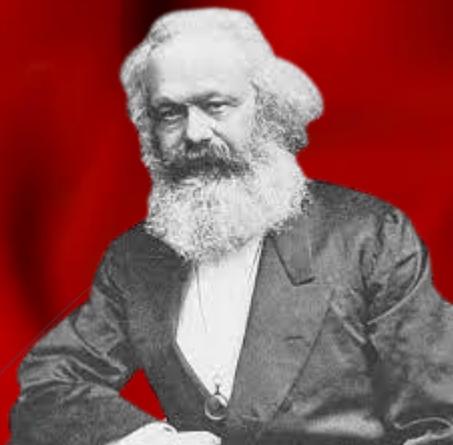


**Polemic with the
International Communist Current:
Working Class or the Masses?**



In Defence of Marxism

Internationalist Voice

Debate is vital, necessary and crucial to internationalists. The revolutionary movement cannot take effective steps unless the internationalists play a dynamic role in the development of this movement. This is only possible through the discussion and confrontation of different points of view within the proletarian political milieu.

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Communist Revolution

or

the Destruction of Humanity!

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*“It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat, at the moment **regards** as its aim. It is a question of **what the proletariat is**, and what, in accordance with this **being**, it will historically be compelled to do.”*

Marx, The Holy Family

Introduction

The International Communist Current (ICC)¹ is one of the main currents of the communist left which historically belonged to the communist left. The ICC tendency, as it has emerged, has always defended proletarian positions, especially during the black anti-revolution era. We have declared any attack on the currents of the communist left as an attack on ourselves; of course, the currents we are assessing belong to the communist left. That is why we have declared solidarity with comrades, if it is necessary (the ICC, the international communist tendency, etc.). The last manifestation of this solidarity is a paper entitled “Discrediting the Revolutionaries Only Serves the Interests of the Capital state” was a response to the slogging and discrediting of the ICC and perhaps the ICC been shaped by the CIA. Although we defend the proletarian nature of the ICC and consider its basic positions to be proletarian and communist, we have criticized in relation to three issues:

¹ The contact information for the ICC is as follows:

- Website: www.internationalism.org
- Email: international@internationalism.org

- **Class consciousness and the revolutionary organization** - We have already published critiques in the form of a series of articles, the series of articles will be published with a new edition and a new introduction in the form of a pamphlet. The important point in this regard is that the basic positions of the ICC are not wrong in this regard, but they are ambiguous. The following points are correctly define the positions of the ICC in relation to class consciousness and the revolutionary organization:

- The necessity of the International and Internationalist Communist Party for the victory of the communist revolution.
- The dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of the working class through workers' councils, rejecting party dictatorship
- The revolutionary organization is a part of the working class and a product of class struggle

Despite these correct positions, the ICC has ambiguities about class consciousness, and the role and function of the revolutionary organization; in practice, it reduces its role, functions and performance to the level of a revolutionary publication. The root cause of the internal crises that the ICC has experienced was the ambiguity surrounding this issue.

- **The left of capital** - The ICC, based on its basic positions, considers the left of capital to belong to the bourgeois camp; but, in practice, it has repeatedly expressed its ambiguity in this regard. We have publicly published our critique of the relationship between the ICC and the Unity of Communist

Militants (UCM)². A large part of the criticisms in this regard has been sent directly to the ICC without being publicly published.

- **Popular protests** - After the Green Movement in 2009 and the positions expressed by the ICC, as captured in our article “Class Struggle Is the Only Alternative for the Working Class”, published on its website, we published the article “Two Movements, Two Perspectives: Intensifying the Class Struggle Is the Only Alternative” in the Critique of the ICC. Following the protests in Iran in January 2018 and those that followed in Jordan and Iraq, the ICC published four articles:
 - Iraq: marching against the war machine³
 - Class struggle in Jordan's war economy⁴
 - Demonstrations in Iran: strength and limits of the movement⁵
 - Iran: the struggle between bourgeois cliques is a danger for the working class⁶

Unfortunately, all four texts were written without the slightest research and thus with many mistakes, both from the perspective of positive arguments and persuasive discussions. The publication of these articles not only failed to clarify the proletarian political milieu,

² For more information, refer to the book “*Worker-Communism Radical Consciousness of the Left Capital*”

³ [Iraq marching against war Machin](#)

⁴ [Class struggle in Jordan’s war economy](#)

⁵ [Demonstrations in Iran: strengths and limits of the movement](#)

⁶ [Iran: the struggle between bourgeois cliques is a danger for the working class](#)

but it also created many ambiguities. Rather than reviewing every four articles, we saw it as logical to portray the social events that have taken place in all three countries with regard to the facts that took place, and this could be seen as a constructive critique. We did this and published an article entitled “Street Protests Amid the Barbarity of Capitalism: The Only Alternative Is Class Struggle”. We hoped that the ICC would seriously address the issues raised and contribute to the transparency and clarification of the proletarian political milieu. In particular, comrades promised repeatedly during the past 10 years to respond to our critiques. Finally, after 10 years, the ICC broke its silence and gave its response. Apparently both our expectations and our 10-year wait were unnecessary. The ICC, with a less serious text than previous texts, and with many mistakes, under the title “Internationalist Voice and Protests in the Middle East”, practically let the cat out of the bag. Before proceeding with the discussion, the transparency of some issues is firstly necessary.

Contrary to the slime propagation of recent years that the ICC has lost its revolutionary nature, we always emphasize the proletarian nature of the ICC, and our discussion with comrades in all three contexts goes back many years.

Another point is that we distinguish between popular struggles and the struggles of the working class. The popular struggles mentioned in this article, in the case of Iran, are the same protests as those in late December 2017 and early January 2018. For more information on the position of Internationalist Voice in relation to labour struggles, see our analysis of the recent strikes and labour protests, under the title “Lessons from Strikes, Labour Struggles and Internationalist Tasks”.

Culture of debate

Debate is vital, necessary and crucial to internationalists. The revolutionary movement cannot take effective steps unless the internationalists play a dynamic role in the development of this movement. This is only possible through the discussion and confrontation of different points of view within the proletarian political milieu.

The purpose of the discussion must be to help transparency in the proletarian political milieu; if discussion has any purpose other than this, then it does not serve the transparency and evolution of the proletarian political milieu. In the debate, there are no winners, losers or saviours; victory in the debate arises when the debate brings about the transparency of the proletarian political milieu, and failure occurs when the debate results in the confusion of the proletarian political milieu. The ICC rightly emphasizes the culture of debate as a weapon of class struggle⁷. The ICC has also published articles on ethics and Marxism⁸.

The basic question is, how much has the ICC been committed to the issues raised in these articles? Clutching at false and fake news, referring to bourgeois publications and avoiding any responsible response form the content of the “response” of the ICC. The ICC is not interested in the “response”; indeed, it has chosen the easiest way to present an incorrect image of the positions of Internationalist Voice, unlocking the path by which to escape from a serious response. We will show, in the following pages, that this attitude of the ICC was not a mistake, but an act of consciousness. Of course, the ICC has been as

⁷ [The culture of debate](#)

⁸ [Marxism and ethics](#)

serious in presenting the wrong image of the positions of Internationalist Voice as that they refer to the arguments and sources.

Every current or political tendency is trying to spread its positions and ideas at a wider level, and this is quite logical. But the question that is posed here is, why does the ICC not publish its critique of Internationalist Voice in Farsi on its website? The ICC has its critiques in Farsi, non-publication in Farsi in this case is deliberate. The ICC consciously wants, for as long as possible, only a few to be aware of its text, because the content of it clearly reveals to those who are familiar with developments in the region the confused position of the ICC.

For us, the communist left is not just about a handful of “political positions”; it is also about proletarian principles and values. In order to adhere to the principles and values of the proletariat, we inform the relevant current of criticism before it is publicly released. This, of course, only includes the currents that we consider to belong to the communist left; and, in the future, we will remain loyal to this tradition as well.

Confronting the influence of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologies, especially after the collapse of the bipolar world and the beginning of a new world order, has become more important. This is because the level of influence of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologies on the working class and its political organizations is inversely proportional to the class struggle. In other words, in the intensification of the class struggle, the influence of these ideologies is less, and, in times of a decline in the class struggle, the degree of their influence is greater. Therefore, among the tireless tasks of internationalists must be the consolidation of proletarian values, which itself reflects the proletarian class consciousness.

Critique of the Weak Link Theory

The ICC, in Issue 31 of its theoretical organ, *International Review*, criticized the “weak link” theory⁹. In the discussion on the supporters of the weak chain of capitalism, the supporters of the weak chain of capitalism argues that the pulling chain is torn from the weakest of its loops, so it is easier to break the chain of capitalism from the weakest of its loops. The ICC insists that this attitude is based on mechanical science. The law of mechanical science cannot be transferred to the social sphere. The social revolution is not a mechanical incident but a social reality. The ICC posits that, even if the weakest chain of capital is torn down, it is possible to quarantine the weakest chain of capital; but, if the heart and brain of capital are attacked, capital cannot quarantine, because it is the most evolved proletariat that faces the most powerful bourgeoisie. So, as stated in an article written in 1982, the proletariat of Western Europe is at the centre of the class struggle.

Despite the usefulness of this critique, unfortunately, the application of this theory in practice by the ICC has led it to focus too much attention on the importance of metropolitan capital. This misrepresents the ICC. Apart from the counterrevolutionary and bourgeois nature of the UCM, a report that discusses its relationship with the ICC in the early 1980s emphasizes how the ICC ignores the struggles of workers in “dominated” countries:

“Another current is the International Communist Current, which publishes a publication called World Revolution. This current

⁹ [The proletariat of Western Europe at the centre of the generalization of the class struggle](#)

*for the first time published one of the declarations of the UCM in English and put us in contact with several other currents. But the complete ignorance of these comrades about the struggles of workers and working people in dominated countries, and the lack of any Leninist understanding of imperialism and the formation of the party, have led to significant differences of opinion with the communist movement of Iran ... To the same extent, we see that there are many forces internationally which are associated with the creation of a new Leninist international”.*¹⁰

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the ICC was accused of a circle that favoured the communist left, Eurocentrism and even racism. Of course, the ICC denied the allegations. Although these allegations were not based on serious debates, in practice, the ICC was unable to advance itself in peripheral capital. Later, the ICC actually changed its policy to be able to advance itself in peripheral capital. Unfortunately, the new policy was more ambiguous, especially since the start of protests in the ‘Arab’ countries, with the ICC declaring that the aim of ‘popular protests’ is to crystallize the class struggle. We need to return to the ambiguities and contradictions of the ICC in relation to popular street protests. Before proceeding with the discussion, it is essential to emphasize that, despite the irrational application by the ICC of the critique of the weak link theory, in practice, the disadvantages of that policy were less significant than the new policy of the ICC where ‘popular protests’ crystallized the class struggle.

¹⁰ Interview with Comrade Farhad Besharat, a member of the Foreign Organization of the UCM, December 1982.

Metropolis and Periphery

Comrades in their literature use the centre and the periphery to describe capitalism. The use of the term “centre” can lead to a disturbance in peripheral capital, in relation to tradition and internationalist positions, whereby the “centre” is seen as more preferable to the periphery. We use the metropolis and the periphery to describe capitalism, which brings with it the same concept, albeit with better literature and understanding. The “centre” may perhaps associate Eurocentrism with the minds of those who approach to the internationalist positions. We are currently moving away from the roots of the “centre”, which considers itself to be the centre of the universe, while the terms of the Middle East, the Far East, the West, etc. are based on the geographic distance from it.

The ICC claims that workers in the Middle East have been plagued by imperialist and ethnic conflicts, as well as having particular difficulty in developing a political perspective, which looks towards a communist society:

“The workers in the Middle East, beset by imperialist war and ethnic conflict, have a particular difficulty in developing a political perspective which looks towards a communist society, and they will not be able to achieve this in isolation from the central battalions of the working class in the heartlands of capital.”¹¹

The fact that Stalinism was not pulled down by the working class, but collapsed instead in competition with democracy, has fostered democratic illusions among the working class, which has

¹¹ [Internationalist Voice and protests in the Middle East](#)

somehow contributed to the perplexed nature of working-class consciousness at the global level. The result is a backlash in the class struggle across the globe after the collapse of the bipolar bloc. The bourgeois class is a global class and, consequently, the working class is also a global class, so the struggle of the working class is also global; and it does not make sense for us to distinguish between class struggle in peripheral capital or metropolitan capital. Unlike “popular struggles”, the class struggle will affect other regions because of its anti-capitalist nature.

With this explanation, we return to the quote from the ICC stated above. The second part of the sentence is almost correct, but the first part of the sentence is ambiguous. It is true that the proletariat of peripheral capital, apart from the working class in metropolitan capital, is not able to develop a perspective on communist revolution. But, while workers in the Middle East have a particular difficulty in developing a political perspective in this regard, the reality of the class struggle among workers in Iran in recent years is contrary to the statements of the ICC. How does the ICC explain the fact that, even though the working class in Iran in comparison to the working class of France has a limited tradition of fighting, thousands of workers on the street call for “Bread, jobs, freedom, council management”, or that, despite 40 years of war in Iraq, the number of labour protests, whether in the form of strikes or protests in Iraq, has been greater than in Mongolia, while, in Iran, it has been more than in Portugal.

Another ambiguity in the statements of the ICC is that workers’ peripheral capitalism, which has not been plagued by imperialist wars and ethnic conflicts, will be able to find a political perspective on communist society.

This comment from the ICC could create uncertainty among the working class on one of the most advanced metropolitan islands, namely, Britain or suggest that, in the terms of the ICC, the centre is capable of developing a political perspective on a communist society. Even in metropolitan capitalism, the most advanced and experienced proletariat **within national boundaries** alone cannot develop a political perspective on communist society.

Another explanation for the rejection of the ICC is the rise of the labour struggle in Poland in 1980. In peripheral capital, the proletariat of Poland began to fight to get rid of this upside-down world. Their determined looks will never be forgotten. The class struggle spread throughout Poland. But, finally, we saw how Lech Walesa kissed the hand of Pope, a symbol of capitalist ideology. There are two basic factors in defeating the proletariat in Poland. The first is the confinement of the class struggle within national borders, and the second is the lack of a revolutionary organization which can develop and deepen class consciousness and form a political leadership for the proletariat.

The above description can be summarized as follows: because society is a class society, there is a class struggle in society, although, in the last two decades, the class struggle has been extremely defensive. As capitalism is a universal system, the proletariat is also a global class. Given the various factors, such as the concentration of the proletariat, the struggle tradition, and the historical memory of the proletariat, the struggle of the proletariat can take on an even more radical form in peripheral capital, but national boundaries need to be removed in order to move the struggle to a higher level. The intensification of the class struggle in the late 1960s and early 1970s was not only in metropolitan capital, but also in peripheral capital. The

wave of the 1917-1923 global revolution, which represented the peak of the class struggle, involved both metropolitan and peripheral capital, and it would be the same in the future.

Street Popular Protests

The ICC irresponsible in its text suggests that Internationalist Voice is against the street protests of workers, despite not being able to refer to a single position or text from Internationalist Voice. It is just talking in general terms to avoid serious discussion. We fully agree with the position of comrades that any labour struggle that refuses to come out onto the streets cannot advance the cause of the class struggle. Comrades write:

*“Indeed we can say that any workers’ struggle that **doesn’t** seek to come out onto the streets cannot advance towards a wider class unity.”¹²*

The ICC, after expressing the absolutely correct position, shows ambiguity in the following sentence:

*“This is not a revolution, but a class that won't fight for its basic conditions of life is not going to make a revolution, and **street protests have historically always been part of the class struggle.**”¹³[our emphasis]*

¹² ¹² As source 11

¹³ As source 11

Have street protests historically always been part of the class struggle? Have the street protests by racists been part of the class struggle? Have the street protests by reactionary religious movements been part of the class struggle? Have the street protests by bourgeois forces against other factions been part of the class struggle? Have the street protests of the millions of people who turned into the black army behind a faction of the bourgeoisie (Iran in 2009 or Venezuela in recent times) been part of the class struggle? Have street protests by feminists been part of the class struggle? What is the meaning of street protest?

If protests begin in the workplace or elsewhere, which could in fact be a street, with **class demands**, then protests will spread to the streets and represent a proletarian class movement. But, if a popular protest starts with popular demands on the streets, it is not an independent class movement. If workers in factories or other workplaces are subjected to popular protests, then workers as a black army are involved in the social movements of other social classes.

The working class not only includes those who are at work. The unemployed are part of the working class who, because of their special circumstances, are not able to express their outrage at the accumulation of capital; as such, they are forced to protest themselves on the streets or elsewhere. Before moving their protests to the streets, they firstly need to gain class solidarity among their class brothers and sisters and expand the struggle to other sectors. The expansion of the class struggle is the guarantor of victory. A very obvious example of this form of class struggle was the movement of the unemployed in 1979 in Iran, when the streets were shaken under the feet of protest workers, and the struggles of unemployed workers on the streets were an important part of the class struggle.

Contexts and Perspectives of Popular Protests

We have stated that capitalism is the source of wage slavery, exploitation and the alienation of man by man. Capitalism is the smell of blood, filth, mud and war; capitalism is the source of all misery and troubles, not only for the working class but for the whole of humanity. That not only for the working class, but also for the majority of people in Syria, Iraq, and ... life in the real sense of the word is a real and terrestrial hell, not because of criminal leaders and dictators but because of the product of capitalism.

For us, the origin of human alienation, environmental catastrophes, earthquakes and ... is capitalism. But the reaction to capitalism is also important, given that the working class is drawn to the electoral circus at the heart of capital and voting for criminals such as Trump or the advancement of populism, especially in metropolitan capitalism, but also on the periphery of capitalism. This phenomenon expresses the retreat of the working class from its class identity on a worldwide scale. The retreat of the working class from its class identity in peripheral capital, like metropolitan capital, has created serious problems for the evolution of the class struggle. With this description, we return to the ICC. The ICC continues to misrepresent the positions of Internationalist Voice, writing:

“It is somewhat contradictory about this: It says that there is no future context for these protests but describes how youth ‘has provided the necessary social force for street protests’

and placed the movement squarely in the crisis of capitalism and its attacks.”¹⁴

Comrades, please, show us the source of your quote, “It says that there is no future context for these protests”. Where did we say this or write it? Instead, we wrote:

“The street protests are the result of a crisis in capitalism, in which metropolitan capitalism is trying to transfer the burden resulting from this crisis to peripheral capitalism. The policy of austerity, the freezing of real wages, widespread unemployment, temporary contracts, the collapse of living standards etc., are the destructive consequences of this crisis.”¹⁵

And we continued:

“The street protests of the poor against poverty, unemployment and inflation are also the protests of youth who are tired of their existing hellish life and have no hope for the future. These people have nothing to lose by protesting. Apart from the class composition of the participating forces, the demands and objectives of the protests determine the nature of that movement.”¹⁶

Popular protests, due to their nature, can evolve in a different direction. If they are in line with the class struggle and serve the class

¹⁴ As source 11

¹⁵ Street protests amid the barbarity of capitalism -The only alternative is class struggle – Internationalist Voice

¹⁶ As source 15

struggle, they will certainly help to evolve the class struggle. All the efforts of the internationalists should be in this direction, that is to say, as much as possible, try to direct the popular protests to serve the class struggle, especially its radical part. But popular protests can also evolve in a reactionary way and be in the service of black forces and bourgeois forces and lose their popular nature and become 100% reactionary. In the popular protests, the reactionary forces are lurking behind them to serve their reactionary and barbarian interests. For example, the popular protests that began in the “Arab” countries were not only reactionary protests, they were also progressive ones. But the same people’s protests that began in Libya and Syria, as in other countries, were virtually aligned with imperialist aspirations by seeking to take revenge on each other and create a real hell for the people. We saw these black forces in the popular protests in all three countries. This issue was more evident in Iran’s popular protests than other countries, and Western-Arab gangsters tried to foment it in line with their imperialist interests. The ICC does not give the slightest mention to them and instead closes its eyes! What is the task of the revolutionary organization in this regard?

Disregard for Popular Protests or Proletarian Perspectives

We believe that capitalism has been the dominant economic system across the planet since the arrival of capitalism in its decadent era; in other words, the antagonism between labour and capital has dominated everywhere. This means that the working class is not only present in all countries, including Jordan, but also the only the revolutionary class. Contrary to the ICC, we explained the context of

the formation of popular protests in Jordan as a result of the capital crisis, which shows its consequences with greater devastation in peripheral capital. Further, we examined IMF policies, Saudi Arabia's role in punishing Jordan and the \$2.5 billion donated by the Saudis, UAE and Kuwait to stop the protests from spreading, as well as explained the role of trade unions in alleviating the people's dissatisfaction. We showed that the description of the ICC of these developments is unfounded. The ICC has only resorted to general talk, insisting that Internationalist Voice is dismissive of the Jordanian demonstrations and strikes, while underestimating the strengths of both:

“The text is fairly dismissive of the protests and strikes in Jordan and underestimates the strengths of both. Like Iran and Iraq, the demands of the protesters in Jordan were clearly demands of a working class struggle: jobs, healthcare, rent, services, against corruption (the latter easily recuperated but in this context part of the indignation of the class). In all three countries, the struggles immediately came up against the trade unions who were ill-equipped to deal with them, including the "new" unions in Jordan set up by the bourgeoisie following the intense wave of struggle a decade ago. Workers actively sought out protesters and were explicit about the unions trying to divide them and keep them away from the protests.”¹⁷

For us, any proletarian protest anywhere on this planet, including Jordan, is promising, encouraging and important. Comrades used the word “strikes” in connection with the Jordanian protests. If

¹⁷ As source 11

comrades are aware of strikes other than those organized by trade unions in June 2018, please provide us with a list so that others can be aware of the extent of Jordanian strikes. We wrote:

“Unlike those who try to falsely, and at all costs, assess the street protests in an anarchist way in order to intensify the class struggle in Jordan and turn the working class into a (supernumerary) black army of street protesters, it has to be realistic. The working class in Jordan, as a social class, is one of the weakest in the Middle East, both in terms of numbers, in terms of industrial concentration and in terms of battles that have been fought and inscribed on its historical memory.”¹⁸

It is the duty of the internationalists to analyse as much as possible social events as well as popular protests, in which everyone who participates brings their own proletarian perspectives. Being a follower of the people, including the working class, is not the duty of a revolutionary organization. The revolutionary organization itself must be the compass of the class struggle; even revolutionary publications do not have such a task. Which perspective does the ICC adopt on the radical part of the popular protests?

Popular Street Protests Against Clergy

The ICC claims that the popular street protests in Jordan, Iraq and Iran were against the clergy, writing:

¹⁸ As source 11

*“So the demands of the class were there and the proletarian method of struggle was there, and while it wasn't a ‘fully radical’ revolution it showed some important indicators of the class struggle, not least the hostility towards the unions, the rejection of the clerics in all three countries as well as the rejection of ‘national sacrifice’.”*¹⁹

We will soon return to claims of anti-unionism and the rejection of national sacrifice in all of these three countries. Here, we are discussing the clergy. The above claim from the ICC is only true in relation to Iran, while it is not true in relation to Iraq and Jordan. On what evidence, documentation and events does the ICC base such a claim? It should not be forgotten that Ayatollah Ali Sistani, the Shiite imposter, and the influential Shiite cleric Muqtada Sadr announced their support for the street protests in Iraq in order to influence them. Protesters who burned Iran’s consulate in Basra were so impressed with the religious sentiment. Before trampling the flag of Iran under their feet, they first made sure that the words of Allah were flipped, so that Allah would not be attacked. There is no need to be familiar with the Arabic language; the film itself shows the reality of the religiousness of this part of the protest²⁰.

In Jordan, popular protests were more religiously restricted than in Iraq, under the influence of religious tendencies, but there were still religious slogans. For example, look at the banners of the Jordanian

¹⁹ As source 11

²⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOtHVqvx9UA>

Shura Party²¹, which can be found in the same photo published in the article by the ICC. In Jordan, religious views have also been raised in support of Jerusalem or in relation to the martyrs²². English-language readers will probably think that religious slogans are radical slogans, due to their lack of knowledge of Arabic.

Shadow of Nationalism Over Popular Protests

We have already explained that the ICC's embrace of fake news in order to provide a radical picture of popular protests is not a mistake, but an act of consciousness. With the onset of the street protests in Iran, comrades asked us to comment on them. We also sent the comrades the draft version of the text "Street Protests in Capitalist Barbarism and Internationalist Positions". In the draft version of the text in English transmitted by the ICC, as well as in the Farsi translation, the slogan "We are Aryan, we do not worship Arab!", is among the slogans. But the slogan "We are Aryan, we do not worship Arab!" has been removed from the published article in English. The reason for the removal of this slogan from the English text was due to the presentation of a racist image of popular protests. Although there

²¹ One of the goals of the al-Shuri party is thus: "Guaranteeing freedom of expression in a way that does not conflict with the book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger and the laws and regulations in force." Our translation and the original text are below:

"ضمان حرية التعبير بما لا يتعارض مع كتاب الله وسنة رسوله والتشريعات والقوانين النافذة"

²² For example, "I am Jordanian, al-Aqsa is my responsibility" or "Martyrs Al-Kark". Our translation and the original text are below:

"شهدا الكرك" and "انا اردني الاقصى مسؤوليتي"

was no dominant slogan in the protests, this particular slogan was seen in different cities. We also informed comrades about a fake slogan raised on the “Libcom” website. Despite our reference, comrades did not want the slightest explanation, and later used it as a reference in their article. The ICC also featured an image of the supporter of the Islamic Republic, namely, the Iranian Hezbollah, in its article, although it later changed the photo following an explanation by one of the comrades. With this description, we are returning to the ICC, which states that nationalist slogans in Iran, Iraq and Jordan were by no means the distinguishing feature of the strikes and protests, writing:

“It draws a conclusion that's nowhere verified by the facts: "The fact is that... nationalist slogans overshadow the protests". Without underestimating the dangers of nationalism, especially in countries which have been dominated by bigger imperialist powers for a long time, we can say that nationalist slogans in all three countries were by no means the distinguishing feature of the strikes and protests.”²³

How does the ICC prove its claim? We are only talking about facts here, not adopted positions. Would it not be better if the ICC presented a list of slogans promoted in all three countries and, according to that list, proved its claim? With its empty assertion, it is not possible to create reality. We will look at each of the three countries, respectively.

²³ As source 11

A number of nationalist slogans was raised in Iran, including:

- Leave Syria, think about us!
- Neither Gaza nor Lebanon, my soul is sacrificed to Iran!
- Independence, freedom, Iranian Republic!
- We are Aryan, we do not worship Arab!

Alongside these were monarchist slogans, which were types of nationalistic and reactionary slogans:

- An Iran without a king has no accountability and stability!
- King of Iran, come back to Iran!
- Reza Shah, bless your soul!
- King of kings, bless your soul!
- We had a revolution, we made a mistake!

In Jordan, the protesters carried the flag of Jordan, which represents the impact of nationalism. But we put this aside and refer to the image published in the same article by the ICC in connection with the Jordanian protests. Perhaps readers who are not familiar with the Arabic language would conclude that the slogan under the photo of the king of Jordan in the article was written to denounce him; on the contrary, the king was praised. Is not the king a symbol of nationalism? The English translation of the photo caption is as follows:

“There is no fear for the homeland, the first soldier of the kingdom - the gathering of loyal youth belonging to the homeland and the leader of the homeland”²⁴.

²⁴ The original text in Arabic is below:

"لاخوف على الوطن اول جنوده ملك - تجمع شباب الولاء والالتماء للوطن وقائد الوطن"

In the Iraqi protests, the flag of Iraq, the symbol of nationalism, was raised. We have photos of the Iraqi protests showing the Iraqi flag; if comrades want to see these photos, we can send them. In a photo published by the ICC in its article on the Iraqi protests, we can see the slogan, "The oil of Basra for Basra"²⁵. English readers, with a lack of familiarity with Arabic, might think this is a progressive slogan. But, is this slogan nationalist, rather than progressive?

Given the facts we outlined above, and in each of the three countries, it was confirmed that nationalism cast a shadow over popular street protests, while the duty of internationalists is not to deliberately ignore them, but to offer a radical critique of the nationalism of the popular protests.

Protests Against Trade Unions

The ICC claims that it immediately came to light that the popular street protests in all three countries were against trade unions. Please remember all three countries when reading the following:

*"In all three countries, the struggles immediately came up against the trade unions who were ill-equipped to deal with them, including the "new" unions in Jordan set up by the bourgeoisie following the intense wave of struggle a decade ago."*²⁶[Our emphasis]

²⁵ The original text in Arabic is below:

"نفت البصرة للبصرة"

²⁶ As source 11

We examine each of the three countries in order to assess the validity of the claims of the ICC. Comrades, please let us know the name of some trade unions in Iran, whether governmental or non-governmental. There are no trade unions in Iran, whether governmental or non-governmental. The governmental worker organizations, of course, if they can be named as organizations, take the form of Islamic councils, which are part of the Ministry of Intelligence at work. Of course, another government institution, known as the “Workers’ House”, is in line with the goals of the Islamic bourgeoisie.

Only a “labour” organization, which is neither a union, nor governmental or revolutionary, only has nominal similarity with the union. While its name is “The Free Union”, some of its activists are currently in jail. When there is nothing external, how can it be protested against? In the popular street protests in Iran in late December 2017 and early January 2018, there was no struggle against trade unions, nor could it have happened.

In the Iraqi popular street protests, unions did not play a role, nor were they targeted by protestors. The struggles in Iraq, like Iran, were more spontaneous and outraged. The ICC should explain how the popular struggles in Iraq were immediately pitted against the trade unions? What kind of struggle, as well as in what form, was against unions? One cannot just make a claim, it must be explained with good reason.

Unlike Iran and Iraq, in Jordan, the trade unions were protest organizers seeking to stop the radicalization of popular protests and push them into a particular direction. We did our own research and failed to see a struggle against trade unions in the Jordanian popular protests in 2018. We asked comrades to discuss their arguments and

explanations regarding the fact that the struggles, which immediately began in Jordan, were against trade unions. We asked them to explain to us and other readers whether their claims were hollow and, if not, we should be informed of these struggles.

According to the ICC, the workers who refused to be isolated in the factories and workplaces by the unions joined the streets in protest:

“The workers, who refused to be isolated in the factories and places of work by the unions, which can easily become a prison even in the most advanced struggles, joined them on the streets.”²⁷

The ICC wants to induce that workers’ strikes were taking place in factories and workplaces, and the workers who refused to be isolated in the factories and places taken their protests to the streets; in other words, they deliberately tried to circumvent an institution of capitalist state (trade unions). Contrary to the valuable wishes of comrades, which we also hoped would be the case, the reality of the Jordanian protests revealed something else. The description from the ICC evolves out of a situation where class struggle, in its own course, withdraws from its defensive form, even if temporarily, and takes on a radical form, as happened in Iran a few months ago. In Iran, labour protests and strikes were not the same as on the very first day, but increasingly radicalized in the process, with thousands of workers in the centre of the city chanting the slogan “Bread, jobs, freedom, council management”²⁸ [28].

²⁷ As source 11

²⁸ For more information on the subject, see the pamphlet “Lessons from strikes, labour struggles and internationalist tasks” published by the Internationalist Voice.

False Division Between Protest and Strike

In popular street protests - in other words, in street protests, where workers, as working people, and not as working class, are protesting along with other strata in society, there is often no clear perspective on their aims. This issue should never be mixed with labour street protests with certain class goals. The ICC continues to reverse the positions of Internationalist Voice by relying on the “culture of debate” and states that the latter creates a false division between street labour protests and workplace strikes:

“For It workers in these protests do not have "a clear horizon or class outlook to their aims". But these attempts of street protests and strikes to complement each other are parts of attempts to push forward the collective struggle and It makes a false division between protest and strike, the street and the workplace.”²⁹

We ask comrades to determine how Internationalist Voice distinguishes between workers’ street protests and strikes in work place? By what argument do they make such a reversal? Not every worker street protest is holy, not every protest at work is sacred; indeed, they can be even reactionary. The protest by workers, whether in metropolitan capital or in peripheral capital, about hiring “foreign-born workers”, is one of the obvious examples of reactionary demands. This problem however can be seen more in metropolitan capitalism than peripheral capitalism; but, in the case of the latter, capitalism takes on a crude form. During the Labour Day event organized in

²⁹ As source 11

Tehran by the “Workers’ House” in 2015³⁰, the following shameful and anti-worker slogans were also raise visible:

- “Afghan workers should be fired”
- “Be a decent boss, let the Afghan go”

Some workers put forward these anti-worker slogans themselves, while others were obviously serving the interests of the bourgeoisie. Further, some workers demanded the expulsion of their class brothers and sisters, or broke with class solidarity. After that, the protests saw a counter response, including in cyberspace, in the form of the slogan, “We are all Afghan”. However, the slogan “We are all workers” would have better outlined class goals.

The nature of a protest is determined neither by the street nor by the workplace, but by the class nature of the protest, the forces of the protest, the demands of the protest, the objections, and so on. Expanding protests to other regions or other industries shows their strength; and being isolated on the street or at work is the greatest danger to the class struggle. We will return to this issue later.

Going Off the Rails of the Internationalist Voice

According to the claim of the ICC, the positions of Internationalist Voice in Iraq are clearly going off the rails. The ICC has not specified whether the train of Internationalist Voice has left the tracks or also been thrown to the bottom of the valley. However, the publication of this text shows that the train is still moving forward.

³⁰ [Bartarinha](#)

The ICC, in all the texts we have published on street protests in relation to Iran, Iraq and Jordan, has only offered one quote expressing how serious it was in its critique. The culture of debate and the communist morality and ethics of the ICC turn a deaf ear to humans. The fundamental question is, why has the ICC not been able to correctly refer to a multi-sentence quote and remain loyal to the original text? The comrades write:

“It's on Iraq that the position of it most clearly goes off the rails. The workers are atomised, it says, but the proletariat in Iraq is in ‘a better position’ and from this ‘contrary to the anarchist view, the power of labour is not on the street but in the workplace where it disturbs the process of capitalist accumulation’ and consequently ‘... if the Iraqi working class stops oil exports, the regime will collapse and the workers will assert their power as a social class’.”³¹

We had written:

“Unlike Jordan, the Iraqi working class is in a better position both in terms of industrial concentration and in terms of battles recorded throughout its history and in its historical memory. Although the gangsters’ war has had a devastating effect on the Iraqi working class in the past 40 years, it is, nevertheless, one of the important battalions of the international working class. The Iraqi working class did not join the street protests as a social class. Atomized workers participated in street protests. Oil exports were not affected by

³¹ As source 11

the protests, as the Iraqi Minister of Oil said. Contrary to the anarchist view, the power of labour is not on the street but in the workplace, where it disturbs the process of capital accumulation. Saddam, through his brutal massacres, managed to keep his strength. But, if the Iraqi working class stops oil exports, the regime will collapse and the workers will assert their power as a social class.”³²

Firstly, we have repeatedly stated, not now, but since World War I, that the capitalist system has been the dominant economic system across the planet, but capitalist growth has not been the same everywhere. Japan is 3.5 times more concentrated in terms of industrial concentration than France, and about 2.5 times more GDP than in France. However, the French proletariat, in terms of battles recorded in its history, is perhaps 100 times bigger than the proletariat of Japan. If the French proletariat in 1917-1925 failed to compete at the level of the proletariat of Russia and Germany in the class struggles and the wave of the global revolution, it was because of the fact that it had not yet succeeded in cultivating the mass after the defeat of the Paris Commune. Jordan’s analogy with Iraq is only from this perspective. There is also a working class in Jordan, as in Japan, and the working class of Jordan is the only revolutionary class.

Secondly, we never wrote that workers are atomized in Jordan, but that the proletariat in Iraq is in a “better position”. This is another aspect of the “culture of debate” of the ICC in describing the positions of Internationalist Voice. In our analysis of popular protests in Iran, Iraq and Jordan, wrote that atomized workers participated in popular protests, neither as a working class nor as a social class. We wrote that

³² As source 15

the Iraqi working class is in a better state than the Jordanian working class, despite 40 years of war, just as the French working class has a better political horizon than the working class of Japan, although industrial concentration in Japan is 3.5 times higher than France.

Thirdly, on 8 September 1978, the Iranian imperial army drew the blood of anti-royal demonstrators in Jaleh Square in Tehran and launched the massacre known as Black Friday. The literal meaning of the word on the street was gushing real blood. The massacre took place between 9.15 and 10.00, meaning that anyone who arrived in Jaleh Square after 10 o'clock was confronted by the spray emanating from the machines that were washing the streets. After that, the king continued to rule. It was only by expanding labour protests and strikes to the oil industry that the king was alarmed, because exports of oil were cut off. The global bourgeoisie saw that it was better to prevent the radicalization of labour protests by changing the superstructure and the political apparatus; and so, the royal bourgeoisie was replaced by the Islamic bourgeoisie. Neither in 1979 nor in 2018 was world revolution on the agenda of the proletariat. Our emphasis was that, in 2018, the working class in Iraq was not in a position to show its class power by referring to its class identity. A strident and long-term strike in the Iraqi oil industry, which could disrupt capital accumulation on the one hand, and lead to a worldwide energy crisis on the other, albeit temporary, requires the evolution of the class struggle in Iraq, as was the case in 1978 in Iran.

Fourth, the power of the working class as an exploited class, and the only revolutionary class in the present era, historically, means only one thing: the working class is the only class capable of carrying out a communist revolution. The ICC is silent about this. We will return to the power of the working class.

Suppression or Class Consciousness

The ICC claims that the oil industry in Iraq has created many barriers to the development of the class struggle and writes:

*“The oil industry in Iraq has erected many obstacles to the development of class struggle; various countries of the west and Iran and Russia have their installations guarded by their own militias and special Iraqi units have responded ruthlessly against protest around the oil plants. Indeed, mafia-like, the Iraqi militias have put their own soldiers on the books of the oil companies in exchange for ‘protection’, and the Americans and British in the Green Zone fortress unleashed their ‘anti-terrorist’ forces against the protesters in order to protect their own interests.”*³³

It is a fact that the Iraqi oil industry is vital, not only for the Iraqi bourgeoisie, but also for other gangsters, especially Western gangsters, so it is heavily protected. But the oil industry in Iraq has erected many obstacles to the development of the class struggle, which have not been seriously discussed. When workers in the oil industry - whether in Iraq or in other Middle Eastern countries, who are oil producers - due to its specific characteristics, begin any labour protest or strike really break the spine of the bourgeoisie. An obvious example concerns the strikes and protests in the Iranian oil industry in 1978.

The fact that the Iraqi working class in general - and especially in the oil industry - not only fails to challenge its wage slavery, but

³³ As source 11

also does not protest austerity policies is primarily due to the retreat of the working class from its class identity. Repression and dictatorship are the next stages. The repression of a class conscious working class that is aware of its class identity, is harder.

The ICC continues:

“To make matters worse, Iraq could be descending into a post-Isis phase of fracture, more and more dominated by centrifugal tendencies which are being expressed by the local gangs and manipulated by the major imperialist powers. There is a danger of Iraq turning into another Libya or something like it. Neither nationalism nor democracy are the main cards being played here – rather we are seeing the remorseless spread of capitalist decomposition. The flourishing of various militias in constant rivalry with each other is a clear expression of this, and this could sideline and overwhelm any class movements. In the meantime the response of the Iraqi state has been lethal gunfire, mass arrests and torture.”³⁴

Why is there a risk of Iraq becoming another Libya? Why do wars take the form of regional wars? The answer to this question in the first place is not in Iraq, but in the global situation and the balance of forces of the two main classes. The gaining of power by local gangsters and the danger of the collapse of Iraqi society indicate a growing retreat of the working class from its class identity. Proletarian class consciousness, and consequently proletarian identity, have a reciprocal relationship with the danger of society’s disappearance. The

³⁴ As source 11

greater the withdrawal of the working class from class identity, the better the conditions for the dissolution of society. In such a situation, the emphasis on an independent proletarian struggle and the defence of class identity becomes more important. In such a situation, when the ICC depicts the working class as a black army in the popular street protests under the title of “class struggle”, the working class will retreat more than ever before because of its class identity.

Avoid an Answer

The ICC is not interested in a serious response, so by presenting an incorrect image of the positions of Internationalist Voice means avoiding a serious response. First, let us see what the comrades say:

“It’s true that the power of the working class can indeed be to prevent the factories or oil refineries from functioning, but their real power does not lie in the paralysis of the production and the circulation of goods, but in their unification across all sectors of the economy, not by isolating workers from each other through “besieging” places of production, but by spreading a movement and overcoming any attachment to a specific work place.”³⁵

Then the ICC continues:

“Indeed, we’ve seen from specific struggles of oil workers in France relatively recently that concentrating on one sector,

³⁵ As source 11

even the oil sector, is the kiss of death for class struggle. The lessons of the isolating function of corporatism, which litter the history of class struggle, apply just as much to Iraq as France and everywhere else - isolation and division are the exact opposites of the needs of the struggle.”³⁶

First of all, it must be emphasized that the opinion of comrades about the fragmentation of the struggle and the isolation of the struggle in a sector, even in the most advanced and most important sectors, which represent the kiss of death for the class struggle, is absolutely correct. According to the lexicon of the class struggle, its extension to other sectors is the guarantor of its victory.

We ask comrades to show us, in a concise way, where we announced that we want to “isolate workers from each other by ‘besieging’ places of production”. In describing the popular protests in Iraq, we declared that they were not an independent proletarian struggle. The working class has not participated in the protests as a social class; rather, we said that, if independent proletarian protests are formed and evolve, and if they are drawn to the oil industry, this will break the back of the bourgeoisie.

In the previous sections, we showed that the claim of the ICC, that the popular struggles in Jordan, Iraq and Iran were not influenced by nationalism, but were against trade unions and clerics, was unfounded. The ICC, instead of answering why it doing the working class black army in the popular protests, choosing to throw around allegations rather than answer basic questions: making vain accusations it not the answer.

³⁶ As source 11

The basic question that arises is, where is the real power of the working class? The real power of the working class is not to stop the accumulation of capital, but to appear as a social class which is conscious of its historical task. The debate is about what this social class is compelled to do historically, because only this social class is capable of carrying out a universal communist revolution.

It was in this context that we insisted that we can only respond to the bourgeois attacks from our own class terrain. The working class should not be pulled into popular movements; worse still, turning the working class into a black army in popular movements will make the working class weaker and powerless.

In the case of people's protests and movements, if the working class dissolves itself into democratic and libertarian movements, it will only weaken the proletariat itself, not the bourgeoisie.

Yellow Vests Movement

Amid the anger about rising fuel prices and taxes, on 17 November 2018, a movement was formed in France which became known as the 'yellow vests', because of the yellow jackets protestors wear. The spontaneity of the protests, the movement on the lower strata of society, mistrust of the elites, violence against the state, the adherence of protestors to diverse demands, the use of social networks to organize protests, police violence against protestors, and ... have been the shared features of the yellow vest movement with the protests of late December 2017 and early January 2018 in Iran. The main similarity between this French movement and these Iranian protests

was so great that the BBC published an article entitled, “Why the French yellow vest movement evoked Iran’s protests?”³⁷.

At least 10 people were killed and thousands injured during the yellow vest movement protests. Jerome Rodrigues, a construction worker and one of the leaders of the movement, was severely damaged by the impact of a plastic bullet in one of his eyes³⁸. Does the wounding of a construction worker and one of leaders of the yellow vest movement during street protests not represent the proletarian nature of these street protests? Certainly, such an argument cannot be taken seriously.

The ICC has published an article on the yellow vest movements under the title “The ‘Yellow Vest’ Movement: The Proletariat Must Respond to the Attacks of Capital on Its Own Class Terrain!”³⁹. We believe that this article examines the internationalist horizons of the nature of the yellow vest movement, the functioning of this movement, as well as the upcoming horizons. We read in part:

*“The inflamed nationalism, the references to “the people”, the beseeching pleas addressed to the powerful, reveals the real nature of the movement. The great majority of the “gilet jaunes” are active, retired or pauperised workers, but they appear here as citizens of the “French people” and not as members of the working class. They are acting in an **inter-classist movement** or are mixed-up in the classes and layers of the non-exploited of society (active, retired, precarious, unemployed) with the petty-bourgeoisie (liberal professionals,*

³⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/persian/world-features-46522318>

³⁸ [The Daily Mail](#)

³⁹ [The “Yellow Vest” movement](#)

*artisans, small entrepreneurs, farmers and smallholders). A part of the working class is tagging along with the initiators of the movement (small business people, self-employed drivers of lorries, taxis, ambulances). Despite the legitimate anger of the "gilets jaunes", among who are numerous proletarians who cannot make ends meet, this movement is **not a movement of the working class**. It is a movement which has been launched by small business people who are angry about the increase in fuel prices. As witnessed by the words of the truck driver who initiated the movement: "We are waiting for everyone, lorries, buses, taxis, tourist vehicles, tractors, etc. Everyone!" That is "Everyone" and all "the French people" **behind** the self-employed drivers, taxi drivers, farmers, etc. The workers are thus diluted into the "people", atomised and separated one from the other as individual citizens, mixed-up with small businessmen and women (many of whom were part of the electorate of the Rassemblement National - ex-FN - of Marine Le Pen)."*

The basic question that arises is, why did the ICC not find this popular movement and street protest to be proletarian in nature? As the ICC rightly states, the proletariat must respond to the attacks of capital on its own class terrain; but, when such protests happen in Jordan, Iraq and Iran, it acknowledges their proletarian nature and capacity to crystallize the class struggle.

Apparently, the ICC has a dual policy in relation to popular protests; protests in peripheral capital crystallize the class struggle, while, in metropolitan capital, they crystallizes the popular struggle. This is similar to the position that some on the radical part of the left

of capital have about unions. They believe that unions are reformist in metropolitan capital, but, on the periphery of capitalism, they are labour organizations for the struggle of the working class.

The Class Struggle and the ICC

The collapse of Stalinism, when competing with bourgeois democracy, not only on the part of the working class, led to a retreat of the working class from its class identity. Following this, the advance of populism and the reversal of neo-liberalism at the global level made the class struggle more defensive than before. The more the class struggle is defensive, the more it will have the same level of inadequacies and weaknesses; only the intensification of the class struggle will gradually turn weaknesses into precious achievements. We agree with comrades when they write:

*“The ‘unclear goals’ of the struggle are certainly weaknesses in the sense that they do not yet pose the question of overturning capitalism, but at the same time the recent protests and strikes in the Middle East should give us encouragement: the willingness to come out and fight is an absolute necessity for the class struggle, not a weakness.”*⁴⁰

As the working class as a social class, not the people themselves, despite its shortcomings and weaknesses, expanded its struggle, where, at one point, the fight shifted from a defensive to an offensive form, with thousands of industrial workers in the downtown area, surrounded by riot police, chanting “**Bread, jobs, freedom, council management**”, the basic question is, how much did the ICC encourage

⁴⁰ As source 11

these labour protests and strikes? What was the ICC concerned with at this moment?

The ICC at that time was eager to publish a letter from Israel regarding the upcoming Israeli elections at the top of its website. Probably, comrades think that Israel is the 51st state of the US; and, consequently, in spite of the fact that Israel is located in the Middle East, it is transferred to the “centre”. In other words, the letter was written not from peripheral capital, not even from metropolitan capital, but from the “centre”, so preference was given to the letter rather than to the labour protests and strikes in “peripheral capital”. It is important to note that, for us, the working class of Israel, as is the case for the working class of other countries, represents our class sisters and brothers.

We have already mentioned that the ICC has essentially reduced its role, functions and performance to the level of a revolutionary publication. Even as a revolutionary publication, the ICC cannot justify its absolute silence in relation to the class struggle that shook the streets. The same publication had received a pamphlet on labour protests and strikes, while other internationalist currents published texts about labour strikes⁴¹.

The ICC, which evaluated popular street protests as a manifestation of the class struggle, assessed the same struggle as an important starting point not only for the Middle East, but for workers everywhere. **Remembering workers everywhere**, comrades write:

⁴¹ For example, the internationalist communist tendency has published 4 articles in this regard.

*“But, even given the imperialist cauldron of the Middle East, or partly because of it, the combativity of the class is an important starting point and an example to **workers everywhere.**”*⁴²[our emphasis]

So, what was the cause of the absolute silence of the ICC in relation to the class struggle? Despite being the current that had published four articles on the popular street protests in the Middle East, why was it silent all of a sudden in relation to the class struggle? Why did the ICC deliberately ignore the news and debates about this class struggle? Why did the ICC even boycott the news and debates about this class struggle? If we want to better express our concern, we could say that the ICC does not ignore the news and debates about this class struggle, but rather ignores the class struggle itself. Why did the “avant-garde” of the proletariat not even want to play the role of a revolutionary publisher? We stand here asking!?

Probably, the ICC believes that the global class struggle is defensive, so, in the current situation, the advancement of the class struggle from a defensive to an offensive position in peripheral capital, chanting the slogan “Bread, jobs, freedom, council management”, is an adventure that can only lead to repression and we saw that it was suppressed! The working class in peripheral capital should wait for the class struggle to be raised by the working class, not in metropolitan capital, but in the “centre”, so that, later, the working class of the “centre” will determine the course and objectives of the struggle for the working class in peripheral capital. Until then, the working class of peripheral capital must participate as workers and not as a social

⁴² As source 11

class in popular struggles to radicalize those struggles. With the participation of workers in popular struggles, they take on the nature of a proletariat. The question that the ICC should be answer is, do trade unions think they are proletarian in nature because all of its members are workers? Fortunately, such an argument is not of interest to the ICC, at least in relation to trade unions.

If we abandon the boycotts of the protests and strikes of workers by the ICC, the biggest ambiguity of the ICC in relation to popular protests is to turn the working class into “the masses”. The evaluation of popular protests, as the crystallization of class struggle by the ICC, denies the most important feature of the working class - its social (class) character - and transforms a social class into “the masses”. The masses are not capable of communist revolution; only a social class in our age, namely, the working class, is capable of communist revolution.

The Paris Commune was defeated, the October Revolution failed, the German Revolution failed, and the Shanghai proletariat was beaten into blood: this list goes on. Although the struggles of the Iranian workers in the autumn of 2018 are not comparable to the aforementioned battles, even though they were the biggest and most magnificent labour struggles in the Middle East following the Iranian workers’ protests of 1977-1979, these were also defeated. None of these failures was an adventure, but a great effort. All failed to provide lessons for future battles. One of the workers of the Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Agro-industry Company explains better than the “avant-garde of the proletariat” (or even a revolutionary publication) how the class struggle took on an offensive form before its defeat:

“It is a mistake if anyone thinks that we did not know that the government and the traitors would succeed in breaking the strike. And it is a mistake if anyone thinks that we did not know that it would be impossible to conquer the factory or secure workers’ control over this strike. We knew and know and the workers know too!!! In order to achieve a soviet way of life, factory conquests and workers’ control require a much larger struggle and very widespread class solidarity. And, in order to advance towards such goals, the working class needs to seize political power; but, in order to achieve such ultimate goals, of course, it has to start from somewhere, such as Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Agro-industry Company, the National Steel Industrial Group (NSIG), the Heavy Equipment Production Company (HEPCO), Azarab and the petrochemicals, or the iron ore mine of Chadormalu, and so on. It began in Haft Tappeh and will continue in Haft Tappeh and, no doubt, will start soon in other factories. The struggle in Haft Tappeh was just a first steps which started to show what soviet life meant, so workers get to know where and how they can achieve their rights. We keep wanting a soviet lifestyle, and we will use every effort to achieve it and, in doing so, we are not afraid of facing any problems. We are present where the struggle is and, undoubtedly, in the near future, hand in hand with the rest of the workers, the streets and cities and the whole country under the feet of the workers will again tremble. We are the workers who have become aware of our own class rights and will not give up on our demands until the overthrow of the capitalist government and the establishment of workers’ soviets, so we can enjoy a soviet style of living to pave the way for potential

growth for workers and other members of the community and to bring it to all Iranian people. We are hoping for such a day”⁴³.

The working class is a global class, and class struggle is also global. In the decadent era of capital, the programme, function and task of a revolutionary organization are universal. The ICC, despite its weaknesses, its ambiguities, its shortcomings and even its mistakes, has played an important role in the proletarian political milieu. Unfortunately, the ICC has become weaker in the last decade due to its ambiguities, particularly concerning the organizational question and, if this continues, it will become weaker and weaker. The global working class and the proletarian political milieu need an ICC which accepts its role, not as a revolutionary publication for the metropolitan working class, or, worse, for the working class of “centre”, but the avant-garde of the proletariat, the avant-garde revolutionary organization that is fighting for the **global working class**. It is hoped that the ICC, by playing the role of the avant-garde of the proletariat, will be important in the future struggles of the proletariat. Playing such a role is a prerequisite for the preparation of an international and internationalist Communist Party, which without the possibility of a communist revolution is impossible. We wish the comrades great success in the class struggle.

M. Jahangiry

March 2019

⁴³ <http://www.sosialism.com/index.php/335-2018-12-04-18-09-18>

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.