

Sport in Capitalist Society



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A fundamental pillar of revolutionary work is to systematically intervene and provide a perspective for the development of the struggle of the working class. The existence of a revolutionary tendency, though very weak, is a manifestation of the antagonism between the social classes and is a barometer of the class struggle.

A revolutionary tendency is only supported against the enormous resources of the bourgeoisie propaganda machine by those who are against the capitalist society, exploitation, wage slavery etc. Internationalist Voice is truly internationalist without any illusions about nationalism, democracy, and the left of capital, and defends the Communist Left tradition. Internationalist Voice is fighting for the Communist Revolution and needs your support in its struggle, in its defence of proletarian values and principles. Support Internationalist Voice.

For the Reader's Attention:

This booklet was published in Persian during the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, coinciding with a wave of social protests in Iran. Subsequently, a number of interested readers requested access to an English version in order to enable its use and dissemination on a wider scale. Now, with the start of the 2026 World Cup, and given that the critiques presented in this pamphlet regarding the role of sport in capitalist society, its ideological functions, the question of nationalism, and its direct and indirect effects on working-class consciousness and conditions remain relevant and valid, the publication of an English version has also been put on the agenda.

This booklet seeks to show that sport within the capitalist structure is not merely a neutral or recreational activity, but is instead embedded in the existing social and economic relations of capitalism, where it performs ideological and reproductive functions against the working class. For this reason, the publication of the English version is an attempt to bring this critique into wider public view and to raise the question of sport in class society from the standpoint of the communist left, as a class critique aimed at opening up an alternative social horizon.

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Introduction

During the most recent World Cup in Qatar (2022), which coincided with widespread protests across Iranian society, sport in Iran took on a more overtly political character than in many other countries. Athletes perceived as sympathetic to the ongoing protests, such as Ali Daei, Veria Ghafouri, Ali Karimi and others, came to be regarded as “people’s athletes”, figures who held a special place in the hearts of many ordinary citizens. In contrast, athletes such as Mehdi Torabi, Hadi Saei, Hossein Rezazadeh and others were labelled “government athletes” and portrayed by critics as supporters or agents of the regime.

Following Iran’s defeats to England and the United States, further efforts were made to frame these competing perspectives in terms of victory and defeat. Opponents of the government, waving American and British flags, openly celebrated each loss suffered by the Iranian team during the protests, arguing that it was not the Iranian national team that had been defeated, but rather the Islamic Republic. Conversely, supporters of the government sought to turn Iran’s victory over Wales into a demonstration of support for the regime.

Much like electoral contests that some choose to boycott while others participate in, the focus remained on whether to engage with the process rather than on questioning the process itself.

The basic question raised is whether sports in capitalist society are a simple and natural continuation of physical training in ancient times. Is sports the same bodily and physical activity that every human needs for physical, mental and social growth and prosperity? Is sport popular in capitalist society? Do athletes become popular by some anti-government orientations? How does the “popularization” of athletes or celebrities benefit the working class?

Contrary to the right and left tendencies of capital, sport is not only popular but also a tool and serves the ruling class's ideology. Sports in a capitalist society with nationalist sentiments serve and consolidate nationalism and are used as a tool to intoxicate the working class and actually serve to suppress the working class. Sports clubs play an essential role in capital giants' exploitation of the working class.

Sports and physical training

The everyday lives of early human beings involved strenuous physical activity and considerable bodily exertion. Excavating caves for shelter, hunting animals with bows and arrows, crossing rivers, and escaping from wild beasts were among the activities that characterised their existence. As knowledge and technology advanced and empires emerged, physical training became an essential and highly valued component of military preparation. Military commanders engaged in daily exercise to maintain their agility, physical fitness, and combat readiness. Consequently, what we now refer to as sport differs significantly in meaning and purpose from the forms of physical training practised in earlier periods.

The English concept of sport has its roots in popular games and aristocratic pastimes, and it emerged alongside the rise of large-scale capitalism in England.

Physical education is an educational and developmental process aimed at the holistic growth of individuals through physical activity and exercise, contributing to their physical, psychological, and social development. Within physical education, competition is either absent or of secondary importance, while activities may instead be guided by collective values and broader social or communal objectives. Contrary to a widely held assumption, modern sport—that is, sport within capitalist society—is not

merely a continuation of the physical training practices of antiquity. Rather, sport refers to a range of physical activities governed by formal rules and regulations and characterised by competition directed towards specific objectives. The acquisition and refinement of skills are therefore among its defining features. In capitalist societies, these rules are regulated by associations, federations, and international governing bodies such as FIFA and similar organisations.

The competitive nature of sport and the pursuit of success can, at times, produce adverse consequences for athletes. The use of performance-enhancing substances in the quest for competitive advantage, together with excessive physiological demands, may result in physical, psychological, and neurological harm. Within the capitalist system, sport has also become integrated into commodity relations; consequently, the dominant social relations within sport mirror those of capitalism more broadly. From this perspective, the primary function of sport has shifted from enhancing human well-being to serving as a means of generating profit and appropriating surplus value.

Capitalism and the sports industry

Alongside the expansion of the capitalist system, sport flourished throughout Europe and subsequently spread to other parts of the world. The growth and institutionalisation of sport, together with the establishment and proliferation of national sporting federations, developed in parallel with the rise of capitalism from the 1860s onwards, particularly during the final decades of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. It was during this period that sport became truly international in character. For example, football was introduced to South America by European workers employed in railway construction and maintenance. The first international sporting organisation, the International Rowing Association, was founded in 1875. Other

organisations soon followed, including the International Horse Show Club in 1878, the International Gymnastics Federation in 1881, and international rowing and skating bodies in 1882. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) was established in 1894, while FIFA (the Fédération Internationale de Football Association) was founded in 1904. Most international sporting bodies were established before 1914.¹

The development of the productive forces was a necessary condition for professional competition to replace more rudimentary forms of sporting contest. Just as wage labour in capitalist society is intrinsically linked to production, sport in the modern era derives its material expression from capitalist social relations. In other words, modern sport is a direct product of capitalist development. As capitalism expanded, new sporting disciplines emerged, all of which were organised around competition.

The sports industry is one of the largest industries in the world in terms of financial turnover. In 2022, its value exceeded US\$500 billion, and it is projected to surpass US\$700 billion by 2026.² Millions of workers are employed by major global sports corporations, producing sporting goods and generating substantial amounts of surplus value. A significant share of capital accumulation takes place within the sphere of sport. These powerful corporations also exert considerable influence over decision-making processes relating to major international events such as the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup.

Sport in the service of nationalism

Sport is one of the principal instruments through which the ruling class in capitalist society promotes patriotism, nationalism, and military discipline among workers. It is not only one of the most prominent

¹ World Revolution, January 2013

² [Globe Newswire](#).

expressions of nationalism but also a particularly effective means of cultivating nationalist sentiment. It is in pursuit of these objectives that national teams are presented as symbols of the nation-state.

The notion of political neutrality in sport is little more than a myth. Governments and capitalist institutions alike have sought to use sport as a vehicle for advancing their political objectives. From the Spanish dictator Francisco Franco to the Argentine dictator Jorge Rafael Videla, and from the cradle of democracy, France, to Britain, sport has been employed both to legitimise political authority and to advance broader political agendas. The use of sport for the propaganda purposes of the ruling class—or, put differently, as a means of pacifying workers—has become a widespread practice across the world.

During major sporting events, emotions are heightened and support for national teams is channelled towards national symbols. Workers gather together to support their national team, watch matches collectively, experience a sense of national pride, develop feelings of loyalty towards their nation, and sing their country's national anthem. In such moments, workers are encouraged to identify with the nation; notions of popular unity and common purpose emerge, while social class antagonisms are obscured or denied. Spectators stand shoulder to shoulder, their eyes fixed upon the national flag or the colours of their favoured team, joining together in the singing of the national anthem or their team's song.

With a sense of superiority towards their own team and a feeling of national or ethnic belonging, supporters often demean opposing teams and sow the seeds of hatred. They foster hostility and resentment along national, ethnic, and local lines, which at times leads to verbal and physical confrontations. Slogans such as “Death to Azeris”, “Death to Kurds”, “Death to Persians”, and others have repeatedly been chanted by ethnic chauvinists and nationalist reactionaries during matches and in stadiums.

During a match between Tehran's Esteghlal and Tabriz Tractor on 1 November 2019, Azeri ethnic nationalists displayed a banner written in both English and Azeri stating: **“Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia, the choice is yours.”** The bourgeoisie has historically relied on nationalism as a means of stimulating nationalistic sentiment.

The capacity of the bourgeoisie to incite nationalist emotions, and consequently the scope for manoeuvre available to ethnic nationalists, is inversely related to the level of class struggle. In other words, when class struggle becomes radicalised, ethnic nationalists and reactionary chauvinists are marginalised, allowing for the emergence of deeper forms of human solidarity. During the 2019 protests against the increase in petrol prices in the city of Urmia, demonstrators—contrary to reactionary Azeri and Kurdish ethnic nationalists—chanted: “Azeris and Kurds, hand in hand; all together against oppression.

Sport and the left of capital

Following the First World War, an imperialist war in which the vast majority of socialists betrayed the interests of the working class and supported their respective national bourgeoisies, only a small minority remained loyal to internationalism. Socialists opposed to the war held the Zimmerwald Conference in 1915, the majority of which consisted of pacifists. Only a small minority, namely the Bolsheviks, supported by the Bremen Left and the Dutch Left, advanced the position of revolutionary defeatism. In other words, **the left wing of the Zimmerwald Conference, rejecting any illusions of pacifism, identified the working class and the class struggle as the only force capable of confronting the war.**

Now let us see how the left of capital drags communist traditions through the mud and presents a bundle of lies under the label of defeatism. A group of Iranian “revolutionary” “communists” write:

*“By embracing defeatism towards the ‘national team’ in these competitions, the people neutralised the government’s plan. They acted in a way that history has rarely, if ever, witnessed in international sporting events. By wishing for the defeat and celebrating the loss of a football team that effectively became the team of the Islamic Republic, the people created a different historical trajectory during this revolutionary upsurge... This act of the people during the revolutionary uprising can be assessed as an action ‘against the current’.”*³

In contrast to these political charlatans and fraudsters, whose only difference from the shameful Islamic bourgeoisie is that they have not yet come to power—like the Khmer Rouge, who seized power in order to carry out massacres in the name of Chairman Mao and turn the “heads” of the people into museum exhibits—revolutionary defeatism emphasises that the enemy is within one’s own country, and that class struggle is the only force capable of confronting the domestic bourgeoisie.

If we move beyond the “four-classists” and turn to the left wing of NATO, such as the Worker-Communist Party, we find the same nonsense being repeated. Their language is very similar because they belong to the same class and merely represent different factions. Mr Kazem Nikkhah, one of the leaders of the Worker-Communist Party, engages in such demagoguery:

“A significant and unusual event in recent days was the celebration of the defeat of the national football team in Iran. The

³ Iranian Revolutionary Communists Collective (Maoist)

celebration of the national team's defeat by young people and others in Iran has become widespread in recent days, and it was a unique and unprecedented event. It is unprecedented for the people of a country to rejoice in the defeat of their 'national team'. Last week in Iran, the world witnessed this exceptional event."

However, a current among Iranian patriots—namely a tendency among Stalinists—not only regarded this behaviour by the “people” as criminal and contrary to Iran’s territorial integrity, but also as deserving of punishment. The party of Labour of Iran (Toufan) Stalinists called for the punishment of the “people” in the following terms:

“Those who rejoiced at the defeat of Iran’s national football team in an unequal situation, and who danced in Tehran or Sanandaj, raising the disgraceful flags of the United States and Britain, and who demonstrated with them—even if they justify their actions with anti-regime hatred—have committed a criminal act against the territorial integrity of Iran and the fate of 85 million patriotic Iranians, and are deserving of punishment. This hatred is only outwardly directed against the Islamic Republic, but in substance it is directed against the people of Iran, both children and adults, and it prepares the ground for normalising American aggression against Iran.”⁴

Tufan, arguing that Iran’s national football team is not the team of the Islamic Republic but the national team of the country, interpreted celebration of its defeat as being against the fate of 85 million patriotic Iranians and called for punishment. Unfortunately, Tufan has overlooked a very important question: who is supposed to punish these “errant people”? Apparently, Tufan is not satisfied with the extent of repression by the shameful Islamic bourgeoisie and is calling for even greater punishment. The left-wing factions of capital are each more repulsive than the other.

⁴ *Tufan*, Issue No. 274.

Popular athletes or working-class exploiters

In capitalist society, commodity relations prevail, and sport is no exception. Accordingly, athletes who develop specialist skills earn astronomical incomes. In other words, these astronomical earnings are part of the surplus value extracted from workers and allocated to them. These sporting stars—often portrayed as “popular” figures—then invest these very incomes and emerge as capitalists, albeit of a supposedly “popular” kind, beginning to exploit workers themselves. Their interests thus lie in the continuation of this exploitative system. This is a general argument, and we set aside exceptions, although one such exception also relates to the police force.⁵

Setting aside the astronomical incomes of foreign athletes such as Jordan, Ronaldo, Messi, and others, we return to our own “popular” sports figures. Let us begin with the most prominent of these popular athletes, Mr Ali Daei, who has recently become a symbol of the “people’s athlete”. Mr Daei has also been successful in business as well as in sport. He invested his earnings through his father even while playing for Bayern Munich, and he himself states the following:

“Even when I was playing for Bayern Munich, I gave my money to my father; he invested it for me, and I have now seen the results.”⁶

“Now I have seen the results” means that I have invested the portion of surplus value extracted from workers that I obtained as income, and I now also, as a “popular” athlete and a “popular” investor, form part of this exploitative system and am engaged in the extraction of surplus value.

⁵ One of the exceptions and curiosities of history is that the commander of the Berlin police during the German Revolution of 1918 belonged to the revolutionaries. In other words, the chief of the Berlin police was part of the revolutionary forces and, during the workers’ uprising, began distributing police weapons to militant workers.

⁶[The business of Iranian athletes.](#)

Ali Daei is involved in economic activities such as buying and selling cars, producing sportswear (the Daei brand), and the monopoly of Adidas and Nike brands, and so on—engaging in what is presented as “popular” economic activity, or, more accurately, participating in the exploitation of workers. Mr Daei has faced threats against himself and his family due to some of his statements during recent protests. However, Mr Daei claims that certain incorrect remarks are being attributed to Ayatollah Bejat in order to discredit him, including the suggestion that Ayatollah Bejat advised him not to use social media. On this matter, Mr Daei states:

“I have learned humanity, dignity, patriotism, and freedom from that great man [Ayatollah Bejat].”⁷

When a “popular” athlete has learned lessons in humanity, dignity, patriotism, and freedom from Ayatollah Bejat, then the concepts of dignity and humanity become clear. The problem does not lie with Mr Daei’s dignity, humanity, or patriotism; rather, the main issue is those who, on the basis of athletes’ anti-dictatorial statements, construct for them a “popular” identity.

Of course, the term “people” takes on different forms depending on the various bourgeois tendencies. The same “people” becomes the concept of the “ummah” for the religious bourgeois faction, the concept of the “people” (*khalq*) for others, and the concept of the “masses” for the radical left wing of capital. Other sporting stars are not only no less implicated than Mr Daei, but at times are even more involved in the exploitation of the working class and are themselves part of this exploitative system; only a few examples will be mentioned.

- **Karim Bagheri**

He is involved in importing trucks and exporting raisins, and is also one of Iran’s well-known carpet traders in the Iranian and Tabriz carpet markets. He is also active in the restaurant business.

⁷ [Donya-e-Eqtasad](#).

- **Ali Karimi**
Ali Karimi's main business is—or was—construction. He was a shareholder in a clothing manufacturing company and had a project in northern Iran.
- **Khodadad Azizi**
At one time, he owned a sugar factory in Fariman, Khorasan, but he is now active in construction. He also owns a jewellery gallery on Karimkhan Street in Tehran and has made significant investments in the United Arab Emirates.
- **Samad Nikkhah Bahrami**
He previously owned a fitness club in Gheydariyeh. He has since sold it and is currently involved in property development and tower construction, and has also made successful investments in the stock market.
- **Farhad Majidi**
He is active in construction and business, and owns a building in Dubai.
- **Alireza Mansourian**
He was once involved in the computer business but now owns a restaurant and recently opened a new branch.

Blue girl and textile factory girl

Following its seizure of political power, the shameful Islamic bourgeoisie, on the basis of its ideological superstructure, prevented women from entering stadiums to watch sporting competitions. Girls and women repeatedly attempted to challenge this systematic humiliation imposed by the filthy Islamic bourgeoisie by finding ways to gain access to stadiums.

In one such case, on 12 March 2019, Sahar Khodayari attempted to enter a stadium disguised as a boy in order to watch the match between

Esteghlal and Al Ain. She was arrested by security forces. As it took her family some time to arrange bail, she spent two days in detention. Because of her support for Esteghlal, Sahar became known as the “Blue Girl”.⁸

During subsequent court appearances, she learned that the judicial authorities intended to sentence her to six months’ imprisonment. In protest against her situation, she set herself on fire and, tragically, died from her injuries in September 2019. There is no doubt that the filthy Islamic bourgeoisie bears responsibility for her death.

Sahar’s death attracted widespread attention both within Iran and internationally. During sporting events, moments of silence were observed in her memory. Athletes wore blue armbands in tribute to her and called for women to be allowed entry into stadiums. The “Blue Girl” received extensive coverage on social media. On the online encyclopaedia Wikipedia, the story of her life was published in sixteen languages. “Blue Girl” became a worldwide trending topic on Twitter, and press conferences were held in her memory.

Sometime later, on 6 November 2021, a 21-year-old female worker named Marziyeh Taherian, who worked at the Kavir Semnan textile factory, became caught in a ring-spinning machine when her headscarf was pulled into the mechanism. The machine dragged her head into its gears and crushed it. Thus, another wage labourer lost her life.

The incident was reported only briefly among workplace accidents. No one observed a minute’s silence in her memory, no one published the story of her life, it did not trend on Twitter, nor did it become a subject of discussion on social media. Why? What distinguished this working-class woman from the Blue Girl?

The prominence given to the death of a working-class woman in the media would call the capitalist system itself into question and would

⁸ The players of Esteghlal wear blue and are therefore known as the “Blues”, while the club’s supporters are commonly referred to as “Blue supporters” or simply “the Blues”.

require a response from the workers' movement. By contrast, the Blue Girl challenged only the political superstructure and the rule of the Islamic bourgeoisie, placing her case within the sphere of the democratic (anti-dictatorial) movement.

Every year, dozens of women and girls commit suicide or self-immolate as a result of the brutality and pressures of the capitalist system. During the summer that has just passed, we witnessed a wave of suicides and self-immolations by workers protesting publicly against their hellish living and working conditions. These acts of self-immolation stirred little public emotion; no press conferences were held in their memory, nor did they become significant topics of discussion on social media.

This silence and indifference are worthy of reflection. Every class-conscious worker, every communist, must not only recognise these differences but also understand, through class consciousness, the class foundations and social conditions that give rise to them.

Sport and violence

Unlike previous class societies, injustices in capitalist society assume a systematic and industrial character. In capitalist society, commodity relations also govern social relations between human beings. Consequently, the violent behaviour of members of society reflects the specific social conditions in which they live.

Violence in capitalist society operates as an interconnected cycle and has assumed a structural character. In other words, violence inflicted upon one section of society does not simply disappear; rather, it changes form and spreads to other sections of society. Daily humiliation and social violence, whether in society at large or in the workplace, as well as poverty, unemployment, war, dismissal from employment, job insecurity, and similar conditions, manifest themselves in other forms of

violence, such as involvement in criminal gangs, aggression, alcohol abuse, drug addiction, delinquency, and other social problems.

In 1845, Engels described the brutality and violence of capitalist society, which spread from one individual to another, in the following terms:

*“Present-day society, which breeds hostility between the individual man and everyone else, thus produces a social war of all against all which inevitably in individual cases, notably among uneducated people, assumes a brutal, barbarously violent form — that of crime.”*⁹

Violence associated with sport is a reflection of the violence of capitalist society. In other words, violence in sport is not a reflection of individual violence but rather of social violence. During sporting competitions, suppressed anger often manifests itself in the form of unrest and expresses itself as violence directed against other individuals or against society more broadly. The excessive emphasis placed on sporting results, the cultivation of false social identities—in which institutions of capital play a significant role—and police violence all play an important part in generating violence in sport.

One of the most tragic incidents associated with sport occurred in “civilised” Britain on 15 April 1989 during a match between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest. Owing to severe overcrowding, the police mistakenly opened a gate that was normally used as an exit. As a surge of spectators entered the stadium, many supporters were crushed in the crowd. As a result, 97 people lost their lives and 766 were injured.

Most World Cups and continental championships have been accompanied by violence. Violence in sport is an inseparable feature of sport in capitalist society. It is impossible to eliminate this violence within the framework of capitalism; to eradicate violence in sport, its material and class foundations must first be abolished.

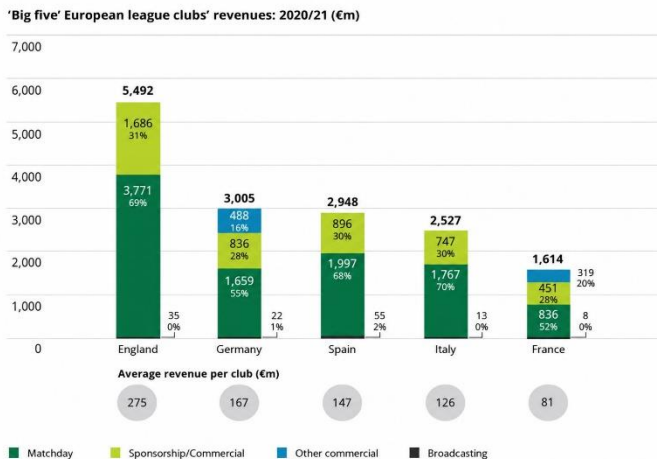
⁹ [Speeches in Elberfeld.](#)

Sports clubs or capital giants

In capitalist society, commodity relations prevail, and this also applies to sport. Sport is one of the most profitable industries in capitalist societies. Even these so-called “popular” sports clubs generate enormous profits for capitalists.

An important point regarding clubs is that, unlike industries in which workers produce surplus value as in other sectors, surplus value is not produced within clubs themselves. Rather, club revenues—even those of “popular” clubs—are financed through the inflow of surplus value from other industries. In other words, the astronomical incomes of sporting stars (including so-called “popular” athletes) are ultimately paid out of the surplus value created by workers.

Powerful capitalists also own and control sports clubs, managing and directing them, since clubs are among the most important arenas of competition between capitalists for profit. This also applies to Iranian clubs. The owner of Tractor Sazi is one such well-known and powerful capitalist. Supporters of sports clubs are merely passive elements within sport and serve as a mass following that enables the profitability of these clubs.



Source: Deloitte analysis.

The chart above clearly shows that the vast majority of club revenue comes from the sale of broadcasting rights to media companies covering Premier League matches, making sport an attractive business for capitalists worldwide. Sponsorship constitutes the next most important source of income for sports clubs. Share offerings on the stock market, advertising, and branding follow sponsorship in importance. Ticket sales account for only a small proportion of total revenue.

From this explanation, it becomes clear that, contrary to populist claims such as “popular sport”, sport plays a significant role in the capitalist economy and also plays an important role in the pacification of workers, a point that will be examined in the following pages.

Sports competitions on the bodies of workers

In 2010, the British newspaper *The Guardian* conducted an investigation into the deaths of migrant workers during the construction of sports stadiums in Qatar. It published its findings in a report entitled “6,500 migrant workers have died in Qatar since World Cup awarded”¹⁰, exposing what it described as the mass deaths of workers. The scale of worker fatalities during stadium construction was so severe that it even prompted concern within bourgeois institutions themselves.

Amnesty International was compelled to analyse death certificates and identified ambiguities in the documentation of workers’ deaths. It found that most death certificates were recorded under vague categories such as “unspecified cardiac failure” and “acute respiratory failure due to natural causes”.

In its report, Amnesty International emphasised that Qatari authorities had not conducted sufficiently thorough or professional investigations

¹⁰ *The Guardian*.

into the deaths of migrant workers, and that in most cases the deaths were classified as “natural causes”. It further noted that death certificates for migrant workers were frequently attributed to “natural causes” or conditions such as cardiac failure.

Journalists aligned with the bourgeois establishment of the Islamic Republic questioned the statistics published by bourgeois institutions regarding the alleged mass deaths of workers during the construction of stadiums in Qatar. They claimed that the majority of the deceased had died of natural causes.

At a time when, after all these crimes, General Hassan Karami, commander of the Special Units of the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran, states that if anyone can prove that a person has been killed as a result of the mistake of the “kind and compassionate” personnel of the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran, they will be rewarded—thereby making an openly false claim:

“I have such confidence in the capabilities of the Special Forces that I have repeatedly said that if anyone proves that a person has been killed as a result of the mistake of our personnel, I will reward them.”¹¹

When, despite all this evidence and footage, crimes are denied; when, for those who lost their lives in recent protests, death certificates are issued stating causes such as falling from heights, traffic accidents, suicide, natural causes, and so on, why would the same approach not be extended to Qatar? Journalists aligned with the Islamic bourgeoisie are of the same ilk as the commander of the Special Units of the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and they fabricate such falsehoods:

¹¹ [Commander of the Special Units.](#)

“While it is claimed that 6,750 migrants working in Qatar on projects related to the construction of World Cup stadiums have died, the statistics tell a different story... 80 per cent of these deaths were due to natural causes, 10 per cent were due to road or traffic accidents, 6 per cent were suicides, and 4 per cent were due to workplace accidents.”¹²

Contrary to the populist journalism of the Islamic bourgeoisie, according to reports from bourgeois institutions themselves, every 15 seconds a worker—a wage labourer—falls dead somewhere on this planet. Every day, 3,000 workers are killed in workplaces. In no war are such numbers killed daily, except in the class war between labour and capital.

The overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of this planet earn their livelihood by selling their labour power, whereas the “honourable” journalists of the Islamic bourgeoisie make their living by selling their conscience. Neither the lies and demagoguery of Islamic bourgeois journalism, nor the ostensibly troubled conscience of democratic bourgeois journalism, can conceal the fact that World Cup matches are played on the corpses of workers, so that capitalists may make greater profits and workers may be further pacified and poisoned.

Sport is a manifestation of the moral degeneration of capitalism

Sport is part of capitalist society, in which commodity relations prevail. In other words, the culture, values, and morality governing sport are a reflection of those of capitalist society. More precisely, in sport, achieving goals by any means necessary—that is, ambition, cheating, corruption, violence, brutality, hypocrisy, exhausting oneself to the point

¹² [MehrNews](#).

of collapse, individualism, and so on—has become institutionalised as the dominant culture. Therefore, speaking of “popular sport” is nothing more than demagoguery and serves only these ends, in which sport is used as a political instrument.

When, in a sporting competition, a single goal or a matter of a few centimetres can turn one person into a champion, a victor, or a millionaire, while condemning another to defeat or failure, it becomes a direct manifestation of capitalist competition. This highly individualistic and inhuman competition, which reflects competition in capitalist society, creates the conditions for moral decline. Solidarity gives way to individualism. The athlete comes to understand through experience that without adapting to the standards of the dominant order, there is no possibility of progress. Today, no sport is immune to cheating by athletes, and sport has effectively become a school of cheating.

In order to secure a better position, the athlete comes to the conclusion that they must improve their performance by any means possible and must win at all costs. Consequently, they are compelled to violate human values in order to reach that position. The tendency among athletes towards doping or the use of performance-enhancing substances arises from this logic.

Moral decline reaches such a point that the pursuit of momentary victory is preferred over the severe and potentially fatal physiological or psychological side effects caused by doping or performance-enhancing drugs. This issue is not limited to professional athletes; it has become part of sporting culture and plays an important role in the moral decline of younger generations.

Such a culture leads to psychological and personality deterioration among young people, resulting in severe depression and anxiety, which in turn increases the tendency towards substance use within sporting activities.

Doping is an expression and manifestation of the decay and corruption of capitalism, in which competition, wealth, fame, and, above all, the frenzied and degrading exploitation of athletes' own bodies become the central concerns.

Corruption, patronage, and moral decay have become so deeply entrenched in Iranian sport that even Mostafa Hashemitaba, former head of the Physical Education Organisation, has referred to them openly in the state-run press. Years ago, commenting on moral decline and corruption in sport, he made the following observation. Given the inflation characteristic of peripheral capitalist countries such as Iran, the sums he mentioned in millions would probably have to be expressed in billions today:

“For example, a coach brings in a player and says, ‘You must give me 30 per cent of your contract.’ Such individuals exist within our football system. They register that player’s contract at an inflated value in order to secure a larger share for themselves. We had a player who joined a club on a contract worth 600 million tomans and did not play a single match throughout the entire season. The coach said, ‘I want this player,’ and a contract was signed. If the coach genuinely needed that player, why did he not play a single game all season?”¹³

Since modern sport is a product of capitalist society and a manifestation of capitalist decay, the idea that it can be made genuinely popular and placed in the service of the people is nothing more than an illusion. The material basis of modern sport—capitalist society itself—would first have to be abolished before sport could lose its commodity character and be transformed into physical education and physical activity for all, or, more importantly, into a form of social activity among human beings.

¹³ [An Anatomy of the Roots of Corruption in Sport.](#)

Sport and gambling

Betting is one of the most profitable sectors of the sports industry, behind which stand capitalists and capitalist institutions. Nevertheless, the very barbarity of capitalism—namely economic instability, the moral decay of society, and, above all, the dominant bourgeois culture, or, in other words, the pursuit of “easy money” and rapid enrichment—is among the factors that have contributed to the growth of this sector of the capitalist economy.

In Iran, because gambling is ostensibly illegal, betting is conducted through private companies using various indirect methods. In such an environment, where legal loopholes exist, betting openly takes the form of fraud, often operating beyond the reach of even the capitalist system’s own laws and regulations. In countries where gambling is legal, gamblers generally place their bets through betting agencies and organisations that operate under the laws and regulations of those countries.

With the growth of the internet, traditional gambling houses have largely been replaced by online gambling platforms, and sport has provided a fertile ground for online betting. Iranian betting websites have generated enormous financial turnover, built upon the misfortune of individuals who have lost their savings and assets. Most of those who lose their savings through betting websites come from the lower strata of society; dreaming of improving their economic circumstances, they ultimately lose what little they possess.

The form of betting discussed above represents the official and visible side of gambling. A significant proportion of betting, however, takes place through unofficial channels. Influencing the outcome of sporting events—or, in other words, match-fixing—extends even to Europe’s top football leagues. There is considerable speculation surrounding this issue, sometimes involving sums running into hundreds of millions of euros.

Unofficial betting and match-fixing have corrupted sport to such an extent that the President of the International Olympic Committee has described them, alongside doping, as among the most serious threats to the future of sport. He stated:

“Illegal betting , match-fixing as dangerous as doping. Says IOC chief.”¹⁴

Sport in Iran is a stark and unvarnished reflection of a decaying peripheral capitalist society and, consequently, is more deeply affected by corruption than sport in many other countries. Match-fixing is therefore by no means absent from Iranian sport. Regarding the deliberate loss of matches for betting purposes, one player in Iran’s Premier Volleyball League stated:

“Unfortunately, last week one of our team-mates, who is regarded as one of the team’s key players, deliberately took medication before a match in order to make himself nauseous and unable to play. We later discovered that he had placed bets through a gambling website and did not want to take part in the match because he wanted the team to lose.”¹⁵

Sport during the decline of capitalism

The origins of modern sport, like the development of capitalism itself, lie in England. In other words, modern sport is just as much a product of the evolution of capitalism as industrial factories are. The decay of capitalism is accompanied by an expansion of the functions of the state; in other words, in the era of capitalist decline, the responsibilities of the state

¹⁴ [The President of the International Olympic Committee.](#)

¹⁵ [JahaneSanat.](#)

expand steadily. In this context, the aim of the bourgeois state is **to create the necessary conditions** for capital accumulation, whereas the aim of capital is not merely to create such conditions but to ensure **accumulation itself**.

Consequently, a large part of society's infrastructure is financed by the bourgeois state in order to facilitate investment conditions, create the conditions necessary for the exploitation of labour power, and increase the profitability of capital. This expansion of state functions has also led, and continues to lead, to the growth in size of capitalist states. The bourgeois state serves capital and capital accumulation.

In line with such objectives, the capitalist state assumes responsibility for organising sporting competitions. In effect, sporting events function as a form of propaganda for the state or national institutions.

The organisation of sporting competitions requires the necessary infrastructure; consequently, states begin constructing stadiums and sports complexes. Competitions and other sporting events are, in essence, real commercial exhibitions of states, which are covered by the relevant media.

Initially, this process was driven by the specialist sports press and radio. With the introduction of television into everyday life, a major transformation took place in this field, and the number of spectators increased steadily. With the spread of the internet, even the most minor sporting events are now covered, to the extent that sports reporting is simultaneously accompanied by advertising for products, betting services, and gambling. In the following pages, we will examine how these very competitions and sporting events serve to pacify the working class.

Sport in the service of repression

Capitalist states, including democratic ones, deploy their police forces around stadiums and in public spaces during sporting events under the pretext of maintaining public order and security, thereby creating a securitised atmosphere in society. In such conditions, the police exercise full control over the situation, and citizens are effectively subjected to a police state.

More importantly, capitalist states, particularly democratic ones, through the extensive mobilisation of repressive forces, foster the illusion that such deployments are intended to ensure public safety. Consequently, the population becomes accustomed to the widespread presence of security forces across urban spaces.

Sport has always been used and exploited for propaganda purposes within imperialist militarism. Only a few historical examples will be mentioned. The 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin played a major role in legitimising the Nazi regime. These Olympics were of significant importance in advancing Nazi objectives. The Nazis equated sport with the nation and the nation with Nazism, and were able to mobilise the population behind them for the subsequent crimes of capitalism under a Nazi ideological superstructure.

During the Nazi period, as imperialist tensions intensified, the issue of an Olympic boycott was raised by rival imperialist powers. However, many countries, particularly democratic ones, sent their athletes to participate in the Nazi propaganda spectacle. At that time, the United States government announced that it would not support an international boycott and sent its athletes to the Berlin Olympics. Avery Brundage, then President of the US Olympic Committee, stated that politics had no place in sport and that the United States would send its athletes to the Berlin Games, saying:

*“The Olympic Games belong to the athletes, not to politicians.”*¹⁶

In this context, the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City were held in conditions where, just ten days before the official opening of the Games, Mexican security forces had violently repressed the student movement. During this crackdown, security forces killed hundreds (and, according to some reports, even thousands) of students protesting against the regime, an event that became known as the Tlatelolco massacre.

The Mexico City Olympics provided the Mexican bourgeoisie with an opportunity to present a façade of normality through the staging of a grand sporting spectacle, effectively telling the population that “everything is fine”—much like its Iranian counterpart’s claim of having “cleansed society of scum and rubbish.”

The military coup in Argentina was carried out with the support of Western democratic countries, led by the United States, bringing General Jorge Rafael Videla to power. The 1978 FIFA World Cup in Argentina was held with the assistance of these democratic powers and served as a demonstration of the strength and legitimacy of Argentina’s military regime. This occurred while, simultaneously, death squads were executing people in the streets in large numbers, creating an atmosphere of terror and repression.

Global sport remained under the dominance of the Cold War until the end of the 1990s, and international sporting competitions served as arenas of confrontation between the Western and Eastern blocs, in line with the interests and objectives of the imperialist blocs.

For example, during that period, countries such as the Netherlands and Spain, among others, boycotted the 1956 Melbourne Olympics in protest against the Soviet military intervention in Hungary. China also boycotted the Games due to the recognition of Taiwan as an independent state.

¹⁶ [Boycott Movement of the 1936 Berlin Olympics.](#)

In 1980, during the Moscow Olympics, the United States, in line with its own imperialist interests, together with 64 Western countries, boycotted the Games in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In turn, at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, the Soviet Union and 14 Eastern bloc countries boycotted the Games, citing alleged security concerns for their athletes, again in line with their own imperialist interests.

Although, on the surface, there appears to be no direct connection between sports stadiums and repression, there is in fact a structural link between sports infrastructure and the barbarism of capitalism. Many stadiums have a horrific history, of which several examples are noted below:

- The French police arrested more than 13,000 resistance fighters and Jews in July 1942 and then assembled them in the Vélodrome d'Hiver stadium without food or access to sanitation before handing them over to Nazi Germany for deportation to Auschwitz.
- In June 1966, Mobutu's regime executed its opponents in front of crowds at the Kinshasa stadium.
- Following General Pinochet's coup in September 1973 in Chile, the National Stadium was used as a temporary detention camp and prison, where prisoners were interrogated and tortured.
- In Argentina, during the 1978 World Cup, a naval training school located near the stadium was turned into a prison for political detainees. The military regime used loudspeakers from the stadium to drown out the screams of those being tortured.
- The Taliban have used stadiums for public executions, forcing spectators to witness them.
- The notorious Islamic bourgeoisie has repeatedly used sports stadiums for public executions and has arranged for spectators to be seated in the stands to observe them.

The bourgeoisie has always used victories in sporting competitions in pursuit of its imperialist interests, employing them as instruments of social control. In the first instance, repression may not necessarily take a physical form; rather, it often takes the form of psychological pressure and the weakening of morale.

For example, following the victory of Iran's national football team against Wales, which coincided with anti-regime protests, the Islamic bourgeoisie organised victory celebrations. On the one hand, it sought to boost the morale of its supporters and forces; on the other, it attempted to weaken the morale of its opponents through these same celebrations. Most importantly, it used the pretext of victory to expand its security presence across cities.

Sport as a tool for the benefit of the ruling class

In capitalist society, the dominant ideas are those of the ruling class, namely the bourgeoisie, which not only controls the means of material production but also dominates the means of intellectual production, thereby enabling it to shape public opinion through these same instruments. This domination of the ruling class over the means of intellectual production is only abolished in revolutionary periods. Marx refers to this as follows:

“The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material

relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. Insofar, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch.”¹⁷

The question is how the ruling class comes to dominate the means of intellectual production, and what role sport plays in this process. Sport, like religion and nationalism, functions as an instrument of political management and social control in the hands of the ruling class, used to manage social discontent and engineer public opinion.

The ruling class exploits sport and the emotions it generates in order to consolidate its class dominance, both ideologically and socially. By directing public opinion in line with its own class interests and reinforcing nationalist sentiment, it plays an important role in marginalising class struggle and diverting the struggle of workers.

Professional athletes in capitalist society are instruments in the hands of the ruling class, and states and capitalist institutions use them to advance their own objectives. Saudi Arabia’s multi-million-euro contract with Ronaldo is not merely about football; Ronaldo is set to receive 200 million euros, while also contributing to Saudi Arabia’s bid, alongside Egypt and Greece, to host the 2030 World Cup.¹⁸

¹⁷ Marx’s *German Ideology*.

¹⁸ Ronaldo will earn 400 million euros in Saudi Arabia.

A World Cup in Saudi Arabia would inevitably overshadow the image of a dictatorship that carries out public executions by sword, and instead project an image in which everything appears normal and successful.

In electoral circuses, the bourgeoisie makes use of athletes and other celebrities to heat up the electoral atmosphere. This is not limited to the United States or other foreign countries; it now also applies to the Islamic bourgeoisie. It is therefore no coincidence that during the 2017 presidential election and Hassan Rouhani's campaign, athletes and artists played a prominent role. Ali Reza Mansourian, head coach in Iranian football, stated that Esteghlal (blue) and Persepolis (red) had come together for Iran, saying:

“Today, red and blue have come together and formed purple for Iran.”¹⁹

The ruling class also uses sport as an instrument to control workers and to undermine workers' strikes. During miners' strikes in England, the promotion of sporting competitiveness helped prevent the formation of political discussion—debates that were crucial for the continuation and success of the workers' movement. In other words, sporting competition, and consequently the absence of discussion on these issues, contributed to the defeat of workers' strikes. The same phenomenon can be observed in different forms elsewhere.

Sport plays an important role in maintaining the military structure of states and advancing their imperialist objectives, both in terms of domestic repression and imperialist warfare. One American general, Douglas MacArthur, described the role of sport in American society as follows:

¹⁹ [Athletes and artists supporting Rouhani at Azadi Stadium.](#)

“Sport builds character that is alive and dynamic, and prepares young people to fulfil the roles expected of them as guardians of the republic and democracy, because sport teaches them to become stronger, to be braver in times of fear, to maintain their pride, not to submit in defeat, and to remain humble and kind in victory.”²⁰

Sport in the service of stupefaction of the working class

Hegel was one of Germany’s philosophers whose dialectic, in its original form, stood “on its head,” and he expressed an approving attitude towards Christianity. Some of Hegel’s students became scholars of religion; for example, David Friedrich Strauss sought to present a new interpretation of Christianity and to update it in line with modern times, in a manner similar to what Dr Ali Shariati did with Shi’ism. In contrast, one of Hegel’s students, Marx, recognised the inverted nature of Hegel’s dialectic, turned it “the right way up,” and, in his critique of Hegel’s philosophy, formulated the view that “religion is the opium of the masses.”

The struggle of bourgeois materialism and the left of capital against religion—even when it invokes Marx’s phrase “religion is the opium of the masses”—can at best be reduced to a critique of Hegelian philosophy and has no affinity with historical materialism. From the standpoint of historical materialism, from Marx’s perspective (after his critique of Feuerbach), simply criticising or understanding religious beliefs is not sufficient to abolish them; rather, the transformation of the social and economic structure is a precondition for the disappearance and rejection of religion.

²⁰ [The ideological function of sport.](#)

Feuerbach, one of the Young Hegelians, was strongly opposed to religion and regarded it as a source of human alienation, representing the materialism of his time. Marx, in his Fourth Thesis on Feuerbach, criticises him and remarks that Feuerbach fails to understand that it is the real-world conditions of human distress that drive people towards the religious sphere, writing:

“Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-alienation, of the duplication of the world into a religious world and a secular one. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis.

But that the secular basis detaches itself from itself and establishes itself as an independent realm in the clouds can only be explained by the cleavages and self-contradictions within this secular basis. The latter must, therefore, in itself be both understood in its contradiction and revolutionized in practice. Thus, for instance, after the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the holy family, the former must then itself be destroyed in theory and in practice.”²¹

Marx did not stop at a critique of Hegel’s philosophy; through his critique of the Young Hegelians, including Feuerbach, and in his work *Theses on Feuerbach*, he moved from bourgeois materialism to historical materialism. With *The German Ideology*, written as a critique of the Young Hegelians such as Feuerbach, Bruno Bauer, and Stirner, Marx developed a critique of all forms of ideology (false consciousness). For the first time, he set out a historical account of the stages of social development in *The German Ideology*.

²¹ [Theses On Feuerbach.](#)

Religion, nationalism, bourgeois democracy, Stalinism, Maoism, and others are all forms of ideology. In the era of capitalist decline, sport itself appears as a form of ideology and plays a role similar to that of bourgeois democracy or religion in pacifying workers. If in earlier societies the ruling class used religion to pacify people and create a form of illusory happiness or satisfaction so that they would be less aware of their suffering, then in the era of capitalist decline sport functions as a kind of secular religion whose aim is to control the working class and the lower strata of society, and to produce a form of consolation or satisfaction with life.

Sports facilities and sporting programmes, thanks to extensive promotion and publicity, draw masses of workers into either participating in sport or watching it during their leisure time. In other words, sport becomes an instrument in the hands of capital, one that encourages workers to submit to the invisible power of capital.

Workers engage in sporting activities or watch sport as a form of relaxation after an exhausting day's work, much as they require food and sleep to restore their labour power. Through sport, they seek to forget the exploitation, hardship, and suffering that characterise their lives and to attain a form of artificial relief, enabling them to prepare themselves for the exploitation of the following day. In doing so, they are denied the opportunity to reflect upon the forces responsible for their condition, or even to contemplate the possibility that a different world could be created.

In the United States, baseball is immensely popular—far more so than association football—and plays a significant role in occupying Americans' leisure time. The role of baseball in American life is so extensive that Madalyn Murray O'Hair, the American atheist thinker, jokingly responded to Marx's famous statement that "religion is the opium of the masses" by remarking:

“Marx was wrong--religion is not the opiate of the masses, baseball is.”²²

Sport enables workers to attain a form of illusory satisfaction and prevents them from understanding the causes of their exploitation and the harsh conditions of their lives. In this way, it hinders the development of class consciousness among workers and serves to reinforce capitalist social relations. More precisely, sport performs a function of ideological and political control over workers that is, in many respects, more effective than physical repression.

The bourgeois mass media play an important role in encouraging participation in sport and in making it a matter of public concern and interest. Through constant ideological promotion, they turn sport into a dominant social topic. As a result, workers, instead of discussing workplace conditions, exploitation, and related issues with their fellow workers, find themselves discussing particular sporting events or athletes.

When workers return home after an exhausting day’s labour, instead of reading or discussing the conditions of their lives with others of their class, they often spend their time watching sport. Through the world of sport, they release the pressures accumulated during the working day and prepare themselves for the next day of work. In this way, the process of capital accumulation continues without interruption.

As a result of this ideological bombardment, workers, instead of taking militant workers and labour activists as models for their lives and struggles, come to emulate the clothing, hairstyles, mannerisms, and public image of athletes, celebrities, and other public figures.

Social media platforms, through the use of artificial intelligence algorithms, recommend content to users and thereby play a significant role in exposing workers to a constant stream of ideological influences

²² Madalyn Murray O’Hair.

and in fostering false consciousness. In other words, social media plays a deeply influential role in shaping and directing the thinking of workers.

The issue of social media's role in engineering public opinion became so controversial that even sections of the media and bourgeois ideologues themselves were compelled to acknowledge it. In an article entitled "*The Cambridge Analytica and Facebook Scandal: Power Politics in the Shadow of Data*"²³, the BBC highlighted how social media platforms monitor users' behaviour, collect and exploit personal data, and use targeted advertising to influence political attitudes and contribute to the success of candidates in electoral contests.

Apart from the ideological bombardment associated with sport, major sporting events such as the Olympic Games, the World Cup, and other widely viewed competitions—watched by millions of people around the world—provide ideal opportunities for the promotion of companies, products, and brands, thereby helping to secure enormous profits for capitalists.

One of the illusions propagated by the ruling class in relation to sport is the notion that the children of workers can develop their talents, become sporting stars, and thereby secure their future. The ideologues of the ruling class do not explain what proportion of working-class children have any realistic chance of achieving such success, nor do they address the social disappointment and frustration experienced by the vast majority who do not.

More importantly, the bourgeois media, through the creation of false hopes and illusions, discourage workers from reflecting on the causes of their impoverished conditions. They divert attention away from the realities of exploitation, hinder the development of class consciousness, and consequently contribute to the weakening and diversion of working-class struggle.

²³ [The Cambridge Analytica and Facebook Scandal: Power Politics in the Shadow of Data.](#)

Sport in the service of humanity

Sport in capitalist society takes the form of a commodity and becomes integrated into commodity relations. Like any other industry, it plays an important role in generating profit for capitalists. In capitalist society, the more wealth a worker produces, the poorer they become. In other words, the more commodities the worker creates, the more they become alienated from the products of their labour. This alienation also extends to sport.

As a result, the idea of “popularising sport” or placing sport at the service of the working class or the people within capitalist society is nothing more than demagoguery, and is merely used as an instrumental means of exploiting sport, athletes, and celebrities in pursuit of anti-regime and pro-democracy objectives. To speak of “popularising sport” is as meaningful as claiming that capitalism itself can be made “for the people” and placed at their service.

It is the material foundation of sport that is bound up with capitalism and has become an inseparable part of it; professional sport (commodified sport) is not possible without capitalism.

The need for physical education, healthcare, and non-commodified sport is not only essential for physical, psychological, and social development, but is also a requirement for socialist production. It is an undeniable fact that the formation of the socialist individual is closely linked to the physical and mental health of people and the workforce. However, such conditions are not possible within the capitalist system and can only be realised through the overthrow of capitalism and the abolition of the material conditions of professional sport.

Instead of generating illusions and false hopes, the root of the commodification of sport—namely the barbaric capitalist system—must become the target of anti-capitalist struggle. When class divisions are

abolished and money disappears from society, the commodity character of sport, like that of any other commodity, will lose its meaning. At that point, sport will no longer function as a form of competitive professional activity and will instead become an expression of human social activity, in which its social dimension replaces individualism.

The production of material goods in a classless society is not commodity production but the production of use-values. The same applies to sport. Only in a communist society can we speak of a form of sport that is not in the service of human alienation but in the service of humanity itself, because in such a society, the development of each individual is a condition for the flourishing of the whole.

Internationalist Voice

19 February 2023

Basic Positions:

- The First World War was an indication that the capitalism had been a decadent social system. It also proved that there were only two alternatives to this system: communist revolution or the destruction of humanity.
- In our epoch, the working class is the only revolutionary class. Furthermore, only this social class can deliver the communist revolution and end the barbarity of capitalism.
- Once capitalism entered its decadent period, unions all over the world were transformed into organs of the capital system. In turn, the main tasks of unions were to control the working class and mislead them about its class struggle.
- In the epoch of decadent capitalism, participating in the parliamentary circus and elections only strengthens the illusion of democracy. Capitalist democracy and capitalist dictatorship are two sides of the same coin, namely, the barbarity of capitalism.
- All national movements are counterrevolutionary, against the working class and the class struggle. Wars of national liberation are pawns in imperialist conflict.
- The reason for the failure of the October Revolution was the failure of the revolutionary wave, particularly the failure of the German Revolution, which resulted in the isolation of October Revolution and afterwards its degeneration.
- All left parties are reactionary: Stalinists, Maoists, Trotskyists and official anarchists etc. represent the political apparatus of capital.

- The regimes that arose in the USSR, Eastern Europe, China, Cuba etc., while being called “socialist” or “communist”, only offered a particularly brutal and barbaric form of capitalism: state capitalism.
- The revolutionary organization constitutes the avant-garde of the proletariat and is an active factor in the development and generalization of class consciousness. Revolutionary organizations may only take the form of revolutionary minorities, whose task neither is to organize the working class nor take power in its stead, without being a **political leadership**, or a political compass, where revolutionary organizations’ political clarity and influence on the working classes are **the fundamental elements for the implementation of a communist revolution.**

Political belongings:

The current status, positions, views and activities of the proletarian political tendencies are the product of past experiences of the working class and the effectiveness of the lessons that political organizations of the working class have learned during the history of the proletariat. Therefore, Internationalist Voice can trace its own roots and origins back to the Communist League, the First International, the left wing of both the Second International and the Third International, and the fractions that defended proletarian and communist positions against the degenerating Third International, which was represented by Dutch-German fractions, and **particularly Italian Fraction of the Communist Left** and the defence of Communist Left traditions.

The Internationalist Voice Already Published!

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Intensification of Imperialist rivalry:
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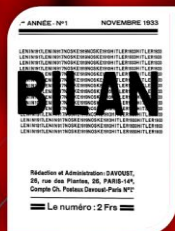
**The Shifting Balance of Imperialist Powers
and the Recomposition of the World Order:
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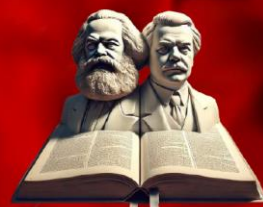
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