the bourgeoisie, leading the proletarians to fratricidal massacre is a question of life or death in the face of the mounting

In Memoriam

Its been a difficult couple of months. Our party has lost two young comrades.

SARAH, a comrade in the North of Germany, lost her life in October. She had joined the party in 2022 and had jumped into the party’s translation work with enthusiasm, aiding the years long study of the German Revolution.

A month later, we were informed that party member, **LENA**, a comrade from Almaty, Kazakhstan, had also died. Lena had joined the party in 2021 and was participating in our research on the Third International’s efforts in the Caucasus during the 1920s.

Capital, it has been said, leaves its marks all over our bodies, but also on our minds. We urge our comrades and readers to take care of themselves, lest this world take any more of us as martyrs.

A EULOGY READ FOR COMRADE MAURO IN TURIN, ITALY

We will miss you dearly, comrades.

We are here today to greet and remember, also on behalf of those who could not come, our dearest Mauro.

Dearest Mauro, first a long illness separated you from your (and our) beloved Silvana. Today it is you who leave us: Donatella, Manuela, your beloved grandchildren, and all of us comrades in the party.

With us you have been a soldier of the communist revolution. You enthusiastically devoted your energies to the cause of Communism by militating all your life in our Party of International Communism in preparation for the revolution of the working class. That revolution and Communism which you and we have not yet been able to see, and which the older among us will not see, but which, like everyone in the Party, of yesteryear and today, you have been able to live and enjoy already in our collective and daily social battle, alongside the sufferings, courageous assaults and numerous defeats of workers all over the world, lessons for new victorious assaults tomorrow.

We also remember your long commitment, constant attention, keen sensitivity in workers’ activities and struggles for the defense of working conditions and for the formation and imposition of genuine and combative class organizations, arousing the affection, appreciation and solidarity of fellow railroaders.

We all find ourselves more alone now, we who needed you, and would still need you, your generosity, your intelligence, your good-natured sweet and joyful irony, your understanding, helpfulness and closeness for all.

Also for you, to remain faithful to you and to remember you, we Communists will continue the study and propaganda of Communism, for which here we reaffirm that unscathed faith of ours that for a lifetime we shared with you. Your enthusiasm will remain for us as an example.

Thank you, Mauro.

economic crisis of capitalism: if the war doesn't start, the revolution won't stop.

The opportunist workers' parties—remnants of Stalin's false communism, of its anti-Americanism functional to the interests of Russian or Chinese imperialism—continue today to support the struggle for the illusion of a bourgeois Palestinian state. For decades these parties have meant nothing to the proletarians but are still useful to the bourgeoisie for continuing to discredit communism before the working class, after the infamy of false communism in the USSR and China!

The capitalist oppression of the Israeli wage-earning class and the doubly capitalist and national oppression of the Palestinian proletariat will end only with the proletarian revolution against the Israeli and Palestinian bourgeoisies, with the revolutionary dictatorship of the working class.

For this reason, it is necessary to strengthen the International Communist Party, its conquest in the main countries of the leadership of the movement of workers' struggles against capitalist exploitation and in defense of their living and working conditions.

HAMAS AND ISRAELI GOVERNMENT UNITED IN THE SLAUGHTER OF PROLETARIANS

As happens when a war develops between bourgeois forces and States, the proletariat is the element that disappears from any description of events. The workers never have a voice in that long-winded work with which the bourgeois States, whether internationally recognized or “de facto”, and the armed bands of capital set about their war preparations, material and ideological. They are only a labor force employed in the production of arms and ammunition to suppress other humans and in the logistical preparation of war. Workers will always have to bear the economic cost of rearmament and the damage of war. The workers in Gaza, who for decades have been made to dig a grid of military tunnels for hundreds of kilometers, know this well. The proletarians in Israel, who have always sacrificed to support the state's enormous military expenditure, and who are forced to live in perpetual threat and often give their lives for the regional imperialist ambitions of their bourgeois state, the weaponized arm of the United States in the region, know this.

Militarism accompanies every stage of the expanded accumulation of capital in all its historical phases. It is, as Rosa Luxemburg explains in “The Accumulation of Capital”, “a means of first order for the realization of surplus value, that is, as a field of accumulation”. It is always difficult to determine which branch of production is aimed at war purposes and which is not. Revolutionary Marxism has called “economic militarism” that phase in which the demand of the “free” market for individual consumer goods is superimposed by “the demand of the state, centralized in a great unified and compact power”.

This recipe, pioneered for more than a century by the most advanced capitalist states, is now generalized to even the most fragile bourgeois ruling entities, because it is the easiest way for the workers to bear the economic burden of rearmament. The obscurantist, religiously-oriented Hamas party, which imposes itself on the proletariat in Gaza on behalf of other imperialisms, fulfills the function of the State, organized violence of the ruling class on the dominated class. Hamas manages in the Strip the financial resources that come in the form of aid from international bodies, some Arab or Islamic-majority countries and international financiers, often linked to political Islam. It allocates much of it to the military sector.

In the more than sixteen years since the “Battle of Gaza” in June 2007, by which it seized power by force of arms in a bloody clash with the rival Fatah party, Hamas has implemented a repressive anti-proletarian policy. Numerous caravan revolts have been crushed with an iron fist by Hamas, which has acted against Gazan workers as a gendarme on behalf of the Palestinian and international bourgeoisies.

To eradicate in the workers any memory of belonging to the world labor movement, Hamas has, since 2015, banned the celebration of May Day.

Most of Gaza's population is very young in age, imprisoned by the blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt. Deprived of the solidarity of the workers' struggles of other countries, Hamas cultivates in those young proletarians an indistinct hatred for Jews in order to keep them away from the class labor struggle. Hamas' bourgeois political domination induces them to enlist in its militias and other Islamic fundamentalist formations. Contributing to the recruitment of

new militiamen are, in addition to the total isolation imposed by Israel, the periodic massacres committed by the Israeli Air Force and border guards, and the misery caused by the blockade, which induces many young men to resign themselves to one of few available occupations: the arms trade. The elite corps of the Hamas armed forces offer salaries between \$400 and \$500 to their militiamen, an amount not too paltry by local standards.

Moreover, Hamas, in line in this with the Muslim Brotherhood mainstream to which it belongs, has been able to buy social peace by guaranteeing a fair amount of welfare, subsidies to widows, orphans, and relatives of “martyrs”, and by supporting education and medical care for the indigent; elements that play an important role in maintaining consensus in a territory where almost half of the workforce is unemployed.

Hamas has revealed a greater ability to weld the internal social front than the rival Palestinian Fatah party, which is dependent in everything—politically, economically and militarily—on Western powers.

The management of labor power is the essential problem of any bourgeois regime. In this Israel and its archenemy Hamas wage a parallel war against the proletariat.

For some years now, the Jerusalem government has been favoring the entry of Asian workers from different countries to limit the economy's dependence on the Palestinian labor force. This is one of a thousand ways through which the Israeli bourgeoisie seeks to secure a disciplined and cheap labor force, while at the same time harassing and blackmailing Palestinian workers. Asian immigration has been numerous in the agricultural sector. Until October 7, more than 30,000 Thai proletarians were living in Israel, about 5,000 of whom were employed on farms in areas bordering the Gaza Strip. In the rampage of the assault, Hamas militiamen not only did not spare Israeli workers, but also slaughtered Asian immigrants. Also falling under the blows of this reactionary party were 30 Thai, 10 Nepalese and 4 Filipino laborers. That these were not random victims is proved by the fact that dozens of these Thai workers were taken hostage by Hamas.

Several thousand Thai workers have been repatriated from Israel by an airlift organized by the Bangkok government, which has offered \$1,300 compensation to all who want to return from Israel.

Hamas, like any bourgeois force at war, has no qualms about inflicting mourning and suffering on workers. In this it has allied itself with the equally reactionary and bourgeois Israeli government, which in the months leading up to October 7 opened and closed the Erez crossing, which allows the flow of as many as 20,000 laborers from Gaza, on and off.

Skirmishes with Hamas, characterized by rockets fired from Gaza into Israeli territory and punitive raids by the Israeli Air Force, or demonstrations against the blockade quelled with lead by Tsahal soldiers, held Gazawi border workers hostage by closing them at intervals inside their imprisoned territory.

In the days leading up to October 7, there were 18,500 Palestinian Gazawi workers in Israel. As is always the case when war breaks out between capitalist powers, those from the country being bombed are subjected to tight police control and deprived of freedom of movement. The first measures taken by the Netanyahu government were the cancellation of all work permits and an order by Defense Minister Yoav Gallant allowing the detention of Gazan workers for ten weeks in army bases. Hundreds of these construction workers and farm laborers, considered “illegal combatants”, were forcibly escorted back to Gaza under bombs. Buses dropped them off at the dedicated freight crossing of Kerem Shalom (a toponym with the mocking meaning of “vineyard of peace”) from where they had to travel six kilometers to reach the Strip. Another 4,000 of these workers who were sent to the West Bank, where many of them found refuge in the already crowded Dheisheh refugee camp near Bethlehem, beyond the wall dividing Israel from the occupied territories. All of them live in very difficult conditions, aggravated by anxiety about the fate of relatives left under the bombs that are destroying Gaza.

In this small patch of land meanwhile, the young levers of the proletariat redundant to capital are being led to the slaughter.

Once again, with the October 7 incursion carried out by Hamas, but seized as a propitious opportunity by the Israeli bourgeoisie, war has been imposed on the reluctant proletariat. Capital, of both Israel and the world, has and will have no compunction about carrying out the most heinous acts of violence. A

destructive fury of dying capital that will make the memories of the Holocaust and the Nakba pale in comparison.

LIFE OF THE PARTY – 2023

RAIL ROAD STRUGGLE - 2022/23

We were ready to participate in an organized manner in this nation-wide class struggle. The effort was abortive because of the Biden government's efforts to enforce a sell out agreement. But we were prepared to leaflet as best we could, identifying strike locations and union offices.

PORTLAND, OR CITY WORKERS' STRIKE - FEBRUARY 2023

We conducted an organized intervention in a city workers' strike held in Portland, Oregon. 600 sewer and water workers went on strike. Militants blockaded sludge tankers. Our party was able to write and distribute 3 different leaflets to the strikers as well as distribute our newspaper despite efforts by the DSA's Labor leadership in the AFL trying to exclude us.

RUTGERS - APRIL 2023

A comrade who's an labor militant active in New Jersey/New York unions was involved in the Rutgers University strike – the strike involved all 3 locations of Rutgers, the major New Jersey state university. The strike involved 9,000 staff members and 67,000 student were affected.

The Rutgers strike was called on the night of Sunday, April 9th, to commence on Monday, April 10th. It involved three unions: AAUP-AFT, which represents full-time faculty and graduate workers; Rutgers PTLFC, the Adjunct Faculty Union (part-time lecturers); and AAUP-BHSNJ, representing biomedical and health sciences researchers, teachers, and librarians. These unions are spread across three campuses located in the cities of Newark, New Brunswick (the largest campus), and Camden.

NATIONWIDE MEETINGS - 2023

The ICP has initiated what we call “informal meetings”. We hold them in a cafe or libraries, publicized in The Communist Party and on social media. At this they have been very successful, attracting more interest in the party from across the USA every month.

Currently these informal meetings have been held in Charlotte, North Carolina; Chicago; Denver; Milwaukee; Minneapolis; New Brunswick, New Jersey; Pittsburg; Seattle and Portland, Oregon. We are discussing “informals” in several more cities – Boston; Fort Collins, Colorado; and Ventura, California (Los Angeles).

STRIKE WAVE INTERVENTIONS - SUMMER 2023

Party Militants in North America have been seeding the principles of Class Unionism into our own work places as well as showing solidarity to bridge struggles with other workers. Recently in Wisconsin, when workers at New Dairy Select went on strike, the Party was there on the picket line to help hold the picket, distribute food donations to support the resiliency of the workers, and otherwise discuss various other strikes occurring to further contextualize and highlight the importance of the principles and practical tactics and strategies of Class Unionism. Additionally comrades have recently attended strike pickets for union and non-union workers for SAG-AFTRA (actors), WGA (screenwriters), CEA, and the ILWU (Pacific Coast dock workers).

On September 15, auto workers from General Motors and Stellantis in the United Auto Workers union (UAW) went on strike. Comrades compiled a lively leaflet applauding the 18,300 UAW workers currently on strike for taking strike action against the auto giants, reminding workers of their militant history, the importance of spreading the strike to other workplaces and sectors, stating the necessity of the International Communist Party in the fight for the emancipation of the working class, and calling for the building of a class unionist current and encouraging workers to join the Class Struggle Action Network. So far Party comrades and sympathizers in 9 states have attended picket lines and distributed Party and sometimes Class Struggle Action Network propaganda.

On the first day of the UAW picket line in Beaverton, Oregon, comrades arrived with drinks to share. A fraternal air of solidarity could be felt among the workers on the line immediately. Earlier in the day, workers had blocked managers trying to leave the facility for 45 minutes. Politicians also showed up trying to gain workers' support. Overall, workers on the line felt that their presence, along with that of President Biden on the picket line in Michigan, was unwelcome. Most workers understood that the interests of politicians are those of the bourgeois class and not of the working class. This sentiment has been different from picket line to picket line.

UAW workers have 10 weeks of strike pay available. Workers in Oregon remembered the UAW strike in Tigard, Oregon in 2002, at the Williams Air Control facility, which lasted 11 months but ended successfully for the workers. Workers discussed lessons to be learned from that strike. We supported workers in learning the relevant labor laws they wanted to know the limits of, while confirming that they would ultimately do what they needed to in order to win. A sort of “war council” was convened between party militants and workers to discuss further ways in which they could apply pressure on employers to win their battles. From this, it was learned that there is another facility in Portland that receives automotive parts. It was decided to organize workers inside and outside the UAW to also apply pressure within that structure to try to convince non-union workers to support the strike. It was also decided to extend strike hours to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, because the company had adjusted the hours to bring in scabs during non-strike periods.

BIRTH OF CSAN - MAY FIRST 2023

In order to promote and strive for workers' unity of action in the economic class struggle—up to the international level—our comrades, together with other workers, promoted the formation of a coordination which was given the name Class Struggle Action Network, or CSAN. CSAN is not a party body; it is open to all workers—employed, unemployed, retired—of all political views who share its goals. Neither is it a new union: workers from every union and non-unionized workers can join it. CSAN wants to promote the unity of action of workers in every labor organization. Having launched in May 2023, the militant minority of workers drawn to our class unionist principles have flocked to CSAN like a spring in a desert of opportunism and treachery.

Over the past 5 months, CSAN has hosted 5 public events promoting class unionism among workers and supporting the networking of workers across sectors. The website, which can be found at <https://class-struggle-action.net/>, has a resource page which contains multiple booklets of original content on the subject along with various leaflets targeting workers in specific professions. The network has mobilized solidarity for a number of strikes. It has connected internationally with union militants in other countries. Workers in CSAN are networking and collaborating on the clarifications and promotion of action relating to building class unionism via various communication platforms.

CSAN has begun promoting the construction of class struggle committees. The committee is an organization of workers in a particular workplace, or with a shared employer, coming together under class unionist principles to take action either inside or outside of their unions, or both. A number of workers in various industries have taken up the work of forming these committees. The last public meeting brought together workers to discuss the formation of these committees. This meeting was additionally an opportunity for these committees to coordinate their activity with other committees, and to otherwise report on and get support for their activity. One of the most developed committees is that of a grocery store chain. Their committee has not only been collectively mobilizing for solidarity strike actions, but have been collectively visiting other locations of the business that employs them to inform workers about CSAN and their class struggle committee, in part to prepare workers for their contract negotiations coming up in January. In support of this work, an event is being planned where workers from the historical militant strike in 1995 by workers at the same grocery company in Portland, Oregon will give a presentation on their experience. There are other workers in CSAN with experience in militant solidarity action during that strike who will speak as well. This event will bring in not only workers across the city who work for the company, but all workers interested in solidarity actions. CSAN will help distribute flyers to workers at each facility.

CSAN is working to create an educational event where workers can get support learning about various tactics for organizing in their workplace. This too will support potential strike activity for the grocery workers.

PROVIDENCE NURSES STRIKE IN OREGON

1800 workers at Providence hospitals in Portland walked off the job last June. We distributed about 400 leaflets as Class Struggle Action Network at the kick off rally. Comrades quickly gained respect and trust from rank and file as well as union organizers. We hung a banner at the main scab entrance/exit reading “picket lines mean do not cross”. Here we, as a network, held our own picketline, helping to turn away a supply truck driven by an uninformed Teamsters driver and inconvenience 10 vans full of scabs as they

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