

1st BULLETIN

FOR THE

INTERNATIONAL

COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT) – Spain

July 31st, 2025



revolucion-prt.es

INTRODUCTION

The Bulletin for the International Communist Movement is a project of the Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT) of Spain to make its main contributions accessible internationally. The first edition, dated July 31st, 2025, includes:

1. A brief **Presentation of the Party** (page 2).
2. The public statement of the **Political Line Clarification Campaign**, the PRT's current main focus (July 8th, 2025, available from page 6).
3. The **Stance of the I Congress of the PRT on the Labor Movement** (published on May 1st, 2024, available from page 10).
4. The **Stance of the I Congress of the PRT on Urban Popular Movements** (published on March 25th, 2025, available from page 60).
5. The Party Stance on the ***Analysis and Struggle Guidelines regarding the European Rearmament*** (published on April 19th, 2025, available from page 85).

We hope that this bulletin will serve as an introduction to our party, as well as a humble contribution to the reorganization of the international communist movement in the spirit of proletarian internationalism.

Dare to struggle, dare to win!

Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT) of Spain

Who are we?

From revolucion-prt.es, March 2023.

The Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT) is a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party.

We understand that ideological definition is of vital importance, because revolutionary ideology condenses the entire experience of revolutionary class struggle and is a condition for bringing the working class to power. Therefore, we recognize Maoism as the third and highest stage of proletarian ideology, understanding that it has advanced gradually and in leaps and bounds, with three major milestones in the struggle for workers' power: The Paris Commune and the struggle of the working class in ascendant capitalism, in which Marxism was forged; the Soviet Revolution and the arrival of capitalism at its terminal phase, the imperialist phase, where the leap to Marxism-Leninism takes place; and the Chinese Revolution, the Cultural Revolution, and the People's Wars that break out in the heat of these two revolutionary experiences, where the stage of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is reached.

Our strategic objective is the reconstitution of the Communist Party of Spain. We do not consider ourselves or any party of the Spanish Communist Movement to be such. The Communist Party is that political tool that systematically brings together the most ideologically advanced elements of the working class with the greatest capacity and courage in the struggle.

Therefore, our strategic objective is its reconstitution. The term reconstitution or constitution puts the ideological and political rearmament of the vanguard of the proletariat at the forefront. In other words, we do not believe in party unity based on organizational factors and a few abstract ideological points in common. In this process, our goal is to take the initiative and become the vanguard of the reconstitution.

We understand that the revolution in Spain is socialist in nature, given the imperialist and developed capitalist nature of the country. Specifically, Spain is a second-rate imperialist power. This means that, within the imperialist chain, our country has a financial oligarchy with developed monopolies, which exports capital and maintains relations of domination over other countries, especially in Latin America. We can see this in the monopolistic and usurious practices of Spanish banks, the activities of companies such as Repsol, Melia Hotels, etc., and the State's participation in predatory wars led by more powerful powers. At the same time, it maintains a policy of subordination to leading imperialist powers such as the US, Germany, and France. This reality means that class division and distribution have specific characteristics that are important to take into account in developing our revolutionary policy.

For all these reasons, we understand that both the leading force and the driving force of the revolution is the proletariat, that is, the working class in the productive sector, mainly those who are exploited in the large chains of production and distribution of goods. Although Spain, due to its nature as an imperialist power, has a fairly extensive unproductive sector, as well as speculation and rentierism, it is an industrialized country. However, its nature as a second-rate rather than a first-rate power is reflected in the disproportionate weight of medium and small enterprises in the productive sector (industry and logistics), as well as its volatility and lack of diversification, phenomena that also affect the functioning of large

companies subject to monopolies. In these small, medium, and large companies, which produce for monopolies, workers suffer more acute exploitation, with lower wages, worse working hours and health and safety conditions, more outdated infrastructure, and a more openly reactionary and despotic hierarchy. These workers make up the bulk of the deep masses of the proletariat, who are at the forefront of the most direct outbreaks against the capitalists and their State, as we saw in the workers' revolts in Cádiz in 2021.

On the other hand, the voluntary subordination of the Spanish financial oligarchy to that of stronger imperialist powers, including the partial control of former Spanish monopolies (such as SEAT or the former Spanish steel companies) by foreign monopolies, imposes work rhythms and cost adjustments on the workers of these parent companies that exacerbate their exploitation, reducing the number and conditions of the upper layer of the working class that capitalism can temporarily satisfy. The pressure to relocate, to subcontract tasks, to hire temporary or intermittent staff... pushes the conditions of these workers towards those of the rest of the working class, thus confirming that capitalism creates its own gravediggers.

The Communist Party, once reconstituted as an organization of the most conscious and advanced elements of the working people, must lead the construction of a united front of all revolutionary classes and strata against capitalism, reaction, and its State. Likewise, it must lead the construction of a true people's army firmly based on mass popular organizations and their tools of self-defense, and launch a people's war.

We assume that this revolution, like any other struggle for power by the working class, will be a People's War, that is, a war in which the masses led by the Communist Party will fight using their military and civilian methods and tools. Since the term People's War is relatively unknown in Spain, we will publish documents and training materials on the subject, as it is necessary to move away from the cliché that People's War is only applicable to colonial and semi-colonial countries. In any case, we anticipate that the People's War in imperialist countries will not be a mechanical translation of how it is carried out in colonies and semi-colonies, but it will be a lasting conflict of gradual construction of workers' power, as some historical experiences have shown to be possible.

WHERE ARE WE COMING FROM?

The Communist Organization *Revolution* [*Revolución* in Spanish] was founded in 2015 in a context of breaking with the reformism and revisionism of the parties from which our members came. Our starting point, approved at the First Congress, was to establish ourselves as a Marxist-Leninist organization with a strong aspiration to reconstitute the Communist Party in Spain and with a great vocation for political activity among the masses and their movements. From the outset, the struggle between different lines, albeit implicit or unconscious, with honest and open debates within the organization, and especially within our leadership, was the method by which we developed our line, evolved ideologically, and acquired party cohesion and unity.

We understood from our founding that, in order to end capitalism, we should not aspire to infiltrate bourgeois institutions with the dream of placing communists in Parliament. We also

understood that revolution is a complex war, which has little to do with a series of coordinated lightning labor strikes. Consequently, we drew on the study of the contributions of the Soviet Revolution and different revolutionary movements around the world.

In a country where the red thread of history was severed decades ago, we had and continue to have arduous tasks ahead of us, some of them starting almost from scratch: the ideological strengthening and training of revolutionary cadres through the study of political theory and practice, the construction of revolutionary political principles that underpin revolutionary tactics and strategy, the construction of a democratic-centralist and vanguard cadre structure; and all of this linked to the learning and leadership of popular movements.

Our membership is made up of activists from all sectors who acquired a revolutionary consciousness through the different struggles in which they participated, so in this first stage of Organización Comunista Revolución as a cadre school, we were dedicated to training ourselves to become revolutionaries, professionalizing our activity based on our possibilities.

Thus, for us, working in mass movements has always been essential: through involvement in everyday struggles, the limitations of the capitalist State and reformism are revealed, allowing revolutionary ideology to spread and deepen through our own experiences. Furthermore, the mass struggle is where the class struggle manifests itself—in some cases more acutely than in others—and it is through these experiences that we learn and grow in strength and mobilization capacity.

It was through this daily struggle, but also through the study of historical and contemporary revolutions, especially those currently taking place in the Philippines and India, as well as the current state of the International Communist Movement, that we realized that our position as Marxist-Leninists was no longer adequate to respond to the questions and challenges we faced: mainly how to reconstitute the Communist Party and how to lead and organize the socialist revolution in an imperialist country like ours. From there arose the need to unleash an open line struggle within our organization.

At our Third Congress, we culminated this intense process of ideological struggle and took the leap to establish ourselves as a communist party that embraces Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as its ideology.

Although the road ahead will be difficult, capitalism is in decay: reformist governments, whether left-wing or right-wing, come and go; and not only does nothing change, but the situation worsens; every right is a battle, every right has an expiration date. We know that it is the masses who make history, and that the number of activists who are beginning to question whether capitalism can be reformed is growing.

But we know that partial struggles alone will not lead us to socialism. Our duty is to contribute revolutionary science, that is, the synthesis of all international revolutionary experiences, which allows us to plan, organize, and execute the leap from the current mass struggles to revolutionary struggles.

This is why we want to invite those of you who are reading this to walk with us toward the reconstitution of the Party, to fight to build the three instruments of the revolution and destroy capitalism to its very foundations.

ADDITION: OUR COMMUNICATION ORGAN *REVOLUTION*

Revolución is the communication organ of the Workers' Revolutionary Party. Through this medium, the Party expresses its positions to revolutionaries, activists, and the working classes. *Revolución* is open to contributions from revolutionaries and activists who wish to reflect the reality of the people's struggles and point out their enemies. Currently, our English publications are severely limited to the most important documents. To the date, those are the ones compiled in this bulletin. Find more at revolucion-prt.es.

Political Line Clarification Campaign

July 8th, 2025

A year ago, the Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT) initiated a **Political Line Clarification Campaign**. The objective of this campaign is to deepen our understanding of fundamental aspects of the proletariat's ideology, revising our published political line under the light of this deeper understanding, reissuing the fundamental documents correcting any errors we may have made, and synthesizing the **General Political Line** for the socialist revolution in our country.

The Clarification Campaign, initially planned for the second half of the year 2024, has turned out to have a much larger scope than initially planned. In this article, we will share **the reasons why we give it a great relevance**, to the point that the Clarification Campaign has become the **main thrust of our general tactic**, ratified at our Central Committee Plenum on March of this year.

The aim of this statement is to share with our comrades in struggle, whether they are sympathisers of our party, members of other communist detachments, or activists with whom we share a trench, the primary focus of our current general tactic, which serves as a compass to guide our work in the different spheres and levels, inside and outside the party.

UNITY-STRUGGLE-UNITY

At the II Congress of the Communist Organization Revolution (2018), the organization that preceded us, the ideological line around anti-revisionist Marxism-Leninism was consolidated. The consistent application of that line ended up triggering a division within the Party: an economist deviation began to develop which was opposed by a sector of the organization. This is how the struggle became primary and unity secondary, and this process gave rise to the two-line struggle around Maoism, of which we spoke in a previous statement.¹

The contradiction between the left line and the economist line sharpened during the spring and summer of 2022, and the end of the two-line struggle process was the III Congress of the Communist Organization Revolution – I Congress of the PRT, held at the end of 2022. This meant a qualitative change to a stage where, again, unity is primary. Thus, in recent years **we have gone through three stages: unity around the ML, struggle around the need to adopt Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and new unity around the MLM.**

However, **MLM was adopted without a sufficient understanding of the different ideological lines in contention in the international debate**; there were no leaders up to the task of developing certain political areas and the political cohesion among them was insufficient. In addition, the documents of the 1st PRT Congress incorporated some ultra-leftist deviations and left some issues open.

This needed one more year of study and practical experimentation leading to a **Conference during the fall of 2023**. There, Unity was strengthened through the concretization of some aspects of our line: mainly in the documents of the Labor Movement, Urban Popular Movements and Organization, and, secondarily, during the debates around Youth.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CLARIFICATION CAMPAIGN

The 2023 Conference left out an important task: **our Party's political line is scattered** in dozens of documents and fills almost half a thousand pages among documents of different kinds (congressional documents, conference documents, internal and educational materials and some transcendental articles²). Moreover, **these documents have some contradictions among them and do not clearly distinguish between the primary and the secondary aspects.**

In this context, on April 2024 we decided to undertake a Clarification Campaign to bring the Party together. The main tasks of this campaign are:

1. Synthesizing the Party's line in a General Political Line document:

- So it serves as a presentation of our analysis and commitment for the revolution in Spain.
- So it clearly expresses those primary and secondary aspects relevant to our line.
- So it serves as a guideline for the interpretation of specific documents, uniting the different areas of the political line.

2. Developing relevant questions that are still unanswered, especially those that are the most debated among MLM communists today.

3. Correcting the ultra-left and right-wing mistakes in some parts of the documents of the First Congress of the PRT and the Conference of 2023, as well as other relevant documents.

POLITICAL LINE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CLARIFICATION CAMPAIGN

The main aspects on which we are developing the political line, based on exhaustive research, as well as our practical experience in the class struggle, are:

- The revolution in Spain, in particular starting from deepening our understanding of the Protracted People's War and its universal elements, its application in imperialist countries, and its application according to the actual conditions in Spain.
- The role of the United Front in the revolutionary historical experiences, its nature and shape as an indispensable tool of the revolution, and its role in building and defending socialism.
- The analysis of the consequences of the application of the "universal contributions of Gonzalo Thought", taking into account the experience of contemporary communist detachments that defend "Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism with the universal contributions of Gonzalo Thought".

The tasks related to the deepening of these three aspects were underestimated both in relevance and scope: encompassing this study and analysis with the required level is requiring a dedication of several months that we aspire to complete during the next year.

AGITPROP AND CADRE'S PROMOTION

The Political Line Clarification Campaign has highlighted **the need to improve our leadership methods and cadre policy.**

In this sense, we have decided to upgrade the role of our newspaper (our website and social media), making it our main method of directing both our membership and mass base. Through statements, articles and documents, we can provide political guidance to our base and supporters before the different class struggle happenings, both in the fields of direct economic and political struggle, as well as in the field of ideological struggle.

This allows us to **give directions based on ideological and political orientations** for creative application by the membership and mass base. This method of leadership brings to the fore **our priorities, agenda and objectives**, and replaces the tendency to lead our membership by solving each individual problem, which drags the party's resources into routine management. Replacing "case by case" management with political leadership, the explanation of the situation to point the struggle to transform it, is a qualitative leap that **favors discarding bureaucratic methods of leadership**, and gives our base the indispensable role of reporting and sharing their experiences through public chronicles and internal reports, in order to confirm or rectify the orientations given.

This new approach has meant completely **banishing the conception of our newspaper as a portal for articles based on the subjectivity of a few party members**, or that is limited to following the political news. On the contrary, it allows us to make our newspaper a tool for ideological and political guidance, which through appeals and analysis guides the discourse, actions and measures to be taken and reinforced. **We understand our newspaper as an organ at the service of the class struggle and the reconstituting of the party.**

In turn, **we have strengthened democratic centralism**, with agile permanent leadership bodies at all levels, which complement the plenary meetings at each level, and with clear political principles of organizational operation, allowing us to have an unified leadership, with a general vision and initiative to guide the party's activity in the face of the various changes and obstacles of the class struggle, and with the ability to apply the general line according to the particularities of its concrete reality.

These changes have allowed us to **overcome the spirit of a "small circle of communists"** that we had carried over from previous stages, and have allowed us to take better advantage of the efforts of each militant, correct our management methods (which, as we said, tended to micro-manage case by case) and lay the foundations for a new system of promotion of cadres.

On May 2024 we held our I Cadres' Central School, which was the first step to resume the standardized training. Recently we have approved the new Membership Training Plan, structured around the three integral parts of the ideology (scientific socialism, political economy, and philosophy), in three levels (introductory, intermediate, and advanced) for each one of them, surpassing our previous training plan that hardly included, or did not systematically include, the contributions of MLM.

GENERAL POLITICAL LINE

All this effort will be completed with the publication of our General Political Line, whose objective is to be **the basic document of our Party, which will allow our existence, our ideology, our political line and basic positions to be understood in a synthetic way** by our base, our sympathizers and the International Communist Movement. In addition, this document will serve in the future as the basis for our revolutionary program.

At the present time, we outline that the General Political Line will cover: the essentials of our ideology; an assessment of the Spanish and International Communist Movements with its main milestones; the reality of imperialism globally and in Spain in particular; the revolution and the Protracted People's War in general and the character of the revolution in Spain; the nature of the Communist Party and the struggle for the reconstitution of the Party in Spain; the necessary building of the United Front and the Red Army, and its foundations in a country like Spain; and finally the mass line and our general method for its application.

It is not only an outline or a repository of previous positions because, although it draws directly from them, it elevates them to a new level by expressing them in a unified and cohesive way, without contradictions and dealing exclusively with the main points, omitting secondary details that will be dealt with in other documents.

In order to draft the General Political Line, first it is necessary to complete the Clarification Campaign: study and correct erroneous secondary aspects of our documents, identify the need to draft some shorter partial documents and, in general, identify the primary and secondary sides of each aspect of our line in order to express them as clearly as possible.

Beyond that, the **General Political Line entails a qualitative leap, discreet but relevant, for the International Communist Movement**. It will be the first Marxist-Leninist-Maoist General Political Line applied to the Spanish reality. More needed than ever just as the contradictions of imperialism intensify, war is unleashed in more points of the globe, the peoples of the third world are crushed with more vehemence, and reaction within imperialist powers rises.

CONCLUSIONS

We are aware that the road ahead of us is still long and hard. We are also aware that, although we are still learning to walk, our influence in the communist movement and the popular movements of this country is ever greater; and consequently is also ever greater the responsibility that weighs on our shoulders. But we have confidence in living up to this purpose to which we have given ourselves: that of reconstituting the Communist Party and leading the people towards revolution. Let us not lose our enthusiasm, let us not lose our discipline and let us not lose our wrath.

Let's march towards the clarification of the political line!

Let's struggle for the reconstitution of the Communist Party!

Worker's Revolutionary Party

Labor Movement Document

I Congress of the Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT)

May 1st, 2024

The Labor Movement is the workers' mass movement, mainly the proletariat, who struggle according to the capitalist social relations of production, for their class interests in the broad sense and ultimately for their own emancipation as a class. It is, therefore, the main mass movement for the Socialist Revolution and constitutes the main mass base of the Communist Party in an imperialist power.

To support our position in a scientific way, we will carry out a study of the theoretical bases that the working class has established through its ideology until its current development: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

After the exposition of these theoretical bases, which we will try to make as exhaustive and systematic as possible, we will apply the MLM to present our general position on the Labor Movement. Then we will proceed to the analysis of the Labor Movement in Spain and our tasks for the period until the next Congress.

PART I - THEORETICAL BASIS

1- Marxism:

The capitalist class exploits the entire working class:

In the Marxist phase of our ideology, in pre-monopoly capitalism already established as the dominant system, Marx and Engels unveiled the basis of the capitalist exploitation of the working class.

Going into more detail than our ideological document [our first congressional document, not yet available in english], Marxism explains how capitalist exploitation is total, from the entire bourgeoisie to the entire working class.

It has already been exposed in our ideological document how, in production, it is the proletariat through its labor that contributes to the added value not paid by the bourgeoisie, the surplus value.

This surplus value tends to be balanced between the different sectors of production: sectors with low investment in constant capital (less mechanized), despite having a higher relative weight of their surplus value in relation to the anticipated capital, they attract more investment and tend to overproduce more quickly, having to lower prices below their social value. While sectors with more constant capital, which require to anticipate more capital to obtain less surplus value, tend to see their prices rise and competition/supply decrease.

In this way, even before the partial price fixing that today monopoly capitalism carries out, the whole bourgeoisie ends up benefiting from the exploitation of the workers of the other sectors.

But it is not only within the productive sector that capitalist exploitation takes place.

Surplus value extracted in the production of commodities from workers is used to pay for commercial activities that allow the realization of this surplus value, commercial activities only possible through the existence of an enormous part of the working class which is also paid only what is just and necessary to reproduce its labor power, which gives rise to surplus labor insofar as it continues to develop its activity (realizing the surplus value), when it has already covered its salary.

The same applies with banking activity: surplus value extracted in the production of commodities passes through phases of inactivity until it can be reinvested as industrial capital. Phases in which it is deposited in the banks, which use this surplus value to lend or invest it in exchange for interest. This activity is also only possible with a base of workers who cover with their work more than they receive in wages.

Capitalism pushes the working class to fight:

Marxism shows that the struggle of the proletariat begins spontaneously on the economic field.

As soon as capitalism imposes itself as the predominant mode of production, workers begin to react against the competition that capitalism imposes on them to sell their labor power. The first reaction of the working class occurs in its most economic form, petty-bourgeois in the sense that it occurs closely within the capitalist framework: the workers begin to limit their supply of labor power by associating.

Cooperatives and mutual aid organizations, which seek to avoid the total impoverishment of their members that prevents them from standing firm in negotiations for the sale of their labor power, give way to the first trade unions, first of the workplace, then of whole industrial sections, and finally, of the entire class.

As this struggle shakes the heart of capitalism, it grows parallel to the development of the working class consciousness. Their unions become more and more politicized, and the first working class parties are formed.

Marx, throughout his extensive work on the Labor Movement, which includes not only books, but also polemics and letters with guidelines, points out that this working class historical progress is not reversible. The class struggle is the motor force of history. These workers' struggles push capitalism towards its development and the sharpening of its contradictions. They also advance experiences that are consolidated in ideology.

Although there are concrete setbacks that can make it seem that history has regressed, the proletariat as an international class preserves its teachings and part of their conquests. That is why Marx rejects defeatism in the , and always demands that other revolutionaries, while taking into account the specific setbacks (for example, the dismantling of a union, the arrest

of many revolutionaries or the loss of laws won by the working class), do so in the light of the experience and achievements of the international proletariat: preserving the ideology and trying to spread it, trying to promote the most advanced forms of organization, etc.

He resolutely rejects going back, for example, to trade union forms of organization. He rejects, for example, the resignation of revolutionaries who consider ceasing to promote their ideology. He rejects attempts to renounce the proletariat's political struggle.

While recognizing that a particular situation demands specific priorities, for example, prioritizing as a general rule partial economic struggles, marxism highlights that these can move from slow gradual development to a rapid storm of political struggle which, in turn, later makes the economic struggle advance, and that all the tools of the workers' struggle must be used at all times. That the same workforce that has gradually developed its economic struggle can become involved in a political struggle or that the ideological elevation of one of its members to communist positions can weigh more in the development of the economic struggle than the entire negotiation with the employer.

The Two-Line Struggle in the Labour Movement:

The positions of Marxism on the are perfected in a two-line struggle. The two-line struggle in the Labor Movement in the Marxist stage of our ideology can be divided into two major stages, parallel to the development of capitalism:

- A first stage, the birth of the Labor Movement, prior to the creation and/or growth of trade unions. In this first two-line struggle the maximum representative of the right would be Lasalle, and that of the ultra-left (petty-bourgeois), Proudhon. This discussion will revolve around whether it is possible and whether it is convenient for the working class to organize unions to earn gains through economic struggle.
- A second stage, the establishment and expansion of trade unions. In this stage, the representatives of the right are various reformists and corporatists in the trade union movement, such as Weston on the side of the Fabians. The maximum representative of the ultra-left, although not the only one, is Bakunin. This discussion will revolve around the role of the trade unions in the Labor Movement, their limitations and the possibility and necessity of the political struggle of the working class to seize power.

There are issues that reappear in a different way in the two stages of the two-line struggle, because they are relatively close and often, the right and ultra-left representatives in each stage, have a close political or even personal relationship with their predecessors.

This is why we will deal with all these issues not discussion by discussion, but by grouping them thematically under the following items:

- The viability of the union struggle and the economic gains of the working class.
- The role of trade unions in the Labor Movement Movement:
 - Trade unions, their positive aspects and limits.
 - The Communist Party and the political struggle in relation to trade unions.

The feasibility of union struggle and working class economic conquests:

The very possibility that the working class can organize itself within the workplace to demand improvements in their working conditions, launch struggles that shake capitalist production and achieve improvements, even temporarily, in their living conditions by fighting has been and is proven every day, despite being continually disputed.

We are used to argue against reformists who idealize the possibilities of the struggle for reform, sometimes including the trade union fight as a concrete materialization of that struggle. However, among the broad masses, less conscious and more terrified by the apparent omnipotence of capitalists in the workplace, the very feasibility of organizing against the boss often seems like a fantasy.

This view is amplified and continually receives ideological justifications by the petty bourgeoisie, who are far removed from the working class reality, and manifests itself through both its reformist and radical sides with similar assumptions, although with different motivations and political consequences.

In an exemplary manner, Marx did not limit himself to approach the polemic from class background or motivation of this issue, but rather he refuted, with scientific rigor, the assumptions and theories that focused on that class motivation.

It is necessary to take note of this fact: Marx's greatest contribution to the Labor Movement, even in its economic mass struggle aspect, is the communist theory. Understanding the feasibility and validity of beginning the struggle is the first indispensable step, which is taken whenever there is a consistent communist, no matter how little experience he or she has in the workers' struggle.

The feasibility of earning wage increases:

As a specific and meaningful case, the Labor Movement's right and ultra-left championed the theoretical position that it was impossible to achieve real wage increases through workers' struggle. This theory was formulated by Proudhon, Lasalle and Weston, the most famous version being the so-called Iron Law of Wages. Its assumption about political economy was always the same: raising wages will only raise prices, either through inflation or through scarcity.

For the right, like Lasalle or Weston, the consequence of this Law should be reformism: unions should not be organized to battle against employers, but primarily as a lobby to encourage the advent of politicians to achieve reforms and to react against direct and extreme abuses by employers.

For the ultra-left, mainly Proudhon as far as this argument was concerned, any action to win a temporary and partial improvement would only cause a situation of even greater exploitation. The raising of wages, specifically, would encourage shortages, and the struggle needed to achieve it would stir chaos and confusion. Therefore, these forces should be steered towards a more direct readying of the revolution.

Marx, while pointing out that the political positions of these leaders were the outcome of their bourgeois and petty-bourgeois class vision, he tore down these theories about the impossibility of winning real wage increases, starting from the very nature of wages.

Wages are the price of labor power expressed in money. Like any other price, it is rooted in the social value of its commodity, in this case, labor power. Therefore, the wage tends to oscillate around the amount necessary to cover the minimum needs to be useful in production.

To begin with, Marx explains that this objective value itself has a socially determined component. The minimum physiological needs in themselves are not easy to determine, but there are also needs that Marx calls "spiritual", i.e., entertainment, satisfaction ... in short, minimum expectations that evolve (advance and retreat) as the class struggle progresses. That is to say, the workers' struggle itself, with its conquests and setbacks, alters what is considered the minimum value of the labor force.

But, in addition, like any other commodity, its price can fluctuate up and down according to the law of supply and demand. Trade unions are, in part, workers' cartels to fix minimum prices for the sale of their labor power, which can encourage social shortages of labor power by refusing to work under certain conditions.

Against this, the usual response is that wage rises, although formally possible, also makes commodities prices to rise so that, in relative terms, wages remain the same.

This can only be shown to be mistaken if one understands the basis of the value and price of a commodity on a fundamental level.

On the one hand, the price of commodities oscillates around their price of production, which is rooted in the social value of commodities, i.e. the average labor time required to make possible said commodity. This means that, unless there is a remarkable imbalance between supply and demand, the price depends, fundamentally, on the time required to produce said commodity¹.

Therefore, for it to be true that raising wages makes goods more expensive, the wage increase would have to cause a generalized increase in consumption that creates a shortage of goods.

This cannot happen because:

- 1- Goods are not consumed equally by all classes, nor by all strata of the same class.
- 2- A wage increase does not affect the working class as a whole in the same way. There will be sectors of the working class that increase their demand for commodities, others that use it to pay debts of commodities bought on credit, the rural-urban contradiction will also influence access to goods, etc.
- 3- A sustained shortage of a commodity generates an investment opportunity that increases the volume of supply, balancing again supply and demand.

¹ Directly in the form of working time, and indirectly in the form of machinery, which is manufactured using working time.

The truth is that wage increases are born of cutting the profit margin of the capitalists, that is to say, they are born of slightly reducing their profit, without altering the value of the commodity and, therefore, in the long run without affecting prices.

This issue also answers to views expressed mainly by the bourgeoisie and its representatives, who are unrelated to the Labor Movement, such as that goods presuppose a fixed price and that raising wages for some means lowering them for others, or that for all workers to earn more, others must earn less. This view was more prevalent in the early nineteenth century, in the absence of the first gains of the Labor Movement, but it is still common to hear it from the most backward workers.

The feasibility of winning laws that improve the situation of the working class:

Although we will return later to the question of the struggle for reforms, its limits and its problems, which have increased with imperialism, Marx expressed himself in these terms with respect to the conquest of laws in *Das Kapital*:

"We see that only against its will and under the pressure of the masses did the English Parliament give up the laws against Strikes and Trades Unions, after it had itself, for 500 years, held, with shameless egoism, the position of a permanent Trades Union of the capitalists against the labourers."

"The creation of a normal working-day is, therefore, the product of a protracted civil war, more or less dissembled, between the capitalist class and the working-class. (...) For "protection" against "the serpent of their agonies," the labourers must put their heads together, and, as a class, compel the passing of a law, an all-powerful social barrier that shall prevent the very workers from selling, by voluntary contract with capital, themselves and their families into slavery and death."

That is to say, Marx understands the conquest of laws that diminish the arbitrariness and intensity of capitalist exploitation as a possibility that does not deny the class nature of the bourgeois state, but rather affirms it. Just as a more favorable agreement can be won with a particular bourgeois, so can the bourgeoisie as a whole be forced to comply with an agreement in the form of a law, if the force exerted is such that the bourgeoisie has no choice but to break its common front and sacrifice its weakest elements.

The conquest of a law through struggle is the greatest partial conquest of the economic struggle in the capitalist framework, insofar as, in fact, it serves as a lever even for those workers most susceptible to agree to even worse conditions, and erects a "social barrier" which fixes a new reference of what is "normal" exploitation.

The role of unions in the Labor Movement:

Positive aspects of trade unions in the revolutionary struggle:

Communist theory in its first phase, Marxism, identifies that trade unions are:

- A focal point of organization of the working class as a class in itself.
- Schools of socialism
 - Schools of war
- Levers for revolution

Trade unions continually emerge, from their most primordial forms of profession or trade to the more advanced forms of complete industry or of workers in general, as places where the exploited wage earners are pushed to organize to reduce their economic exploitation by the bourgeoisie.

They unite workers, they are centers of workers' organization in an intuitive struggle against the capitalists.

In a relatively autonomous way, the working class ends up uniting as a class in itself, economically, because it is the most effective and efficient way to achieve improvements in their wages, working day and general conditions of exploitation. Although this unity is not easy, irreversible, nor free of contradictions, as we will see in the section on limitations of the unions.

In their most advanced stages, the unions even carry out a secondary part of the political struggle, by demanding laws that limit exploitation in a general way, bourgeois-democratic freedoms for the working class and social guarantees.

Any agreement between capitalists and unions is always made on the basis of capitalist exploitation, with the capitalist class in power, so it is temporary, forcing continuous advances and setbacks to the union struggle, while the general tendency of capitalism is to become more exploitative (higher rates of production, greater risk of wars, greater transcendence of crises ...).

In this struggle for partial demands, the unions test the limits of capitalism, conquer victories that end up being lost, receive the false promises and repression of the State and acquire a certain understanding of their place as a social class, at least at the intuitive level of comradeship.

A worker who has a high level of consciousness on all these issues has an advantage in taking the union struggle to its highest level, so he or she can make those basic levels of understanding evident to his or her union comrades, thus facilitating winning them for the political movement for the emancipation of the working class.

At the time Marxism developed as the first phase of communist ideology, the trade unions were just beginning to develop, and the communist parties as well. Adding this to the fact that imperialism had not yet arisen and, with it, the labor aristocracy with the significance it later came to have, the division of tasks between the trade union and the Communist Party was only roughly pointed out, and the limitations of the trade unions to act spontaneously as a school of socialism, too.

It is worth mentioning that Marx and Engels explicitly regard the trade unions as a potential school of war. This is a part of their role as a school of socialism, but it is worth mentioning explicitly because of its practical significance.

In union struggles, particularly in acute moments such as strikes, workers who fight resolutely learn the need for a certain level of secrecy and security, mobilize broader layers of the population (traditionally their families and neighbors), confront the rudiments of tactics and operations to repel the thugs and repressive forces at the service of the boss, and internalize the need to make sacrifices (stop receiving a salary, distribute their savings through resistance funds...), even for months, to obtain a desired result.

Its character as a school of war is expressed in moments of conflict, and its generalization must be interpreted as a social thermometer, which is not enough by itself, inasmuch as it does not express political consciousness, but it does demonstrate the basic aptitudes to withstand a high intensity conflict such as a revolution.

Quoting Engels²:

In war the injury of one party is the benefit of the other, and since the working-men are on a war footing towards their employers, they do merely what the great potentates do when they get into a quarrel.

The incredible frequency of these strikes proves best of all to what extent the social war has broken out all over England... These strikes, at first skirmishes, sometimes result in weighty struggles; they decide nothing, it is true, but they are the strongest proof that the decisive battle between bourgeoisie and proletariat is approaching. They are the military school of the working-men in which they prepare themselves for the great struggle which cannot be avoided; they are the pronunciamentos of single branches of industry that these too have joined the labour movement... And as schools of war, the Unions are unexcelled.

It is said on the Continent that the English, and especially the working-men, are cowardly, that they cannot carry out a revolution because, unlike the French, they do not riot at intervals, because they apparently accept the bourgeois regime so quietly. This is a complete mistake. The English working-men are second to none in courage; they are quite as restless as the French, but they fight differently. The French, who are by nature political, struggle against social evils with political weapons; the English, for whom politics exist only as a matter of interest, solely in the interest of bourgeois society, fight, not against the Government, but directly against the bourgeoisie; and for the time, this can be done only in a peaceful manner...

It is, in truth, no trifle for a working-man who knows want from experience, to face it with wife and children, to endure hunger and wretchedness for months together, and stand firm and unshaken through it all. What is death, what the galleys which await the French revolutionist, in comparison with gradual starvation, with the daily

2 Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844, Engels.



sight of a starving family, with the certainty of future revenge on the part of the bourgeoisie, all of which the English working-man chooses in preference to subjection under the yoke of the property-holding class? We shall meet later an example of this obstinate, unconquerable courage of men who surrender to force only when all resistance would be aimless and unmeaning. And precisely in this quiet perseverance, in this lasting determination which undergoes a hundred tests every day, the English working-man develops that side of his character which commands most respect. People who endure so much to bend one single bourgeois will be able to break the power of the whole bourgeoisie.

The potential of the unions to include the whole working class, the permeability of communist ideas that their struggle allows and the preparation for combat that the union struggle gives, means that unions are viewed as levers for the revolution, with certain requirements and limitations that we will comment on in the following sections.

Limitations of trade unions in the revolutionary struggle:

The main limitation of the unions, even before the emergence of imperialism and the growth of the labor aristocracy, is precisely their tendency to focus on what Marx called “economic guerrilla warfare” against capitalism, instead of expanding and using their fighting potential in a single torrent against capitalism.

Unions can bring together the whole working class as a united working class, but their very mass character and focus on winning improvements makes political struggle secondary to their day-to-day work.

Marx and Engels, through the International, worked actively to attract the unions and their most militant leaders to communist positions, and to make them aware of their own role as a tool of partial struggle and to facilitate the tasks of the general political movement of the working class and the establishing and strengthening of workers' (communist) parties.

Moreover, unions are not born in a vacuum; they begin as literal unions of workers seeking to reduce their degree of exploitation by making demands on an employer. Although the struggle improves if there are more conscious workers and if they are united with the rest of the workers of other companies, the most usual thing is that isolated workers simply unite for some specific objectives, so that the apoliticism, the fear to explore all the possible forms of struggle, the underestimation of the forces of the workers... are very common.

As a consequence, unions often do not take a stand or take lukewarm positions on actually important political questions, they position themselves in favor of bourgeois politicians or allow themselves to be manipulated by the bourgeois press.

This ends up permeating the union leaders and forms all kinds of petty-bourgeois ideological tendencies inside the unions that hinder the revolutionary tasks, both directly, as well as putting limits to what the union movement could achieve if it fought more resolutely, so that their role as a school of socialism and war diminishes.

Additionally, sometimes it is not even evident to the workers the need to mass unite. Not all workers are exploited with the same intensity (nor at nor out the workplace), nor in exactly the same way (different demands in the short term), and the bourgeoisie can, and often does take advantage of these divisions.

Thus Marx points to a certain tendency towards corporatism, i.e., the division of the trade union movement into “corporations” which fight only for themselves, sometimes even consciously sacrificing or abandoning others. This tendency also exists within unions that are theoretically industry-wide or class-wide, and is used by the leaders more willing to make deals with the capitalists to strengthen their own position in the unions.

This corporatism has its most common manifestation in the defense of those workers who are the easiest to defend (in some extreme cases in the 19th century, with guild unions where only skilled workers on some specific task could be organized) and the exclusion of the poorest workers, abandoning them and even blaming them for their own misery when the capitalists use them as scabs and cheap labor.

From the International, Marx never hesitated to denounce both the apoliticism and deal-making of the unions and their corporatism, very notorious in his day in the cases of English and American trade unionism.

In short, communist theory already points out, from its first stage, that the unions are a partial tool, that they can become aware advocates of the revolutionary struggle and play their active role in the preparation of the revolution; and that, in addition, they have tendencies that communists must fight against, tendencies toward apoliticism and non-confrontation, as well as to the corporatist division of workers.

The Communist Party and the trade unions:

For Marx and Engels there is no doubt, the limitation of the unions is an expression of the limitations of the economic struggle and its secondary character with respect to the political struggle of the proletariat.

The economic struggle can be offensive or defensive, but it is always a struggle against the effects of capitalism and not against the system itself, it always concludes in agreement within its limits.

Although the unions, as we have seen, have a certain component of political struggle and political education, this role is secondary both because their form and their function, the function for which they are born and grow, and this political struggle happens, under normal circumstances, also to limit the effects of capitalism, as a generalization of the economic struggle and the freedoms necessary to wage it.

As the political struggle of the proletariat must be principal, Marxism already pinpoints that the political Party of the proletariat, the one which organizes the working class for themselves, the workers aware of their own interests, must lead the whole of the struggle of the working class, including leading the unions.

The Communist Party is involved in the trade union struggle both through direct participation in the unions and in the political guidance of the unions, always seeking to enhance their favorable points (extending their organization, intensifying their role as schools of socialism and war, and encouraging them to support the political movement of the working class), and minimizing their weak points (combating corporatism, deal-making, apoliticism...).

There are multiple examples of how Marx and Engels themselves carried out this work of political leadership of the Labor Movement, particularly of unions, through the International, but we can group them into 5 categories in an ascending level of political demand:

1. The material, economic, aid given by the International to resistance funds and campaigns for strikes organization and other trade union strife. In fact, this was one of the main ways of popularization of the International and Marxism inside the Labor Movement.
2. Its practical and precise orientations for organizing strikes, sections, federations and trade union centrals, facing matters of economic struggle; the synthesis and diffusion of experiences of particularly important trade union struggle... In general, guiding unions for the adoption of a combative line of work and unifying the whole working class, including the poorest and the unskilled workers.
3. The composition and promotion of struggle programs for demands³, learning from the partial struggles at the international level to set a reference point applicable to unions of all countries, with specific demands, achievable but ambitious, which would be an agreement for the immediate action of workers as a class, as well as setting of organizational goals and political struggle for workers as immediate objectives.

For ease of understanding, we reproduce verbatim Marx's position at the Genoa Congress of the International:

*The formation of mutual aid societies; statistical investigation into the conditions of the working class in all countries, to be carried out by the workers themselves; a detailed list of questions for collecting statistical data; a chapter devoted to the shortening of working hours and the establishment of the eight-hour working day; the prohibition of night work for women; child labour to be limited to two hours, four hours and six hours for children and adolescents, according to different ages; schooling of children to consist of mental, physical and technical training...*⁴

4. The composition of political positions of general interest of the proletariat in its revolutionary struggle (on wars, coups d'état, laws, international questions...) and their

³ For example, in the Genoa Congress of the 1st International.

⁴ From *Marx and the trade-unions*, A.S.Lofovski.

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lofovsky/1935/marx-trade-unions.pdf>

In this same text appears Marx explanation in regards to this question: "I deliberately restricted it (the programme) to those points which allow of immediate agreement and concerted action by the workers and give direct nourishment and impetus to the requirements of the class struggle and the organisation of the workers into a class."

diffusion and active discussion, through articles and direct communication (letters), with the unions, specially with their most combative leaders.

5. The struggle for unions to take a conscious position of their role in the Labor Movement: the necessity of the political struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, the fact that this political struggle ends in revolutionary war and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the recognition that this requires the formation of a Communist Party to lead the political struggle, the need to subordinate the economic struggle to the political struggle and, by extension, to put the resources of the union (its organization, membership, economic resources and knowledge) at the service of the struggle for revolution, and a role as proactive as possible as schools of communism for its members, within the limitations of an organization that aspires to include the entire working class.

Two Line struggle about the unions:

The right (reformist) wing of the Labor Movement evolved at the same time as the Labor Movement itself, and although the specific proposals they expressed have disappeared or changed, the underlying tendency is clearly identifiable today in different forms.

At the initial moment of birth and diffusion of the Labor Movement, with the arrival of the first trade unions, Lasalle in Germany, in addition to his theories on the practical impossibility of achieving collective wage improvements, already discussed above, participated in the setting up of the first German general trade union, but under the open postulate that it should serve primarily to organize workers with the aim of demanding universal suffrage and the adoption of favorable labor laws.

Later, with the arrival and diffusion of the trade unions, the English Fabians, among whom we know, from Marx's writings, Weston in England, proposed a trade unionism focused on class collaboration with the capitalists, the refusal to encourage class hatred and the desire to mobilize the proletariat, and the "alliance" (obedience) to the liberal-democratic wing of the bourgeoisie to act as a pressure lobby.

In both cases, Marx shows, as we have already talked about, that the working class can achieve labor victories, however transitory, through the fruit of its struggle and that these represent an improvement in net terms for their needs, since they arise from reducing the margin of surplus value extracted by the capitalist, not from making commodities more expensive.

But, more importantly for this section, Marx also focuses at this point on pointing out how there is a difference of principle between reformists and revolutionaries in the : while the former ultimately seek social peace within capitalism, and seek to reach agreements as an end in itself, which inevitably leads to promoting the demobilization of the masses, their infantilization and the promotion of a spirit of class collaboration, revolutionaries value trade union struggle, and the struggle for reforms in general, insofar as it enhances the organization of the working class and promotes showing the reality of the capitalist system and the means necessary to end it to its potential gravediggers.

Marx and Engels worked actively, much more than any reformist of their time, for the getting of real trade union victories, but they do so to the extent that these ambitious reforms can only be wrested in long struggle, with important organization, and from them revolutionary militants emerge and the masses are disciplined.

On the other hand, among the ultra-left in the Labor Movement, Proudhon's tendency to reject trade union organization itself as a supposed retreat from the circles of revolutionary conspirators is massively replaced by Bakunin's tendency to extol spontaneous trade union conflict as a revolutionary event in itself.

Bakunin's ultra-left line (anarcho-syndicalism), with similarities in the radical syndicalism of his time (common in France and later in the US' IWW) draws the masses as a homogeneous exploitative whole (in fact, often speaking "of the people" and "the poor" in general), which at any moment can explode with revolutionary rage and which is basically enough to bring together.

They imagine revolution as an extensive and highly radical general strike, that is, it reduces the revolution to a spontaneous process of the impoverished masses. The masses, having revolutionary potential, are presented as spontaneously revolutionary, and their most basic organizations, the trade unions, are presented as the only legitimate revolutionary organization, as long as they start from some points of agreement as to belligerence and the necessary "social revolution".

Like all the ultra-leftists of the Labor Movement after them, they fall into the paradox of reducing the working class to its simplest and most spontaneous version in practice, but, unlike reformists, they do so by swapping the reality of this mass struggle for their desires as a pro-revolutionary minority, seeing social revolution and revolutionary war in strikes and economic protests.

Faced against this trend, Marx, while recognizing that it is a qualitatively different mistake from reformism because it starts from a good revolutionary desire, points out that:

1- A school of war is not the same as a war. The strike is a good school of war, the economic struggle is a good school for the political struggle, but they are not replacements.

2- The struggle for reforms is the natural and most common expression of the mass struggle, and it must be approached seriously so that it is truly a struggle that advances organization and belligerence, at the same time that it exposes the limits of capitalism.

3- Among the masses, the proletariat is the most revolutionary class. The socialized workers in the productive chains are more focused and trained in the struggle, and their position in production enables them to build the new power after sweeping away the exploiters.

4- The unions, whatever their Statute says, tend naturally to be organizations of economic struggle, with an auxiliary role in the political struggle. The working class needs to have its own independent political Party, which leads the whole Labor Movement for the seizure of power and the construction of a Dictatorship of the Proletariat to oppress the overthrown exploiters, since the relatively short period of revolution will not be enough to sweep away the legacies of capitalism and the resistance of the former exploiters.

2 - MARXISM-LENINISM

Marxism-Leninism analyzes and reacts to the passage of capitalism to its last and highest stage, Imperialism, which has important effects on the Labor Movement.

The double influence of Imperialism on the Labor Movement:

With imperialism, the unequal distribution of imperialist superprofits makes it possible to nourish an upper layer of the working class, more or less extensive according to the country and historical moment.

This upper layer is usually configured in those sectors of the proletariat more skilled, concentrated in more modern and stable companies. Having as its social base this upper layer, and secondarily the petty bourgeoisie swollen by imperialist superprofits, a labor aristocracy is born and develops, both in companies and in unions and political parties with a workers' base, a labor aristocracy that acts as lieutenants of the capitalists among the workers, that is, that cooperates more or less consciously in disciplining and keeping the working class at bay.

This labor aristocracy maintains its position thanks to the existence of an upper layer of the working class that is capable of valuing to a certain extent the crumbs negotiated by the reformists, and, with their union and party dues, their votes and their tolerance, the labor aristocracy of unions and social-democratic parties can afford to manipulate and disorganize the deep masses of the proletariat, which makes up the most of the proletariat and their families, and which can become more belligerent in case of mobilization.

The political expression of reformism in the Labor Movement thus takes on a new form as a trend within the workers' parties of that time: economism. Economism takes that which is spontaneous in the workers' struggle, principally its economic struggle, and tries to present it as the main focus of the struggle of the proletariat. That is to say, it swaps the struggle for the seizure of power for the struggle for reforms, the revolutionary Party of the proletariat for a liberal reformist bourgeois party with a working class base.

But, on the other hand, imperialism sabotages its own effort to demobilize the Labor Movement because it sharpens all the social and economic contradictions to the extreme, provoking destructive economic crises and wars, which force the labor aristocracy to commit political suicide every so often to save its privilege, at the expense even of the upper layer of the proletariat which serves as its social base.

As pointed out in our Ideological Document, the discarding of the revolutionary road by the Social-Democratic Parties and the bureaucracy of the trade unions is a class expression of the labor aristocracy, and means, in practice, the forsaking of the masses, particularly of the deep masses which make up the most of the proletariat.

And this means that the revolutionaries, the communists, have the obligation to constitute Communist Parties that do lead the broad working masses to the revolutionary struggle, and have the opportunity to rely on the daily struggles of these broad masses as a starting point.

The bureaucratization of unions in the imperialist center:

The unions grow in parallel with the extension of capitalist relations of production and need leaders paid full or part time to organize them, and the successive conquest of different labor protection laws also require a certain degree of specialization among the union employees.

Imperialism starts from the reduction to the economic struggle of the unions, from their natural tendency to corporatism and deal-making, to the bureaucratization of their leaders, and exacerbates these.

The labor aristocracy is born in the unions taking advantage of the relatively greater weight of the most skilled workers, more difficult to replace and easier to organize of the monopolistic parent companies. It sacrifices the rest of the workers who are more complicated to organize, and takes advantage of the relative tolerance of capitalism that can be achieved with the social reforms "from above" that social democrats and other parties of the bourgeois left in the imperialist states usually achieve.

They fatten the unions apparatus to extend their network of influence, reduce mobilization to the minimum necessary to maintain their position and impose a bureaucratic way of working, in all senses, to avoid the organization and mobilization of the entire working class that could question their machinations.

Finally, they use their position of domination of the trade union apparatus to extend their conformist, demobilizing and bureaucratic vision of the Labor Movement, and to repress those who cross the line, going so far as to collaborate with the capitalists.

In spite of everything, the working class needs to fight because of its material conditions, and it is often pushed to do so.

As a general rule, therefore, Lenin points out that the trade unions remain centers of organization of the working class, even when they are organized by reformists or even reactionaries, and the leadership of the labor aristocracy has a crucial weakness in the fact that it is based on disappointing and demoralizing the masses, something that hinders the trade union struggle itself.

However, even if they are centers of organization, as long as they are subdued by the bureaucrats of the labor aristocracy, they cannot be considered schools of socialism, much less of war, but schools of political opportunism and reformism.

Although all unions that bring together workers offer the opportunity to be a place in which to ignite the economic struggle and educate politically the working class, only unions that consistently wage class struggle against the capitalists can be considered a school of communism.

Also, in numerous situations, it is pointed out by Marxism-Leninism how the over-representation of the upper layer of the working class and the reformist training of the union cadres makes that, relatively commonly, the most advanced workers are not unionized or, at least, are not the most prominent in the unions, and that the non-unionized masses of workers are more combative and belligerent than those organized in the reformist or reactionary unions.

The new relations between the Communist Party and the Labor Movement:

Due to the polemic nature of this point and the richness of the nuances that make up the Marxist-Leninist line, in this section we introduce a larger number of first-hand quotations from the theoreticians of Marxism-Leninism.

The priority is the extension of revolutionary ideas and organization in the Labor Movement:

Marxism-Leninism shows that trade union struggle and the spontaneous response to capitalism in general is something that the working class can do by itself, in fact, often does, and that for building the Communist Party and for the revolution the main issue is always the formation of revolutionary cadres and the solving of the priority questions for the seizure of power, both at the theoretical and practical level.

To carry out this work of agitation, propaganda, organization and political struggle for the revolution, the economic struggle is one of the possible starting points among the workers, but it is not the only one, nor is it always the most effective. While, indeed, workers often take their first step in the trade union struggle, advanced workers only broaden their outlook when they are given an understanding of the whole of capitalist oppression, of how the different classes and layers act in the class struggle.

"Why do the Russian workers still manifest little revolutionary activity in response to the brutal treatment of the people by the police, the persecution of religious sects, the flogging of peasants, the outrageous censorship, the torture of soldiers, the persecution of the most innocent cultural undertakings, etc.? Is it because the "economic struggle" does not "stimulate" them to this, because such activity does not "promise palpable results", because it produces little that is "positive"? To adopt such an opinion, we repeat, is merely to direct the charge where it does not belong, to blame the working masses for one's own philistinism (or Bernsteinism). We must blame ourselves, our lagging behind the mass movement, for still being unable to organise sufficiently wide, striking, and rapid exposures of all the shameful outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it), the most backward worker will understand, or will feel, that the students and religious sects, the peasants and the authors are being abused and outraged by those same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life. Feeling that, he himself will be filled with an irresistible desire to react, and he will know how to hoot the censors one day, on another day to demonstrate outside the house of a governor who has brutally suppressed a peasant uprising, on still another day to teach a lesson to the gendarmes in surplices who are doing the work of the Holy Inquisition, etc. As yet we have done very little, almost nothing, to bring before the

working masses prompt exposures on all possible issues. Many of us as yet do not recognise this as our bounden duty but trail spontaneously in the wake of the "drab everyday struggle", in the narrow confines of factory life." ("What Is To Be Done?", V.I. Lenin)

The economist trends within the Labor Movement tend to grow in number because they lower themselves to the level of the backward worker and the intermediate worker, but that can only lead to reinforce the union narrowness and to avoid the task that only organized communists can carry out:

"Our Economists, including Rabocheye Dyelo, were successful because they adapted themselves to the backward workers. But the Social-Democratic worker, the revolutionary worker (and the number of such workers is growing) will indignantly reject all this talk about struggle for demands "promising palpable results", etc., because he will understand that this is only a variation of the old song about adding a kopek to the ruble. Such a worker will say to his counsellors from Rabochaya Mysl and Rabocheye Dyelo: you are busying yourselves in vain, gentlemen, and shirking your proper duties, by meddling with such excessive zeal in a job that we can very well manage ourselves. There is nothing clever in your assertion that the Social-Democrats' task is to lend the economic struggle itself a political character; that is only the beginning, it is not the main task of the Social-Democrats. For all over the world, including Russia, the police themselves often take the initiative in lending the economic struggle a political character, and the workers themselves learn to understand whom the government supports.⁴⁸ The "economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government", about which you make as much fuss as if you had discovered a new America, is being waged in all parts of Russia, even the most remote, by the workers themselves who have heard about strikes, but who have heard almost nothing about socialism. The "activity" you want to stimulate among us workers, by advancing concrete demands that promise palpable results, we are already displaying and in our everyday, limited trade union work we put forward these concrete demands, very often without any assistance whatever from the intellectuals. But such activity is not enough for us; we are not children to be fed on the thin gruel of "economic" politics alone; we want to know everything that others know, we want to learn the details of all aspects of political life and to take part actively in every single political event. In order that we may do this, the intellectuals must talk to us less of what we already know.⁴⁹ and tell us more about what we do not yet know and what we can never learn from our factory and "economic" experience, namely, political knowledge. You intellectuals can acquire this knowledge, and it is your duty to bring it to us in a hundred- and a thousand-fold greater measure than you have done up to now; and you must bring it to us, not only in the form of discussions, pamphlets, and articles (which very often – pardon our frankness – are rather dull), but precisely in the form of vivid exposures of what our government and our governing classes are doing at this very moment in all spheres of life. Devote more zeal to carrying out this duty and talk less about "raising the activity of the working masses". We are far more active than you think, and we are quite able to

support, by open street fighting, even demands that do not promise any "palpable results" whatever. It is not for you to "raise" our activity, because activity is precisely the thing you yourselves lack. Bow less in subservience to spontaneity, and think more about raising your own activity, gentlemen!" ("What Is To Be Done?", V.I. Lenin)

The clarification of ideological and political positions is the priority for the revolutionaries to unite the advanced workers and build the vanguard Party. The spread of these positions in the form of political mass struggle is the fundamental objective of these advanced workers.

"The moral to be drawn from this is simple. If we begin with the solid foundation of a strong organisation of revolutionaries, we can ensure the stability of the movement as a whole and carry out the aims both of Social-Democracy and of trade unions proper. If, however, we begin with a broad workers' organisation, which is supposedly most "accessible" to the masses (but which is actually most accessible to the gendarmes and makes revolutionaries most accessible to the police), we shall achieve neither the one aim nor the other; we shall not eliminate our rule-of-thumb methods, and, because we remain scattered and our forces are constantly broken up by the police, we shall only make trade unions of the Zubatov and Ozerov type the more accessible to the masses." ("What Is To Be Done?", V.I. Lenin)

"Look at the Germans: their forces are a hundredfold greater than ours. But they understand perfectly well that really capable agitators, etc., are not often promoted from the ranks of the "average". For this reason they immediately try to place every capable working man in conditions that will enable him to develop and apply his abilities to the fullest: he is made a professional agitator, he is encouraged to widen the field of his activity, to spread it from one factory to the whole of the industry, from a single locality to the whole country. He acquires experience and dexterity in his profession; he broadens his outlook and increases his knowledge; he observes at close quarters the prominent political leaders from other localities and of other parties; he strives to rise to their level and combine in himself the knowledge of the working-class environment and the freshness of socialist convictions with professional skill, without which. the proletariat cannot wage a stubborn struggle against its excellently trained enemies." ("What Is To Be Done?", V.I. Lenin)

To sum up, Marxism-Leninism deepens the knowledge about the consciousness of the masses and its evolution, condensed in the phrase that the political consciousness of the working class comes "from outside", that is, that union struggle produces advances at the organizational level and an intuition of the contradiction between proletarians and capitalists, but does not contribute by itself more than a "syndicalist" vision of workers' politics, that is, of assumption of the capitalist framework.

This means that any policy based on "elevating the economic struggle of the working class to the political terrain", that is, taking the economic struggle to its ultimate consequences of belligerence and entirety, will continue to be limited exclusively to a reformist struggle. That

is to say, any policy based on extending union and reform struggle endlessly in the hopes that it will “overwhelm” capitalism will simply find itself haggling over the capitalists' profit margin while exploitation and imperialist decay intensify in the form of wars, repression and crisis, with the working class in an ideological, political and organizational straitjacket incapable of breaking out of that cycle.

The Role of Trade Unions in the Revolutionary Struggle:

In capitalism in general, and more acutely in the imperialist stage, the bureaucratization and militarization of the State excludes workers from politics and means that, by definition, organized workers, whether at the Party or trade union level, will always be a minority:

“What is this largest proportion of politically conscious and active wage slaves that has so far been recorded in capitalist society? One million members of the Social-Democratic Party - out of 15,000,000 wage-workers! Three million organized in trade unions--out of 15,000,000!

Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich--that is the democracy of capitalist society. If we look more closely into the machinery of capitalist democracy, we see everywhere, in the “petty”--supposedly petty--details of the suffrage (residential qualifications, exclusion of women, etc.), in the technique of the representative institutions, in the actual obstacles to the right of assembly (public buildings are not for “paupers”!), in the purely capitalist organization of the daily press, etc., etc.,--we see restriction after restriction upon democracy.” (“The State and Revolution”, V.I. Lenin).

Having the necessary force for revolution will depend on workers supporting or, at least, remaining favorably neutral to the first revolutionary outburst:

To throw only the vanguard into the decisive battle, before the entire class, the broad masses, have taken up a position either of direct support for the vanguard, or at least of sympathetic neutrality towards it and of precluded support for the enemy, would be, not merely foolish but criminal. Propaganda and agitation alone are not enough for an entire class, the broad masses of the working people, those oppressed by capital, to take up such a stand. For that, the masses must have their own political experience. (V.I. Lenin, “Left-Wing” Communism—an Infantile Disorder).

The broadening of union struggle to the possible maximum is positive for communists because it adds broad masses of workers to the principles of the struggle. Although, it generates a bureaucracy, even more so in imperialist bourgeois democracies, it offers the possibility that, even with the bureaucratic control of the labor aristocracy, workers can take up their own economic struggle and we communists can focus on using that center of organization as an audience, and on exposing the fake comrades that union bureaucrats are.

"The workers' organisations for the economic struggle should be trade union organisations. Every Social-Democratic worker should as far as possible assist and actively work in these organisations. But, while this is true, it is certainly not in our interest to demand that only Social-Democrats should be eligible for membership in the "trade" unions, since that would only narrow the scope of our influence upon the masses. Let every worker who understands the need to unite for the struggle against the employers and the government join the trade unions. The very aim of the trade unions would be impossible of achievement, if they did not unite all who have attained at least this elementary degree of understanding, if they were not very broad organisations. The broader these organisations, the broader will be our influence over them – an influence due, not only to the "spontaneous" development of the economic struggle, but to the direct and conscious effort of the socialist trade union members to influence their comrades. [...]"

The legalisation of non-socialist and non-political labour unions in Russia has begun, and there is no doubt that every advance made by our rapidly growing Social-Democratic working-class movement will multiply and encourage attempts at legalisation – attempts proceeding for the most part from supporters of the existing order, but partly also from the workers themselves and from liberal intellectuals. [...] Our duty is also to unmask any conciliatory, "harmonious" remarks that slip into the speeches of liberals at public workers' meetings, whether these remarks are due to the fact that these people sincerely believe that peaceful collaboration between the classes is desirable, or because they wish to ingratiate themselves with the authorities, or simply because of their inability.

What the tares are, we have already indicated. By the wheat we mean attracting the attention of ever larger numbers, including the most backward sections, of the workers to social and political questions, and freeing ourselves, the revolutionaries, from functions that are essentially legal (the distribution of legal books, mutual aid, etc.), the development of which will inevitably provide us with an increasing quantity of material for agitation. In this sense, we may, and should, say to the Zubatovs and the Ozerovs: Keep at it, gentlemen, do your best! Whenever you place a trap in the path of the workers (either by way of direct provocation, or by the "honest" demoralisation of the workers with the aid of "Struvism") we will see to it that you are exposed. But whenever you take a real step forward, though it be the most "timid zigzag", we will say: Please continue! And the only step that can be a real step forward is a real, if small, extension of the workers' field of action. Every such extension will be to our advantage and will help to hasten the advent of legal societies of the kind in which it will not be agents provocateurs who are detecting socialists, but socialists who are gaining adherents. (V.I. Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?")

The advent of labor aristocratic bureaucracy in unions makes impossible a tactic based on convincing union leaders or unions as a whole "from outside" to join the revolutionary line, and butchers their role as a school of socialism.

In order to be able to organize the takeover of power, the Communist Party must have a decisive political force within trade unions, an influence that is measured by the degree of advancement of communist positions within trade unions against those of the labor aristocracy, to win, to a certain extent, trade unions for the workers, for the class struggle, and to replace the labor aristocrats with forward-thinking, revolutionary workers:

"Further. In countries more advanced than Russia, a certain reactionism in the trade unions has been and was bound to be manifested in a far greater measure than in our country. Our Mensheviks found support in the trade unions (and to some extent still do so in a small number of unions), as a result of the latter's craft narrow-mindedness, craft selfishness and opportunism. The Mensheviks of the West have acquired a much firmer footing in the trade unions; there the craft-union, narrow-minded, selfish, case-hardened, covetous, and petty-bourgeois "labour aristocracy", imperialist-minded, and imperialist-corrupted, has developed into a much stronger section than in our country. That is incontestable. The struggle against the Gomperses, and against the Jouhaux, Hendersons, Merrheims, Legiens and Co. in Western Europe is much more difficult than the struggle against our Mensheviks, who are an absolutely homogeneous social and political type. This struggle must be waged ruthlessly, and it must unfailingly be brought — as we brought it—to a point when all the incorrigible leaders of opportunism and social-chauvinism are completely discredited and driven out of the trade unions." (V.I. Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder).

Lenin explains that this decisive force is relative to the revolutionary plan of each country, it is not a total absolute majority among the workers, since this would contradict the general principle that, under capitalism, it is impossible for all workers to participate in politics on a continuous basis:

"Political power cannot be captured (and the attempt to capture it should not be made) until the struggle has reached a certain stage. This "certain stage" will be different in different countries and in different circumstances; it can be correctly gauged only by thoughtful, experienced and knowledgeable political leaders of the proletariat in each particular country. (In Russia the elections to the Constituent Assembly in November 1917, a few days after the proletarian revolution of October 25, 1917, were one of the criteria of the success of this struggle. In these elections the Mensheviks were utterly defeated; they received 700,000 votes—1,400,000 if the vote in Transcaucasia is added—as against 9,000,000 votes polled by the Bolsheviks. See my article, "The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat", in the Communist International 25 No. 7-8.)" (V.I. Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder).

Work within unions must be done in such a way as to unmask the reformists and reactionaries who control the unions. Splitting or leaving unions is to surrender workers to the labor aristocracy and the capitalists:

"We are waging a struggle against the "labour aristocracy" in the name of the masses of the workers and in order to win them over to our side; we are waging the struggle against the opportunist and social-chauvinist leaders in order to win the working class over to our side. It would be absurd to forget this most elementary and most selfevident truth. Yet it is this very absurdity that the German "Left" Communists perpetrate when, because of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary character of the trade union top leadership, they jump to the conclusion that ... we must withdraw from the trade unions, refuse to work in them, and create new and artificial forms of labour organisation! This is so unpardonable a blunder that it is tantamount to the greatest service Communists could render the bourgeoisie. Like all the opportunist, social-chauvinist, and Kautskyite trade union leaders, our Mensheviks are nothing but "agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement" (as we have always said the Mensheviks are), or "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class", to use the splendid and profoundly true expression of the followers of Daniel De Leon in America. To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the insufficiently developed or backward masses of workers under the influence of the reactionary leaders, the agents of the bourgeoisie, the labour aristocrats, or "workers who have become completely bourgeois" (cf. Engels's letter to Marx in 1858 about the British workers). This ridiculous "theory" that Communists should not work in reactionary trade unions reveals with the utmost clarity the frivolous attitude of the "Left" Communists towards the question of influencing the "masses", and their misuse of clamour about the "masses". If you want to help the "masses" and win the sympathy and support of the "masses", you should not fear difficulties, or pinpricks, chicanery, insults and persecution from the "leaders" (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), but must absolutely work wherever the masses are to be found. You must be capable of any sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles, in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and patiently in those institutions, societies and associations—even the most reactionary—in which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses are to be found. (V.I. Lenin, "Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder).

This thesis was developed and applied by the Comintern and its international trade union organization, the Profintern (The Red International of Labor Unions), to multiple cases, which is reduced to: the Communist Party must go to the unions to intensify union struggles, involving those workers whom the union bureaucracy leaves behind (many of them not yet unionized), using the moments of struggle aggravation to discover new activists and workers leaders and to persuade the advanced elements, progressively leading sectors of the union-organized proletariat to revolutionary positions, throwing out the bureaucrats and replacing them with conscious workers.

With this intervention the Communist Party trains its membership in the struggle for reforms, gradually re-establishing the role of school of communism in the trade unions, gradually displacing and sweeping away the influence of the labor aristocracy, thus gaining, on the one hand, the recruitment of workers to fight for the general cause of the proletariat and, on the other hand, a unified red trade union movement useful for the revolution.

The political thesis of the Comintern developed both against right-wing visions which reduced the role of the Communist Party to that of an auxiliary organization to trade unions or which limited its work among workers to only working among the unionized workers, and against left-wing visions which, within the Communist Parties, above all, took the form of "dual unionism", which split the most advanced workers to form red unions, not representative of their comrades in struggle, feeding sectarianism among workers and indirectly strengthening the trade union bureaucracy.

We can see the case of combat against the ultra-left line and the right-wing line in the trade union question within the same Party, the Communist Party of Germany. An example from 1926 against the ultra-left positions of leaving the trade unions:

"The immediate task of the German Communist Party is to overcome the "ultra-Left" danger [...] How, for instance, are we to explain the generally known fact that the Communist Parties of Britain, France and Czechoslovakia have already obtained important footholds in the trade-union movements of their countries, have found their way to the broad masses of the working class, and are beginning to win the confidence, if not of the majority, at least of a considerable section of the working class, whereas in Germany the position in this respect is still weak? It is to be explained above all by the fact that the "ultra-Lefts" are still strong in the German Communist Party, and that they still look sceptically on the trade unions, on the slogan of a united front, on the slogan of winning over the trade unions. Everyone knows that until recently the "ultra-Lefts" upheld the slogan "Get out of the trade unions." Everyone knows that survivals of this anti-proletarian slogan have not yet been completely eradicated among the "ultra-Lefts." (I.V. Stalin, "The Fight Against Right and "Ultra-Left" Deviations").

And another example from 1928 against the right-wing positions of trade union tailism and their framework limitations:

"At the time of the Ruhr battles the German Communists noted the fact that the unorganised workers proved to be more revolutionary than the organised workers. Humbert-Droz is outraged by this and declares that it could not have been so. Strange! Why could it not have been so? There are about a million workers in the Ruhr. Of them, about two hundred thousand are organised in trade unions. The trade unions are directed by reformist bureaucrats who are connected in all manner of ways with the capitalist class. Why is it surprising, then, that the unorganised workers proved to be more revolutionary than the organised? Could it indeed have been otherwise?

I might tell you of even more "surprising" facts from the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia. With us, it happened not infrequently that the masses proved to be more revolutionary than (some of) their communist leaders. That is well known to all the Russian Bolsheviks. It was this that Lenin had in mind when he said that we must not only teach the masses, but also learn from the masses. [...]

The same must be said of Serra. He does not approve of the fact that the German Communists, in their struggle to organise the locked-out metalworkers, went beyond the framework of the existing trade unions and shook this framework. He regards this as an infringement of the resolutions of the Fourth Congress of the Profintern. He claims that the Profintern called upon Communists to work only within the trade unions. That is nonsense, comrades! The Profintern did not call for anything of the kind. [...]

The merit of the German Communists is precisely that they did not allow themselves to be scared by talk about "the framework of the trade unions" and went beyond this framework by organising the struggle of the non-organised workers against the will of the trade union bureaucrats. The merit of the German Communists is precisely that they sought for and found new forms of struggle and organisation of the unorganised workers. It is possible that in doing so they committed a number of trifling errors. But no new undertaking is ever free from errors. From the fact that we must work within the reformist trade unions — provided only that they are mass organisations — it does not at all follow that we must confine our mass work to work within the reformist trade unions, that we must become slaves of the standards and demands of those unions. If the reformist leadership is identifying itself with capitalism (see the resolutions of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern and the Fourth Congress of the Profintern), while the working class is waging a struggle against capitalism, can it be affirmed that the struggle of the working class, led by the Communist Party, can avoid breaking to some extent the existing reformist framework of the trade unions?" (I.V. Stalin, "The Right Danger in the German Communist Party").

The difficult practical problem of maintaining the priority of agitation, propaganda, revolutionary organization and political struggle while taking advantage of the broad masses' struggle for reforms, and specially the workers' trade union struggle, to recruit and train advanced elements, also translated into theoretical problems clearly noticeable in the line promulgated by the Comintern and the Profintern.

In this line, we observe a certain mechanicism where the line of winning a decisive force over the labor aristocracy, that "certain degree" of which Lenin speaks, gives way to speak of an absolute majority, practically impossible under the bourgeois state and with the bourgeoisie effect of imperialist superprofits.

Thus, the Comintern and the Profintern have handed us down invaluable contributions orienting the practical intervention among the masses, clarifying problems that arise in the struggle of the Labor Movement on a daily basis, but it should not be ignored that, progressively, their theses were being diluted by the fact that most of the working class will not unionize until once power has been taken, that the upper echelon has more relative weight (although not necessarily absolute) inside unions than the broad proletarian masses, and that the main thing about the union struggle and winning the unions for a revolutionary line is to train the advanced and root them with the broad masses to unleash the political struggle.

In any case, it is clear that the general Marxist-Leninist line seeks to gather and train theoretically advanced workers of all classes, mainly the proletariat, to gain a decisive force in the trade union movement to be able to build a unified trade union movement around the need for revolution, a decisive force that will be different in each country, and that implies, at least, the favorable neutrality of most of the working class.

This unified trade union movement openly favorable to the revolution and its Communist Party is necessary because, at some point, the unionized workers are expected to leave the simple struggle for reforms and put their massive organization and their knowledge of production at the service of the general need for political struggle: the ability to call for political struggles or to facilitate the control of production in the service of the seizure of power and the maintenance and extension of the revolutionary civil war.

Thus, at the strategic level Marx's view is confirmed and deepened: the Labor Movement needs for its success a unified and openly communist trade union movement, which recognizes the leadership of the Communist Party.

It should be noted that, in Lenin's early writings on the question (What Is To Be Done?) he speaks of the need for unions to be politically neutral or non-partisan. Later this position is retracted, assessing that tactically it may make sense in cases of repression of the communist movement, that it should be understood in the context of a polemic in which the Party was not really in a position to lead the union, and to emphasize this direction would result in enhancing the economist line.

Trade Unions in the Dictatorship of the Proletariat:

Marxism-Leninism also developed the question of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and socialist construction.

Specifically, the Marxist-Leninist theory points out the role of the trade unions in the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as a transmission belt of the Communist Party with the broad masses of non-Communist workers, especially in the field related to workers' control of production and surveillance of the bureaucracy and collaborators with the bourgeoisie.

Only with the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is it possible to really win the bourgeois-democratic demand that all workers can be effectively organized in a union that looks after their interests.

New forms of struggle in the Labor Movement:

In the imperialist era all the contradictions of capitalist society are sharpened, and this allows Marxism-Leninism to unveil new forms of struggle of the Labor Movement.

The Struggle for Control of Production:

Imperialism facilitates the movement of capital, while socializing production to an unprecedented level. This continually sharpens the question of who should control production, a struggle that was extensively studied by The Red International of Labor Unions

Outside a crisis of production, this contradiction exists mainly on the terrain of ideological struggle, and it is common for workers to detect everyday the wasteful and arbitrary measures, as inefficient as oppressive, of the capitalists and their chain of petty-bourgeois bosses.

At times when there is no situation of revolutionary crisis, in isolation, the struggle to control production arises in the terrain of economic struggle as a response to a lockout or a decrease in production due to some crisis or corporate arbitrariness. Workers try to force "their" capitalist, bosses as a whole or the State, to ensure that production will continue, to devise new products that give continuity to their jobs, or even take the factory as a measure of pressure and use it as an auxiliary form to produce tools of struggle.

It is common that, at such moments, the labor aristocracy tries to use this struggle to promote its line of class appeasement, by means of proposals for "co-management" of the enterprises (including union bosses in the management of the enterprise), or to make the workers swallow serious setbacks in their conditions to enforce important issues of the interest of the owners of the enterprise.

In times of social crisis, where trade union struggle has escalated into a trade union struggle of a large part of the working class, it is common that the struggle for control of production on the economic terrain can be expressed in a more militant manner: the seizure of factories to be used in favor of the strike struggle (objects for combat, provisioning of families...).

In times of revolutionary crisis, the mass seizure of factories is a slogan that quickly catches on among the advanced layers of the working class. Even so, it is not the same as taking power, and it can be quickly disbanded. It happened in the October 34 strike and it happened in Italy before the seizure of the State by fascists, and, while in the first case it was linked to the seizure of power in Asturias, in the second, it stagnated and led to confusion and repression. The Profinintern points out to communists the importance of knowing how to identify well the moment and potential, and if there is no real plan for the seizure of power, try to use these factory takeovers with great pedagogy to strengthen the mass struggle.

The slogan of workers' control of production is not the same as the slogan of the seizure of power. It is, in a way, the furthest the struggle for reform can go, the furthest tradeunionist consciousness can go. It is an integral reform that is only possible under socialism, it facilitates exposing the question of the seizure of power in a relatively clear way and it is an even clearer social thermometer than the great union struggles, but it can stagnate and be redirected by the labor aristocracy or disbanded if it is not accompanied by the seizure of power.

The struggle for the seizure of power in the Labor Movement:

Workers' councils to fight for general political issues (soviets) arose, of course, also in the factories and other workplaces, with the maximum example in pre-revolutionary Russia.

For long periods of time they were organs of resistance and political struggle which also served to advance the in its trade union aspect, and often effectively went beyond the narrow trade union framework.

The Communist Party must pinpoint when the situation is ripe for these councils to transition from being bodies of political struggle to bodies of workers' power that eliminate and replace bourgeois power, as the Bolsheviks led by Lenin knew how to do, thus assuming the basis of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

3 - MARXISM-LENINISM-MAOISM

The key contributions are those pertaining to the mass line and the system of contradictions.

However, there is no agreed general Maoist analysis about the problem of the Labor Movement in the first world, so we will humbly try to analyze it under the MLM lens.

The proletariat is still exploited in imperialist powers:

As we have already pinpointed when speaking about Marxism-Leninism's contributions, imperialism has two contradictory tendencies: on the one hand, to general decadence, to "reactionarization" and intensification of exploitation. On the other hand, to the unequal distribution of crumbs from imperialist superprofits among the working class of imperialist centers, concentrating it in a higher layer of more skilled workers, stable and generally concentrated in the monopolistic parent companies, and particularly in the labor aristocracy of unions and reformist parties.

Of these two tendencies, Maoism points out very clearly that the main one is the first. As much as imperialism gives a little leeway to the capitalists to have an escape valve in imperialist powers, the problems of capitalism have been accumulating: to the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, the need to intensify exploitation, productive anarchy and the cyclical character of the crises of production already present in pre-monopoly capitalism and which become more intense in imperialism; are added the bureaucratization-militarization of States and the inevitability of wars among imperialists and of imperialists against the peoples dominated by imperialism.

Although there are factors which increase the relative size of the upper echelon of the working class (rentier character of the country, influence over colonies and semi-colonies...), capitalists retain, in the first world, those processes of production, maintenance and distribution of commodities which would not be profitable if they had to be carried out in dominated countries, either because the costs of maintenance and distribution involved, or because the need for greater training of the labor force, or because the need to guarantee the supply of commodities.

That is to say, the proletariat, the working class in socialized chains of production, distribution and maintenance of commodities, continues to exist and the capitalist class continues to have reasons to exploit it, and to want to "optimize the costs of production" (in bourgeois terms), that is to say, to intensify the exploitation of the proletariat.

Although monopolies can enter into occasional collaboration, the main thing between them is competition, both among themselves and with aspiring monopolistic companies. The same happens among imperialist powers. This competition continually shakes the gains of the working class and motivates capitalists to seek ways to divide workers to reduce the

upper layer to the minimum necessary, and sometimes the lust for profit leads them to attack together even this upper layer to reduce it below the minimum necessary or as a layer to be extinct within the company.

In imperialist powers we find networks of small and medium enterprises where exploitation is not disguised at all, where working conditions can become extreme. We find large enterprises eternally aspiring to occupy a position of monopolistic center, where the capitalists do not hesitate to continuously step on the gas pedal of exploitation in order to achieve their goals.

But also in the monopolistic parent companies we find different categories, with more thriving and modern companies as opposed to weaker or backward ones where exploitation is more intense; others that have been acquired by stronger monopolies and have become a second-rate firm. In the monopolistic parent companies there is a strong segregation of the workforce into a multitude of categories: external and internal, permanent and discontinuous, and sometimes the advantageous conditions are even reduced to a specific group by task or by preservation of conditions conquered decades ago.

Native or foreign born, the same working class:

Additionally, the imperialist powers force workers from the third world to migrate and incorporate themselves among the deep masses of the proletariat, in sectors that cannot be outsourced, mostly in the agricultural sector.

These proletarians wage their day-to-day economic struggle spontaneously in fields and factories, mostly in a segregated manner due to the passivity of the labor aristocracy, the bigger hostility on the part of the State... And, on the other hand, their natural spontaneous explosiveness also has its specific impediments such as the influence of semi-feudalism of their countries of origin (ties to religious representatives, for example) and their small labor aristocracy generally disconnected from trade unions, taking shape as the immigrant overseer at the boss' service.

As communists we say that immigrant proletarians not only can organize and fight, but in fact do so, having to endure the reproduction of imperialist domination on our own soil. It is our task as communists in the Labor Movement to promote and organize their struggle in a way that integrates with the class struggle in Spain and with the workers' struggle in particular, thus unleashing the potential of these comrades who are kept under the imperialist and cacique yoke.

The proletarianization of the popular classes is the dominant trend:

As Marx and Engels demonstrated, capitalism tends to simplify social contradictions, grouping classes into proletarians and bourgeois. All working people tend to see their living and working conditions more and more similar to those of the proletariat, the class of common wage earners who carry out mainly manual labor in socialized chains of production or similar work centers.

This process is not immediate, it is a general tendency of capitalist society, the result of the need to intensify exploitation by concentrating property and socializing production.

Imperialist monopolism accentuates proletarianization in the imperialist powers, because finance capital seeks new sectors to incorporate into monopolistic control, first by incorporating petty bourgeois and specialists into their enterprises, then by standardizing their way of working to gradually replace them with wage laborers each time with a lower level of necessary training.

This tendency interacts with the law of uneven development of capitalism in ways that are difficult to foresee, causing proletarianization to develop in cycles that can take decades. For example, in the car manufacturing sector, at the beginning of the 20th century the industry's tycoons concentrated craftsmen and specialists from different sectors; they then studied and standardized their ways of working until they were able to replace them to a large extent with semi-skilled proletarians.

Progressive waves of automation accelerated and intensified the work of these workers. While they eliminated jobs at the heart of the sector monopolistic matrixes, they also multiplied production, distribution, quality control and maintenance needs.

Many of these job positions, in the beginning, were carried out by specialized workers and petty-bourgeois technicians or administrators. This may have created the impression for a time that proletarianization was slowing down, but it was only readying a new wave.

On the one hand, automation (increase of constant capital) brought stagnation and productive overcapacity (lowering of the rate of profit), which has led the capitalists to make a large part of their workforces seasonal, lowering the conditions of the well-off workers, and that the large, medium and small companies complementary to the monopolistic parent company shun the incorporation of more automation.

On the other hand, proletarian maintenance and distribution jobs have grown as they have become more standardized.

And, finally, the general stagnation of the main monopolistic strongholds (the big production chains), forces finance capital to restart this cycle in new productive sectors, or even in sectors of low added value, previously barely explored, left to the competition of the petty-bourgeois: such as the hotel and retail trade, logistics and distribution of goods of low added value.

That is to say, in cycles that take decades, imperialist capitalism tends to expand the deep masses of the proletariat both by the elimination of the relative control of the workers over their own work (intensification of the division of labor through the standardization of tasks that makes it easier to make workers replaceable), and by the incorporation of wage earners previously outside the socialized chains of production.

In the imperialist powers, this tendency towards proletarianization clashes with the accumulation of imperialist superprofits, which not only makes it possible to generate a small upper echelon of workers, but also to maintain a relatively large number of non-working petty-bourgeois echelons.

The upper echelon of the working class tends to be tolerated by the capitalists in key sectors for their production (armaments, ports...) and in the monopolistic parent companies, where

more relatively skilled workers are concentrated, although, as we have seen, they cannot escape proletarianization.

As for the petty bourgeoisie, they see their way of life regressing for generations, see its "social elevator" limited and are incorporated in waves into salaried jobs where its individual bargaining power and control over its own work is less and less, and capitalist discipline, as well as the arbitrariness of their bosses and middle managers, is more and more suffocating.

The office workers and technicians exploited in the enterprises are not a "new echelon", they are the manifestation of the old petty-bourgeois class being slowly imbibed by the proletariat.

Proletarianization, then, is a tendency and not a mechanical and absolute process. It does not guarantee that we will go to a future where in the imperialist powers all the working population will be proletarians of the deep masses in socialized chains of production, that is only an economist fairy tale with which we would be running away from reality and dreaming of a world of "pure proletarians", but it does mean that there is revolutionary potential in the imperialist countries and that we are not advancing towards the welfare and jobless society advocated by the petty-bourgeois pencil-pushers.

Revolutionary failure in imperialist powers is mainly due to subjective factor:

It is necessary to understand that, although in moments of great social conflict the State of an imperialist power can give in or even promote social reforms "from above", these reforms are always less than what the organized proletariat can wrest, they are always temporary and the main focus is always the subjective factor.

A revolutionary worker will retire in France at the age of 62 and a reformist worker of the same level will retire in Spain at the age of 67, and in both cases it is possible that both will lose everything due to an accident at work, illness, whether professional or the result of the lifestyle promoted by the system, economic crisis or consequences of a war or, recently, environmental catastrophe caused by capitalism.

Labor gains and social services can be wrested and temporarily consolidated by the workers' struggle, they can last a few decades, but they will end up under siege or left obsolete and stagnant by the decadent development of imperialism.

Clarity in this regard among the broad masses of workers is key to their revolutionary organization, and it is one of the fundamental tasks of the Communist Party to firmly plant this idea among all ideologically advanced workers who can then lead the struggles of their comrades.

In this respect, it is common that defeatism spreads among the communists of imperialist powers, defeatism that tries to pass for objective analysis, and that overestimates the upper echelon of the working class, their stability and that practically identifies the nucleus of the proletariat, the deep masses of productive workers, with that upper echelon.

It is common to refer to the experience of the first Communist Parties in imperialist powers (with the exception of the Bolshevik) and to the appearance of modern revisionism to support this proposal of abandoning the hard core of the proletariat.

With the intention of spreading our general vision on this question we include below a few examples of the fact that what is fundamental in the reformist bankruptcy is not the economic, but the political resolve of the Party. However, we are aware that these small notes only give an idea of our general approach, still in development, which must also be complemented with a detailed analysis of the experience of economicist evolution of the ML-Mao Zedong Thought Communist Parties which arose in the heat of the Cultural Revolution in the first world.

The reformist bankruptcy of the great Parties of modern revisionism, like the PCI of Italy, the PCF of France and the PCE (Communist Party of Spain in its Spanish initials *Partido Comunista de España*) of Spain in the 20th century, came from ideological and political weaknesses, especially in their leadership, and only later did they end up being the appendage of social democracy among the upper working class echelon, because of their more militant side, and those who tried to deceive the rest of workers who still trusted these Parties.

The PCI and the PCF were reprimanded by the Cominform for their leadership's lack of revolutionary strategy after World War II, and in both cases they were leading the working class of ruined countries, and particularly in Italy, the working class and the peasantry had in fact shown a spontaneous fierceness that the communists could not lead, and which ended with Mussolini's fascist coup.

The PCE grew fast during the Civil War by its heroic military and political leadership, among a working class with practically no upper echelon due to Spain's productive and political backwardness. After losing the war, again, the PCE became reformist long before it had again a largemembership base among the working class.

In all three cases, the modern revisionist Parties succeeded in setting up unions which declared themselves communist or close to communism (CGT, CGIL and CCOO), and in all three cases these Parties were taking on the role of union bureaucrats, often being passed over by the left even because of the official positions which workers took in these unions.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the Communist Party USA, CPUSA, unleashed an intense activity of union struggle when this was not tolerated [by the bourgeoisie], uniting equally workers of all echelons of the proletariat, particularly those who the "yellow" American Federation of Labor, AFL, left out, who were mostly unskilled and semi-skilled. In the 1940s the CPUSA already went through a liquidationist line, adherent to the financial oligarchy of the Democratic Party, even in the midst of very intense mass struggles, and by the time the U.S. briefly became the only relatively intact power after World War II and the only imperialist superpower until the 1960s, it completely lost its position among the working class through a combination of reforms and repression.

These four cases do not have in common the harmful influence of a supposedly well-off proletariat on their Communist Parties in a general way, they have in common the political

decadence of the Communist Parties and their harmful influence on the base membership, which they led to become reformists.

If we reject economism and making the trade union struggle the main task of the Communist Party, we must also reject the economist way of thinking that hides behind blaming the working masses for the Communist failures in the first world, as if a worker would be content with imperialist crumbs and unable to look beyond the general political oppression and the course of imperialist degeneration if we Communists are sufficiently clear on these questions.

The Labor Movement and the Protracted People's War:

In our ideological and political documents we have already established that the Protracted People's War is only assumed as a universal theory of the seizure of power insofar as we understand that it is adapted to the principal contradiction and the phase of revolutionary transformation required by each country.

In an imperialist power, the main contradiction is the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and the transformation is the socialist one.

Applying the rules of the Protracted People's War, without forgetting its most relevant manifestation for us, the Bolshevik Revolution, we observe that in imperialist powers the revolution begins in several largely industrialized regions at the same time, where the workers power annihilates the bourgeoisie and mobilizes the working masses for the socialist transformation of production, specifically in the form of war production, for the spreading of the people's war to control the whole country. The strategic defensive begins suddenly and in a relatively advanced way in comparison to the third world, therefore it has an insurrectional character and is preceded by a mainly non-military accumulation of forces.

Roughly speaking, we can say that all the insurrections and temporary experiences of workers' power that have existed in imperialist countries have been located in heavily industrialized and red regions. Unions are key to the stopping and reorganization of production in this sense. The revolution has only flourished when the Communist Party has had clarity on their plan to take power, of course, but also untimely attempts have essentially reproduced these characteristics.

The driving force of the Protracted People's War in an imperialist power is the proletariat. The proletarians are socialized and disciplined by the capitalists, they are concentrated by the necessities of production, they are pushed to struggle day by day, risking their livelihood, often in exchange for small improvements, or even to suffer defeats or an uncertain future.

The proletariat hardly notices the "ambrosia" of bourgeois democracy. Inevitably the bourgeois democratic freedoms, the social guarantees of the reformists and the bombastic constitutional rights are nullified under the capitalist shoes.

The system chews on proletarians and spits them out when they are too old or worn out to continue working, concedes improvements under intense struggle and then focuses all its efforts on rendering them ineffective.

To obtain small crumbs, they must organize covertly, must unite all who can be united and must confront directly the capitalist and repressive forces. The system exploits native proletarians and immigrants, women and men, old and young, and the proletariat, not exempt from contradictions within itself, learns from all this.

On the other hand, the socialization of production places in the hands of the proletariat all the "secrets" of capitalist production, not only in the hands of the petty-bourgeois technicians and the most skilled workers, but also, in its race to standardize production to the maximum and make workers replaceable, the general formation of the working class in the fundamentals of production management is extended.

Monopolization links enterprises with one another, turns everything into huge chains of commodity production, distribution and maintenance in which the proletariat has an easier time unraveling the complexities of capitalist society and their own role in production.

All this taken together means that the proletariat can be taught the communist line, can understand the connection between their partial struggles, inside and outside unions, and the overall revolutionary political struggle better than any other class, can understand the need to form a united front with them as its core, and can be the heart of the Protracted People's War.

Protracted People's War in an imperialist power, the mobilization of the masses for the revolutionary war is based on socialist transformation of production, which begins as workers' control of production at the service of the revolutionary war effort.

Within each imperialist power Protracted People's War can begin in an urban territory sufficient to sustain the war effort, taking into account the degree of proletarianization, the politicization of the masses and the capacity to transform industry for the war effort. The absolute omnipresence of the bourgeois state in imperialist powers and the interconnection of production means that Protracted People's War is initiated insurrectionally in a relatively large urban territory, in a phase that we can qualify as advanced strategic defensive.

A necessary note, in any case, is that what is fundamental in Protracted People's War are the masses and not the means of production. The masses of workers in the first world are trained in a general way in the basic knowledge necessary for modern industrial production, and the proletariat of large productive chains, in particular, has greater depth in production.

The imperialist State has as its main strength in its war technology, and although the extension of advanced machinery and its handling by a part of the proletariat, as our Political Document points out [our second congressional document, not yet available in english], is a very important factor in counteracting this war technology, the crucial thing is that this knowledge of production is put at the service of mass warfare.

It is not a matter of a few highly skilled workers or university technicians countering the bourgeois war machine with advanced technological methods. It is about the masses of workers, skilled and unskilled, employed and unemployed, mobilizing to push the means of production to the maximum, even those that capitalists abandon or keep shut down due to "productive overcapacity," to transform them in creative ways so that every member of the working class or other pro-revolutionary social layers, infinitely more numerous than the

bourgeois military forces, can resist the bourgeois military onslaught and outnumber their forces in relative terms in every encounter.

Therefore, military tactics follow the general scheme of Protracted People's War despite having this productive capacity available. The proletariat remains technologically inferior and numerically superior to the bourgeois military forces. The proletariat, even beginning an advanced strategic defensive with an insurrection in several urban centers, is still not unanimous in its commitment to revolutionary war, and the masses, both in areas of greater revolutionary and greater reactionary influence, continue to join the revolution in waves, as they observe in practice that it can be won and as they observe that the revolutionary transformation underway answers to their needs.

Far from resolving the question, these additions to the Political Document arisen from analyzing the question of the Labor Movement form part of our contribution to the discussion on the revolution's character in imperialist powers.

The Labor Movement and the Reconstitution of the Communist Party:

In the general revolutionary struggle, the main strategic objective is the Communist Party's reconstitution when it has not been constituted. Before the Reconstitution, we apply the mass line for the Reconstitution. Afterwards, we apply the mass line to initiate the People's War.

Of the mass movements, the primary one at the strategic level is the Labor Movement, as has been clear since the Marxist stage, this is true, but the mass movements are secondary with respect to the Reconstitution of the Communist Party and organizing the revolution.

We participate in the movements to reconstitute the Communist Party, not the other way around. We go to the movements to polish our theory by learning from the struggling masses, to learn how to lead and to recruit fighters from the people.

Before reconstitution, communists focus on clarifying the correct political line, on organizing the advanced around that line, on helping them find the answers, both general and specific to their mass struggle. In this way, our line is put into practice in an expanded way, both in general political struggles and also within mass movements, where the advanced can use what they have learned to advance their comrades in struggle and organization, and persuade them toward our political positions.

Naturally, we communists are not a foreign element to the working class and the people. We cannot hope to lead the advanced and be on their level for discussion if we do not have an understanding not only of the general aspects of capitalism, but of the specific needs of the struggle, and we must have a certain degree of referentiality.

But, very often, we will meet activists who know more about their movement than we do, this is inevitable, because the masses need to fight for their conditions and produce their own leaders in the practical struggle for reforms. We must learn from them the most advanced forms of struggle, but not get complacent or entangled in organizing the intricacies of each concrete mass struggle. These advanced comrades can be recruited as comrades who contribute to the general effort to reconstitute the Communist Party if we

answer to their political concerns, which need not exclusively (nor principally) refer to their struggle for reforms, incorporating their knowledge at once to that of the Communist Movement.

Training, analysis, agitation and propaganda are the main tasks of communists prior to the reconstitution of the Communist Party, also within the Labor Movement, and the leadership of broad political struggles aimed to begin the People's War.

This is particularly relevant to point out in the Labor Movement. The Labor Movement is so powerful as a movement because, unlike other movements of the oppressed by capitalism, it concentrates and pushes to fight people who can come from a void ideological level, it cannot avoid it.

Yet this is also one of the main dangers of the Labor Movement for a small revolutionary detachment. The tasks are endless, and the volume and concentration of the center and backward masses is immense from the very beginning, in relation to the number and concentration of advanced masses. It is just the opposite of what happens in the Urban Popular Movements.

The working class needs revolution and does not have its Communist Party. This is the main contradiction of all the exploited and, by extension, also of the Labor Movement. It is crucial to remember this as the document progresses and we break down the Labor Movement's system of contradictions.

When we identify the Labor Movement's primary contradiction at a tactical level, in any of its phases, what we will be saying is that this contradiction will allow us to advance in the Reconstitution of the Party by advancing the Movement. If we limit ourselves to make it advance by itself, we will fall into tacticism and we will liquidate the struggle for the reconstitution of the Party and, with it, also the advance of the Labor Movement.

Role of trade unions:

Unions are fundamentally tools of economic struggle, and, in imperialist powers, they are ruled over, by default, by the labor aristocracy in the shape of union bureaucracy, more and less recalcitrant.

Labor aristocracy rest their strength on the bureaucratic control of the trade union apparatus and its institutions, of the labor representation posts of many monopoly parent companies and cliques of civil servants, of the indoctrination into corporatism of the working class upper echelon, today in full retreat, and layers of petty-bourgeois wage earners, and of the demoralization and forced disorganization of the broad masses of the proletariat, both industrial and non-industrial.

This is a force that devours itself, because imperialism is predatory and cannot respect agreements, not even with its imperialist super-profits, with a falling rate of profit.

Their leaders are often indolent, petty and self-serving bureaucrats, their reformist politicians are disappointing, the working class upper layer has been shrinking in number,

and ideological dominance shows cracks, for the moment in the form of discredit of union leaders and lack of motivation to join unions.

Unions can be and often are centers of organization of the workers' struggle at its most instinctive level. Only under the conscious leadership of advanced elements can they act as schools of socialism and war.

The strength of the revolutionary proletariat within unions is rooted in the workplaces that are necessarily most exploitative and at the same time feasible to unionize. The large, small and medium enterprises of the productive chains excluded from the monopolist parent company, as well as some monopolist companies in retreat or particularly exploitative.

As Marxism-Leninism-Maoism teaches us, we rely on the struggle of the masses to make them advance, to learn from them and to refine our practice and our understanding of theory.

Within unions we find employees at many levels, and also union representatives elected by the workers in the companies. Between these levels, the top union bureaucracy and the management of the enterprises try to promote a petty bourgeois lifestyle, unconcerned and detached from the masses, because by doing so they not only secure their loyalty, but also alienate these union members from the masses and make them more dependent on their bureaucratic control.

A few union employees at lower levels (more often at middle levels) and union representatives in the enterprises completely take on these postulates and become labor aristocrats, petty bourgeois in their own right and act as recalcitrant bureaucrats.

Most do not take on this lifestyle, show concern for the conditions of workers and for the workers' struggle, and even dedicate a lot of personal effort to it, but essentially take on the union vision of the labor aristocracy.

They seek legal or individual solutions before attempting collective ones, and they stifle themselves and their comrades by trying to exhaust the (institutional) channels of class collaboration, instead of using them as a complement to the discussion and mobilization of workers.

They avoid clear engagements with the masses because they do not trust that they can get motivated and win, or be mature enough to analyze the causes of their defeat, so they enter into the game of extreme possibilism and active non-organization of the masses.

They get frustrated with the masses of workers and blame them for their own disorganization and discomfort, instead of looking for the cause in the continuous tripping and frauds of the union bureaucracy that have spread demoralization.

Some union members and representatives and, to a lesser extent, low-level union employees can also be elements from which we can learn, on which we can rely and which we can win over, but we must not forget the general maxim that unions dominated by the labor aristocracy are schools of opportunism, so, without antagonizing unnecessarily and without splitting the most advanced from the union masses and their potential members, we communists have to rely mainly on the mass struggle and advance it, and not on the opinion

and preferences of union representatives and employees, nor restrict ourselves to the ways and membership that a union initially has.

The Leninist theory principles regarding unions are right. Tactically it is an enormous challenge to sweep away the labor aristocracy, but strategically they are few and cowardly, and we will sweep away their hegemony if we unmask them inside and outside the union struggle.

A greater weight of the proletariat broad masses, mainly the industrial proletariat because of its capacity for struggle and organization [and] revolutionary potential, can sustain a more combative union. This overturning can only come about as a result of a conscious challenge to the petty-bourgeois way of work of the labor aristocracy, that is, as a result of communist work.

The reconstitution and construction of the Communist Party, the grouping of the advanced workers around the revolutionary political line, the strengthening of the proletariat general political struggle and the sharpening of the trade union struggle, will allow us to progressively win more sectors of the proletariat to revolutionary politics, will allow us to make more trade union sections take on the need for revolution, workers power and the leadership of the Communist Party.

Yes, we must win decisive strength in the trade union movement for a revolutionary trade union, politically led by the Communist Party, committed to support the seizure, maintenance and extension of workers' power, organizationally led by true conscious workers' fighters, seeking to organize for the struggle the immense majority of the working class, communists and non-communists alike, but with the will and effort to be a school of socialism and a school of people's war.

Yes, we must win this majority by uniting and not splitting, without isolating the advanced from the masses, displacing the reformists and their aristocratic workers' roots through the accumulation of forces in the mass workers' struggle organized from the base of the reformist unions whenever possible, whenever they are, at least potentially, centers of workers' organization for the struggle within companies.

But no, the decisive majority is not the whole country or the totality of proletarians. It is the decisive trade union majority for the plan to start the People's War that the Communist Party, now newly constituted, has drawn up. The decisive majority to paralyze production and support the seizure of power in the cities where it is established feasible and sustainable, and to quickly resume production, but now in socialist transformation for mass revolutionary war production.

After the seizure of power, the trade unions will be one of the conveyor belts connecting the Communist Party with the broad masses and, applying also the teachings of Chairman Mao, the proletarian line of the Communist Party must defend the right of these proletarians to fight against the Party and State bureaucracy, including going on strike when necessary, and its base must be mobilized in the Cultural Revolutions to break the guildist and conservative character that these economic struggle organizations naturally have.

The Middle Front in the Labor Movement:

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, as it sets of from the mass line, has come to provide the Communist Party with a powerful tool with which to rally the advanced masses and build the United Front: the intermediate fronts.

The intermediate fronts unite the masses' advanced elements to implement Party policy. They allow them to discuss and agree on their partial struggles, while redirecting the strength they gain in their movement by their rooting of the broad masses to put it at the service of the proletariat's general political struggle.

They are the main element of the construction of the United Front and the embryo for the new power organizations.

These organizations allow to multiply the force in mass work starting from the natural way for communists: to unify and lead the left so that it drags the center.

The Intermediate Workers Front (FIT) [*translator note: FIT from its acronym in Spanish, in English they are usually referred as Intermediate Workers Organization (IWO)*] is, therefore, the starting point for the effective intervention of the communists in the Labor Movement. It brings together advanced comrades to answer to their need to advance the workers' struggle, which will generally be of the trade union kind (inside or outside the framework of unions), while giving them answers to the working class general political problems and involving them in broader political struggles.

These advanced comrades may come closer to us because they have a relatively high knowledge of our line, but they do not know yet how to mobilize the masses, recruit other advanced elements among them and do agitation and propaganda,. Or they may be members of the trade union movement who have come up against the trade union bureaucracy's deficiencies to answer to their needs and have not limited themselves to wanting to extend the trade union struggle, but have shown interest in thinking and broadening their point of view. Or, in most cases, somewhere in between those two extremes.

The FIT makes it possible to meet the immediate need of these comrades to answer to their exploitation in a coherent way through trade union struggle and to break the labor aristocracy's encirclement, which often makes even the coherent trade union struggle itself impossible, but it [the FIT] does so with the aim of raising their ideological level, with the aim of mobilizing these advanced workers, and, to a lesser extent and through them, intermediate workers, to the broader political struggle: mobilizations in solidarity with other oppressed sectors and peoples, against state repression, for pressing political issues, etc.

Therefore, although the FIT empowers the union struggle, this is a result of its action, and not its end. The FIT is not an alternative trade union coordinator, it is not a trade union struggle committee. All these are organizational forms to reach intermediate workers forgotten by unions which can and should be promoted by the FIT when it is convenient, but the FIT seeks to gather and give general political answers to the advanced workers, and, through this, directly and indirectly, these advanced comrades share their tools to improve their union struggle, to add more workers to the struggle in a more coherent way and to be

able to bring the Labor Movement's discipline and organization to the general struggle against capitalism.

The FIT, although firmly led by our Party in practical terms, given it does not aim to "gather all that can be gathered" for a specific cause [since it is aimed at the advanced masses], it must be progressively representative of the advanced masses' political level. The advanced masses are against capitalism, imperialism, patriarchy and for solidarity in broad terms, but they are not revolutionary in a decided way nor do they assume the need for a Communist Party yet.

In the FIT communist ideas must appear explicitly, it must be common to hear slogans and ideas which go beyond the advanced masses average political level, but the position publicly defended by the FIT must be arising as a result of the persuasion of the advanced elements which join in, and must not scare away advanced elements which do not openly sympathize with communist ideas yet.

Their build up should tend to be rooted in the most proletarianized sectors, where we communists have our main mass base, and, when possible, penetrate even into the sections within work centers or of a given [industrial/economic] sector.

Especially in large workplaces or in sectors with high seasonal work, with hundreds of workers who can not meet each other in person, the FIT and its political agitation allow us and advanced companions to reach advanced workers outside unions or excluded by them, to unite advanced elements who are in different unions and workplaces, to gather the advanced not only to fight politically outside the enterprise or sector but also to unite the trade union movement into class and militant struggle positions.

Contradictions in the Labor Movement Analysis:

The analysis of the system of contradictions, of the contradictions within the people and between the people and the enemy is one of the great contributions of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

In the Labor Movement, this analysis can also be applied to give meaning to the progressive discoveries made by our ideology.

First, at the most basic level, we find the antagonistic contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie over economic issues, which gives rise to trade union and lesser economic struggles.

This contradiction can be found at the level of the workers and the company boss, at the sector level and at the general level.

The exploited non-proletarian wage-earning layers also have antagonistic contradictions with the capitalists on economic questions, at the same time as they have non-antagonistic contradictions with the workers.

Within the trade union struggle, there is an antagonistic contradiction with the trade union bureaucracy that controls the big reformist and reactionary unions.

The working class develops its struggle spontaneously within these contradictions' framework and, in moments of relative social peace, it is the principal contradiction for the movement that which mobilizes the greater part of proletarians and other wage earners, and that which often succeeds in advancing more rapidly the level of struggle and organization. However, this contradiction, no matter how much it sharpens, cannot solve itself in a revolutionary sense, since it occurs within the capitalist framework.

The contradiction's passage from the workplace to the general struggle can happen suddenly by the very necessity of the masses, and overcome the union bureaucracy, forming broad layers of worker activists overnight.

Secondly, there is the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie for the control of production. As a general rule, this contradiction exists on the terrain of ideological struggle, and comes spontaneously to the front in moments of threat of mass layoffs and in overproduction crises, but it cannot solve itself insofar as it does not address the question of the state.

Thirdly, there is the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie for power. This contradiction is the main one at the strategic level, but it is not the main one for the mass movement as long as a general political crisis has not risen, and it can only be solved in a revolutionary way if the Communist Party is reconstituted and has a plan for the start of Protracted People's War, which implies that their positions have the support of a decisive force among the proletariat and other revolutionary classes.

Outside of a revolutionary situation, this contradiction is on the ideological terrain and is most evident in the general political struggles caused by capitalist oppression

While the contradiction on the economic terrain is the primary one, the task of communists is to recruit the advanced so that the primary contradiction moves to the political terrain, the seizure of power.

For this, we must make analyses, articles and general slogans without forgetting that what will make the advanced workers push forward, verify or disprove our line's rightness will be precisely the rate at which they manage to mobilize the masses to fight, that is, if it allows them to add the masses to the economic struggle and overwhelm the trade union bureaucracy.

Forgetting the primary contradiction of the mass movement will lead us to ultra-leftism, to clichés instead of answers for the advanced workers, to leave them defenseless against the trade union bureaucracy, to, in practice, not develop that discipline and organization that the proletariat has, to make it difficult for those advanced elements to recruit others and mobilize the intermediate ones.

Forgetting the secondary contradictions of the mass movement will lead us to rightism and economism, to confuse the advanced elements with the general masses who want to fight destitution however they can, to limit ourselves to organizing the advanced as simple alternative union leaders, to cage the working class instead of guide them to the general political struggles and raising their awareness level, to ignore that not all workers awaken mainly because of union struggle.

In general, the effort is always to gather, teach and train the advanced workers, to involve them in the general political struggle and to put them in a better position to lead the center by displacing and expelling the bureaucracy and their ideas. However, even when the trade union struggle is key for the movement, our effort adapts to the flow with which this struggle evolves too.

When the main contradiction is at the workplace level, we will find a greater audience in the struggle that the bureaucrats forsake, in the first steps of the workers to stand tall against “their” bosses, and to help organize the militant union struggle, [and] the contacts between union members from different companies and sectors, will take more effort, but it is key to keep the political mobilization and agitprop from the beginning.

If it turns into the sectoral level, which can happen at some point or in a generalized way outside our leadership, it becomes more relevant to learn from the most advanced forms of struggle and extend them to workplaces in other sectors, recruit their most outstanding activists, foment solidarity so that nobody is left behind in the struggle, help the workers to understand how their struggle fits within capitalism in general and how it connects with the rest of the struggles within capitalism.

When economic struggles are heightened on a general scale (not only general struggles for laws, but the generalization of specific or sectoral struggles, the strike waves), the political aspect of our work intensifies: the identification of key political slogans, the carrying out of propaganda, the push for political strikes or struggle for production control, the organization of trade union oppositions to displace at a stroke the labor aristocracy, the promotion of the most advanced forms of struggle, the involvement of the fighting workforces in other political causes that are taking place....

It is possible that we will gradually move things from the workplace to the sectoral, and from there to the general, but it is highly improbable and to have such an approach as a starting point is undeniably economistic. The most probable thing is that the combination of the spontaneous evolution of the union struggle with the advance of communist positions among the workers that we carry out with our work through FIT and unions will result in unexpected explosions that will lead us to have to mobilize our efforts and change them quickly.

In moments of serious political crisis, the primary contradiction can move to the terrain of the seizure of power, even if the situation is not ripe for the seizure of power because the revolutionary positions do not have sufficient support. In such a case, the impulse of political strikes, experiences of workers' power, even if they are temporary, of appeals by the advanced workers for general political mobilization dragging their mass base are key, with the aim of sharply raising the level of consciousness and organization.

PART II - THE SITUATION IN SPAIN AND OUR POLITICAL TASKS

History of the Labor Movement in Spain:

Birth of the Labor Movement

The Labor Movement was born parallel to the development of rising capitalism, which, in Spain, as our document "Situation in Spain" explains [our third congressional document, not yet available in english] , arrived late and without a true popular revolution.

The underdevelopment of Spain in the 19th century and until the second half of the 20th century meant that the countryside, including its strongholds of feudal production relations, had a great influence on the movement and, by extension, anarcho-syndicalist positions. The first trade union movement came from guildism, and took the form of the so-called Workers' Commissions (unrelated to the current CCOO trade union), which gained strength in industrial centers such as Barcelona.

The first workers' union under socialist (then revolutionary) influence arrived in Spain in 1888, promoted by the PSOE (*Partido Socialista Obrero Español* - Spanish Socialist Workers Party in its Spanish acronym), the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT).

Spain arrives late to be an imperialist power, and does so with failures and defeats in its former feudal colonies, so that the attempts to constitute a labor aristocracy rooted in a higher layer of the wealthy working class are frustrated by the economic backwardness and poverty of the Spanish proletariat, and there is simply a farce of such a process, which did take place in the rest of the imperialist countries: the PSOE goes on to occupy some positions of responsibility in the monarchist dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (including the opportunist Largo Caballero), takes a back seat on the question of World War I, and the UGT acquires a conformist approach to the dictatorship. Parallel to this process, in 1910 the National Confederation of Workers (CNT) was born, with anarcho-syndicalist influence, persecuted by the regime and mainly located among agricultural workers.

The Communist Party of Spain was born in 1921, still with a scarce mass base and an ultra-left official line, which would keep the communist positions relatively in a minority in the Labor Movement until 1932.

The Labor Movement in the Second Republic and the Antifascist People's War:

The impossibility of stabilizing Spanish imperialism in its monarchic and dictatorial form leads in 1931 to the proclamation of the Second Republic, where the UGT and CNT unions grow sharply in parallel to the political struggle of the workers, and the masses of proletarians approach revolutionary positions.

Once again, the weakness of Spanish imperialism makes the Second Republic incapable of stabilizing and constituting a stable upper layer of the working class without upsetting the accumulation plans of the big capitalists and feudal landowners. As a consequence, the Second Republic continually betrays the aspirations of the proletarians, which translates into the growth of the PCE, especially since the election of a leadership with a just political line in

1932 with comrade José Díaz at the head, as well as the growth of revolutionary positions in the base of the PSOE and the Socialist Youth, used by Largo Caballero.

In 1932 the PCE also founded its minority union, the Unitary General Confederation of Labor (CGTU), still under the influence of the sectarianism of the previous stage, with some 200,000 members as opposed to the million of the UGT. From 1934, with the Party purged of ultra-leftists, the level of class struggle in Spain very high and the experience of fascism and the effect of the division of the unions in Germany very present in the Communist International, the PCE gave the directive to the CGTU to integrate into the UGT, an effort that the leadership of the UGT sabotaged until 1935.

In October 1934, in a climate of disappointment with the Second Republic and the risk of regression posed by the entry of the ultra-reactionary CEDA party to government ministries, a general political strike broke out which in Asturias led to the insurrection led by the miners as the most advanced sector of the working class in Spain, and to the establishment of an Asturian Socialist Republic that came to take the arms factory of Trubia and the regional capital, Oviedo, reorganizing society, instituting the first effective system of health care, and the first effective control of the workers over their daily lives, both in the rear and on the war front.

Although in the industrial zones of the rest of the country the revolutionary general strike includes the organization of armed workers militias and the general abandonment of production for the barricade struggle in the cities, the PCE does not yet have the strength to organize this struggle on a general level and the PSOE actively neglects and betrays the workers in struggle, including its own militants.

Even so, the practical non-existence of a higher layer of the proletariat in Spain makes Largo-Caballero's wing and Indalecio Prieto's wing in the PSOE pose as revolutionaries in favor of the strike, although their main intention is to use it in the parliamentary struggle to prevent the entry of the CEDA into the government.

Finally, mobilizing the ultra-reactionary military in the colonies (Franco among them), the Second Republic massacres the workers' power in Asturias and imprisons tens of thousands of militant workers throughout Spain, including the Socialist leaders who had been "respectable" parliamentarians a couple of years earlier.

The struggle for the freedom of the political prisoners and against the advance of reaction and fascism allow the PCE to recruit advanced elements very quickly, constituting the Popular Front with a program and a social organization that transcends by far the possibilities of the Second Republic and forces the reactionaries and the financial oligarchy to move, as we have explained previously in our documents and published analyses.

As we have advanced, the growth of the influence of the PCE by its handling of the tactics of building the United Front, lead in 1935 to force the hand of the leadership of the UGT and to accept the mass entry of the affiliation of the communist CGTU, much more advanced, and in 1936, the Socialist Youth unify with the communist youth under the command of the PCE in the Unified Socialist Youth, JSU [by it's spanish acronym, Juventudes Socialistas Unificadas].

In the Civil War, the Popular Anti-Fascist War, the PCE grows in its leadership of the workers both by forming the nucleus of the Republican Army and by nationalizing and placing under workers' control many factories.

Up to this point, we can see how Spanish imperialism, of the second order, poorer and more backward, weakens reformism. We have been able to see how the Communist Party, although of course it has a trade union policy that it is refining, really advances also in the trade union terrain as a result of giving the key answers at the political level, and advances in great waves in the revolutionary attempts and mass political struggles, especially when the Democratic Revolution is launched under its leadership during the Civil War.

Similar to pre-Soviet Russia, the upper layer of the working class is almost non-existent and this leads to reformism being weaker, finding its main support in trade union narrowness and conservatism, and not having such a solid position in the accommodation of a part of the workers.

The Labor Movement in the anti-Francoism:

With the Civil War lost, the vanguard is mostly annihilated, the remaining advanced elements are imprisoned for decades or forced into exile. The PCE, with its leadership in exile, isolated from the masses and without sufficient political training, succumbs to the revisionist line that takes hold of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union after Stalin's death.

In the interior of the country, the first mass struggles against Franco arose in the 50's and 60's among the proletarians of the productive sector, with the Asturian mining industry standing out in this regard. As an example of struggle, in 1962 the so-called "strike of silence" took place, the biggest mass struggle since the Civil War, where the miners of the Nicolasa pit in Mieres began a strike of solidarity with 7 comrades fired for protesting, which became generalized until it led to a strike of 65,000 miners among other proletarians. The strike spreads to 65,000 miners among other Asturian proletarians, and unleashes a social struggle that also involves other oppressed strata close to the proletariat, such as the housewives of the mining basins, who block the highways and organize resistance boxes and pickets. The conflict spreads to Euskadi, including another 50,000 workers, and forcing the regime to call a State of Exception in Asturias and Euskadi. This, in turn, causes 300,000 workers in other provinces to also go on strike, and liberal-bourgeois intellectuals sign a manifesto for negotiation with these workers. The workers elect a Workers' Commission to represent them, and it negotiates with the Francoist minister, extracting economic concessions from him.

This dynamic is repeated throughout the country, within the vertical union of the regime and outside it, capitalist exploitation pushes workers to fight and facilitates old and new communists, even without a correct political line, to promote Workers' Commissions whose degree of interconnection and organization grows.

The in the Transition:

The PCE, already fully revisionist, manages to lead this process. During the years of the dictatorship, the CCOO trade union, not yet formally constituted as a trade union, grew without stopping until reaching the historical maximum of almost 2 million with the

transition to bourgeois democracy, as a result of the enormous political struggles of the masses that occurred hand in hand with the progressive upsurge of trade union struggles.

During the Moncloa Pacts, the revisionist PCE is forcing agreements and demobilization of the CCOO while trying to keep its militant base happy by constituting a combative Eurocommunist/Pro-Soviet trade union leadership in the spontaneous economic field, but at the service of the pactist politics of the PCE. CCOO plummets in membership to 700,000 members in 1981 and below half a million members in 1986, not being able to unleash the mass struggle, nor to consolidate a reformist union that affiliates systematically by making bearish pacts [with the bosses], and this inability of the Eurocommunist-Prosoviet leadership of the PCE in CCOO is exploited by UGT, revived after its disappearance throughout the dictatorship.

Industrial Reconversion and Spain's entry into the EU:

In 1986, at the historic low in CCOO membership since the Transition, the PCE loses control of CCOO to a sector of the union led by Antonio Gutiérrez, which aspires to set up a reformist trade union bureaucracy that can make pacts as its ultimate goal. The leaders of the PCE, among whom there are honest and militant leaders, but deeply revisionist like Marcelino Camacho, as well as union bureaucrats who will end up switching sides or will take refuge in the faction of "Critics" of CCOO, is completely overwhelmed by the pragmatism of Gutiérrez and the new rising bureaucracy.

Parallel to this process, in Spain, the first upper layer of the working class constituted relatively extensively after the constitution of strong monopolies and the trade union struggles of late Francoism, is again put under siege with massive closures of factories and entire sectors in the Industrial Reconversion [Translator's Note: this is the name of an industrial policy of that time], with the aim of preparing the Spanish economy to enter the inter-imperialist alliance of the EU.

CCOO, which grows again under a more openly pacitist line and, in general, groups together the most combative elements organized in trade unions, begins to lose some of these workforces through bureaucratic downward negotiations during the Industrial Reconversion, but also drags the UGT into successive general strikes, of which the general strike of December 14, 1988 remains a milestone for its extension to practically all the workers in Spain.

The final balance of the entry into the EU is that the financial oligarchy is strengthened, the upper layer of the proletariat is weakened, entire organized workforces with very advanced experiences of struggle are also lost, but the labor aristocracy of the unions weather the storm and prepares for its subsequent expansion in influence.

The Labor Movement in the economic bubble of the 90s-2000s:

With the governments of José María Aznar a process began to try to make Spain climb up the imperialist chain at the cost of militarism, speculation and investment in productive sectors of quick results, especially construction. Until 2004 this implies the increase of trade union struggles from a very narrow framework, the growth of the trade union bureaucracy and its progressive discursive moderation in parallel to a relative gentrification of a large part of the

proletariat in comparison to previous stages, not only because of the constitution of a relatively solid upper layer of the working class, which is evidently a factor, since there are also attacks on labor stability and public services, continued labor conflicts at the company and sectoral level, the introduction of temporary labor on a large scale and a skyrocketing increase in prices, as well as an increase in state repression. The main reason for this lack of combativity is the absolute absence of truly revolutionary communist political positions among the proletariat, which makes the liberal-conservative and reformist discourse the only existing ones with a certain breadth.

In this context, in the year 2000, José María Fidalgo was elected Secretary General of CCOO as successor endorsed by Gutiérrez, although with a more right-wing and pragmatic discourse. Throughout his term of office, he lost popularity and fell to 60% of the votes against the candidate of the “critics”, Agustín Moreno in the VIII Congress of 2004.

The combination of a period of bonanza with an increase in the trade union struggle in its narrowest framework and the weariness with the militarism and ultra-reactionary discourse of Aznar and his clique, which reached an extreme with the Atocha bombings on 11M, led José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero to be proposed by the PSOE as candidate for the presidency of the Government with a line to the left of Felipe González, and to be elected with an absolute majority.

Between 2004 and 2008, in Zapatero's first legislature, what has been the only period of social reforms “from above” in the history of Spanish Imperialism takes place, approving labor improvements which apply mainly to the upper stratum of the working class and the civil service, but which trickle down to wider masses, and, above all, contribute to fatten the bureaucratic apparatus of CCOO and UGT with subsidies.

It is once again when CCOO recovers its maximum membership, reaching 1,200,000 members in 2008 in its IX Congress. Fidalgo loses the majority by the skin of his teeth against Ignacio Toxo, who recovers the style of “posing to the left” in a moderate way that Gutiérrez had, but no longer in the key of “critics against the apparatus”, but simply as an alternative candidacy representing another family of the bureaucracy, where the interests of the bureaucracy of the different branches (federations) and the territorial apparatus (confederations) are mixed.

The 2008-2011 crisis and the current situation:

But the outbreak of the crisis is double in Spain, due precisely to the incapacity of Spanish imperialism to get out of its second order position, and the setbacks of the crisis erase not only the reforms from above partially enjoyed in the last 4 years, but decades of conquests since the Transition.

The CCOO and UGT apparatus call strikes with hardly any organization, inflated by bureaucratic accommodation and no longer knowing how to fight, and achieve modest levels of mobilization for the degree of attack suffered.

In the context of the crisis, from the urban popular movements, especially the youth, a new generation of communists and radical activists is born and great mass struggles are unleashed, both political and economic/sectoral. In parallel, the apparatuses of the big

unions enter into crisis due to the loss of membership due to the closing of enterprises, the enormous retreat of the upper layer of the working class and the incapacity of the bureaucracy to add new generations of workers to the struggle.

The upper stratum of the proletariat in retreat runs, advised by the trade union bureaucracy, to sign agreements of exclusive application for those hired before the crisis, to massively pre-retire old co-workers, to agree on company closures or to allow the massive entry of temporary companies and subcontractors.

The young workers are incorporated into capitalist production in a climate no longer of close union struggle, but of open bosses' terror and neglect of functions by the unions.

This climate lasts practically a decade, with the fraud of Podemos' reformist policy and the succession of urban popular movements. The bosses unleash their repression and reorganize the productive forces by resorting to the use of temporary labor, to such an extent that it torpedoes production itself.

Progressively, as the young workers have been losing their fear and as the activists of the Urban Popular Movements have been reaching the labor arena, albeit by way of the progressive proletarianization of the middle strata, we are beginning to see a slow but steady growth again of the trade union struggle.

In this new context, the majority unions, CCOO and UGT, continue to have representation and membership which, jointly, is around 2 million members, and, although they promote demoralization, disorganization and lack of combativity among their representatives, the second order nature of Spanish imperialism does not allow them to make them squeamish about the workers they affiliate.

In this new context, CCOO, which historically has organized somewhat more combative workforces, has taken the step to passivity over active bureaucratic control; while UGT seems to have bet on the massive organization of "sham" union elections in all sectors, sometimes with pacts with companies, but often illusioning proletarian workforces to later abandon them once they have received the corresponding subsidy or dues.

Many Spanish monopolistic parent companies and large non-monopolistic companies from before the crisis have ended up selling out at low cost to monopolies of stronger imperialist powers, to be their low cost center, like Stadler, ArcelorMittal or Seat-Volkswagenn. The upper stratum has remained as a redoubt with special and exclusive benefits (as in CEMEX and other companies with two salary scales according to the year of hiring), separated from the conditions of the bulk of workers or, at least, has seen its conditions regress and has not yet recovered them, living in continuous blackmail for not being Spain neither as cheap as the third world, nor as productively developed as the first order powers (as in the automobile sector).

In these large and monopolistic parent companies we can observe how the clerks and middle managers who before were a relatively privileged minority, now join in enormous numbers to carry out tasks in the process of standardization, with proletarianized conditions and lower wages than those of the upper stratum before the crisis. This layer, although evidently in the medium term is a lifesaver for the bureaucracy of the unions because of its

accommodation and less combativity, is also a way of entry for activists coming from petty-bourgeois layers into the life and organization of the proletariat.

In the ascendant sectors after the crisis, we find new monopolistic companies with proletarians who directly join the deep masses without much possibility of constituting a relevant upper layer (the hotel and catering franchises, the logistics warehouse workers), and big companies which aspire, probably without success, to constitute themselves as monopolistic companies at the cost of trampling and demanding endless efforts from their workers.

The enormous network of small and medium enterprises, where the most direct cacique terror crushes the majority of the Spanish proletariat and forces them to organize and fight or to survive and die or have bloody accidents at work, has become more exploitative after the crisis, either by the will to remain in business, or accelerated by new monopolies that set the pace, like Mercadona.

This proletarianization has been intensified by the tendency in the “Western” imperialist powers to concentrate production again in “giga-factories”, now that the phase of relative peace between imperialists and plunder in Eastern Europe and Asia experienced with the fall of Soviet social-imperialism and the capitalist restoration in China has ended. With a questioned US superpower and more divided imperialists, offshoring, although still an option for the imperialists, meets with a “return of production”, the reorganization of productive forces after the crisis translates into new sectors arising from the movement of capital from other stagnant sectors, which also leads to the concentration of production.

The postmodern dream (or nightmare, depending on how one looks at it) of an atomized, individualized “precariat” condemned to languish in individual identity struggles has been invalidated by the reality of capitalism. The population is concentrated in cities, the proletarians are concentrated in sectors and chained enterprises.

Our tasks for the Labor Movement in the present period between Congresses:

In parallel, the small Communist Movement of Spain has matured since the crisis of 2008. The most advanced stage of our ideology, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has for the first time a modest predicament among organized communists and people interested in communism, but, including our Party, it is still a movement fundamentally formed by proletarianized petty bourgeois layers and semi-proletarians.

A stage of spontaneous trade union struggles is beginning once again in Spain. Spanish imperialism is incapable of constituting a lasting upper layer of the working class, although it will naturally recompose it to a certain extent and compensate it with the new petty-bourgeois layers recently proletarianized.

The main contradiction of the Labor Movement, of the masses struggling in the workplaces, is today in the trade union terrain, still at the level of the workplace, although it could pass in a generalized way to the level of sectoral struggles or general economic struggle in the coming years in a spontaneous way. But the main task for the revolutionary movement is the reconstitution of the Communist Party.

This means that our main task is the study and dissemination of MLM among the advanced elements of all the classes oppressed by capitalism, but particularly we have the task of deepening the link with the proletariat, particularly with the deep masses of the most socialized and potentially organized proletariat of the productive sector, to be our mass base.

For this, always subject to party construction and formation, in the Labor Movement the primary task is that we gather advanced elements of the proletariat and other wage earners in Intermediate Workers Fronts that contribute to unify the left around advanced postulates: against capitalism, its parties and its State, in favor of proletarian internationalism and workers solidarity, and lead it to general political mobilizations.

With these Intermediate Workers Fronts we will favor the struggle of these advanced workers to mobilize their colleagues and win the unions section by section, sector by sector, for the working class, given that it is the main contradiction with which they will most recognize the advance, but we will do it trying that our role be that of contributing the political analysis, to favor the role of school of communism of the trade union sections under our influence, to export the most advanced forms of struggle and to achieve that the members of the Intermediate Fronts drag their co-workers to the sectorial struggles of other classes to give support, and to the general political struggles against capitalism.

Naturally, the membership of the PRT in labor terrain should be, in general and except for exceptions justified by the needs of the Party, exemplary in the Labor Movement and, therefore, today, in the trade union struggle, mass leaders who know the movement and can be an example for the advanced workers.

Generally, we will take as union of intervention the CCOO and, secondarily, the UGT, and we will avoid feeding union splintering in small autonomous red sections or minority unions, unless they are relevant at sectoral level and the contrary would be to isolate ourselves even more from the masses.

But we must not forget at any time that it will be our overall political success, our ability to spread the most advanced ideas of our international class (Marxism-Leninism-Maoism), which will attract and give tools to those who are already union fighters, not our micromanagement of all aspects of their struggle.

In our country, we have the advantage of the relative weakness of the labor aristocracy, which makes possible a certain degree of participation even in the lowest level structures of the CCOO, and the majority unions cannot turn their nose at us if we organize a sector of the deep masses of the proletariat. Recently we have the experience of how UGT, of all possible unions (!) has organized union elections among waiters of medium-sized franchises financed by monopolies and among delivery companies ("riders") to, of course, then leave them in the lurch. Also of large companies actively boycotting and suppressing unionists throughout the workforce, and of monopoly parent companies restricting privileges to small layers of the workforce, causing unions to virtually abandon the rest.

But, on the other hand, even large companies tend to be smaller than in other imperialist powers, the deep proletariat is more distributed in medium and small companies, and the general level of politicization is lower.

Thus, establishing that our work in the Labor Movement relies primarily on our agitation, propaganda, training, and general organisation as the PRT, we have the mission of establishing Intermediate Workers' Fronts wherever the Party is already relatively consolidated or where our work begins directly with membership from the proletariat or similar strata, to openly propagate communist ideas within it, and that these Fronts, in turn, promote political positions opposed to capitalism, its politicians and its State among the workers, popularise class-based and combative trade unionism, promote the generalisation of the most advanced experiences of struggle, help to organise consistent trade union struggle as a mechanism for recruiting new advanced comrades and unmasking the trade union bureaucracy, and maintain continuous contact with Popular Urban Movements and political mobilisations of a general nature.

As a measure of the advance of our positions, at the end of the period between Congresses or immediately after the next Congress of our Party, we should try to hold a conference of red workers in Spain, which sets the general lines of struggle for the Workers Movement, both in the general political struggle and in the trade union struggle.

Urban Popular Movements Document

I Congress of the Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT)

March 25th, 2025

Capitalism oppresses a broad strata of the population, and forces them to struggle for different causes. Especially, within the imperialist powers, the masses are forced to congregate in cities, big and medium sized, so that their struggles interact among themselves, and activists and social leaders shared by the different inter-classist movements arise.

Because of this, the PRT merges Urban Popular Movements into a common analysis, complementary to the Labor Movement, thus describing the array of mass forces which the revolutionary forces can count on to build the United Front.

In this document, we will base our work on the MLM contributions in order to study the nature of the broad term “popular”, the class content of the “people” and which is their role within the general struggle against capitalism. Later on, we will establish which place Urban Popular Movements inhabit within the revolutionary strategy.

1. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS.

To this end, we will bring together, to the best of our ability, the contributions that have emerged in the three stages of our ideology: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

1.1 MARXISM

PROLETARIANIZATION AND URBAN CONCENTRATION WITHIN CAPITALISM

Capitalism was built over a process of primitive accumulation, made possible thanks to the colonization of territories that enabled the rise of the first big bourgeoisie and the exploitation of the medium and small peasants, forcing them to migrate to the cities in order to earn a livelihood, only to end up being exploited by the big bourgeoisie. With the growth of industry, former farm hands and small producers were forced to become part of the proletariat, selling their labor-power.

Now, however, the development of big industry has ushered in a new period. Capital and the forces of production have been expanded to an unprecedented extent, and the means are at hand to multiply them without limit in the near future. Moreover, the forces of production have been concentrated in the hands of a few bourgeois, while the great mass of the people are more and more falling into the proletariat, their situation becoming more wretched and intolerable in proportion to the increase of wealth of the bourgeoisie. And finally, these mighty and easily extended forces of production have so far outgrown private property and the bourgeoisie, that they threaten at any moment to unleash the most violent disturbances of the social order. Now, under these conditions,

*the abolition of private property has become not only possible but absolutely necessary.
(...)*

Above all, it will establish a democratic constitution, and through this, the direct or indirect dominance of the proletariat. Direct in England, where the proletarians are already a majority of the people. Indirect in France and Germany, where the majority of the people consists not only of proletarians, but also of small peasants and petty bourgeois who are in the process of falling into the proletariat, who are more and more dependent in all their political interests on the proletariat, and who must, therefore, soon adapt to the demands of the proletariat. Perhaps this will cost a second struggle, but the outcome can only be the victory of the proletariat.

-Principles of Communism – Engels (1847)

This big bourgeoisie uses its advantage to move forward the socialisation of production while maintaining the private appropriation of wealth, the foundation of capitalism. This way, small owners, that during feudalism could move up the social ladder through feudal institutions (guilds, purchased nobility titles, special licenses...), can no longer accumulate enough capital to compete against the big bourgeoisie.

Thus, as commented in the Communist Manifesto, elements of the middle strata begin to swell the proletariat's ranks:

The lower strata of the middle class — the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants — all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialised skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.

-Communist Manifesto – Marx & Engels (1848)

The heart of capitalist exploitation, industry, has forced the popular classes to move to the cities in order to be able to sell their labor-power or to set up their small business. From capitalism's very beginnings, cities are where both the working class and the petit-bourgeoisie are concentrated.

URBAN ENVIRONMENT AND CLASS STRUGGLE

Moreover, urban life is part of the class struggle.

Workers are not only forced to struggle in the factory, but their way of life is oppressive in itself where they are forced to pay part of their wages in exchange for housing or suffering from speculation on the price of commodities (food, energy, etc.). Likewise, during the times of Marx & Engels, there were already discussions about housing being treated as a

commodity, in this case, sponsored by the same industrial tycoons, who devised housing systems directly linked to the places where their workers worked. Take as an example the cottage system. Capitalists recognized that within cities housing is a low-risk business because there always will be a big number of tenants who are willing to pay for any housing, no matter in which condition the housing unit may be.

But capitalist exploitation does not only exist within the public sphere, but also within any social relationship, including family. One of the biggest Marxists contributions was to analyze family relationships, both among workers and among the bourgeoisie, in order to show that the capitalist system had transformed the patriarchal relationships to make them functional to capital accumulation.

Within pre-monopoly capitalism, in its ascendant phase, the peoples' general proletarianisation was starting, with the modern contradictions of capitalist society not yet unfolding and the old contradictions inherited from feudalism still present. To that extent, some Popular Movements, like for example the struggle for affordable housing or the struggle for women's rights, gained mass support for the first time when the revolutionary outburst of the Paris Commune was unleashed.

THE DIFFERENT CLASSES THAT INTEGRATE THE PEOPLE

Even so, the proletarianization process does not make the people homogeneous, nor does it make every popular class have a revolutionary political outlook. Some of Marx and Engels' contributions have been to demystify the concept of the people, because while the revolutionary proletarian science was being developed, the petty bourgeoisie was also shaping their own outlook about political struggle.

The petty bourgeoisie, also stomped by the capitalist boot, may align itself with the political demands of the working class, but its own understanding of the world creates its own ideological outlook. This outlook changed with the development of capitalism in its pre-monopoly phase, having as a common denominator trying to keep the prominence and social position of the petty bourgeoisie in the face of the advance of the big bourgeoisie.

At the time when the feudal past was recent, the petty bourgeoisie's political outlook had two sides: a conservative one, yearning or defending of the old feudal gild institutions against the development of production and the modern capitalist institutional framework. The other one, the radical one, that proposed to continue in some fashion the Enlightenment's bourgeois idealism, specially through intellectual circles (utopian socialism, Proudhonism...).

This petty-bourgeois perspective was discussed in different polemics and did not only appear among intellectuals. One of the most interesting polemics was about the housing question. In this polemic, the supporters of the petty-bourgeois view argued that all proletarians should aspire to home ownership as a solution to the housing problem. Engels criticized how this position, in reality, alluded to the old regime of serfdom, considering the working class as tied to a concrete area, and that furthermore, in the concrete historical context it meant directly tying them to a bourgeois.

When capitalism had developed and displaced feudalism more significantly, two new petty-bourgeois visions took over: the new conservative vision became the liberals and early reformists within the Labor Movement, while the radical one had Bakunin's anarchism as its maximum exponent.

Anarchism took some of the most common petty-bourgeois ideas and turned them into an organizing principle: liberalism (presented as collective anti-authoritarianism), the cult of spontaneity of struggle combined with the idealism that that struggle would take a revolutionary turn, and the denial of contradictions within the people, presenting every individual among the people as revolutionary in equal measure and with identical interests.

In its conservative form, and not radical, we observe similar postulates among the petty-bourgeois reformists, of which those belonging to the Labor Movement of the time as socialist leaders are of particular interest: Lassalle in the Gotha Program. Moreover, they tended to blur classes and replace the Dictatorship of the Proletariat by a pretended "Free People's State" and to follow the spontaneous struggle of the masses, but in this case without any revolutionary idealist pretension in them, but celebrating the struggle for reforms as an end.

These petty-bourgeois positions were based on deliberately misinterpreting the Communist Manifesto, in which the revolutionary line is clearly indicated. As is well expressed in this work, the proletariat is the revolutionary class since it is at the heart of capitalist exploitation, producing and distributing its commodities. With the growth of capitalism, the bourgeoisie has even removed itself from the management of production, reducing itself to a rentier role, delegating production into the hands of the proletariat. That is, the proletariat has the ability to control production and plan it through the socialization of the means of production. This can only be achieved through a socialist revolution led by this class.

As the Paris Commune taught us, the liberation of the proletariat is the liberation of the oppressed; the popular strata, which unlike the working class are segregated, must have an allied position in order to resolve the oppressions that affect them, because when the proletariat takes power, these contradictions can be resolved definitively.



The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

- *Communist Manifesto* – Marx & Engels (1848)

Another aspect to highlight is that the proletarians have a different way of fighting: if the petty bourgeoisie is hesitant, disorganized, individualistic and seeks to preserve its social position; the proletariat, by its condition of revolutionary class, also adopts specific forms on politics and ways of fighting.

As Marx points out in the Communist Manifesto: "The proletarian movement is the only movement of a majority for the benefit of an even greater majority". The proletariat, because

of its class position, can only liberate itself by abolishing the regime of capitalist appropriation to which it is subject, since it has nothing to lose as a whole. This makes them a historical class whose agenda is necessarily the Proletarian Revolution.

The concentration of the labor force, the integration of all subjects in wage labor and the stark exploitation by the bourgeoisie endowed the proletariat with an integral and progressive vision, having the potential to overcome the secondary contradictions within the people (gender, sexuality, creed, nationality, race, etc.) since they share the same oppression and the same interest in getting rid of it.

As we have said before, the proletariat is concentrated, under a concrete instruction that gives them knowledge about production and subjected to organization and discipline; but as Marx said, the ruling class breeds its own undertakers, so these capacities in those who have been instructed for production, are also fundamental when fighting for the socialization of these means of production and for the struggle in general. This makes the proletariat fight in a disciplined way, in a massive way (to win a struggle for wages, for example, it is necessary the involvement of the majority of the workforce) and for collective causes.

1.2 MARXISM-LENINISM

IMPERIALISM AND URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS

The development of imperialism as a superior stage of capitalism entails a series of changes for the Urban Popular Movements since, in imperialism, the proletarianization of the popular strata is the dominant tendency, as we pointed out in the Congress Document of the Labor Movement:

Imperialist monopolism accentuates proletarianization in the imperialist powers, because finance capital seeks new sectors to incorporate into monopolistic control, first by incorporating petty bourgeois and specialists into their enterprises, then by standardizing their way of working to gradually replace them with wage laborers each time with a lower level of necessary training. This tendency interacts with the law of uneven development of capitalism in ways that are difficult to foresee, causing proletarianization to develop in cycles that can take decades

- Labor Movement Document - Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT) (2024)

In absolute numbers, the proletariat is growing, since there are sectors in which workers are continuously required to become proletarians (automotive, logistics, delivery, etc...). In addition, we cannot fall into the trap of thinking that automation removes proletarian jobs in one fell swoop since, precisely, although it destroys jobs, it creates other jobs through the expansion of production. Finally, this automation does not reach all companies: medium-sized companies, if they want to remain competitive, will have to squeeze workers more to increase their productivity.

Coming back to the middle strata and petty bourgeoisie generated by capitalism: imperialism's superprofits make it possible to maintain a broad base of these strata, but the very stagnation of the system continually breaks them up.

The independent petty bourgeoisie suffers the risk of proletarianization due to the inability to continue its business, since it can be ruined by being crushed by the competition of the big capitalists or monopolies. But, on the other hand, the sectors which could have a petty-bourgeois style of life and be in well-to-do positions, end up in specialized jobs that are mechanical, disciplined and repetitive (office clerks, low-level senior technical positions, etc.), that is ,they increasingly resemble a proletarian in their way of being exploited and in their interests, but they still have "something to lose" (at least in conditions of relative social peace) and promote petty-bourgeois visions of the world, now with more penetration in the Labor Movement, where they make common cause or serve as a radical counterpoint to the labor aristocracy.

For all these reasons, proletarianization occurs in waves and not in a linear fashion.

These same sectors are also called upon to participate in social movements distinct from the classic struggle for the negotiation of wages. With this large volume of masses pushed to fight, the Urban Popular Movements begin to have a more massive character, developing with their own entity.

Another aspect affecting the composition and trajectory of the Urban Popular Movements is the concentration of production, which implies even more the growth of cities: municipalities and dormitory towns are erected around industrial zones, while city centers become a space dominated by the service sector, finance, office buildings and where the main leisure and consumption activities take place. Exploitation also becomes more pervasive, e.g., a monopoly opening up in one sector leads competing small businessmen to squeeze their workers more; a monopoly undercutting prices allows other smaller owners to do so, and so on.

Finally, imperialism has meant that the machinery of the state has been perfected, tending towards bureaucratization and militarization. Even in times of social peace, the state guarantees the stability of the financial oligarchy by repressing all the popular strata. This repression begins with the State's regulation of all aspects of life, starting with the impossibility of participating in political life without going through a chain of endless bureaucratic procedures. Moreover, this bureaucratization is sustained by a network of civil servants at all levels (health, judiciary, education, etc.) and, in short, state power regulates all social life. Thus, it is necessary to emphasize that this bureaucratization of the state also proletarianizes, since it places legal or administrative obstacles in the way of someone becoming a petty bourgeois by means of his own savings.

Then, the point where militarization and bureaucratization of the state intersect is in the repression: all those who try to exceed the limits imposed by the bourgeois state are repressed. We observe how there has not been an increase in crime, but an increase in the prison population, with incarceration affecting mainly the popular strata. Also, this repression affects the use of space and the right to protest: from disincentives to innocuous activities for occupation of public space without authorization, to the systematic

administrative repression of activists for doing agit-prop. All this does not only affect the working class, but also petty bourgeois and semi-proletarian strata, since this repression operates in a standardized way.

In conclusion, the bureaucratization and militarization of the bourgeois state provoke proletarianization, because of what has been said above, but also because they imply, in the cities and together with the expansion of the monopolies, a proletarianization beyond the economic aspect: that is, to have a way of life similar to that of the proletariat. If one does not have a boss in a salaried position, one must religiously pay rent to a landlord, or a mortgage to a bank. The popular strata see their leisure time limited, they are also victims of speculation with consumer goods, the petty bourgeoisie is often drowned in taxes while the big bourgeoisie obtains fiscal advantages, etc.

Overall, this gives, for the first time in history, mass breadth to popular struggles of a sectoral and interclassist character, highlighting the women's struggle and the struggle for housing.

The women's movement was one of the first Urban Popular Movements in which, at the time of Leninism, a form of intervention was systematized. The demands for universal women's suffrage and women's political rights were highlighted because of their size and magnitude. The issue of women's suffrage implicitly involved the recognition of women as subjects with class interests of any kind, including women workers. In this struggle, in which communists participated, experiences were gathered on how to put the political demands of working women at the forefront.

The women's struggle leaves us great examples of communist leadership among the masses, raising a movement for reforms to a revolutionary movement. An example is how the bolshevik women turned the March 8th demonstration into an anti-Tsarist revolt that dragged other popular sectors and contributed to give the starting signal for the February Revolution.

THE PARTY AND THE MASSES

Regarding party building, in the era of Leninism the party-masses relationship began to take shape. The communist party groups together the most advanced sectors of the working class, organizes them professionally, and becomes the detachment that leads the revolution. Obviously, this revolution cannot be carried out without the masses, therefore, during Leninism this role is elucidated. The militants of the communist party must be able to lead and raise all forms of struggle of the working class. Depending on the context, these struggles can bring together other popular classes.

Thus, this advanced sector of the working class does not emerge out of nowhere, but has a direct link with the mass movements. The aspiration of the intervention in these fronts is not only to dynamize or find better ways to fight, but to take a step forward through the centralized leadership of the party, and to elevate them to revolutionary struggles.

The Party possesses all the necessary qualifications for this because, in the first place, it is the rallying centre of the finest elements in the working class, who have direct connections with the non-Party organisations of the proletariat and very frequently lead them; because, secondly, the Party, as the rallying centre of the finest members of the working class, is the best school for training leaders of the working class, capable of directing every form of organisation of their class; because, thirdly, the Party, as the best school for training leaders of the working class, is, by reason of its experience and prestige, the only organisation capable of centralising the leadership of the struggle of the proletariat, thus transforming each and every non-Party organisation of the working class into an auxiliary body and transmission belt linking the Party with the class.

- Foundations of Leninism – J. V. Stalin (1924)

Consequently, the III International addressed the importance of building the Party on the different mass movements in which the working class was organized:

The basis of the organisational activity of the Communist Party must everywhere be the creation of a Communist cell, however small the number of proletarians and semi-proletarians involved may be from time to time. In every soviet, in every trade union, in every factory, in every co-operative society, in every residents' committee (tenants' association), wherever there are even only three people who fight for communism a Communist cell must be formed immediately. Only the unity of the Communists gives the vanguard of the proletariat the possibility of leading the whole working class. All Communist Party cells that work in non-party organisations are unconditionally subordinated to the whole party organisation, completely irrespective of whether the Party is working legally or illegally at that given moment. The Communist cells of every kind must be subordinated the one to the other on the basis of the strictest order of precedence according to the most precise system possible. The Communist Party arises almost everywhere as an urban party, as a party of industrial workers who for the main part live in towns.

-Theses on the Role of the Communist Party in the Proletarian Revolution, Second Congress of the Communist International (1920)

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS LINE IN THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT AROUND THE URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS

As in Marx's time, some of Lenin's contributions were developed in the struggle against petty-bourgeois opportunism.

There are 3 polemics in the Marxist-Leninist stage of our ideology that are of great relevance to understand the struggles of the urban masses: the ideological struggle against the radical

populism of the “friends of the people”, the line struggle against economism and the line struggle against Trotskyism.

THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE AGAINST THE RADICAL POPULISM OF THE “FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE”

In the case of the line struggle of the communists against the petty bourgeois intellectuals, this opportunism constituted a degeneration of political populism of a more radical character.

Precisely, part of the basis of this populism was based on the notion that there was a dissociation between capitalist production, which they called mercantile, and small artisan production, that is, that developed by the petty bourgeoisie. They claimed that the latter supported an industry of popular character. Lenin, in his work ‘What the “Friends of the People” are and how they fight the social-democrats’, debated against this current analyzing precisely how capitalism was configured in Russia.

Lenin defended that this separation was false: capitalism is a system that operates in all spheres and, therefore, a series of capitalists tended to progressively accumulate branches of production, forming the big bourgeoisie. The petty bourgeoisie was not exempt from the capitalist chain: it produced and carried out subsidiary orders for this big bourgeoisie and, while subject to a process of impoverishment, it exploited and survived on the basis of its workers. This analysis made it possible to reaffirm the communist thesis that the working class is the revolutionary class and that, by liberating itself, it liberates the working people.

Nowadays, we still find the petty-bourgeois vision that idealizes small forms of property or cooperative property.

THE LINE STRUGGLE AGAINST ECONOMISM

One line which Lenin fought against and which continually reappears as a deviation in the Communist Movement is economism.

Economism reproduces the petite-bourgeois vision that belittles the revolutionary potential of the workers by extolling their economic/union struggle as their only proper struggle, and the proletarian political struggle as the elevation of that economic struggle to the political level (i.e., for questions that affect the day-to-day life of the worker as exploited under capitalism).

In particular, this appeared in Lenin's time, and often appears, as a bourgeois “workerism” that tries to pass off the trade union struggle as the only struggle of which the workers are capable, the trade union bureaucracy or the reformist parties as the organization and discipline proper to the proletariat (under the slogan “we are not those petty bourgeois radicals”), and a formal contempt for the non-proletarian popular struggles which in practice

means letting the petty bourgeoisie lead those movements and pretending to convert the Party of the working class into a pressure lobby in capitalism.

Against this, in texts such as "What is to Be Done", Lenin explains that the Communist Party bases its strength on the proletariat, but is integrated by revolutionaries of all classes, and addresses all the popular classes in struggle, bringing with it the discipline, organizational capacity and sacrifice of the proletariat to replace the vacillating character, individualism and idealism of the petty bourgeoisie that usually dominates these movements.

Imperialism cannot avoid crushing all the popular strata, and the proletariat is the only class capable of liberating them, so the Communist Party must also lead these popular movements of struggle.

Economism as a deviation can also appear within the communist intervention in the Urban Popular Movements, disregarding that the priority of the Communist Party is to politically unite the advanced members and sway them for the revolutionary political struggle as a fundamental step for them to advance the mass struggle for reforms, so that they can have a correct understanding of when the struggle for reforms is truly helping to advance the organization and consciousness of the masses.

This economism can manifest itself in different ways, even if unconsciously. An example of this would be to reduce the struggle to the demands that the masses already have clear, without providing any kind of political education; or to go directly to the intermediate and backward sectors without understanding that the main task is to bring together the advanced ones.

THE LINE STRUGGLE AGAINST TROTSKYISM

Trotskyism is the political condensation of all the pernicious petty-bourgeois ideas in the mass movements. Because it is so markedly petty-bourgeois, it has not had much influence in the Labor Movement, apart from deceiving some critical workers from time to time, as it did when it was an opposition force to the Communist Movement in Comrade Stalin's time. But it has preserved, either organizationally or through varied versions of its ideas, a significant rooting in the Urban Popular Movements.

Trotskyism grows out of the vacillating spirit and petty-bourgeois democratic fears of the popular strata towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, proposing to them an alternative ideal which has never come into existence, but which is more credible than the good old anarchism.

Trotskyism gives an organizational systematicity to the petty-bourgeois form of bureaucratic control of the mass movements, theorizing that the role of the communists is to climb by any means to the commanding positions and to rely on a fundamentally unorganized mass base to follow them with some general slogans.

Trotskyism gives its most advanced form to the cult of the spontaneity of the masses in its ultra-left idealist variant (but with a rightist outcome), with the Transitional Programs or their more modern variants of transitional reforms. They are utopian lists of demands that fall halfway between the struggle of the broad masses for reforms and revolutionary measures that only a Dictatorship of the Proletariat could carry out, with the hope that more and more masses will join in following such a program, and, almost without realizing it, giving their struggle for reforms, will end up asking for something impossible and will “overflow” the system generating a revolutionary crisis that the well positioned Trotskyists will take advantage of.

1.3 MARXISM-LENINISM-MAOISM

THE PEOPLE AND THE ENEMY

It is in Maoism where the concept of “people”, its contradictions and the role of the social movements in the revolutionary tactics and strategy is delimited in a more explicit and concrete way. It is from the experiences of the Chinese revolution and its synthesis that a transversal method is generated to resolve the party-mass contradiction: the mass line. To begin with, Mao leaves us a definition of “people” that is still operative.

To understand these two different types of contradictions correctly, we must first be clear on what is meant by "the people" and what is meant by "the enemy". The concept of "the people" varies in content in different countries and in different periods of history in a given country. Take our own country for example. During the War of Resistance Against Japan, all those classes, strata and social groups opposing Japanese aggression came within the category of the people, while the Japanese imperialists, their Chinese collaborators and the pro-Japanese elements were all enemies of the people. During the War of Liberation, the U.S. imperialists and their running dogs -- the bureaucrat-capitalists, the landlords and the Kuomintang reactionaries who represented these two classes -- were the enemies of the people, while the other classes, strata and social groups, which opposed them, all came within the category of the people. At the present stage, the period of building socialism, the classes, strata and social groups which favour, support and work for the cause of socialist construction all come within the category of the people, while the social forces and groups which resist the socialist revolution and are hostile to or sabotage socialist construction are all enemies of the people.

-On the correct handling of contradictions among the people, Máo Zé Dōng (1957)

From this, it is important to extract that people is not a static concept, and that it depends on the situation of the country at the level of the economic system, and on the phase of the revolution in which we find ourselves.

THE UNITED FRONT

The experience of the Chinese revolution also made it possible to analyze the behavior of the social classes in China, then subject to Japanese imperialism, and what was their role in the new democratic revolution. In particular, how it was to be built and which were the classes that made up the anti-imperialist united front. We will discuss the question of the United Front in the strategic section.

To advance the united front, Mao made a distinction between the progressive sector, the intermediate sector and the recalcitrant sector. In Mao's view, the progressive forces were the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban bourgeoisie; on the other hand, the intermediate sector was the national bourgeoisie and part of the middle landlords ("sensible shenshis") and the recalcitrant sector was made up of the big landlords and the comprador bourgeoisie, which made a pact with the United States and the Japanese Empire.

This analysis is constituted on the basis of the social role of these classes with respect to semicoloniality and semifeudalism. For example, the national bourgeoisie is considered to have an intermediate role in the question of the anti-imperialist struggle against the Japanese, due to the fact that, on the one hand, it has an antagonistic contradiction with the working class and, also, another contradiction with imperialism and the comprador bourgeoisie, which exercise oppression over it. Hence its intermediate character.

From there, Mao articulates the tactic of advancing the progressive camp, winning over the intermediates and fighting the reactionaries. For this, the development of the progressive forces is primary (proletariat, peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie). But why was it necessary to drag in the intermediate sectors? The intermediate sectors, in the specific conjuncture of the anti-imperialist struggle, supposed a vacillating sector but which, in the question of striking the main blow, expelling the imperialists, were a necessary social force for the conformation of the united front. But in the face of the revolution, they present contrary interests, therefore, the fundamental allies are the classes participating in the progressive sector. That is to say, the expansion of the political force of the revolutionary classes, with the role of the proletariat at the forefront, must win unity through struggle and tangible results.

Developing the progressive forces means building up the forces of the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, boldly expanding the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies, establishing anti-Japanese democratic base areas on an extensive scale, building up Communist organizations throughout the country, developing national mass movements of the workers, peasants, youth, women and children, winning over the intellectuals in all parts of the country, and spreading the movement for constitutional government among the masses as a struggle for democracy. Steady expansion of the progressive forces is the only way to prevent the situation from deteriorating, to forestall capitulation and splitting, and to lay a firm and indestructible foundation for victory in the War of Resistance. But the expansion of the progressive

forces is a serious process of struggle, which must be ruthlessly waged not only against the Japanese imperialists and the traitors but also against the die-hards. For the latter are opposed to the growth of the progressive forces, while the middle section is sceptical. Unless we engage in resolute struggle against the die-hards and, moreover, get tangible results, we shall be unable to resist their pressure or dispel the doubts of the middle section. In that case the progressive forces will have no way of expanding.

-Current Problems of Tactics in the Anti-Japanese United Front, Máo Zé Dōng (1940)

To win over the progressive camp, win over the intermediates and fight the reactionaries, the key lies in the deepening of the Leninist idea that the Communist Party gathers the advanced and brings them into the political struggle. The Communist Party gathers and advances the left (the advanced elements of the masses), which advances the center (the great majority of the masses willing to fight under certain conditions) and isolates the right (the elements of the masses opposed to fight or allied with the enemy).

MASS MOVEMENTS AND PARTY BUILDING IN MAOISM

At present, we can learn not only from the Chinese Revolution, but also from all the theory elaborated in the contemporary protracted people's wars (PPWs). In this document we will study, because of its relevance and relation with the field to which we refer, the contributions of the Communist Party of India (Maoist). Although in all PPWs there has been urban work, the CPI (Maoist) synthesizes these experiences of application of the mass line in a unified document.

The CPI (Maoist) establishes that the class struggle in the city and the urban movements are a key piece in the strategy of the PPW, even in the case of a PPW in a semi-colonial country where agrarian reform is necessary and the peasantry exists as a class. Even so, these are reflections that are applicable to any context.

Thus, being the centres of concentration of the industrial proletariat, urban areas play an important part within the political strategy of the New Democratic Revolution. It is the task of the Party in the urban areas to mobilize and organize the proletariat in performing its crucial leadership role. Urban work thus means firstly, forming the closest possible links with the working class and, through the class struggle, establishing the Party as a proletarian vanguard; further, it means the mobilization and unification of all other sections under proletarian leadership in the struggle to achieve the tasks of the revolution

-Urban Perspective—CPI (Maoist)

This is in direct relation to the theses set out above: in the cities and urban areas there is a demographic concentration of the working class, petty bourgeoisie and semi-proletariat.

Therefore, capitalist exploitation extends to all areas of life and, consequently, the class struggle is present in every aspect of existence. Therefore, the masses will always mobilize for the improvement of these conditions of life.

In addition to the primary importance of trade union work and intermediate fronts in the , the CPI (Maoist) understands that this is not the only form of organization taken by the working class in particular, but that there are other forms of mass organization that encompass more popular sectors. In the case of India they mention a few: the organization based on the defense of a religion or ethnicity, the organization of women and children, students and the organization by localities. The latter is particularly interesting:

Though the workplace organization is the primary organization of the workers, we should also pay attention to organizing the workers within the slums and localities. Through this we can get contact with new workers from various industries, we can draw the families of the workers into the movement, and we can organize the semi-proletariat and other sections of the urban poor living in the slums and poor localities.

In slums and other poor localities, there are already numerous traditional organizations in existence. Constantly living in precarious conditions, the urban poor naturally come together to help each other and unite within organizations to fight for their rights, to secure better living conditions, to solve problems among themselves and to better organize their social and cultural activities

-Urban Perspective—CPI (Maoist)

2. URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS WITHIN THE REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

Spain is an imperialist power, and the People's War in Spain will develop in accordance with this reality.

This means that it will go through a relatively long period of accumulation of forces, that we will rely on mass movements of struggle for reforms to grow and that it will have a mainly insurrectional component in the cities. In this aspect, the urban Popular movements suppose a direct reserve for the proletarian revolution and constitute an important strategic weight in the development of the PPW.

That is to say, although in the strategy of the PPW the military line and the preparation to be able to confront and lead the war acquire a principal role, in the face of the development of the PPW it is necessary the mobilization, preparation and motivation of the masses to support this struggle and to develop it.

To achieve the latter it is not enough to lead the left (the most radical and advanced layers), but to drag the center through the generation of networks of support and

solidarity, organizations of struggle, self-defense and self-management, cultural associations, etc. in which the advanced elements and members of the party are fused with the masses, are referential, etc.

- Our political line, strategy and tactics. - Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT) (2023)

URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS AND PROLETARIANIZATION

Urban Popular Movements gain importance as the proletarianization of society deepens, not mainly because more workers abandon production, as postmodernists imply, but because more previously petit-bourgeois layers bring their mode of exploitation and their interests closer to those of the proletariat.

The Urban Popular Movements are not the new Labor Movement, but they are a Movement that groups together both struggles of interest to the proletariat and struggles of the proletarianized middle strata.

It is not only about impoverishment, it is about the loss of control and autonomy over one's own work, it is about the standardization of the work process, it is about the massification of formerly petty-bourgeois (or more bourgeois) professions, it is about the progressive erosion of the social elevator....

Of course we include ruined small owners and semi-proletarians, but also all the new layers that imperialism creates day by day: new semi-proletarian professions that once would have been petty-bourgeois, clerks and technicians hired en masse that once would have been middle management or well-off officials, new sectors that begin full of small ultra-exploitative companies competing among themselves, to be later progressively eliminated by monopolies, university students who temporarily pass for proletarian professions to pay their studies....

All these sectors do not yet have the possibility of unleashing a struggle against the capitalist who employs them because they do not work under fully proletarian conditions, but also, in many cases, they do not feel the need to risk comfortable or relatively well-paid jobs, or they have not developed their own experiences of struggle in the workplace because it is newly created or they are bound by petty-bourgeois squeamishness (as often happens among senior technicians and office workers).

But to varying degrees, these sectors do suffer the oppression and exploitation of capitalism and, in the cities, they often swell the ranks of different causes of popular struggle, often more than one.

Complementarily, the process of proletarianization of the popular strata accelerated by monopolism adds to the deep masses of the proletariat workers previously dispersed (or even semi-proletarian) in sectors of low added value in which the massive entry of the

monopolies has waited until there have been no more interesting sectors to squeeze (see home delivery with the riders and franchises in the hotel and catering trade).

This sector of the proletariat that has recently swelled, although it is mainly part of the Labor Movement and often carries on union struggles when its degree of socialization and concentration allows it, also has more difficulties in obtaining improvements in the direct wage paid to it by its particular capitalist, and it is easy for it to have particular interest in joining, sometimes even before the union struggle, the struggle for indirect wages and the limitation of exploitation outside the workplace that takes place in the Urban Popular Movements.

In short, the Urban Popular Movements are born with the birth of the cities themselves, and acquire greater weight and relevance as the petty-bourgeois classes and strata suffer the exploitation, oppression, repression and arbitrariness of the capitalist system, from which they cannot escape.

The development of monopoly capitalism leads, in waves, to crush the independent petty-bourgeoisie on the basis of the fiercest competition, and to systematize and mechanize in waves the liberal petty-bourgeois professions, swelling the ranks of the working class, turning once semi-proletarian workers into a disciplined army led by the monopolist parent companies, and pushing the conditions of the majority of petty-bourgeois professionals (those whose work has not yet been systematized) to ones similar to those of a proletarian.

It is these petty-bourgeois classes and strata that mainly drive the resistance movements that are the Urban Popular Movements, with the working class participating in them only secondarily. While the permanent organizations are usually small and made up of the petty-bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeois leadership can achieve large quotas of working class mobilization in moments of movement influx.

This exposition should serve as a vaccine to the thesis of the “deproletarianization” of the working class or the “disappearance” of the proletariat, as the Urban Popular Movements often end up affirming, because the Urban Popular Movements are driven mainly by the petty-bourgeoisie and see the world from their class point of view, overestimating the prevalence of their class and the other layers more present in the movement.

The petty-bourgeoisie that drives and generally leads the Urban Popular Movements criticizes the manifestations of the capitalist system from its own experience and vision of the world: they make the specific oppression they face a central (and even foundational) element of the failures of the current system, and not infrequently, their most radical sectors, which agree with criticisms of the entire capitalist system, point to the workers' unions as part of the problem, or when they are more accurate, to their leaders sold out to the interests of capital (to the labor aristocracy, which straitjackets the workers' struggle to the defensive negotiation of corporate economic interests)

Although the latter is not negative, it can be partial and not achieve its objective when it is a utilitarian critique on the part of petty-bourgeois reformism. One of the aspects that we

must keep in mind is that the Urban Popular Movements are not watertight to the influence of the different social forces, each one with its class stamp. Mainly, we can highlight: the influence of the labor aristocracy itself, founding corporatist organizations and focused on concrete negotiation; and petty-bourgeois reformism, which ultimately tries to convert the popular associations into their electoral support, “fighting in the street” when they emerge or are in opposition, and unfailingly betraying their bases when they come to power. These two influences are the most relevant, and are the protagonists of alliances and disagreements which, together with the influence of the conscious proletariat, make up the main contending forces in the Urban Popular Movements.

Therefore, Urban Popular Movements are mass struggles where both proletarians and the proletarianized middle strata will naturally go, and, secondarily, a good way to reach a part of the deep masses of the proletariat.

URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS AND THEIR ADVANCED MEMBERS

Also, as the concentration in the big and medium-sized cities advances, and as the proletarianization of the popular strata makes Urban Popular Movements grow, more and more activists, some of them with advanced levels of consciousness, appear.

We must understand that Urban Popular Movements have the advantage of being concentrated in the same geographical space, which are more or less freely accessible to any activist who wants to participate.

Since they do not develop in the heart of the main contradiction of capitalism, they do not have the same systematic and regular massiveness that the Labor Movement has in a purely self-organized form, but, for that very reason, they do not usually have the same degree of bureaucratization as the trade unions. Urban Popular Movements can give rise to massive struggles, but because they are voluntary movements, are usually ideologically limited and, on occasions, are difficult for the proletariat to access, they do not happen on a regular basis. Thus, we can promote different structures (intermediate fronts, broad mass fronts, etc.) to strengthen and empower them.

All this together leads to Urban Popular Movements concentrating and developing a layer of activists with an advanced level of consciousness, often much more than the isolated struggle for reforms struggle alone would allow by itself, usually as a result of participating in or knowing several of them up close and directly confronting the State in political causes.

Being more isolated from the broad masses and, normally, having suffered multiple defeats or the rise and fall of diverse mass movements, and having learned fundamentally through the practice of struggle in inter-class movements, it is common to find to one degree or another radical petty-bourgeois deviations: vacillation between voluntarism and total demoralization, between the cult of the spontaneity of the masses and the distrust in them to fight and win, between the most basic and minimal resistance struggles and the rejection of the struggle for reforms on principle, between bureaucratic organization alien to the masses and anti-authoritarian assemblyism, and so on.

URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS AND THE UNITED FRONT, AT A STRATEGIC LEVEL

All these mass movements encounter the contradiction that capitalism cannot resolve their demands through state mechanisms. That is to say, it can guarantee neither the end of patriarchy, nor free universal housing, nor living conditions that are not marked by uncertainty and hardship. Thus, the popular urban movements bring together the sectors of the people who have an irreconcilable contradiction with capitalism, therefore, it is in their interests to put an end to it.

Regarding the revolutionary strategy, we have already stated that the three instruments of the revolution must be built: the party, the united front and the people's army.

In the imperialist countries, at the center of the united front is the unity of the working class, as the motive and leading force of the revolution. This does not mean that the Urban Popular Movements do not incorporate in their midst workers' demands; in the construction of the United Front, once the revolution has begun, at the moment when the control of production and war socialism begins to be established, the broad masses will apply these demands: liberation of political prisoners through the practice of red relief, expropriation of blocks, collaboration with technical workers to recover supply in case of cuts, organization of women's groups to carry out self-defense, etc

That is to say, many of the political actions that right now are carried out in Urban Popular Movements, such as squatting or feminist self-defense campaigns, will change their nature. While in the stage of disorganization of the masses the impact of this type of actions is low and they are used to exert pressure to achieve some partial demand, in the revolutionary phase they become an exercise of power.

URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS AND THE PARTY'S RECONSTITUTION

Right now, we have approved that the primary strategic blow is the reconstitution of the Communist Party. Therefore, all tactics, propaganda, agitation and intervention in mass movements must be focused on this task.

On the other hand, in the face of the reconstitution of the Communist Party, we must keep in mind why we participate in these movements. Our idea is not simply to be organizers of social movements, or to make the front fight better. Our mass intervention, in general, is to achieve this reconstitution. In the end, the center of the mass line is power, and if there is no party there is no power. Therefore, our participation in these movements must be primarily the formation of revolutionary cadres coming out of these movements. To train them to be able to lead, to unite and lead the advanced, and to be able to drag the intermediate.

In short, regarding party building, many advanced elements of the working class and the popular strata are activists in popular urban feminist movements, housing activists, etc. At present, the starting point if one has a certain political restlessness is to participate in these movements. Therefore, we must group this sector, incorporate the most capable into the ranks of the party.

3. URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN SPAIN

In order to understand the configuration of urban movements in Spain, it is necessary to analyze, on the one hand, the trajectory of the class struggle and, on the other, the conditions for the existence of Urban Popular Movements with sufficient political relevance.

The configuration of Spanish capitalism is going to determine the motives for which the masses initiate struggles for their demands. As we have seen in previous documents [our Third Congressional Document, on the nature of the spanish state, not yet available in english], Spain is a second order imperialist country which, from the transition, began to modernize its state, its army, with some state monopolies already regenerated. But this situation of second order imperialist power, impacts on the classes in the following way:

The relatively small size and the transitory character of the upper layer of the working class, continuously under siege; the existence of a numerous poor semi-proletariat and the breadth of the deep masses of the proletariat in the most precarious sectors mean that the struggles for indirect wages and, in general, the struggles for economic issues outside the workplaces have an important extension: neighborhood struggle, student unionism and the various specific movements of the semi-proletarians and some independent petty-bourgeoisie.

The housing issue in Spain cannot be underestimated. The construction and real estate market is an important source of profits for the financial oligarchy, since it is an investment from which profits are obtained quickly and in the short term. This situation, structural to Spanish capitalism, has led to a situation of permanent crisis in the housing sector, which the State has not been able to manage. Thus, the cost of housing is a major expense for a good part of the popular classes, especially the working class, either directly (rent) or indirectly (mortgages, loans, public facilities in the neighborhood, etc.) and the power of financial capital in the sector is expressed directly and without disguises. We also find other fundamentally economic movements, such as the student movement, which is also mainly made up by young people, and the movements for the defense of public healthcare and education.

On the other hand, not all the oppressions of the popular classes are focused or limited to the economic struggle. In Spain, although the reformist leg of feminism has managed to obtain legal reforms on the back of the popular movement, the patriarchal culture prevails in a certain way in which women and the LGBT community suffer daily difficulties: labor discrimination, male violence, sexual and physical aggressions, precariousness of feminized jobs, etc. The people who suffer most violently from this issue are the proletarianized: difficulty in legal self-defense, worse living conditions, and so on.

We also find other Urban Popular Movements of a political nature that encompass multiple sectors. We find that in Spain there is an anti-repressive movement that defends the release of political prisoners, the repeal of the most repressive laws and offers legal assistance to imprisoned activists. This movement is mainly made up of young people and progressive

legal and juridical technicians. There are also times when it gains strength in anti-fascism, a youth movement of self-defense (or promotion of self-defense) in the face of fascism or particularly belligerent elements of the far-right. The latter, in the current context, always have radical and sometimes philo-communist discourses. Although with less trajectory and impact than the movements mentioned above, the environmental movement is beginning to emerge, as an export of international organizations such as Extinction Rebellion or Fridays for Future.

URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS' HISTORY

It is necessary to know briefly how these struggles have been configured historically, in order to understand which are the main ones.

It was in the last years of "The Transition" [Translator's note: refers to the period of the middle-to-late 1970s' and early 1980s' of transformation from the fascist dictatorship to the current democratic bourgeois regime] that the struggles for democracy in different sectors began to gain prominence, both in students, neighborhood associations and the emerging women's movement. In these last years of "The Transition", the masses took advantage of the legal loopholes regarding associations to mount the first broad fronts.

We highlight the first neighborhood associations of this period, whose protest was focused against the urban redevelopment and the services of the neighborhoods. Since the Francoist and late-Francoist housing policy was different, the neighbors were faced with factory extensions, degradation of services and repression. A model of associative activism was then formulated that would remain present until 2008.

On the other hand, after "The Transition", feminist and LGBT associations gained prominence, demanding women's rights (divorce and, above all, access to abortion). The LGBT movement, for its part, fought for the abolition of the "vagrants and thugs law", and also for the decriminalization and depathologization of homosexuality. In the case of the LGBT movement, it was an extremely politicized movement from the outset, of Marxist inspiration, based on the French and North American tradition. This current lost weight when the struggle for equal marriage meant an ideological rupture: the sector most linked to the radical left refused to make marriage a right to be claimed, because it meant the integration of dissenting people into heteronormative models.

Later, in the 1980s, popular demonstrations called by Izquierda Unida [Translator's note: "United Left", a reformist electoral coalition] flooded the streets, to oppose the entry of NATO. Even so, Izquierda Unida, already captained by the reformist PCE and other spaces cut from the same cloth, did not organize a movement of struggle capable of escalating the conflict, but used mass mobilization to reinforce the institutional path of resolution. This would also mark a line of protest critical of imperialism. In addition, we highlight the protests that took place against Spain's participation in the Iraq war.

In the period between the 1990s and the 2008 crisis, there is a period of relative economic bonanza with the US as the only imperialist superpower and Spain trying to move up the

chain by sticking to it. This notably slows down the process of proletarianization of the middle strata, and shuts down Urban Popular Movements even more than the Labor Movement, perhaps with the exception of the oppressed nations.

THE 2008 ECONOMIC CRISIS, A TURNING POINT FOR THE URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS.

In 2008, the crisis of overproduction shook Spain, a crisis in which productive forces were destroyed, the quality of life of the popular classes decreased and, in addition, because of the way Spanish capitalism is composed, the main sector impacted was real estate. The real estate bubble meant that a large number of people who were paying for housing were foreclosed and evicted. After this crisis, the PAH and the anti-eviction movement was born.

At the same time, the proposal of the bourgeois state, as it could not be otherwise, was the implementation of a bailout to the financial oligarchy. Through policies of cuts in the main public sectors, indebtedness to the EU and others, the banks were rescued and the SAREB [Translator's note: Sareb is a company owned by the Spanish government and the Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring (FROB) that manages and disinvests high-risk assets from four nationalized banks] was created with public funds. Today, the latter is still one of the largest homeowners in Spain.

Among all the organized activists, from feminists, to the PAH, students and the Labor Movement, mass mobilizations began to emerge against politicians, the capitalist system and the bourgeois state (implicitly and abstractly). The 15M movement [Translator's note: the 15M was an urban movement started on the 15th of May of 2011 against the austerity measures of the right-wing government at the time] was initially led by a group of petty-bourgeois activists, which in the end was overflowed by the great wave of masses that supported the demands. These proposals were very important because, from them, we can learn about united front tactics, about a program of political demands, about escalating conflicts and, also, we can learn about what entails that there is no reconstituted Communist Party.

The 15M, which is the definition of broad and popular, was finally led by petty-bourgeois sectors, at that time radical, whose discourse was already articulated from reformism, claiming that it was possible to substantially reform the bourgeois State to make it more democratic. In the end, it has been demonstrated that this is not possible.

With the passage of petty-bourgeois reformism into institutional politics, we have seen first hand how its tactics are articulated and what its role is in the mass movements. Reformism participates in the mass movements with the intention of restoring in the activists faith in the state and the institutions, lowering the combativity of the movement; then, it tries to legislate on the demands of these movements.

With part of the movement institutionalized and occupying a role as managers of capital, the Urban Popular Movements regrouped and became politically radicalized, attracting mainly advanced sectors. Examples of these were the feminist strikes of 2018, which involved a sector of reformism that entered fully into the institutional dynamics; as a counterpoint, the

bulk of the movement adopted radical and even 'anti-capitalist' theses. A similar process occurred with the PAH and the housing movement. [Translator's note: "PAH" is the acronym for Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca, "Platform for People Affected by Mortgages" in English, a grassroots movement appeared to protest against the usurious practices of banks regarding mortgages.]

Currently, the Urban Popular Movements in Spain attract mainly advanced sectors due to their voluntarist character and, despite the fact that the vocation of these movements is, by essence, broad, their political scope is narrow due to the general disorganization of the working class.

Next, we will analyze what are the trends of the classes and how they operate within Urban Popular Movements in Spain:

As we have already explained in the strategic point, it is normal that there are activists in Urban Popular Movements who have petty-bourgeois tendencies and imprint them on the movement. These tendencies, as we have explained before, range from adopting eclectic political postulates of petty-bourgeois revisionist currents and trying to convert them into the principle of the movement, horizontality and assemblyism in the most anti-authoritarian version, etc. But there are not only petty-bourgeois tendencies, but in the movements that have more breadth they will also form part of the agenda of the labor aristocracy, which also introduces its line to the Urban Popular Movements.

The leadership of the labor aristocracy and its affinities will be characterized by excessive bureaucratism and the justification of reformism as a lesser evil. Although they can be combative in form or in some actions, they present an institutional vocation in which the front can become an intermediary between the government and the masses, having the role of advisors in legislation. This link with institutions and general accommodation can lead to openly reactionary positions when they see their social status endangered by third parties: the example par excellence would be the trans-exclusionary feminist movement or semi-institutional collectives, such as large LGBT associations.

Finally, many ideas of the bourgeois political agenda permeate easily into the Urban Popular Movements, since we are at a point where there is no generalized communist leadership. These ideas are materialized, for example, in the fact that the most important demand is representation, something that the bourgeoisie can offer without any problems since, in addition, it is profitable for them. Other examples would be punitivism and the idea that it is necessary to reinforce -even more if possible- the bourgeois State.

4 TACTICAL ISSUES

As we have established before, the main thrust is the reconstitution of the Party, therefore, the tactical approach that we must apply is the one that brings us closer to this objective.

1. Party building. First and foremost, our intervention in Urban Popular Movements has to be linked to this issue.

The Party trains the cadres in matters of mass line and intervention in social movements, and we will have to use this intervention for the recruitment of the most advanced and conscious elements in the struggle. Likewise, these cadres will also be trained and this will be the first step to nucleate the advanced and to have people who are capable of leading them.

On the other hand, it is in daily activism that we are in contact with the masses and understand and learn from their needs. The aim is not to become pollsters or journalists, but this must be linked to the development of the Party. That is to say, it is necessary to systematize our most advanced experiences of mass organization, analyze them, learn from them and extend them to the education of the cadres and to all the territories. These syntheses must also serve so that in our propaganda and party agitation we can question the most advanced masses. As a party, we must give political answers.

Although we have spoken of the problems posed by the leadership of the petty-bourgeois line, we cannot ignore the fact that they are people who fight and who have a very high involvement in the front. In addition, many of them accumulate very valuable experience in self-defense against the State. This knowledge should not remain for self-consumption, and ways should be sought for the working class and communists to learn from them, and we can return these learnings in the form of a proletarian line.

Finally, it is necessary to remember that, although we mainly appeal to the advanced sectors, we cannot forget the intermediate ones, which are a fundamental piece of support in the communist leadership. For this, we must see which social classes are being reached and which ideological sectors the front interpellates, as well as the identification with the demands. Our objective is to work mainly with the advanced sectors, and to drag those intermediate sectors. To involve the masses in the daily struggle is more tactically profitable compared to the existence of a sort of artificial division of labor.

On the other hand, the Party must remain vigilant and self-critical with respect to the different deviations that can arise through the work of the masses. We understand that these tendencies will arise mostly as a result of routine and good intentions, but they can provoke the Party to fall into economism, among other tendencies. An example of economicist approach in a front would be to focus only on management, and functioning of the front, and leave aside the ideological and political leadership, the identification of the main enemy, simplifying the language.

2. United Front Tactics. Historically, there is a natural tendency for mutual solidarity between movements, so that united front tactics emerge spontaneously. The unity between service workers and feminists for labor harassment in a company, the unity between students (petty-bourgeoisie) and cleaning workers, transport workers, the unity of semi-proletarians, petty-bourgeoisie and poor popular strata for better services in the neighborhood... These are examples of experiences of tactical united front that arise spontaneously. And they can be even greater in the face of repression, as the "Valencian Spring" demonstrated. [Translator's note: the "Valencian Spring" was a series of mass

protests in 2012. Initially carried out by students in Valencia against cuts on the public education system, these were severely repressed, which unfolded a cascade of solidarity mass protests in the rest of the State.]

This fact, which exists spontaneously, we must take advantage of it as communists with the aim of bringing struggles that, in principle, tend to isolation, to all sectors of the working class. They must serve to take the struggles to a more advanced level.

To advance reconstitution, united front tactics must serve to unite the Urban Popular Movements with the Labor Movement. On some occasions, Urban Popular Movements will be a gateway to the conflicts of the industrial working class. An example of this would be in Zona Franca, a neighborhood of Barcelona near the industrial park, where part of the workers of that area and their families live. Each of the large cities has Urban Popular Movements near industrial centers. This is also applicable to medium-sized industrialized cities such as Cadiz, where we saw that the neighborhood movement played a key role in the shipyard labor conflict.

3. Put the demands of the working class at the forefront of the movements.

Urban Popular Movements have primary contradictions that will determine the concrete tactics. An example would be in the case of the housing movement, in which the primary contradiction is between the financial oligarchy of the real estate sector and the popular strata. To determine them we must study the class composition of Spain, of the movement, as well as the trajectory of the claims and demands, to clarify who are the friends and enemies. Detecting this contradiction, we can specify what will be the demands of the working class, to put them at the forefront and bring together as many people as possible for political struggles.

Thus, if we are consistent with this orientation, the struggle will grow in strength and volume. We will organize the advanced first around these demands and push the intermediate ones. Sharpening this contradiction to the maximum through struggle will demonstrate that these demands cannot be completely fulfilled under capitalism, while at the same time it will allow us to convert class consciousness into revolutionary consciousness, at least in the most advanced sectors, and turn them into political leaders.

Also, this political orientation should be reflected in the organizational aspect and in the forms of struggle. It is not enough to identify the demands of the working class, but also to have a space of activism capable of organizing members of this class:

That a front has a petty-bourgeois organizational style implies that a part of the people who should be involved because they are directly affected are not. Dishonesty, ultra-assembly forms of organization that eternalize decision-making, opaque systems in which there are no recognized leadership figures who can be held accountable, non-confrontation or avoidance of internal debates of importance to the movement must be avoided.

4. Correctly handling of contradictions among the people.

In the mass front, our line must be to unite and not to separate, so as not to lose strength. Thus, it is necessary to identify with whom we will have non-antagonistic contradictions. Our responsibility is not to antagonize with people akin to revolutionary ideas but who have a petty-bourgeois style. This could make us fall into economist or rightist deviations, or into unprincipled unity with other sectors or detachments, as well as lose influence among the masses.

We do not only convince with words, but with actions. Our interventions must be backed by our capacity to organize and mobilize the masses; to work for these workers' demands. We must have clear that the masses are always mobilized, regardless of whether we are there or not, and although there may be missed opportunities, our forms of work cannot be desperate and spontaneous.

Regarding the reformist positions within the front, it is necessary to identify where they come from. It is not the same thing for an intermediate person to have the discourse of the lesser evil, or to agree with the "yes is yes" law [Translator's note: a law against sexual violence pushed for by some of the spanish reformist parties], than to have actively reformist activists. In this case, the contradiction is antagonistic, but because of our weakness, a direct expulsion by bureaucratic means is not possible, but politics must be used to isolate the ideological influence of these elements.

Analysis and Struggle Guidelines regarding the European Rearmament

April 20th, 2025

The evolution of capitalism during the last few years have caused several phenomena that have made the internal contradictions of the imperialist system more acute, with an outlook that show us:

- A general stagnation in production with even more recurring economic crisis.
- An increase in the number of wars and a worldwide increase in military investment due to growing inter-imperialists tensions.
- The rise of the far-right in the imperialist countries, and the rise of open fascism in the subjugated countries, giving way to a fast loss of democratic-bourgeois rights and freedoms that many thought were set in stone.

In this context, in the case of the European Union countries, the acceptance of the jingoist rearmament discourse is advancing rapidly, fully set in the whole bourgeois parliamentary arc in 2025.

US pressure, through NATO, to increase the military budget of all member States is not new. But for the EU, the new US stand with regards to Ukraine has caused a ruckus. Trump has given the European imperialist the cold shoulder in the negotiations with Putin. In order to end the Ukrainian War, which has been settled with the blood of both peoples, Ukrainian and Russian, the US and Russia have agreed to share the plunder of the Ukrainian lands between both imperialists countries.

The US has tried to calm the imperialist disputes with Russia, and to force the EU to realign with the new US doctrine, both in the military and political arenas. In this way, the US will focus their military capabilities on helping Israel and defending their interests in the Asia-Pacific region, in their fight against China.

How real is the threat of war between the EU and Russia? What interests are at stake for the EU member states, the UK and the US? Which difficulties do they find in pursuing a unified imperialist policy? What is the relationship between the “European rearmament” and the rise of reactionary politics (both the rightwards turn in bourgeois politics and the investment in right wing policies and parties by the big capitalists)? And last, which position should the revolutionary proletariat adopt in this context? In order to answer this questions, in this article we will give an overview of our analysis about the EU and this rearmament, the Spanish political situation, and the revolutionary proletariat's tasks in the face of the jingoist policies of imperialism.

1. THE EU'S NATURE .

First and foremost, we must understand that the EU is not an imperialist power *per se*: there has not been, nor there is, a unified financial oligarchy, nor the different imperialist States

have melt into shared borders and policies. This pipe dream has only existed in the minds of a few reformist and liberal europeanists, too blind with the myth of the “European oasis” and the liberal triumph of the 1990s, and inside shoddy books penned by postmodern petty-bourgeois academics.

On the contrary, the EU is a loosely knit imperialist project that we characterize as an alliance between imperialist powers under the shared, and conflicting, leadership of Germany and France. Its existence is the result of overlapping interest of the oligarchies from the imperialists countries that comprise it, but it is constantly being shaken by the contradictions among these, which prevail over the former. This was made manifest in the different answers to the 2008 financial crisis, later on with Brexit and the exit of the UK from the alliance, or recently with Germany's reluctance regarding the war in Ukraine.

In this respect, it is a project with a very shoddy design, mainly focused on trade rather than politics, aimed to get short term profits. Forced by the 2n World War's aftermath, the European Coal and Steel Community, and the European Economic Community (AKA “the European single market”) are set to give answer to the need of stability in order to rebuild the monopolies and adapt them to the new US hegemony that demoted the old European powers to a weaker position in regards to their status before the war. Even today, the EU is mainly useful to their member States to carry on joint strategic “ventures” that they would not be able to implement at the same level individually.

In addition to this, the contradictions with the semi-colonial member States, most of them joining the EU in the early 2000s, after the fall of the Soviet revisionisms' social-imperialism, with the exceptions of Ireland, Greece and Portugal, who joined earlier. The EU has been useful to the European oligarchies, specially the German one, to bring together these semi-colonies and leash them: flood them with capital and commodities, control their finances and its natural resources, and use their population as cheap labor.

In the imperialist camp, the EU powers are trying to develop a plan for a foreign policy independent from the US since the fist Donald Trump term, in 2016, a question that has come back in force due to his new electoral victory in 2024. To analyze this question, the following must be taken into account: Armies are one of the ruling classes main tools to carry out their dominance. They have a double reason of being: on the one hand, to protect the existence of the ruling classes, primarily against their own people, but also against other oligarchies or rival factions inside the bourgeoisie, and on the other hand to spread their imperialist dominion and increase their share of power.

Taking this into account, nowadays Russia is not an existential danger to the European oligarchies, but it can threaten their share of power, setting foot in Eastern European countries. However, a loss of control in that region in favor of Russia seems unlikely due to the economic, political and military quagmire that is the Ukrainian war for Russia, and to the relative firm dominion by the Western powers (the EU and the US) in Eastern Europe, despite the rise of pro-Russian political forces, like Viktor Orban in Hungary, or more recently, Calin Georgescu in Romania.

Anyhow, the European powers have had many difficulties to extend their imperialist dominion beyond Europe in the last decades, due to the fact that each oligarchy, as evidence

of their lack of cohesion, has different power spheres (France in Africa, Germany in Eastern Europe, Spain in Latin America and the Sahel region...) and are not willing to help each other altruistically. In other words, there is not enough cohesion in the imperialist projects of the different factions of the European oligarchy to move forward in a unified direction. In this situation, each financial oligarchy would like to prioritize their own turf rather than the others and to increase their share of power at the expense of their supposed allies.

2. THE EU MILITARY WEAKNESS

The sum of all this factors makes a truly European army unlikely as long as this situation continues: nor the financial oligarchy is cohesive enough to use it efficiently due to the great monetary cost that this army would have, nor is their existence threatened in the short to medium term for them to be interested in it. Even half-way measures like enhancing the interoperability of the armies from the EU countries are met with huge difficulties like the high dependency on the US for command, intel, and logistics in joint operations, the lack of legal power of the EU commissions in this area, the quarreling between the UK, France and Germany to increase their share of power in military matters, and a divided arms industry that fights each other in order to get a bigger share of the European budget.

European dependency on the US military infrastructure has been well illustrated by how decisive it has been for the Ukrainian resistance: the commanders, members of NATO, are highly capable to plan and lead troops from different countries, and are able to turn this information into tactical strikes in enemy supply chains and command centers, anticipate enemy movements in order to carry out fallbacks and counterattacks and chose the proper weapons that each moment needs. Some examples of this are that at the beginning of the war the US gave the Ukrainian infantry anti-tank weaponry to stop the Russian *blitz*, their intel (mainly satellite imaging) gave information about Russian movements which allowed them to guide long range missiles to strike ammo depots and other key locations of the Russian army, and they protected the Ukrainian command centers and logistical hubs with artillery. The US also gives high capacity air logistics for the quick deployment of troops, at a level far superior to that of the EU. This command knowledge and experience, capable of using military intelligence information efficiently, the intelligence infrastructure that in turn makes possible to establish electronic warfare resistant communications (where Musk's Starlink has a prominent role), and being the US the main weapons and ammunition supplier worldwide, causes an EU dependency from the US that is very difficult to fix. [1] Even though the EU and the US have had a similar financial effort in order to support Ukraine (around 120 000 000 000 €) US support has been mainly military whereas that of the EU has been financial. Without the US, Ukraine would most likely have been completely invaded by Russia.

On the other hand, the fact that inside the EU the semi-colonies are integrated on a formal political parity (without veto power by the more important countries, and without any established mechanisms of paralegal coercion in defense matters by the imperialist powers) hugely constrains the ability to have a unified leadership. As an example: recently, the UK and France supported the idea of sending troops to Ukraine (trying to score some leadership points in this European rearmament) whereas Germany and Poland didn't, even though they

both support rearmament. The latter two are more dependent on Russian natural gas and run the risk of paying the price of Russian retaliation to an insufficient troop deployment that is not a deterrent, knowing that they don't have the capability to deploy troops outside their borders without US support. On the other hand, countries like Spain and Italy, whose imperialist dominance is not in Eastern Europe, are against an European intervention in Ukraine, therefore they have some reservations against rearmament. It is to be expected that their performance is less strong and decisive, but they can not escape the US influence and their policies, which are supported by the leading European powers (France, Germany, the UK).

This shows a weak point in the EU project: the existence of second class imperialist countries without any power to carry out their own political agenda (like Spain, Italy and the Nordic countries). This are breaking points in the theoretical European unity against the influence of powers beyond Europe, mainly the US and the PRC. The latter, for example, has made huge investments in the Barcelona and Piraeus (Greece) ports in order to get gateways into Europe for their commodities and capital; meanwhile the US keeps their strategic interests from one end of Europe to the other which, against the rise of Trump and his new policies, create strains throughout the whole EU even inside the imperialist powers, openly supporting far-right parties.

3. THE CURRENT SITUATION: CRISIS, REARMAMENT AND REACTION

This unequal outlook in the strength and influence of the different imperialist powers means that their alliance policies and their strategic deployment are constantly in contradiction against each other, and they have to adapt to the current political situation in order to not be left behind: that is why we point out that between imperialists *competition is absolute and cooperation is relative*. Taking all of the above into account, already in our call for March the 8th we outlined a relevant change in the international situation illustrating five factors, which we will expand here:

1. The economic stagnation in the US and the EU in the last two decades, due to the dynamics of monopoly capitalism, in which there is a so-called "tendency of the rate of profit to fall". That is, simply put, that the investment needed to do business is getting bigger and the profit is getting smaller.

2. Increasing inter-imperialist tensions due to the shrinking of their super-profits. The profit that the imperialist countries can extract from the subjugated countries is getting smaller and the imperialists must fight against each other for their share of plunder: The US-PRC trade war or the Russian invasion of Ukraine are the most acute examples of the current inter-imperialist conflicts. The violent escalation of the settler-colonial state of Israel and their US masters in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen in the face of resistance from the peoples in struggle is also a relevant front of attrition for the US, as it represents a frontal opposition to imperialist plundering in the region.

In this context of stagnation and inter-imperialist conflict, the oligarchy needs a more vicious policy, both against their imperialist rivals as well as against the working class and the popular classes. This means:

3. Bourgeois States rearmament: Nowadays we see how the military and repressive investment by the NATO member states, including the Spanish State, have risen to record proportions, as well as in Russia and the PRC. Von der Leyen has announced a plan of several thousand million euros to rearm the whole of the EU due to the seemingly weakening of the alliance with the US, ignoring the infamous “debt ceiling” of member states if it serves to expand the military spending. This European investment plan will be carried out by a 800 000 000 000 € package for the next 4 years, a bit more than 1% of the European GDP, 650 000 000 000 € from the member states' budgets and the rest, 150 000 000 000 € from Union grants. Therefore, military spending will be shielded, isolated from the national debt limits imposed since the 2008 financial crisis. Even more, a lending mechanism will be established just for this rearmament, allocating European cohesion funds to this issue, and rallying private capital through the European Investment Bank [2].

But EU countries do not only work in a collective fashion. Each european State is doing the same efforts: The UK announced the biggest increase in military spending since the Cold War [3]. In Germany, both conservatives and social-democrats have made a deal to exclude military spending from the “debt ceiling” and to massively invest in infrastructure and logistics [4-6]. In France, 2 years ago, Macron sketched a scheme for rising the military spending by 40% by 2030 and is flirting with reintroducing the draft [7]. On the other hand, Poland is the spearhead of this rearmament, having increased their military spending in more than 4% of their GDP in the last years, and having promised to rise it to 5% [8]. This shows the role that the semi-colonies will take in an hypothetical military conflict against Russia: cannon fodder for the imperialists. All these increases in military spending will weight heavily in the States budgets, and will mean austerity and cutbacks in social spending like healthcare and education: that is, cutbacks to the indirect wages of the working class. Which leads to the next point:

4. Popular classes' living conditions are getting harder. Inflation and interest rates rise, housing profiteering overwhelms the working class, and trade union struggle is not currently able to rise wages at the same rate that the cost of living increases. Imperialism's ability to bribe and accommodate some working class echelons is drastically shrinking, causing a general proletarianization process that we can see in many places, not only in the living conditions but also in the loss of work autonomy, overcrowding and proletarianization of jobs that used to be exclusively petty-bourgeois, etc. This hardening of the living conditions causes popular outbursts and riots, that overlap with the different democratic protests (women's rights, LGBT rights) and political protests (like the Palestinian solidarity ones). This makes difficult the continuity of a stable government and without hiccups that the oligarchy was so used to during the neoliberal rise in the 1990s and early 2000s.

5. Therefore, financial oligarchy needs a more aggressive internal policy in order to defend their interests: their new gamble, the far-right. This political force is not new, and has had an increased importance since the 2008 financial crisis, reflecting it was the option of an increasing part of the middle and big bourgeoisie in imperialist countries. However, the far-right has not turned into the Western financial oligarchy's main political option until very recently.

The far right is needed to validate the need of defending the country from an external threat, justify military spending and involvement in wars, and to give a populist answer to the economic hardships criminalizing popular class segments like migrants and gender dissidents. This frontal attack against minorities tries to make the contradictions among the people more acute and ease the passing of legislation to lower the labor costs, making profitable to bring back to the metropolis the industries that are now outsourced to the more unstable semi-colonies or that add logistical costs along the production chain. The ultra-liberal and climate change denialism legislation sponsored by the far-right tries to lower the environmental protections to ease natural resource extraction and manufacturing of polluting products inside the country, bringing back these previously outsourced issues.

This trend is also happening in the subjugated countries, with Milei in Argentina, Bukele in El Salvador, Noboa in Ecuador and the ultra-conservative regimes of Eastern Europe. This rise is the result of increasing stagnation and internal and external tensions. The reelection of Trump in the heart of worldwide imperialism and the implementation of openly reactionary policies is a turning point in this development.

4. THE SPANISH POLITICAL SITUATION

In Spain, as with the rest of Europe, in the latest years, far-right political positions have gained relevance. With a similar discourse as "Make America Great Again", our country's oligarchy has taken out their liberal-moderate mask from the last decade and now labels migrants as the cause of the economic hardships, ignoring on purpose the relationship between the poverty that the migrants are forced to live in and crime. In parallel, mass media promote the idea of the proximity of a war, either against Russia or the PRC, trying to create a rationale about increasing military spending in the public opinion. Even though there is a social-democrat government, the Spanish State does not, nor can not, run away from the need to rearm and remilitarize, because social-democracy [9], even selling themselves as the "lesser evil" in service of the capitalists, is just another representative of the bourgeois front. In fact, during the 2020-2023 period military spending increased in 7 000 000 000 €, with Podemos in government, even though now they are making a fuss in regards to the rearmament question. The petty-bourgeois reformist parties like Sumar, Podemos, ERC, Bildu, BNG or Compromís, more or less overtly, end up supporting militarization in order to keep their position [10, 11], and opportunistically criticize it whenever it suits them [12].

Concrete analysis shows that the "European rearmament" is not an answer to an imminent threat of war, but a response of the European imperialists to the US change in policy regarding continuing their military support to Ukraine. The US has chosen to share the plunder in Ukraine with Russia, normalizing their diplomatic relations in order to pacify one of their open fronts to focus on Taiwan and Palestine. This, in turn, makes the EU to adopt the position that the US demanded, reinforce their military capacity, and turn their governments rightwards to justify it.

However, the strengthening of the EU imperialist alliance has different meanings for Germany, France or the UK; Germany prefers a fast rearmament but without direct

involvement in the Ukrainian War, France and the UK prefer to deploy troops in Ukraine as soon as possible. Moreover, they start from an inherent weak position: The EU was created as a tool of economic subjugation, and has not any mechanism to easily force weaker member states to adopt a joint defense policy, nor the European imperialist powers have a shared sphere of influence that aligns their common interests.

The Spanish oligarchy is not particularly interested in a quick rearmament, because of this the PSOE and SUMAR government is masking out an increase in military spending by doing some accounting tricks so some budget items that were not counted as military spending are now counted as such. In this way they can reach the 2% of GDP required without spending a single Euro.

These and other splits and differences between the EU member states will be noticeable, but this should not mislead us. The “European rearmament” is primarily to close ranks inside the EU, to secure their external dominion (Africa in the case of the French, Eastern Europe in the case of the Germans), and to get ready for an increase of inter-imperialists conflicts in the middle term. And this will also be carried out in Spain.

In this new context, the apparent progressive regime, absorber and assimilator of resistance movements so they become complicit in the management of capitalist wretchedness has exhausted its usefulness. It is necessary to legitimize the sacrifices to be made for the good of the imperialist nation. And is also necessary to limit, even to crush any kind of dissent that can turn against them. Because of this the far-right has become the best political option of the US and EU oligarchies.

Inside the imperialist countries: the small far-right parties gain influence, financing and voting intention; the traditional conservative parties are radicalizing, the social-democrat parties have happily taken the role as “statesman parties” justifying to the broad working masses the need for rearmament; and the reformist parties accept this because “even this is not the world they would like to live in, homeland defense must be strengthen” as they get to have a minimal share of bourgeois power. The parliamentary shift to the right that we have seen in recent years has accelerated. It is noticeable that the reformist possibilism has weakened their political positions, their positions in power have increased their cretinism, and, in the last decade, we have noticed social-chauvinist discourses in those formations that support the government (ERC, SUMAR).

The far-right is key for the financial oligarchy: it allows at the same time (1) to predispose the masses to accept the “necessary sacrifices” while (2) it legitimizes the open repression (legal and para-legal) of the “dissidents and undesirables”. With the support of the social media algorithms and the mass media, they have launched an offensive of criminalization against the migrants, as well as, in parallel, against gender dissidence, aided and abetted by the social-democracy. These are the keystones to lash out against any kind of dissidence: the LGTB community, feminists, ecologists, communists and even progressives. Anything “woke”. This links up with their recruitment campaign: to be rebel is to confront all of the above, which is part of the “Establishment”; thus creating a dangerous mass base.

This is to say, “European rearmament” is a campaign to fatten the far-right:

a political force financed by the oligarchy that currently primarily engages in cultural activity to generate a state of consciousness among the masses so that they accept losses in democratic rights and freedoms, increased exploitation, and cuts in social and public services; as well as a reactionary mass base that can be mobilised to exert pressure, which is linked to a business network and the institutions.

In creating this mass base, companies in the technology sector that control the main social networks, such as Meta (WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook), Google (YouTube) and Tesla (X, formerly Twitter), have played a particularly important role in this business network, with the media providing complementary reinforcement. Social media has served as a propaganda tool with a capacity for mass dissemination of the new reactionary ideology far superior to that of the bourgeois press, with a more than proven effect on the bourgeois electoral circus, especially among young men.

This activity drags rightwards the whole political spectrum, so that while a far-right government means the overt application of these anti-popular policies, in its absence the same policies will be applied gradually, forcing the masses to agree with the outlook of “this is the furthest we can go” or “vote me in order to stop the fascists”.

This drags the whole parliamentary arch. Closing ranks to be in a better position to secure their dominion both home and abroad.

5. THE POLITICAL POSITION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAT AND THE TASKS THAT COMMUNISTS MUST CARRY OUT.

“European rearmament” is an obedient answer by the European financial oligarchy to the demands for NATO militarization headed by the US, as well as the first imposed political measure by the new US administration, which is the flagship of this new policy that drives from now on the global superpower to its allies. There is not an imminent threat of war escalation, nor fascism inside imperialist countries, but there is a context of progressive increase of inter-imperialist tensions and the beginning of an offensive against democratic rights and freedoms, of austerity, and the worsening of exploitation.

That is why, although the opposition to imperialist war (and to turn it into a revolutionary civil war) and to develop the capacity to stop and fight fascism are issues that the communist movement must deepen their knowledge and practice, are not the main task to carry out. Rather, adopting this outlook is to roll out the red carpet for the puffed up discourse by the social-democracy and the reformists, giving them air in their miserably servile administrations to capital, which have been executing the policy of the oligarchy with crocodile tears and to allow them to once again cry wolf, “vote me to halt fascism”. In this new context, reformism goes from being the primary enemy to being a relevant secondary enemy, which we should not forget in order to limit their influence when we fight the primary enemy, represented by the far-right.

We come from a position of weakness: trade-unionism is dominated by the labor aristocracy, trade union bureaucracy is subservient to the governing social-democracy, the urban

grassroots movements only gather together a very small fraction of those that could struggle for those collectives, and those critical of reformism are subdued by petty-bourgeois outlooks which isolate them from the masses (irrealist radicalism, performative pacifism).

That is why we must focus on how we can move from the current situation to an open political struggle against reaction, a process that will in turn serve to strengthen the working class and the people ideologically, politically and organisationally, while weakening the bourgeois state.

We pinpoint three resistance struggle axis. All of them should begin from the actual forms of struggle, isolated and domestic, increase their massiveness and forcefulness, and leap forward in order to become part of the general political struggle:

1.- Trade union struggle against the worsening of exploitation in the workplace: , We must begin with organisation on a company-by-company basis, works council by works council, which is primary at the current moment. Trade union sections in struggle must be the base to pressure the trade union bureaucracy inside the big trade unions. The aim of this pressure must be that trade unions become tools at the service of the working class and the peoples' political struggle, especially in the mid-term, with the intensification of the context and the struggle, so that we can force them to unearth the powerful tool of the general strike.

2.- Urban Popular Movements' struggles in defense of public services and other demands, like housing access (limitation of indirect exploitation, and the defense of the indirect wage), starting from the actual existing organizations, among which the neighborhood organizations stand out, and picking up the baton from the grassroots movements of the previous decade, in order to gather together into the struggle more and more strata of the people, linking particular demands (putting a stop to particular local measures) with general demands (halting regressive legislation, austerity cuts, or the absence of regulation like for example in the housing market) and the political struggle against the interests of the financial oligarchy.

3.- Peoples struggles for democratic freedoms and rights. We pinpoint that nowadays the spearhead of the reactionary discourse is the criminalization of migrants and racialized peoples, as well as the persecution against trans people. This is part of a general offensive against any progressive idea. The working class and the people must fight against the reactionary persecution of racialized and trans people as part of an offensive against the whole of the people. Peoples' auto-defense will be spontaneously organized by specific organizations. We must promote the perspective in workers' and popular organisations of addressing these demands as part of a general struggle against a more overt and crude form of capitalist dictatorship.

The struggle for demands arises spontaneously, but the common sense that arises naturally from it is the reformist outlook: changing this or that wrongful aspect of the current system, which seems doable within a reasonable time framework. This is where the parliamentary initiatives, the political theater by several opportunists, the influence of social-democrat

realism and the disappointing reformist possibilism take the struggle to a well known dead-end.

Therefore, the task of the communists is to concern ourselves with structuring the different conscience levels that are forged in the struggle. As for the most advanced from the class and the people, we must avoid that their rejection of reformism takes them to isolate themselves from the broad masses which are significantly influenced by the bourgeoisie's "left" outlook. Setting up protest organisations whose main activity is the overt critic of capitalism makes these organizations marginal, surrendering the broad masses to bourgeois influence. On the contrary, the most advanced elements must be broad mass organizers and propagandists of revolutionary ideas to the most advanced layers of the masses. Struggle organisations, at their core, must be schools of socialism and schools of struggle.

Workers and peoples organizations can breach into the peoples' consciousness through effective agitation against the anti-popular policies of the bourgeois right and the hypocritical claims of the reformist and social-democrat left. Political education must be a cornerstone of the organizations' internal dynamics in order to ideologically lift and train the new members from these collectives.

In the absence of this effective clarifying agitation, that brings a working class outlook forwards in the face of the masses' troubles (and not a generic anti-capitalist discourse), the anti-popular policies and the abandonment of the working class by the bourgeois bloc are being channeled by the far-right discourse.

The aim of political agitation and education within workers' organizations must be the breaking point with the opportunist ideology of the bourgeoisie, that puts on and takes off the progressive costume as it sees fit, and deploying class politics, that brings the interest of the working class to the fore, which serves the people in their struggle, and which sets the foundations to be able to convey a revolutionary outlook as the situation worsens and the working' class and peoples' level of consciousness has developed enough. This is the right way in which we can move from a defeatist logic of defending the lesser evil to death, to an attack logic which is ready to not take any step back.

The advancement of the organisational and fighting capacity of the working class and the people will be tightly linked to the development of the revolutionary movement. This, by definition, is the most consistent and most indomitable part of the workers' and peoples' struggle. And by necessity, their most dedicated, capable, and conscious will become the proletariat's general staff in their fight against the bourgeoisie in order to end all kinds of exploitation and oppression. This general staff is the Communist Party. An organization which is built by merging the most committed and conscious people within the Labor Movement and the social struggles.

The tense situation that we live in is not different from the early XXth Century, when the conflicts among imperialists began to bubble up, gunboat diplomacy was imposed onto the subjugated countries, and the different oligarchies yearned for their rivals' colonial possessions. This situation leaded, fifteen years later, to the First World War. Unfortunately, nowadays we live in a situation where the international communist movement is significantly

weaker and where there is less working class organization than at that time. We can not fall into the “lesser evil” and “halting fascism by the ballot box” cycle, but we have to strengthen the mass organizations, rebuild the Communist Party and, as the Bolsheviks did in 1917, be able to turn the imperialist war into a revolution whenever this war shows up.

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