The IXth World Congress of the IVth International

February 8, 9 and 10, 2016 - Paris
La Vérité

*The Truth* - Theorical review of the IVth International

The IXth World Congress of the IVth International

February 8, 9 and 10, 2016 - Paris
CONTENTS

● The IXth World Congress of the IVth International has just been held ..................page 3

● Declaration of the IXth world congress of the IVth international .........................page 7

● Introductory report by Marc Gauquelin
  “The situation of the IVth International” ............................................................page 9

● Second report presented by Andreu Camps:
  “The strategy of construction in the imperialist countries” .....................................page 15

● Third report, presented by João Alfredo Luna
  “The strategy of construction in the oppressed countries” .......................................page 21

● Debate-Meeting on the report of the IXth World Congress
  of the IVth Internationale (February 10, 2016) .....................................................page 27

● Balancesheet of Black Consciousness and its relevance ........................................page 35

● FREE TRIBUNE: The JRCL in the Vanguard of the Japanese Working Class
  Fighting against Abe’s Neo-Fascist Government ...............................................page 39
The IXth World Congress of the IVth International has just been held

To present and give an account of the proceedings of the IXth World Congress of the IVth International, which met February 8, 9 and 10, 2016, is not an easy exercise, because the discussions and political elaboration were so rich. This N° 89 of La Vérité/The Truth, theoretical review of the IVth International, is essentially devoted to the congress and to providing a set of material and documents allowing everyone to form his or her own opinion and to form a judgement on the basis of the reported facts.

First of all, we would like to insist on the political declaration that was adopted. It is by the way the only public document adopted by this World Congress. You will find it published in full in this issue. It may surprise some of our readers. It is voluntarily brief, concentrated and incisive. It is far from being one of those interminable declarations on the development of the objective situation, formally “correct” but distracting us from the present moment and the tasks to accomplish therein. This declaration states that there is no more urgent or more decisive task for revolutionaries building the IVth International, at this turning point in the world situation, than to immerse and anchor themselves in the heart of the class organizations which form the backbone of the struggle of the broad mass of workers.

This declaration is important. It is written in a simple form, accessible to all workers and youths in the vanguard who are asking themselves questions. Indeed, faced with the ongoing turmoil and the need to discuss and to act, this declaration fixes the place of the IVth International, which is to establish the necessary exchanges in the search for joint action to overcome the obstacles of the apparatuses. It is the contrary to all ultimatism and lessons proffered by “red professors”. It is an instrument for the presentation of the IVth International, its political positions, in order to discuss them and to call upon workers and youths to strengthen the International on the eve of decisive class confrontations. We call upon you to discuss it with the militants of the IVth International, in the framework of the presentation meetings that they organize, in order to strengthen the ranks of the International and join in its struggle.

The congress saw the effective participation of delegates and guests from 28 sections or groups of the IVth International. But we have to note that delegations from some countries were refused visas by the French authorities, which effectively prohibited them from being present at the congress.

The congress first paid tribute to leaders of the IVth International who have died during the last period: Pavlusko Insirovic (1), a Yugoslav militant, member of the International Secretariat, deceased in Belgrade in August 2014; Gérard Iltis (2), treasurer of the French section since 1971, member of its leadership, deceased in November 2015; Louis Eemans (3), French Trotskyist militant since 1940 and childhood friend of Pierre Lambert, deceased in January 2016; and the Polish revolutionary militant Edmund Baluka (4), deceased in Warsaw in January 2015, with whom the IVth International maintained political relations.

Prior to the World Congress, the control commission, the International Secretariat and the General Council met. The latter adopted unanimously a mo-
tion submitted to the World Congress, proposing to reject any claim by the liquidationist center to be received in delegation by the IXth World Congress. After the roll-call of delegates duly mandated by sections, the congress proceedings began and, on a proposal from the bureau of the congress, composed of members of the elected Correspondence Committee, it unanimously first adopted the motion proposed by the General Council.

The proposed agenda included three reports, followed by discussion on the following points: 1) The situation of the IVth International; 2) Building strategy in the imperialist countries; 3) Building strategy in the oppressed (dominated) countries. Two commission meetings were organized according to the agenda: one on La Vérité/The Truth, the other on the declaration of the IXth Congress.

This issue of La Vérité/The Truth publishes large extracts from the three presented reports. We propose that you refer to them, as they establish the framework for the rich and rigorous discussion that followed.

The discussion on the first report allowed the World Congress to establish and register the ways and means by which the liquidationist offensive which sought to destroy the French section and the IVth International had been repulsed. By overcoming this crisis, the congress furnished itself with the means to move forward towards the construction of sections. With this orientation, numerous interventions in the discussion underlined the major role of the Correspondence Committee, elected unanimously by the General Council in March 2015, in impulsing and developing debate between sections, breaking in this way with all forms of supervision, of verticalism, of “fiefdoms” and “reserved domains”. And one can stress the great maturity of the discussion on this first report, which established that the situation of the International is hereafter placed within the framework constituted during the conference of reproclamation of the IVth International of 1993, reaffirming the whole of the latter’s considerations and conclusions. That is not the least of the achievements of this congress.

The second day of the congress was opened by the presentation and discussion of the second report, dealing with the strategy of construction in the imperialist countries, especially in western Europe (see the report by Andreu Camps in this issue). The discussion established the framework for the reconstitution of the European bureau permitting exchange and political elaboration between the European sections, with the goal of building them through their intervention in the class struggle. In this discussion, numerous comrades showed how the demand “break with the European Union”, which is correct, could be used to mask the full responsibility of EU member governments, wholly subservient to the policies of finance capital, if one does not relate it to the struggle against each respective government. The central issue of the independence of class organizations in the face of the bourgeoisie was discussed as a constant question of what is at stake in every country. Numerous interventions illustrated the way in which sections of the IVth International are an active part of these real processes, through their intervention in the class struggle. To illustrate the end of “reserved domains”, we should regard as an achievement of this congress the fact that the report from the commission created to examine our intervention in the United States was made by a comrade from Azania.

The third day was largely devoted to discussion of the report on building sections of the IVth International in the oppressed (dominated, or dependent) countries, and especially the particular situation in Latin America (Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Chile…). The report took into account the turning point in the world situation and the need to homogenize the activity of sections of the IVth International, under the responsibility of the Pan-American bureau (PAB), fully integrating under its responsibility the work in the Caribbean, including the semi-colonial countries and colonies. A rich and fascinating discussion developed on the practical implementation of the strategic orientation of the anti-imperialist united front, a major and determining instrument for the defense of the sovereignty of nations faced with the dismemberment imposed by imperialism. This discussion established that the strategy of the anti-imperialist united front fully integrates the struggle for the workers’ united front, which at the present time is concentrated on the defense of trade union organizations and on the precise formulation of demands.

The discussion also touched upon key countries in Africa and the Middle East, especially the North African countries and Azania.

The congress registered the proposal to organize a cadre school for Latin American sections.

A discussion took place about the responsibility of the IVth International and its sections, on an equal footing with all the militants and leaders that are not Trotskyist, in order to make the International Liaison Committee of workers and peoples resume its full place, embedding itself in the struggle for genuine independent workers’ parties, needed by the working class in order to take power from the hands of finance capital.

A commission meeting on La Vérité/The Truth was held on the Tuesday evening and reported back to the congress on its work the following day. First of all, it indicated that we were able to assure the publication of the issues N° 87 and N° 88 within the regulatory deadlines imposed upon us, despite the crisis we have undergone. These two issues put an end to a certain exteriority in the preceding ones. Proposals for the contents of the four issues of the year 2016 were presented. The simultaneous publishing of La Vérité/The Truth in all languages makes it necessary to shorten the publication periods and to concentrate on theoretical and political articles unrelated to immediate current events. The format of 64 pages corresponds better to this current requirement. The dossiers of theoretical documents published in N° 87 (“Democratic centralism”) and N°88 (“Trade unions and class independence”) will
be followed up (in the N° 90, the continuation of the dossier on trade unions and in the following issues “Workers’ united front and anti-imperialist united front”). The congress mandated the International Secretariat and its Correspondence Committee to continue with the political elaboration in accordance with the needs for the intervention and training of militants.

As we have seen, and to summarise, the three reports submitted for discussion dealt with the situation of the IVth International and with the way in which it repelled the liquidationist offensive; with the building strategy in the advanced imperialist countries, that is, the materialization of a policy of workers’ united front; and finally, with the building strategy in the dependent countries, that is, application of a policy of anti-imperialist united front.

The congress approved the request for affiliation by the Haitian section to the IVth International and adopted unanimously a positive reply to this request. Let us recall that the Haitian section until then had the status of a sympathizing organization and that the political and organizational conditions had been met for this affiliation, as the report to the congress established.

The congress heard the report of the control commission and adopted unanimously the report it presented. (It must be noted that the group of liquidators made no appeal to the International control commission, nor to the control commission of the French section).

The IXth World Congress, in closing its proceedings with the election of the General Council, underlined the importance of the place and role of the Correspondence Committee. It is worth recalling that, faced with the non-preparation of meetings of the International Secretariat and the General Council by the former team of permanent officials of the International, this committee had been elected unanimously at the General Council meeting of March 2015. The goal of the Correspondence Committee was to prompt debate between the bodies and sections of the International, and thus to allow the International Secretariat to accomplish its task. It sought also to overcome the reserved domains, the verticalism and the compartmentalization that existed in the functioning of the organization of the International. It is obvious that the installation of this committee was one of the triggers for the liquidationist offensive, which strove to preserve the previous routine. We know what followed. Up to today’s date, 18 bulletins have been published in French, English and Spanish. Addressed to the leaderships of sections, they have in several cases been distributed to member militants. Without any doubt, the result is positive, but unequal. The congress discussion did however insist upon the need for the correspondence bulletin to be a real instrument of debate and exchange between the International Secretariat and sections, in which all members of the General Council and section leaderships can take their place.

The Correspondence Committee also acts to contribute to the constitution of continental bureaux, starting with those that are fully in place (the Pan-American bureau, the North-African bureau, the reorganization of the European bureau…). The congress also estimated it necessary to inform the leaderships of sections of the various national publications.

The Correspondence Committee and its bulletins are major instruments to make the International Secretariat function, to nourish the leaderships of sections with political material and in this way to allow them to develop their own political elaboration. On the basis of this achievement, it is now a question of taking a new step forward in fully installing the continental bureaux.

Finally, the World Congress went on to elect the General Council, and from within that the International Secretariat. It also elected a control commission of five members.

By Wednesday, February 10, beginning at 6.30 p.m., the French section had already organized a large assembly-debate reporting back on this World Congress, with the participation of delegates from Spain, Venezuela, Brazil, Azania and Tunisia, as well as France. In this issue we publish large extracts of this event, which perfectly sums up the importance and the richness of the debates of this congress.

**Henry Halphen,**
*delegate to the IXth Congress*

---


2. Gérard Iltis (1942-2015). *Informations Ouvrières* n° 377 (the week of November 12 to 18, 2015) devoted its pages 14 and 15 to a “ Tribute to Gérard Iltis, honor to our comrade Sorel”, with testimonies from Danielle, his wife, from Murielle, his daughter, from Michel Landron, his friend, and from Marc Gauquelin, in the name of the French section of the IVth International.

3. Louis Eemans (1920-2016). *Informations Ouvrières* n° 384 (the week of January 14 to 20, 2016) published a “ Tribute to our comrade Louis Eemans” on the pages 14 and 15, with testimonies from Janine and Liliane, his daughters, and from comrade Clement, in the name of the French section of the IVth International. *La Lettre de La Vérité*, in its n° 794 (January 18, 2016) and n° 796 (February 4, 2016) published an interview with the one whom we fondly called Petit Louis, entitled “Militant of the IVth International, organizer of the CERMTRI”. “If you really want things to change, i.e. that there is a revolution, it’s first of all necessary to have an International”, “is the conclusion of the pamphlet “Lessons from the bank strikes of July 1957”, which he wrote.

4. Edmund Baluka (1933-2015). *La Vérité* n° 85, from March 2015, paid a tribute to him in a dossier of documents entitled “Edmund Baluka, revolutionary worker, trade unionist, political leader”. This dossier published documents from 1971 (when Edmund Baluka, then chair of the strike committee of Szczecin, confronted the prime minister Gierke), from 1982 (during the foundation of the Polish Socialist Workers Party), from 1983 (during the study days organized at the Mutualité, Paris), and finally his Letters from prison from 1983.
Declaration of the IXth world congress of the IVth international

The unprecedented acceleration of the decomposition of the whole system of imperialist domination manifests itself today simultaneously in the threat of an imminent collapse of the whole of the world financial system, the brutal extension to Europe of a war which has been ravaging the Middle East and Africa for decades, and the displacement of millions of men, women and children, driven from their homes by want and war.

If this war which is spreading today has the same causes as the last two world wars, if it is an imperialist war for the control of basic resources and markets... it is not a repetition of the last two world wars. It is a war of decomposition of the whole system of imperialist domination. A war made of about-turns, of brusquely changing alliances, expressing the incapacity of the dominant imperialist States – starting with the United States – to meet all the demands required for the maintenance of the bourgeois order on a world scale by their own forces, in particular on the military level.

In a desperate attempt to save the barbaric system of exploitation which is suffocating under the weight of its fundamental contradictions, imperialism (including all its competing components), has decided in the most cynical manner to stage all the horrors that it has organised in order to terrify the workers and peoples of the whole world, in order to provide itself with the means to create the conditions of dynamiting the principal social and political conquests won by the centuries-old struggle of the proletariat – something which it has never succeeded in doing. It has decided to try, at the same time, to dynamite all the democratic conquests won by the emancipatory struggle of peoples to wrest their sovereignty from the hands of the colonial powers.

Pressed by a financial crisis of unprecedented amplitude in its history, imperialism has decided to play for the ultimate stakes. It has decided to unlock the barrier which has been preventing it from realising its vital imperatives for the restoration of the profits of the dominant groups of finance capital, in a market which is in full recession. It has decided to use the situation created by acts of war, terrorist attacks and the massacres which it organises, while destroying workers gains, in order to attack within the imperialist countries themselves the existence of those organisations which structure the working class as an organised class, and in the dominated (oppressed) countries those organisations which form the spinal column of resistance of peoples to the destruction of nations by imperialism.

Humanity has evidently reached a crucial stage in its history. One can imagine the new plunge into barbarity that would represent for the world the destruction of all the juridical framework, all regulations won by 135 years of class struggle in the imperialist countries and partly extended, by the national emancipation struggle, to the proletariat of the dominated countries.

In this situation of counter-revolution unleashed by imperialism on all the continents, in this situation of extension of war, gigantic revolutionary explosions are in preparation, on the lines of those which shook Tunisia and Egypt in 2011, or that which is continuing and deepening in Palestine, or that which is in preparation in Latin America. A
revolutionary wave which will spare no continent, and especially Europe.

Millions of workers and militants are confronted on a world level with the historic battle which is getting under way. They understand that the brutality and the simultaneous nature of the attack on all continents designates the imperialist order and its vassals as the organiser responsible for all the calamities afflicting Humanity. They are engaged, in their hundreds and hundreds of thousands on all the continents, in a process in which the most elementary needs for survival are pushing them to seek the means of organising a resistance commensurate with the offensive dictated by the survival of a system based on the private ownership of the means of production – in so far as one can speak of “survival” regarding a system which no longer has anything else but want and war to offer.

In the imperialist countries, the whole of the political parties which traditionally claimed to represent the working class are disintegrating, rejected by the masses because they have with servility accompanied the policies of their respective governments (of the left as of the right), and for having in their way prepared the murderous offensives being deployed today. In this situation, the workers are seeking out points of support in their class organisations, and particularly the trade unions, trying to use these in order to organise their resistance. Never has the crisis within these organisations, threatened with dismemberment by the pressure exerted upon them by finance capital to force them into accompanying its plans, attained such proportions. The question of the existence and of the independence of these organisations has as a result become a major stake in the class struggle.

In the countries under domination, the workers parties or those that stand for “anti-imperialism” which have developed in the struggle for the defence of the nation (and which have survived) find themselves confronted with an alternative in the face of the new offensive unleashed by imperialism: either survive and develop by helping, under the leadership of the working class realising national democratic tasks, to rally the nation and raise it up against the efforts of the imperialists and their oligarchic agents... or else disappear.

It is upon this highly political common terrain, under forms particular to each of the five continents, that the fight for the outcome of the struggle against war and barbarity is being played out. It is on this terrain that the fate of Humanity is being played out. It is on this terrain that, by renewing the ties of solidarity at an international level, the authentic independent workers parties which the working class needs in order to wrest power from the hands of finance capital will be built or rebuilt. It is in this framework that the IVth International supports the activities of the International Entente of Workers and Peoples (the International Liaison Committee).

For the IVth International, true to its programme, the programme of socialist revolution, true to all the experience of the revolutionary fight of the proletariat, there is no more urgent and decisive task, at this moment in the turning of the world situation, than to immerse and anchor oneself in the heart of the class organisations which structure the combat of the broad working masses.

It is impossible for militant revolutionaries to avoid the demands of such an orientation. For them, there can be no more urgent task than to wage this combat, the only one which can allow the working class to draw to its side all the exploited and oppressed strata of each country in order, by defending workers rights, to defend one of the pillars of political democracy that the peoples need in order to emancipate themselves from the exploitation of man by man. There is no more urgent task than to organise to help, in each country, the workers and militants, who are immediately ready, to wage a common fight, under forms of their choosing in relation to the history of each of their nations, in order to help the workers and the oppressed masses to win.

The IVth International, meeting in its IXth World Congress, invites all workers, militants, youths to associate themselves with this fight, to participate in the elaboration of the forms which it will have to take in relation with the rapid developments of the situation, and in order to do so, the IVth International invites them to join its ranks. The IVth International undertakes to organise the permanent political exchange between militants who commit themselves to this combat on a world scale.
Comrades,

The French section which is hosting this IXth World Congress of the IVth International concluded its 51st congress in this hall yesterday. Please allow me to say a few words about that before we begin our work.

I think we can say that congress, both by its composition and the quality of the discussion which was conducted, occupies a place which has no equivalent today in France, nor even on a European scale. This congress was a meeting of activists and leaders (cadres) inserted for years in the class struggle and exercising, as such, the responsibilities of leadership in the main working class organizations in this country, and it was also the congress of a true section of the IVth International.

100 delegates, 50 guests, 65 speakers devoted themselves, on the basis of a common appreciation of the turning point in the world situation and its refraction in Europe and in France, to enriching and developing the strategic line of their intervention and to clarify the objectives that this situation calls for from a section of the IVth International.

The calm, responsibility and confidence, comforted by the feeling of having restored the relationship of loyalty within the organization, have marked this congress. This state of mind is the result of a battle which has mobilized all the living forces of the CCI these last six months to repel, defeat and expel the liquidatory clique which sought to make our section renounce its strategy for building the revolutionary party.

The resolution adopted by the October 31 meeting of the national leadership (DN – direction nationale, or central committee) clearly qualified the destructive operation. It was connected closely to the turn in the world situation and the most brutal offensive unleashed by imperialism in its crisis of decomposition in order to destroy the organizations which continue – despite the ongoing attacks to which they are subjected – to organize and structure the working class as a class.

This resolution was careful never to separate this destructive operation from its political roots. It sought to sum it up for what it was: one of the multiple instruments used by imperialism and its agents to blow up – ahead of the forthcoming great turbulences – any political organization capable of bringing together a broad vanguard ready to join battle to help its class defend the independence of its organizations.

Regarding France, this offensive obviously focused on the attempt to explode and eradicate the organization that has been built over decades in this fight: the organization of the “Trotskyste-Lambertiste” current (the CCI – Courant communiste internationaliste, French section of the IVth International).

I believe that the essential has been said about it; I shall only allow myself a very short addition. Things are going very quickly. Nature abhorring a vacuum, the orbit on which the liquidatory clique placed themselves becomes clearer day by day. I will therefore confine myself to referring the delegates of this IXth World Congress to the resolution adopted yesterday by the 51st Congress of the CCI:
“Bit by bit – we wrote – the orbit upon which the liquidators have set themselves becomes clearer. The simultaneous assertion of a denunciatory policy (October 10, January 26…) – resolutely hostile to the concern of Marxists, which is to act upon the contradictions that are at work in the labor movement – and a craze for online petitions (the September 26 and January 26 meetings) are the preferred mode of existence of civil society, addressing Holland-Valls in order to convince them to abandon the “reform” of the Labor Code and the state of emergency… (An orientation which) conforms to the lines of force drawn by imperialism to try to dismember the labor movement and the organized working class. In this sense, it is up to the French section of the IVth International to adopt a clear position: We are faced with an organized force hostile to the working class and its fight for emancipation, a force which has nothing in common with its former comrades, and which has already sent signals to the enemies of the struggle for the independence of class organizations, dazzling them with the role that, as mercenaries, renegades to lambertisme, they aspire to.”

I don’t think it useful now to say much more on the subject. Internally, the page has been turned.

I would like now to come to what should be, I think, at the centre of our discussion in this IXth World Congress.

The latest developments of the situation, the latest developments in the war, unfortunately vividly confirm what we wrote during the International Secretariat (IS) meetings of November 13-14, 2014 and January 14-15 January, 2015 (just a year ago).

Obviously, it will be useful to integrate in our publications, and especially in La Vérité/The Truth, these new developments in the analysis that we made, by supplementing it to make clear what specifically characterizes the war that is now developing on all continents.

A war, to employ the formula used by Trotsky on the eve of the Second World War, which “If it is a continuation of the first one, is not a repetition of it.”

A war of political decomposition of the whole imperialist order, and above all, a war in which appears, with more force than ever, the absolute incapacity, including that of the most powerful imperialism (US imperialism), to restore under its control a semblance “of world order”. A war which reflects the inability of imperialism to control developments on the ground. An inability which has become the main factor of destabilization of the entire world situation.

But if this work is absolutely indispensable, it answers only very partially the questions that we are faced with in this Congress.

By opening the proceedings of the IXth World Congress, we are faced with a choice:

What do we want to achieve? And thus, how and with what method do we propose to address, in order to start to solve them, the burning political issues to which the IVth International and its sections are suddenly confronted by this new turn in the world situation?

What goals are we able to set ourselves, in relation to a precise appreciation of the forces we organize within the working class in our respective countries, or within the mass organizations that mobilize, especially in the dominated countries, broad layers of the oppressed population?

These are the questions we are faced with and – it does seem to me – not the question of drafting a new “manifesto” that would supply for a stricken world the answers of an omniscient leadership.

But to address seriously these issues, we need to start by restoring the conditions of collective work called for by the IS resolution of November 13-14, 2014.

Let us open this discussion and let us set up the organizational framework for the permanent pursuit of this exchange. An exchange, on equal terms, which will allow thorough debate to the end of the vital questions posed by our insertion within the processes of crisis as they really develop, and not as we imagine them.

In short, to summarize: either we simply learnedly paint down to the last detail (with the support of selected quotations from the sacred texts) a picture of the mechanisms which have led to the “chaos” in which imperialism is plunging humanity; or we start from what we are, from the forces that we are able to bring into action in order to help the working class concretely to organize its resistance, prepare its counter-offensive, and in this way, to truly act as the core of the International under construction.

Either we content ourselves with refining a “manifesto” addressed to the whole world, inviting all those seduced by our brilliant analysis to gather in a world conference “against war and exploitation”; or we are convinced that the deflagration which is shaking the whole world is going, in the near future, to spark revolutionary explosions – of the type that exploded in 2011 in Tunisia and Egypt – in Latin America, in Europe, Azania, or Asia… and in that case, we believe that there is no task more urgent for a congress of the IVth International than to provide the means of exchange, in the course of these developments, to collectively build a line of intervention that enables our sections’ activists to truly immerse and build themselves in the fight that is going to be unleashed within class organizations in crisis, in the course of the forthcoming processes. And this in relying upon the lessons of the experience of our Brazilian, Algerian, French, and Spanish comrades who have made a non-negligible step in this direction.

This alternative brings us back to the question asked by the IS of November 13-14, 2014. It brings us back to the question of a review without concession (and unhampered by any spirit of routine) of the positions occupied by each of our sections in the political life of the labor movement in their countries, the question of their experiences and of
the lessons they have learned from them, with a view to submitting them, through the strengthening of bodies of the IVth International, to examination and discussion by comrades in other countries and on other continents.

The implementing of this permanent political exchange, in the development of what has been initiated with the IS “Correspondence Bulletin” set up by the General Council of the IVth International in March 2015, has today concentrated the historic role of the IVth International. This requires us to turn our backs, without the slightest hesitation, upon the policy of supposed “holy messengers” charged with delivering the words of “self-proclaimed” chiefs, as well as the policy of fiefdoms and “reserved domains” which have weighed upon the life of the International.

Let’s avoid any temptation to make a routine response to the question induced by the extension of war, as if it were sufficient for Marxists to choose among the various solutions provided, once and for all, by a catalogue of pre-set worldwide or continental conferences… Let’s avoid for instance, as I think we should do, the hasty convening of a “world conference against war and exploitation” on the basis of the old card-index file of the EIT (Entente Internationale des Travailleurs – International Liaison Committee, ILC) while ignoring the political and organizational issues I have just raised, and which are concentrated in the level of representativity of the forces ready to participate.

Making this choice in no way means questioning what we did in 1991 by convening the Open World Conference in Barcelona, and even more so in 1993, in re-proclaiming the IVth International, two dates which are an integral part of our political heritage.

In 1991, we were faced with the first symptoms of the new situation that has developed since, leading today to the extension of war to the entire planet. The USSR, undermined and destroyed by the policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy allied with imperialism, was engaged in a process of collapse. The United States hastened to announce to the world that it was now the only guarantor of the world order and, in order to make that understood, triggered the first Gulf war, plunging the Middle East into a process that has led to the present chaos.

It was perfectly justified – at the time when the fall of the Soviet Union provided a glimpse of the forthcoming outbreak of a major crisis within the main organizations of the international labor movement, as within the large anti-imperialist satellite organizations of the USSR – to set the goal of a wide gathering of representatives of all currents generated by this crisis.

It was perfectly justified to use the contacts we made with the embryos of militant groups being constituted within the former USSR in order to link them up with activists and labor leaders from all continents in an “Open World Conference”. It was perfectly justified to establish the EIT (ILC).

It was perfectly justified to “complete” this initiative, in line with the strategy of transition which is ours, in asserting the IVth International and in re-proclaiming it at the 1993 conference.

Read again the texts produced in 1993, there is not a comma which needs changing.

Yes, we were legitimately entitled, after a whole battle against pablist revisionism, which had allowed us to renew political relations with activists and groups claiming allegiance on a world scale to the IVth International, to re-proclaim the IVth International.

But is it an offence to what we have achieved (and to which many of you actively participated) to simply ask the question of what has happened over the last 25 years?

Is it an offence to what we have achieved to ask the question of what has become of these relations and to ask the question of their political positioning in the new situation?

Let’s make it fully understood: when it came to failures, this is not a judgment upon the initiatives we took and upon the hopes that we placed upon this one or that one.

The class struggle is ruthless and leaves by the side of the road a whole series of activists and groups upon which we could legitimately place our hopes. I repeat: all that we did was totally justified!

But how might such questioning – as the liquidatory clique accuses us – constitute a break with the re-proclamation of 1993? I am, on the contrary, convinced that, on our part, this review is the only way to remain faithful to what we have undertaken by re-proclaiming the IVth International!

This is not an abstract issue. Going all the way in breaking with any auto-proclamatory conception of revolutionary policy raises the most fundamental of political questions.

Indeed, if we do not intend to rule out, a priori, any notion of “World Conference against war and exploitation”, if we want seriously to ask ourselves this question, then we must answer this other question: what forces really involved in this battle would we be immediately able to count upon for its convening and what significant forces would we be in a position to ensure participated?

For we are no longer in 1991, the war is here! And for a certain number of delegates to this Congress, they are active in countries at war!

To put the question any other way would correspond to a policy of “wishful thinking... or else would imply purely and simply giving up the goal of organizing anything but a meeting between friends and people of good company.

Let’s be clear: for activists for whom Liebknecht’s formula “The enemy is in our own country” still makes sense, it is in the United States that a real “Conference against war” should be convened. Because it is the United States that is the chief orchestrator of this extension of the war.
But does there exist a force capable of seriously carrying such a conference?

Don’t discount the question of Britain and France, principle imperialist countries engaged alongside the United States in the war of extermination ravaging the Middle East.

Under what conditions could such a conference be held there and assume its full significance?

I repeat, war is here! For Marxists, who (since 1915) do not confuse “fight against war” and “pacificism”, the fight against imperialist war is a struggle to help the working class to bring down the imperialist governments engaged in this war. It is a struggle to help the working class to realise, by means of the class struggle, the political conditions of this confrontation. This way of envisaging the question brings us back to the questions I asked at the beginning of my report.

Are we able, immediately, to carry out the terms of the convening of a conference bringing together representatives of organizations or segments of organizations engaged in such battle? I am talking neither about the United States nor Britain which, for the reasons you know, are very far from offering such an opportunity. I’m talking about France...

I do not think that, in the immediate, the political conditions can be met for the initiative of such a conference that would correspond to what is required by a real fight against the unleashing of imperialist war.

France is living under a state of emergency status. True, it is a state of emergency of a particular type, the state of emergency of a government that cannot afford to forbid demonstrations called by trade unions, as has just happened regarding the lifting of the state of emergency. True, it is a state of emergency of a particular type, the state of emergency of a government that cannot afford to forbid demonstrations called by trade unions, as has just happened regarding the lifting of the state of emergency. Just as it is up to the working class to work its way out of the war coalition led by the United States.

The conditions for this clash are ripening in France. In relation with these developments, therefore, the conditions for a gathering of internationalist forces truly engaged in the battle against imperialist war can suddenly be realised. But we are not there yet!

One can regret it, but in the name of what “principles”, of what abstract schemes – unless it is simply in the name of routine – should we skip over the stages? In the name of what, should we take the risk of diverting our forces from the struggle in which we are fully committed to help the working class break the fragile dam with which it is faced.

To say this does not mean that we should set aside (or postpone indefinitely) the idea of such an initiative. Does this mean that the relationships forged over the years in the context of the EIT (ILC) might have become valueless? Not at all.

The deepening of the government crisis, combined with an accident caused by the growing commitment of France to the war, could suddenly accelerate (and sooner than one might think) the maturing clash between the working class, the exploited masses and this government.

We must prepare ourselves to grasp such a situation, both in terms of the direct class struggle and for the gathering together of political forces detaching themselves from the traditional organizations under the pressure of events. We must prepare ourselves for the realisation of the political conditions that will allow us to gain, when it comes to a combination of this kind, a significant participation of these forces in a real conference of internationalist combatants.

We are at the heart of this congress discussion. Let’s get completely rid of the brakes which sought to prevent us from having such discussions, and therefore let’s focus our thinking on the building of a system of organization enabling us to continue the discussions that we are going to engage in these two days.

Such discussion and development must provide the means to react to all abrupt changes of situation, in the countries and on all the continents that are represented in this congress: in Europe, in Latin America, in North Africa or in Azania.

I know, for having talked with a number of delegates, that these comrades will indicate to us the ideas they have had regarding projected continental and national initiatives.

Whether it is possible to organize, for example in Europe, a conference that focuses on condemnation of how the drama of the refugees – which concentrates all the processes of the imposition of the EU – is shamefully exploited by imperialism in order to attack all the conquests of the working class on the continent, a conference which would group together all the forces really engaged in the battle against each national government using watchwords and initiatives corresponding to the policy of authentic labor internationalism.

Or whether to conceive of a conference in Latin America, at a time when the pressure of imperialism is preparing the conditions of a continental explosion.

Or whether to prepare a riposte against the direct military intervention under preparation in Libya and which would completely destabilize the whole of North Africa.

So many legitimate and indispensable discussions that I propose to open in this Congress, as part of the reflections that I have allowed myself to raise concerning the political conditions of the immediate convening of a real world conference...
against war and exploitation. Those reflections were fed by the discussions that we have pursued and renewed since the IS of November 2014 and which re-establish the link with the method that presided over the re-proclamation of the IVth International.

To conclude this introduction to the proceedings, I will try to answer the question: who are we and what are our ambitions?

I think it is clear to all comrades here that the worst thing would be to consider us for what we are not: a constituted International.

This concept is foreign to the real world, it is foreign to the complexity of the process generated by the decomposition of the system of imperialist domination and especially foreign to the way – to quote Trotsky – in which the "deep organic and indefinite yearning of the masses to tear themselves away from the bloody chaos of capitalism" manifests itself and seeks out concretely, step by step, routes for the way forward.

It was this concept of an established (self-proclaimed) leadership which was at the root of the functioning of the "small international apparatus" which tended to establish itself and gradually stifle discussion amongst us.

But if we are not the International, in the zinovievist sense of the word, the "core" assembled today in this congress gathers together all the experience of the IVth International.

It embodies the capacity that we had, with the Brazilian, French, Algerian and Spanish sections... to begin to materialize into the concrete reality of their countries the strategy of transition to which the name of Pierre Lambert is attached. And to open this way to other sections and groups attached to the International.

In this sense, we are the IVth International, re-proclaimed in 1993!

We are facing an “explosion” in which the political crisis tearing apart the summits of US imperialism is revealed in all its destructive magnitude. An “explosion” that simultaneously affects all continents, all countries: Latin America, Europe, the Maghreb, Africa, Asia...

Gigantic revolutionary explosions are in preparation on all the continents, posing in a more acute and terrible way than ever the question of the existence of revolutionary parties, able to help the working class to take power. The existence of revolutionary parties – not that of propagandist sects, cut off from the real world. The existence – therefore the construction – of organizations able to insert themselves into the process of class resistance, in order to bear upon the political developments that will turn upside down each of the countries where we exist.

Where are we starting from? What have we learned? Just how far are we able to generalize this experience? Where are our forces present? How do we decide to arrange them?

It seems to me that it is from there that we need to tackle this congress. This is the reason why I do not think the idea of a “Manifesto” appropriate. On the other hand, it seems to me preferable to draft a statement summarizing in simple and popular terms our fundamental appreciation of the “turn” in the global situation, leading to an invitation to join the IVth International and to immerse ourselves in the class and its organizations, in order to help organize a resistance preparing the counter-offensive which will contest the power of finance capital.

A battle which we invite the militants whom we address to join, and in order to do so, to join our ranks.

These are, comrades, the paths I wished to open as an introduction to this discussion.

Marc Gauquelin
A preliminary remark: this title is probably too ambitious, as we are going for now to concentrate our discussion on the construction of sections of the IVth International in the countries of Europe. And at the same time, we will resume discussion on construction in the main imperialist country, the United States. To build our sections in Europe and implant them in the labour movement, we need to clarify a number of issues.

What are the common characteristics of the former great imperialist powers of Europe?

Of course, national differences do exist, which no “supranational” structure can erase. They show themselves through the shape taken by the different political regimes, the traditions of the labour movement, the type of conquests and the way the class struggle develops.

Let’s remember that, from an historical perspective, the industrial revolution, which began in Great Britain and developed in Europe, generated the birth of the proletariat and the creation of its organisations (parties and unions). It is on this ground that were formed the First and Second Internationals, on the shoulders of which the Third International raised itself. It is due to this history that the working class of the European countries today still occupies a major place on the world scale.

Particularly after the Second World War, when American imperialism affirmed its hegemony, oblige the European imperialisms – not without contradictions or conflicts – to occupy their place in a relation of increasing submission to American imperialism.

The present institutions of the European Union (EU) are a materialization of the grip exerted by the United States on Europe since the end of World War II and implementation of the Marshall Plan. And we will leave that aspect there, given all the texts that we have already produced on this issue. One must nevertheless stress the fact that the dependency of European countries with regard to the United States has expressed itself throughout the process of constitution of the EU institutions, and particularly in the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty.

Now, the current process of collapse of these institutions confirms that there is no super-imperialism. It demonstrates also that the contradictions between the various bourgeoisies, sharpened by the resistance of workers and peoples, is fuelling a process of implosion. This is not just another crisis. It is the culmination of a process of destruction that renders more urgent than ever the problem of the reconstruction of Europe on a new basis, i.e. on the basis of the expropriation of capital, and therefore the struggle for a socialist United States of Europe.

No section of the IVth International can be built without this strategic perspective, which is in contradiction with any nationalist-chauvinist stance, which would only be an adaptation to some fractions of the bourgeoisie which imagine there is some salvation for them through an impossible self-sufficiency.

Today, all the conquests wrested by the different European working classes are placed in question. Particularly those obtained after World War II, when
the collapse of Nazism had opened a revolutionary crisis (in France, Italy, etc.), a process during which the class struggle – without totally succeeding, because of the policy of the apparatuses, and in particular the power of the Stalinist apparatus – nevertheless allowed the wrestling of major conquests. In this framework, France plays a particular role, because it is the country in which the conquests that still exist retain the mark of this class struggle, particularly the existence of the social security system.

Today, the survival of the capitalist regime requires finance capital to wage an all-out offensive to erase these conquests. From this point of view, there is an indissoluble link between the offensive against these conquests and the war that is spreading out from the Middle East and North Africa. That link has just been vividly underlined by the terrorist attacks and the influx of refugees fleeing the war in Syria, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, or the exodus of already vulnerable populations of North Africa, the Balkans and Eastern Europe due to the policy of privatization and destruction of labour power imposed by imperialism.

To take just the example of Romania: half of its workers have disappeared from the country due to the destruction of the nationalized economy, with these workers now living in the countries of Western Europe (Germany, Spain, France, Portugal, Italy); this means that a good part of the Romanian population lives ‘thanks to’ the overexploitation of these workers abroad, where despite everything they have wages and conditions very much superior to those they would have had if they had remained in Romania. And this is the case although Romania is a member of the European Union.

This incompatibility between the working-class conquests and the requirements of finance capital in crisis, added to the resistance of workers with their organizations under different forms and rhythms in each country, leads to a double crisis: the current crisis of the so-called supranational institutions and the crisis of all national regimes and political forces which support them. In that way, the ‘contract’ signed with the political apparatuses since the end of World War II is being shattered, resulting firstly in a loss of ‘legitimacy’ of all parties, including the parties of the bourgeoisie. The point of departure for this breakdown of equilibrium is the disintegration of the Stalinist apparatus since the fall of the USSR in 1991. This has equally affected the social-democratic parties and led to the disappearance – in some countries – of any organized claim to represent the working class, as one can see in Italy. This process has lent itself to the emergence of new centrist groupings, such as Syriza or Podemos, which have proved, at this stage, unable to fill the void left by the traditional apparatuses. In these conditions, we see a good number of activists who want to remain faithful to the class struggle seeking recourse in the trade unions.

We cannot establish a strategy for construction without taking into account these phenomena, without taking into account the forms and national rhythms, in order to to determine an orientation that, this time, can be summed up in the exhortation: “More than ever, immersion in the class and its organisations!”

Any policy alien to the class, self-proclamatory, from would-be “teachers of lessons”, is already condemned by history and leads to a dead end.

Our guidelines

We place this debate, the need to develop a unified strategy based on the implementation of diversified national tactics, in the context of the conclusions that led us to the re-proclamation of the IVth International in June 1993. Remember what we said at the time: “To respond positively to the question: is it necessary to re-proclaim the IVth International, involves the progressive implementation of all the practical, political and organizational provisions. In the first place: strengthen the sections there where they are implanted in the class struggle, create, in every country where there is not yet a section, a core of the IVth International.”

Since the VIIIth Congress of April 2013, just three years ago, we have, in continuity with the campaigns against the Maastricht Treaty, carried out unified Europe-wide campaigns leading to the organization of several conferences. We will come back to that. The question for us today is not just to take stock of the past. But if the International Secretariat meetings of November 2014 and January 2015, the different papers – particularly the report on Europe which prepared this Congress and which was published in bulletin No. 16 of the Correspondence Committee – as well as the various articles in La Vérité/The Truth, drew our attention to the need to break with routine, to establish the true measure of our forces, of our implantation in the class and the place we occupy in the workers movement, this internal “revolution” was and remains essential in order to be able to act in the current upheaval.

It is no coincidence if this review provoked a reaction which led to the split by a minority of the French leadership, which sought to extend its operation to the international level and whose content is clearly liquidatory, as we have established during the past seven months and which we have just discussed in the previous item on our agenda.

If we remember what we decided at the re-proclamation in 1993 about the need to build sections, we must no doubt at least draw the conclusion that the results are far below our hopes. And yet, in a whole series of countries, we have gained a place in the labour movement and, without being determinant, we play a role that we were not able to play previously. It is obviously not a matter of imitating – in the bad sense – what and how we have done so in France, for example, but to use the place that we occupy to help in the construction of all our organizations. To give an example, one cannot understand the impact of the campaign in Spain for the defense of the 300 prosecuted trade unionists without the
help represented by dozens and dozens of trade union bodies which expressed their solidarity, resulting in a united front at the highest level – not forgetting that this campaign was sabotaged and boycotted by all the partisans of the liquidators, in Belgium, Italy, the United States, and that since the General Council of last March.

**Lessons to be learned from the conferences**

Without a doubt, the organization of international conferences at the global or continental level has represented and provided major achievements in the activity of the International, and not just in Europe. The Entente (International Liaison Committee or ILC – translator’s note) established in Barcelona in January 1991 was preceded by other initiatives, including the conference of April 1987 in Caracas. We have conducted joint campaigns for decades in Europe. And in the last period, we organized those of Cologne in 2011, Tarragona in 2013 and Paris in 2014, which represented major points of support. What has the discussion been about? Remember the discussions we had at the General Council of March 2015: does the objective condition to convene a new conference exist? Obviously, from a practical point of view, it was possible to convene a conference, but with whom and for what?

In the note on the situation in Europe, published in bulletin No.16, we spoke of the "many conferences that enabled us in the past to establish political links with militants from the main countries of Europe. Militants who, we must admit, failed for the most part to join in militant groupings capable of weighing upon developments under way in the field of the class struggle in their own countries."

Indeed, organizing a new conference to bring together in a meeting hall “fellow travellers” who are unable to enroll themselves in ongoing developments within their own country, what is the point? That would have led us to create a fiction bypassing the meticulous and conscious work of insertion in the working class in each country and the building of sections. From this point of view, we do not want to remain prisoners of the false reports produced in the past. We feel free to convene a European meeting. That is why the reorganization of the European bureau is a central issue if we want to be able to act accordingly. In saying this, we insist on the need to discuss, in each country, what initiatives the sections of the IVth International are able to take, under appropriate transitional forms, to meet the needs of the class struggle.

During the 51st Congress of the CCI (Courant Communiste Internationaliste, French section of the IVth International), in the final resolution which you have in your hands, the focus was put on the organization, at the initiative of the POI (Parti Ouvrier Indépendant, Independent Workers Party), of a national conference for the defense of the conquests of 1789-1936-1945. This is obviously not an historical question: the Hollande-Valls government, on behalf of finance capital, is currently waging a brutal offensive to dismantle all these conquests; at the same time, the government is “crying wolf”, supposedly to bar the road for the Front National and to prepare the elections of 2017, i.e. to conduct a fake debate on the need to rally behind Hollande, to try and divert the resistance of the workers and their organizations.

This requires us to specify in each country the forms that the political groupings on the line of transition, and the initiatives arising from them, must take. For example, as a result of the campaign for the defense of the 300 in Spain, the fight for the united front – which, to a good extent, was realized – has permitted us to arrange a meeting of the CATP coordination on February 27. This encounter could be a decisive step – while there is total uncertainty about the political situation, there is still no government in Spain, two months after the elections – to advance in the preparation of a national conference that would integrate the fight for the abandonment of the counter-reforms. This is the only fight that can forge unity of the working class in conjunction with the defense of democratic rights, and more directly with the right of peoples to self-determination, which frontally calls into question the very existence of the monopolarchical regime.

The German comrades – and they will intervene on this point – deal with the refugee issue from the point of view of the working class. This question cannot be dealt with in isolation, because it is the product of the policy of imperialism, and because finance capital is trying to use it to break the conquests of the German working class, and especially its collective agreements. The coalition government’s proposals to hire workers under conditions that break with the collective agreements in force are articulated with tear-jerking speeches about the wretched conditions of the migrants. All this to conclude, as in the case of some self-righteous social-democrats, with the proposal of “creating bearable living conditions in the refugee camps in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Kenya...” and the construction of housing corresponding to the Geneva Convention for refugees, but installed outside the borders of the European Union.

This policy seeks to divert the working class and its organisations from the fight for the defense of its conquests and the integration of refugees in the collective framework in force for any other worker.

**The European Union and supranational government**

There is a question to be clarified between us. We have said on several occasions, especially after the International Secretariat declaration of November 2014, that “the only force capable of preventing society from plunging into communal confrontation is the working-class gathered together on a class basis with its organizations”. The institutions of the European Union have since their constitution been seeking, through a policy of integration via the ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation), to foment
clashes between different peoples and to divide the class. In this way, the whole of the EU superstructure seeks, in the service of finance capital, to sharpen conflict between peoples.

It would be a denial of reality to accredit the idea that there exists an all-powerful supranational government. Firstly, this would be to ignore the fact that the 28 governments of the EU are not all in the same boat. And then it would also absolve each of the national governments of any responsibility. The deepening of the crisis reveals a simple question: it is the governments which represent the most important bourgeoisies and major financial groups (Germany and France) which largely determine the whole institution’s policy. And this, let us repeat, takes place in a situation of subordination with respect to American imperialism, which wants the German government to take charge of the “economic order” of Europe and for the French government to head its sub-contracted military operations.

The crisis of domination of US imperialism, unable to establish a clear line and to impose it, also provokes, as you know, contradictions at the highest level, turnabouts and changes of “alliance”, as seen in the war of destruction suffered by Syria and which further sharpens the contradictions between the different governments of the EU.

In this situation, it is absurd to think that the 28 countries of the European Union each follow the EU directives in the same way. It is just as absurd to think that the European institutions impose any measure on the Merkel and Hollande-Valls governments by force. There is obviously a game on their part, which is to use the EU to ensure the adoption of their policies, imposed by finance capital. But the Troika can allow itself to descend on Lisbon to super impose the “economic order” of Europe and for the French government to head its sub-contracted military operations.

The Schengen Treaty and the way it is now thrown into question, is a good example in this regard. The Schengen zone, consisting of 26 European states, of which four are not members of the EU, is an essential feature thereof. The declared objective is to promote harmonization of labour markets, i.e. their downward levelling within the EU. The current Schengen crisis, the reinstatement of internal borders between a number of countries, has exacerbated the crisis of implosion of the EU and demonstrates the impotence of states incapable of receiving a few million migrants. Obviously, decades of dismantling of public services reveal the true face of the EU, as well as the “solution” being pursued: the multiplication of communal conflicts in order to wreak havoc, as one of the forms of the extension of war.

The current discussions between the British government led by David Cameron and the European Union also raises all these contradictions. What is the substance of the debate? Of course, one should not minimize Cameron’s demand to be able to screen immigrant labour to use it against the whole of the working class, and thus to no longer cover fundamental social rights – a relatively new issue. For since Cameron was obliged in 2013 to pledge the holding of a “Brexit” referendum, the centre of discussion has become how to preserve the place of the City. Let’s remember that the City represents 14% of the British economy and nearly 2 million jobs. It is the leading financial centre in Europe and rivals New York for first place at the global level. However, the British bourgeoisie is in no way prepared to accept regulation by the European Central Bank or the constraints of the single currency. At a pinch, the bourgeoisie can accept to remain in the EU, but within a framework of coexistence between the single currency, the ECB and a completely deregulated City of London.

This poses a major issue from the point of view of the workers movement: the Labour Party and the TUC are mostly favorable to a continuation in the EU, on the basis of the argument according to which European directives might be a point of support for social rights in England. This position avoids the central issue: the fight for the repeal of the Thatcher anti-union laws of 1985 (before the establishment of the EU). In fact, it’s a surrender by British social-democracy in the face of this central question.

On the other hand, a fraction of the British bourgeoisie greatly prefers total independence from the EU. From the point of view of the working class, could an alliance between a fraction of political militants and trade union leaders and this ultra-reactor- tionary sector of the bourgeoisie, direct heirs of the Thatcher legislation, be favorable? The fight for a British section of the IVth International, now more than ever, cannot be separated from the struggle for the independence of the labour movement. One must not fall into the traps raised behind the debate on the European Union by an immediate fight against Cameron’s “reforms”.

Lessons from Greece

We said: “It is vital for sections of the IVth International to draw the lessons from the Greek crisis of the last 13 months since the election victory of Tsipras in January 25, 2015, and of these last five years”, i.e. since the first austerity plan for Greece. The Tsipras U-turn after the referendum of July 5 and the surrender he signed on July 13 had an impact throughout Europe. On the one hand, it was a shock for the whole Greek population, which saw the infliction of further attacks and suffering, and on the other hand, it opened a major crisis within Syriza and for all its allies in Europe.

Today, nothing is settled. The EU representatives claim that the Tsipras government is not implementing the counter-reforms to which it is committed. This has inevitably sparked new mobilizations, which show that even if the working class has suf-
ffered major blows, it has still not been defeated. But we must answer the following question: how is it possible that the huge mobilizations of the Greek working class and people have failed to roll back by one inch the murderous plans imposed by finance capital? It’s a question of the survival of the Greek people, to which must be added the suffering of the millions of migrants who are crossing the country. We have said it: the fate of Greece is a warning to all the peoples of Europe. We must draw from these last five years a first conclusion: the leaders of the main organizations have preserved the centre of economic power. Is it not there that the problems are concentrated? Is it not there that the break with the European Union, which is a break with the power of finance capital, is concentrated?

In 2015, during the first six months of the Syriza government, a veritable Popular Front government, not one iota of the banking system was affected, allowing the flight of capital to continue, protecting the large landowners of the Orthodox Church and the ship-owners. And currently, a budget has been arrived at for an army in the service of NATO. But the political forces that supported the Syriza government during six months lied to the people about the supposed negotiations with the EU. Verbally, they were ultra-radical in their attacks on the EU... while at the same time sparing the real positions of finance capital in Greece.

Everything was done to absolve the responsibility of the Syriza government. Including our own press: read the articles by Dominique Ferré who supported “in a critical way” the Syriza government, stressing the (indeed real) responsibility of Pasok and the KKE, but writing as if there was no government (see Informations Ouvrières No. 358, July 2, 2015). The worst impostor in the Tsipras government was undoubtedly Varoufakis. Taking stock of his participation in the government, he “denounced” the European institutions regarding “the failure of the reform program, which we were the only ones able to make the Greeks accept.”

It is clear that today the fate of the Greek working class much depends on the resistance at European level in different countries, but the construction of a Greek section of the IVth International must fully integrate the lessons of the current impasse.

This leads us to conclude that we failed in what we had decided to do and to put in place regarding Greece, and in particular the decision to implant ourselves in Greece. Let’s remember that at the end of 2011, the IS had discussed the need to open an office in Athens. For years, the two former comrades designated for this work limited themselves to making back and forth trips to Athens, taking support from the miraculous presence, in a city of secondary importance, of a comrade from the German section. The refusal to establish an office in Athens, which was criticized in all meetings of the IS, had a political content: an adaptation first to the policy of Syriza, and then to the Popular Front government. The limit was reached at the General Council in March 2015, during which the two former members of the IS simply refused to give an account of their mandate. However, as we learned later, they were already engaged in the liquidators’ operation.

**Advance towards a unified strategy**

To do this, it is obvious that we must rely on the activity of the main sections and on their experience. First, let’s consider the French section, and on another level, the Spanish and German sections. This also forms the basis of the reorganization of the European bureau.

We must therefore avoid any abstract appeal against war and exploitation. We will have the opportunity to discuss the “Mumbai conference” operation, but we have to fully reappropriate our past experience, without forgetting the lessons learned by Lenin in the struggle of the Bolshevik fraction in the Zimmerwald Conference and the point of support that it furnished for the constitution of the Third International.

How to lead the fight against the war in Europe today? No general and abstract formulations, but the fight against every imperialist government, will count as the basis for all internationalism. If we articulate this in Spain today, the central question which provides the link between social emancipation and democratic emancipation is the existence of military bases there, under the control of the United States, which represent a direct threat against North Africa, and in particular Algeria. Therefore, this means pointing out the responsibility of the Spanish government itself, which thereby participates in the imperialist effort.

To help all sections to develop their own policy, starting from the reorganization of the European bureau, we can take a few steps. In particular, nourishing the political exchanges through correspondence bulletins, which must be the centre of collective political elaboration. Secondly, we have the possibility and the information available to publish a fortnightly “Letter of European IVth International activists”, which would allow an exchange of information and experiences in the class struggle.

It is within this framework that we must help, even with our modest means, each organization to develop a publication of its own expression, as has begun to be done in England, and to specify in each country how the IVth International is expressed independently, not limiting ourselves to publishing and distributing La Vérité/The Truth. The next IS, which will be elected by the Congress, will examine the possibility of organizing a summer camp of cadres of European sections of the IVth International, to continue the debates of this Congress and to draw up a balance sheet of what will have been achieved in the meantime.

Andreu Camps
Comrades,

I will not repeat what was said regarding the general context of regression of civilisation due to the survival of a regime based on the private ownership of the means of production, a regime which has run out of steam.

I note only that, concerning the colonial and semi-colonial or dominated (oppressed) countries – in short, those countries which are not imperialist because they are subjected to imperialism – the current situation differs from that of the previous congress of the IVth International, in 2013. At that time, even after the revolutions and uprisings in North Africa, we had to explain that no, the so-called “emerging” countries were not going to save capitalism in crisis.

Today, all of those countries are in open crisis, and not only because of the falling price of oil and other raw materials, or of the part-cancellation of the industrial localisations of the previous decades and of an imminent increase in the FED’s (Federal Reserve, the US central bank) interest rates, but because they are fully involved in the current collapse of capitalism, which is being strangled by relations of production which have for the last century become unviable.

The BRICS grouping of five countries – the acronym used to be BRIC – a speculative investment placed in Brazil, Russia, India and China, to which later, for political reasons, was added an S for South Africa, was conceived of as a “bloc”. This bloc was unable to serve as the driving force of a capitalist recovery, for these five countries were subjected (each with important differences) to a market in recession, even if they could benefit relatively from speculation in commodities during the first stage of the crisis of the past decade.

Today, the talk concerning the BRICS on the financial market has been replaced by bets on which of them will go bankrupt first. Successive lists of the “fragile five” interchange Russia, Brazil and Turkey too. Finally, as the Wall Street Journal said recently, last year for the first time these last decades, over 500 billion dollars flowed out from, and not into, the “emerging countries”, and this long before the FED’s increase in rates (once again postponed, a factor of crisis too). China, the former BRICS star, is of such alarming concern for the banks that The Economist, the review of the financial markets, has called for the country to back-pedal and reimpose controls on capital flows, for fear, as the review said, that the present capital outflows from China “bring an ill-wind and cause general panic”, over and above the country’s social problems, strikes and revolts which, by destabilizing China, threaten the whole of surrounding Asia.

It is on the back of the workers that the burden of the crisis is thrown.

In its annual report, the International Labor Organization (ILO) records an increase of 2.3 million unemployed workers in 2015, on top of an increase of 27 million between 2007 and 2014, making a total of 200 million unemployed workers worldwide. The ILO stated categorically: “This time, the blame is on the emerging countries”, and it pointed to Latin America in particular because of its size, although until recently some of its governments had been held up as an example of “good policies” in fighting this scourge.

The anti-imperialist united front and the working class

The failed system needs to break the resistance of the working class and peoples in order to survive. For its part, the working class needs to raise up the oppressed nations against imperialism in order to overcome the crisis and to emancipate itself.
The anti-imperialist united front in the “backward” or “underdeveloped” countries proceeds from the same orientation as the workers united front in the “developed” countries. Its aim is, in the struggle for power, for a government of workers and peasants, to win over a majority of the working class. This is related, in the backward countries, with the need to win over a majority of the oppressed peoples. I stress this point because reading a text produced by the liquidators which imposes so many conditions for the realisation of a united front in action with petit-bourgeois or even bourgeois sectors, gives the impression that it’s a kind of sentence of conditional freedom, in view of the huge amount of reservations aimed at preventing the offender from repeating his crime, his temptation supposedly outweighing his lucidity.

This is not the case with us, for we are supporters of an audacious policy of anti-imperialist united front in order to to build the IVth International.

Our starting point is that the “national” bourgeoisie, having on the whole become the “comprador” of finance capital, is incapable of achieving the minimum of national and democratic tasks required to establish a sovereign nation and begin satisfying the oppressed and exploited masses’ most urgent demands. We learned from Pierre Lambert that our political and organizational independence – on a line of rupture – is a prerequisite in both the workers united front and the anti-imperialist united front.

The fight for independent workers parties within a united front policy is, for that reason, a vital necessity for the advance and final victory of the working class and a permanent objective, while united front agreements with sectors of the bourgeoisie will very often be “one-off” and can never be more than that.

And I do say independent labour parties or workers parties, and not “people’s parties” or parties of the “oppressed layers” or of “minority communities” (native peoples... etc). All these formulations have figured in debates, even within sections or groups of the IVth International. But among us they are the result of a certain confusion between the struggle for a class-based party (a labor or a workers party) and the tactics or strategy of a legitimate united front with other oppressed layers, in which the united front serves the aim of constructing a class-based party.

This class-based party, an independent workers party is, for us, a transition towards the IVth International. That is to say, while fully respecting other possible components, a policy aimed at building sections of the IVth International in all countries.

Another precision: in a backward colonial or semi-colonial country, when we speak of a united front in terms of power (not only regarding trade-unions which are, as we know, an elementary form of the workers united front), we speak then of an anti-imperialist united front.

The united front against imperialism and its local agents, to phrase it more tangibly, is correct, but let us not confuse that with an “anti-capitalist front” – or with a front “of the working people against the bourgeoisie and imperialism”, which comes down to the same thing. This would be a radical phrase in words, but bound for failure right away, because it would be unable to attract the nation’s oppressed and exploited majority, of which the proletariat has absolute need.

That is how Pierre Lambert dealt with the matter in the commission on the national question at the 4th congress of the IVth International. The resolution broached the anti-imperialist front “on specific objectives” (privatisations, Constituent assembly, etc...) with sectors of the state bureaucracy, with the military, with the petite-bourgeoisie, even with bourgeois sectors, if they are clearly opposed to imperialism. At that time, the practical question in view was the emergence of the Chavez government, a kind of phenomenon which was to repeat itself under various forms in other South American countries as a product of the action of the masses.

In the present situation in Algeria, the current tactics of our comrades there relate to the same anti-imperialist united front, when it comes to defending the 51% government holding in State enterprises and opposing treaties of association with the European Union and so on, and also regarding the prominent place that the workers party must occupy on these matters. Such an analogy is possible.

**Defending the nation against imperialism**

We learned from Trotsky that the world economy is a powerful reality, and not the mere addition of national units. National specificities exist, but as an integral part of unequal and combined development, not as a sum of “exceptions”. In that sense, the relative backwardness of some countries in regard to other (imperialist) ones is a constituent part of the functioning of the world market as such, and not some remnant from a remote past. This helps us understand the limit of the so-called BRICS bank (it only has a capital of one billion dollars at its disposal, on a market where several billion billions are exchanged), which is not going to, and cannot, create another market or escape the existing market rules.

**The anti-imperialist united front is indispensable to the proletarian revolution**

That is nothing new. At the Communist International’s IVth congress in the 1920s, Lenin and Trotsky had already harshly condemned as “opportunism of the worst kind” the attitude of leaders who sought to “exclusively defend the interest of the working class”, which would discredit them in the eyes of the broad masses, rendering them powerless to make revolution in a backward, colonial or semi-colonial country.

A century on, this has not changed. Otherwise one would have to conclude that we are dealing with some new super-imperialist stage of capitalism without contradictions, as if the national question was no longer posed in the backward countries.

A current example is provided by Ecuador.

The founding of a Labor party is being discussed in a forum of four trade union confederations named
"Labor Parliament". Without wishing to be fetishist, in the present case that name is not neutral. But this is no independent workers party; it is more a stratagem by the bureaucratic leadership of the confederations with a view to negotiating with the regime of President Correa, a bonapartist leadership of the Chavez-style, in short (probably with an eye to the next elections). It is a party built from “the top down”, with for the meanwhile no “grassroots” base. Quite clearly, this is a symptom of the pressing need for a class-based party, and quite clearly our section has to bear this in mind in its tactics to build itself within this process.

But this means tackling head-on the problems, such as the obstacle represented by the platform of this Labor party, which begins with a compilation of urgent trade union demands, almost all in the public sector – generally correct, and some in opposition to government measures – but scandalously neglecting the problems of other important and oppressed layers of the Ecuadorian people (peasants, natives, youth, etc...) who are in the majority, as well as other questions of the oppressed nation’s life (the dollarized economy, for instance).

As we can see, the fight for a worker’s party cannot be reduced to diplomatic relations with the trade union bureaucracy. At the same time, it would be wrong, infantile, to conceive of the Labor party as an instrument to be used against the trade union bureaucracy regarded as a bloc, when as is likely the course of this process will divide it. The bureaucracy is faced with the threat of disappearance as a result of class clashes, and a part of it may or must resist, even in an imperfect and clumsy form. It would be unintelligent to ignore it in the fight for a workers party.

Likewise as regards the united anti-imperialist front and the united worker front which nourishes the fight for the workers’ party. These are not separate phases or subjects because, in the end, the objective of the united front is none other than bringing together the conditions for the taking of political power, for a government of workers and peasants, for rebuilding the State on a new basis (essentially, councils, planned economy).

We have observed this harmful split between the united anti-imperialist front and the united workers front in the crisis of the Dilma government over the last year. The Stalinists and the Lulist apparatus have sought to separate the democratic aims of the fight (against the impeachment putch, an objective of anti-imperialist type) from the specific class objectives of the moment (defence of labour rights reviled by government minister Levy, the subject of a workers united front, as it happens, on the pretext that this would “weaken” Dilma). Just as bad have been the leftists of the PSOL, who acted in a similar way while giving an opposite signal: reluctant or refusing to defend Dilma against the threat of impeachment (on the pretext of giving priority to the battle against the economic policy, so as not to “strengthen” Dilma).

On the other hand, important as are the united anti-imperialist and united workers fronts, integrated in the struggle for a workers and peasants government, and however much closer our collaboration with an anti-imperialist leadership might become, this cannot exempt us from the construction of the IVth International (construction of sections through regrouping within an independent workers party as a transition).

That is also why it is a political aberration that the cult of Chavez and of chavism has led, in the United Secretariat and the International Marxist Tendency of Alan Woods, to support for a “Vth International” announced by Chavez in the previous decade. This follow-my-leader attitude was, in this case, the exact opposite of the audacity necessary for an independent policy based upon the united front and, in particular, the anti-imperialist united front.

Finally, a leadership recognized by the masses, when it is obliged by the general conditions and the pressure of the masses to go further than it would like, does not for all that change its nature – petit-bourgeois, bureaucratic, or even bourgeois and counter-revolutionary, as the case may be.

But firm adherence to principles should not be confused with some sort of abstract doctrinaire intransigence, which would constitute an obstacle to our intervention as a fighting organization in the living processes currently under way.

Thus it was that Trotsky supported the nationalization of the railways by Cardenas in Mexico in the 1930, and the guarantee of it. And as for agrarian reform, knowing what was at stake, he fought against insistence at the time for the collectivization of agriculture in a country that did not dispose of the industrial means to support it ("it lacks capital"), because, as he recalled, in Mexico, contrary to Russia, there had not yet been a socialist revolution and that it was necessary to attract capital, etc.

Audacity

Today, audacity in the united anti-imperialist front, if you will allow me to give my opinion, is still more necessary than in the 1930s, in order to exploit the situation created in Latin America, whose explosive potential is enormous. I am referring to the dead-end in half a dozen countries on the continent during the last decade of so-called “progressive” governments which carried with them the illusions of the masses, relying at times directly on their organizations.

On this point, the comrade is right. He has highlighted the importance of the resistance to the free-trade treaties with which imperialism, even after the failure of the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) in 2002-2003, insists upon in order to reshape and integrate local economies in a relationship of reinforced subordination, through bilateral free-trade agreements, on the road to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a project which has still to be implemented and which is meeting resistance even in the United States, mainly in the trade union movement.

But the free-trade question is a valuable criterion to clarify another question raised by another comrade. Yes, because I will agree not to consider in the same way some “progressive” governments, such as the first Bachelet government in Chile, which supported the Iraq
invasion by the United States and the free-trade bilateral treaty, as other so-called “progressives” governments (I am not sure about the current Bachelet government, which has a different composition and has carried out some different measures, but the discussion will clarify that).

It is precisely in the relations with imperialism – “in the international arena” as Trotsky used to say – “that the positions of the different forces are clarified”, and on this issue of free-trade, one may distinguish which are the so-called “progressive” governments. According to this criterion, you must not count among them the countries of the so-called “Pacific Arc”, which have bilateral free-trade agreements with the United States, or the successive governments of Mexico, Colombia and Peru, as well as Chile, governments generally composed of different parties. The said “progressive” governments which refused to sign such treaties are those of Ecuador, Bolivia, Uruguay, Brazil and Venezuela, as well as Argentina (case somewhat apart after the “argentinazo” of 2001), with governments composed of one party or political leaderships which have put up a partial “resistance”.

If we look at this more closely, we will see that it is generally the same governments which – under the pressure of the action of the masses at their peak in the region at this time – tried, without breaking with imperialism, to continue to control the masses up to the limits of a renegotiation of the terms of imperialist domination. And this is where the crucial question of the control of oil and gas exploitation (with the exception of non-producing Uruguay) arises.

But the benefits obtained were limited — there has not been any expropriation or general nationalization, but an increase in State participation – and these have rapidly declined with the recent deterioration of international prices.

As a result, the existence of a certain margin of maneuver available to governments has practically come to an end (other exported raw materials have also tended to fall in price). From there, the reactionary character of any government policy which stands at the boundary of the market is highlighted as never before in the eyes of the broad masses, which have developed a certain particular class consciousness in the past decade. This means that they are now even less willing to tolerate from these governments measures, against which they were already resisting in the 1980s and 1990s when they came from openly pro-imperialist governments.

Points of support

It is not for all that the situation today ceases to be difficult – there are a deterioration in living standards, setbacks and concessions by governments, the exploitation of corruption scandals with which to attack organizations... But insofar as, overall, the situation is “desperate, but not lost”, there are still points of support, including institutional ones, which could allow the reactionary pro-imperialist offensive aimed at regaining direct control of the situation and of the local market to be repulsed, through measures taken using government positions and under the impulse of mass organizations.

But now, the decisions to be adopted should be genuine reforms, and affect property relations (agrarian reform; industrial – certain groups, renationalization; financial - centralization of currency exchange, control of remittances, de-dollarization; urban property too); this in order to improve the living conditions of the masses, since there is no more “trade surplus” to finance them.

Either these reforms will, in the end, lead towards a process of revolution. Or these unfinished, or only barely sketched out, reforms will become easy targets of the threatening counter-revolution.

There’s no other way.

The problem is that the political forces carried into government – petty-bourgeois, bureaucrats or bourgeois – were not and will not be revolutionary; as we have said already, even when pushed to take a step forward, they do not change their nature. The major advance towards a government of workers and peasants, the road to a break with imperialism, will be the initiative of independent forces which, in conjunction with the IVth International, break away from the apparatuses in crisis, regroup and differentiate themselves through the class struggle.

The case of the Cuban State is exemplary from the point of view of the obstacles that exist in Latin America, regardless of our position of unconditional defense of the revolution’s conquests, which are the basis of the formation of this State.

While “progressive” governments sketched out partial or hesitant steps on the road to emancipation, the Castro leadership has persisted in seeking a way to open the market and for privatization and investment by imperialist enterprises, involving the lay-off of thousands of workers, etc. And when these so-called progressives reached the current dead-end, the United States of Obama celebrated the resumption of diplomatic relations with Cuba, whose isolation had become unbearable on the continent, making its reinstatement in the OAS (Organization of American States) a factor of defense of the existing order – including the “war against terrorism” – as can be seen with the highly active Cuban advisers in Venezuela and other countries, who zealously recommend the same search for agreements with the bourgeois opposition and imperialism.

Today, the governments of Venezuela, Brazil, as well as Algeria and other countries, each with a type of relationship between these governments and the mass organizations, must be the object of an anti-imperialist front policy, which will not be identical, and may even be very different in the way of addressing them, always on concrete issues.

This is possible in Brazil, in particular, because Dilma has not fallen. This is largely due to the action of the CUT (Unified Workers Central), linked to the victorious resistance against the “adjustment” policy through national strikes by bank- and oil-workers (even if other categories suffered more). And the action of the CUT alongside other movements and the youth has led to a modification of the PT (Workers Party) itself in re-
lation to the government coalition, which however remains in crisis.

Dilma has not fallen. The one who fell was her minister Levy, who could have represented some kind of bridge for an “entente” with the market. This now places on the agenda the abandon of the “adjustment” policy that remains as a legacy. But under better conditions than before for workers. The fall of Levy at the end of last year cannot be separated from the demonstration by 100,000 protestors in Sao Paulo in December against the putsch and the adjustment, and which we expressed through watchwords which met with an echo, supplanting the demonstrations of the putchist reaction of throughout the year.

I am convinced that we must add to this balance sheet, in this regard, our own balance sheet, in this case the financial campaign conducted during the last three months, which reached 100% of an ambitious goal (20% above last year’s). I emphasise this point, because there can be no class policy without organization and there can be no independent class organization without financial independence (basis of a construction policy, recruitment, statutes, etc.).

And we didn’t know, even until very shortly before, if we would reach the figure of 100,000 protestors with their organizations: this was, in fact, a united front action (with our commitment), aimed at blocking the road for the putchist rightwing. Any more than we knew if we would collect 100% of our financial goal in the allotted time. This is the positive balance sheet of our “audacious” orientation in this period. This does not prove that we are totally right, but I believe that this indicates that we are on the right path.

Going on from there, as I said, nothing is resolved in Brazil. What is at stake is the destruction of the PT (Workers Party), which incorporates the offensive aimed at mass organizations like the CUT, MST and others. Today, it is clear that, despite the disastrous reaction of throughout the year.

Of course, in the final analysis, we do not have the strength to prevent the destruction of the PT. But, besides the fact that we are not a neutral factor in an outcome that we do not know in advance, the main problem is to build the section in this battle for the defense of the organizations, to build the IVth International (on the line of “transition”, which incorporates defense of the PT).

The ground is there. The comrades have been informed of the impact of the Manifesto of CUT trade unionists on the PT congress in June. There was no explicit “out with Levy” formula, but the plenary meeting “recognized” it and expressed it through the cries of half of the mass of delegates. Then, in October, this call made its way to the congress of the CUT and spread, until a few weeks later it became the unanimous chorus of a meeting of PT trade unionists, heralding the fall of Levy in December.

It is on this ground that we have the responsibility, as a section, to do what no-one will do in our place: intervene decisively in accordance with a layer of activists, cadres and trade unionists, for the success of the National Encounter of Dialogue and “Pétiste” action (ENDAP) in March. The DAP is a grouping struggling for the independent workers party which we want to structure in “grass-roots groups” with the motto “Act like the PT acted”. In this framework we are discussing a platform of demands corresponding to the situation.

At the moment, this is the instrument that corresponds with a policy of construction of the IVth International. It is through this that we want to respond to the challenge launched a year ago by the International Secretariat to review our organizations in order to launch ourselves in decisive sectors of the organized working class, at a time when the survival of capitalism is dragging the world into war on the pretext of a “war against terrorism”.

**Time is running out**

Yes, for us too, time is running out, even if for now it does not take the shape of the “war against terrorism”. As on other continents, there are “anti-terrorist” laws passed even by so-called “progressive” governments in Argentina, Ecuador and Brazil, for example, and the announced social and economic decisions can only lead to social disintegration.

In Mexico, in particular, a war-type of situation exists, “war against narco-trafficking”, in this case, with the same objective of terrorizing and fragmenting the resistance against unbridled exploitation.

In Venezuela, another type of conflict is looming: imperialist sabotage to regain control and to destroy social conquests – like the labour law (LOTT) – after its agents obtained a majority in the National Assembly. This can lead to different scenarios of explosion, if there is not a quick response at government level. This could include border conflicts fabricated by imperialism, up to an internal “civil war” in a direct dispute for government power.

And again Haiti, where the insistence of imperialism (Core Group of “friendly” countries led by the United States, France, etc., in which Brazil participates) upon imposing a rigged election, ultimately boycotted by the majority of candidates, has created a dangerous vacuum – as of Sunday, his mandate has ended and there is no president. Confrontations could evolve into a war with the Minustah (UN military mission) being called upon to impose order through bloodshed. For our part, and in talking with the comrades of the Trotskyist group there, we are helping to formulate a peaceful anti-imperialist way out, a transitional government supported by the live forces of the nation, “a Haitian solution for Haiti”, with the task of providing public services and handing over power to a sovereign Constituent Assembly, elected within 60 days, with neither external finance nor interference (Organization of American States, Core Group...).

In conclusion, this report had no claim to give an account for all oppressed countries or even those of the American continent, but was intended to broaden the debate and to develop it subsequently.

In the case of the Americas, we plan to establish a continental school for cadres this year; which will not
be a regional mini-congress, but a training activity to help the development of section leaderships. And until then, we are going to continue the discussion of initiatives, possibly specific to the continent, which will arise in this new situation which is not that of the 1980s and 1990s. Because it is marked by the contradiction that traverses the different political forces subjected to the imperialist offensive – many of them in governments acting against the rights and conquests that the masses have obtained in recent years.

It is there that lies the privileged ground on which to regroup workers and youths, and trade union activists in the first place, for the construction of the IVth International.

João Alfredo Luna
Debate-Meeting on the report of the IXth World Congress of the IVth Internationale (February 10, 2016)

Organized by the French section of the IVth Internationale (communist internationalist current of the Independent workers’ Party)

We publish the report of the debate-meeting which was held on Wednesday 10th February at 18h30, just after the completion of the proceedings of the IXth World Congress, with delegates from several countries (1). This meeting organized by the French section of the IVth Internationale with more than 300 participants was a success. La Vérité/The Truth has decided to publish large extracts of it as part of this special issue reporting the works of the world congress.

Presentation by Andreu Camps

First of all, in the name of the international secretariat elected in the IXth Congress of the IVth Internationale, I thank you for coming tonight in large numbers. As you know the IXth Congress has just taken place. It was a victorious Congress. We have overcome and moved beyond the liquidating crisis which threatened the IVth Internationale. It was our politics which was at stake, our grounding in the labour movement. The workers’ united front, democratic centralism, the place of our newspaper, the sections of the IVth Internationale, our politics in dominated countries... all that was threatened! But it all remains standing and will remain standing! The decisions that we have made during the congress convey that it is not only a congress of resistance, but a congress of advancement.

I have the pleasure to introduce the tribune: comrade Lybon Mabasa, member of the international secretariat and leader of the Azanian section, comrade Alberto Saucedo, leader of the Venezuelan section; comrade Julio Tura, member of the direction of the Brazilian section, comrade Lucien Gauthier, member of the direction of the French section, comrade Mohamed, member of the direction of the Tunisian section and myself, member of the direction of the Spanish section.

Oral intervention of Lyon Mabasa (Azania)

Good evening comrades,

I’m not going to speak for a very long time. I’ll make this comment that, of most of the congresses of the IVth, I have often been given the privilege of being one of the people who report back.

To start my talk, let me give you a little story my teacher at high school once told me. He told me a story of a very experienced professor who was travelling on a little boat with just an ordinary worker. So the professor, to show his great knowledge, asks this poor worker: “do you know psychology?” And the worker says “no”. He says “well a quarter of your life is gone”. He says: “do you know philosophy?” And the poor worker says “no”. So he says: “half of your life is gone. What about anthropology?”, And he says “I don’t know what you are talking about”. He says “three quarter of your life is gone”. But just at the time when he was saying that, something hit the boat. And the worker could see that the professor was panicking. So he asked the professor a simple question: “do you know swimminology?” And when the professor didn’t answer, he said: “well, the rest of your life is gone!”

The point I’m making is that having a lot of knowledge is good, but having useful knowledge is better.

We come from a very important congress of the 4th International. We did not go into a lot of polemics and debates, but we discussed that which was needed to discuss in order to chart our way forward. May be we didn’t know psychology, we didn’t know philosophy, we didn’t know anthropology, but indeed we established the principle of knowing swimminology in order to face the challenges that are posed to us by imperialism.
We know it has been a difficult situation, first in the French section of the IVth International, but also what has happened in the French section of the IVth International has had far-reaching effects in all the sections of the IVth International.

It would have been easy for us to go into very plural and empty debates on a lot of things and not do anything in a manner in which we should go forward. But, comrades, I can assure you that that which needed to be discussed at a congress of the IVth International in the past three days was discussed.

We did not say it is going to be easy. We did not simplify the struggle of the working class in France, in Aztlan, or any other country. We are convinced that the challenges are going to be there. But we are willing to rise up and face those challenges.

In conclusion, be reassured that your organisation, your world party is still in good hands. And we raise the flag of the International, that only the International can unite the human race, can unite the workers.

**Oral intervention of Julio Turra (Brazil)**

I salute my dear comrades of the French section on behalf of the comrades of the Brazilian section. Indeed, as the comrades already said, we have just held an important congress, I would even say a historical congress from the point of view that we have put off a liquidating attack which was trying to destroy the French section and the IVth International. We have done that because we have fought for decades to overcome the situation prevalent in Trotsky’s time – and as Pierre Lambert always reminded in international discussions – to overcome the situation in which we were «exiles in our own class». That is the force which fended off the liquidating onslaught which, for us, now belongs to the past. We have to look to the future. We have to consider the tasks of construction of the IVth International in the organizations of the labour movement to tackle the destructive offensive of imperialism. But the fundamental condition to repel this liquidating center which has arisen among us was, I remind this again, our immersing in the labour movement in each country and at the international level.

In my country, Brazil – you are conscious of it – this latest year 2015 was a year of permanent crisis. A crisis at all levels: economical crisis, political, social crisis. And the year 2014 ended up with a new mandate – a fourth successive mandate – to a candidate to the PT (workers’ party) candidate for president of the Republic. There were two mandates of Lulla, then a first mandate of Dilma Roussef, and, in October 2014, Dilma won, with a small margin against the rights, the fourth mandate of the PT. But, as you also know, the Workers’ Party is not the seventh wonder of the world! On the contrary it is filled with contradictions. The fundamental contradiction is that its base remains a labour base even if the upper levels are more and more aligned with sections of the bourgeoisie and have capitulated several times under pressures of imperialism.

The situation, in my country, is that, in January 2015, with the coming into power of Dilma, all the expectations which her electoral victory had raised among the working class and the popular masses clashed against the first measures of this government, elected by the masses, which tries to implement an adjustment plan which can compare with adjustment plans applied in Greece, in Spain, in Portugal… and even in France. These expectations then collided with the reality of the government’s policy, which attacks its own electoral base. And, of course, the right takes advantage of this situation to launch a major offensive against the PT, against the government, uncovering failings and financial wrongdoings by the government, to obtain the «impeachment» as one says there, that’s to say try to put an end to Dilma’s mandate. From this moment on, the PT was paralyzed.

But the CUT (Central Trade Union Confederation) which is controlled by the same political stream as that which controls the PT but is an authentic trade union, with the contribution of the Brazilian section of the IVth International, with the contribution of the Trotskyists, was the axis of resistance of the labour and popular movement against the attempt of power grab by the pro-imperialist right in Brazil. It was not easy, it even was very difficult, but our Brazilian comrades in the same combat process against the right have played a major role to make the CUT, whereas it was declaring «Hands off the popular mandate given to the PT government!», demand the change of the government’s policy because it was threatening the labour and social rights… After a year of ceaseless fighting, the right would call thousands of people into the streets and we, the CUT, the Landless Workers’ Movement (MST), the National Union of Students, demonstrated with hundreds of thousands to stop the blows of the right and to demand in the same time a change in the government’s policy. Thus we reached a situation in which Dilma was left President of Brazil thanks to demonstrations organized by the CUT along with the other components of the fight to the Brazilian people. And finally the government made the decision to expel the minister of Economy who was the main representative of the policy of imperialism within the Dilma government.

The year 2016 thus begins with a situation where the new minister of Finances seems to apply the same policy as his predecessor; But he will find in front of him a strong mobilization of the masses, with the CUT at its head, which even provoked the PT’s distancing itself from the government’s policy. Even the PT, which was paralyzed for a time at the beginning begins to distance himself and to demand from the government a change of policy. All this was very important. But for the liquidating center, for those «ex-comrades» who try to create trouble, to divide our ranks, the political activity of the Brazilian section of the IVth International was clearly a capitulation in front of the policy of the Dilma government.

Contrary to reality when we have launched all our forces to regroup the labour movement, the popular movement, to stop the attacks of the right and in the same time to change the government’s policy for those «comrades» I, Julio Turra, am a traitor! A capitulator! I supposedly made agreements with the corrupt bureaucracy of the CUT to avoid the major questions… Everyone should have been denounced! We should
have put forward positions which would have cut us from the mainstream of the class, which was looking for a fulcrum to resist the offensive of the right and realign the government on the bases of its own demands. It is not a personal attack against me. It is, in fact, very revealing of what is the policy of this liquidating group of the IVth Internationale. It denounces not only Julio in Brazil but also the comrades in France who have positions in the trade unions’ movement; it accuses the Algerian PT by telling that its leaders capitulate in front of Bouteflika. They don’t see, they don’t want to see that it is the imperialist offensive seeking to destroy the nations, to destroy the peoples’ sovereignty and to destroy the gains of the labour movement which is at stake, that one cannot build the IVth Internationale separately from the fight of the laboring people for its own survival. It is in this that this group reveals its parasitic nature: by its propensity to deliver voluminous speeches, intellectual constructions, to try to explain everything... except what the IVth Internationale was founded for: help the working class resist the offensive of imperialism, help the working class to preserve the independence of its organizations.

Of course, in no country in the world is the IVth International at the head of large mass organizations, but we are recognized, in France, as well as in Brazil, in Maghreb, in Spain and elsewhere, and our objective is to be recognized in every country where there exist groups and sections of the IVth Internationale as integrated part of the labor movement. « We do not have, as Marx used to say, interests distinct from those of the working class ». We are side by side with our class comrades to beat the enemy, and the enemy is the bourgeoisie, the imperialism! That is why we implement the antiparliamentary front strategy in countries like Brazil. That is why we implement the workers’ united front, and we do not constitute the workers’ united front with people who think as we do, on the contrary, otherwise we would simply have to recruit everybody in the IVth International! The workers’ united front, we build it with the labour leaders as they are, to keep the unity of the working class in the fight! And this is what we contributed to Brazil, even if we are not the leaders of the CUT. But we are recognized as a component of the labor movement and our policy has a definite influence on the orientation of the main trade union organization of Brazil and one of the strongest in the world.

I believe, comrades, that this congress, the IXth world Congress, as I said at the beginning, is very important historically, because it has reassessed the political bases with which we have re-proclaimed the IVth Internationnal in 1993. Comrade Lambert used to say: « We are no longer exiles in our own class! ».

We have to root ourselves ever more in the working class and its organizations, for it is the only way to stop the devastating offensive of imperialism and to prepare for the counter-offensive of the working class to beat up our enemies and build the IVth International. Long live the IVth International!

Oral Intervention of Lucien Gauthier (international secretariat)

You have heard a comrade from Venezuela, a comrade from South Africa, a comrade from Tunisia, a comrade from Brazil, each of them, with his peculiarity, spoke the same language, the language of the IVth Internationale. Not that of blabla, that of speeches and communiqués, the gang gage of those who are open to dialogue, to root in the working class, to tie in with sections of the working class to build the revolutionary party.

This IXth Congress of the IVth Internationale, comrades, has been a turning point. Not only, as Julio said we have defeated, as we already did in the 51st Congress of the French section, the liquidating offensive against the IVth Internationale, but unfettered of this parasitic cyst which diverted us from serious political discussions, this IXth Congress allowed us to put into practice what we had decided a year ago: get out of the routine and open the discussion freely among ourselves, on « How to build and reinforce the sections of the IVth International? ». You have in your hands the address adopted by this congress. It will be distributed in all the countries where there are groups of the IVth Internationale. It will be translated, distributed in an organized way, with on objective: to recruit in the IVth Internationale. Recruit in every country, to recruit in all the sections of the IVth Internationale and, in France, recruit in the French section of the IVth Internationale.

Comrades, in this congress we answered one question: how to recruit in the IVth International? By rooting ourselves in the labor movement, within the working class and the youth. The sectors in which we can recruit are the sectors of the class which, today, in this global political situation, try to resist the imperialist offensive. We are on the eve of a new turn in the situation. Comrade Mohamed talked of the risk of war in the Maghreb area. If a war was to start in this area, the consequences would be immediate here, in France and in Europe. The war in Syria has already begun to spread in Europe with millions of refugees, with the fact that there are more Syrians refugees in Europe and in the Middle East than there remains in Syria. A people is chased, a people is crushed, a people is oppressed, a people is massacred because those are the needs of imperialism. Imperialism is war, it is barbarity, imperialism is destruction! Hence, the outcome for humanity is the expropriation of capital, it is the expropriation of the expropriators. Of course, one will say that it is a remote perspective... This will be settled by history itself. This fight on the line of the expropriation of capital conducts and organizes the daily work of revolutionary activists.

Because we are for the expropriation of capital, we are for the class independence if the labour movement. We are for the defense of class organizations because there are antagonistic classes in this society. Because we reject the national union, because we refuse to link the labour movement with the bourgeoisie, even « lefist ».

This political perspective of expropriation of capital leads all our politics and explains why the IVth Internationale proposes militants of various origins in different countries to build up parties. Because the working class
needs parties to liberate itself. Because the question of power will arise in the class struggles, because problem of driving out imperialist or pro-imperialist governments will arise through the class struggle. An for this, we need an instrument, a party, and for this we need the IVth International which, at the world level, seeks to regroup the militants from all tendencies who intend to fight together to found and build labour parties. That is the outcome of this IXth Congress of the IVth International.

To address these layers of activists and workers, to turn to them to fight and, starting from there, comrades, in forms adapted to each country, in practical conditions of the class struggle, to help structure this force. Comrades, whatever we may have lost in this liquidating offensive, the IVth Internationale never had this strength, because in these last ten years, not only in France, but also everywhere around the world and particularly in Brazil, in Maghreb, in Spain and elsewhere it has reinforced itself in the labour movement, has gained new positions, weaved new ties, reinforced its ranks in the working class, for we are a class struggle party. We are a party which must immerse himself in the working class, because it is our class. On this Friday, February 5th, in Madrid, a meeting was held against the Vth Republic which, at the world level, seeks to regroup the militants from all tendencies who intend to fight together to found and build labour parties. That is the outcome of this IXth Congress of the IVth International.

We are in a situation when no government of the Vth Republic has ever been as reactionary as the Holland government. All the measures that it takes against the Labour Code, against hospitals, against medical care, against education are the most reactionary measures that were ever taken. In the same time, it uses without restriction the mechanisms of the Vth Republic and pushes them to a climax by introducing the state of emergency in the constitution. In the same time, while acting this way, a government which is in the midst of a crisis will favor the conditions of the shock which is brewing, because, on the other side, there are workers who want to resist, there are farmers who want to block the country, there are these taxi-drivers who block Paris and the workers who want to block the country, but « up-there » one does not call out for the blockage of the country! That is the problem we are facing!

On January 26th, in the public service, the workers knew that they were not going to win on the question the wage index. Those of the private sector who took part in the strike knew that it was not the starting point for the general strike, but they meant to say to those who are up-there: « As for us, we are here! We are ready to go! ». Well then, the fight we are waging aims at helping and regrouping this force, those militants who fight in the midst of the labour movement for it to move forward. But in the same time, comrades, it demands political clarity, because on cannot merely say « Let us go », « all together… ». No, there are obstacles, there are maneuvers. There is the fact that the State apparatus, Holland, use terrorism, the state of emergency, the fear of insecurity, the threats of war to try to frame the labour movement. There is the operation which aims at boosting Le Pen on one side, terrorism on the other side, at disbanding the parties in an operation « Better have Holland in 2017 than anything else… ». There is this leader of the PFC (French Communist Party) who harshly criticizes Holland… but says: « Yes, the primary, I don’t know, but at least it will allow a big debate to happen within the left… ». As if a debate among the left could settle the problem, as if what is at stake is to have a good program for 2017! To last until 2017, one wants, even among the labour leaders, to trap the labour movement, with this operation.

Nothing will come out of the National Assembly. Nothing will come out of these political representations. Nothing will come out of the maneuvers about 2017. The fight against the state of emergency, the fight against this government’s policy, will use the ways and means of the class struggle: one must regroup and organize, for it is not self-evident that everybody should have this same understanding from the outset. The conference for the defense of the gains and social achievements of the labour class which we will convene at the end of Spring this year, aims precisely at getting this force together, regroup and organize it. Militants from different origins but who all ask these questions: « It is not in 2017 that the problem will be settled… It is not by supporting Holland that the problem will be settled… It is through our own action. Yes, but how? What can be the form of our own action? What force do we dispose of for this purpose? ». What is the problem? The problem is to organize the fight against the government, to get together those militants who say: « In no way shall we let ourselves be fooled again into voting for Holland as some union leaders did for the last presidential election. » There is no answer a priori, no miracle recipe, it is through free discussion, all together, in the framework of this conference, that we will elaborate the answers.

I will add to conclude: everyday we hear speeches about war, the fight against war, the necessity to fight against war, appeals « Peace », etc. Yes Comrades, it is necessary to oppose war. In 1915, in Kienthal and Zimmerswald, Lenin and Trotsky signed an agreement with the leftist socialists and the pacifists who were against war and for peace. But Lenin’s position was different, and Lenin’s position is ours: the fight against war is the fight for the expropriation of capital, because as long as capital lasts, there will be war. The fight against war is the fight against the Holland government! The fight against war is the fight in defense of the class’ gains against this government. That is the IVth Internationale!

Oral intervention by Alberto Salcedo (Venezuela)

Good evening comrades. I bring you the fraternal salutation of the Trotskyists comrades of Venezuela, who fight against imperialism.

I know that in your newspaper Informations Ouvrières you have been able to follow what we think of the situation. This situation is new, and it is valid for the
entire Latin American continent. This situation is that of a brutal attack launched by North American imperialism. In its process of disaggregation and crisis, it is trying to regain control of what one may call its backyard.

In Venezuela, the political process that has developed has had effects over the entire continent. I say this because Venezuela is the nation most advanced on the way to confrontation with American imperialism. In 2000, a National Constituent Assembly was convened, and this allowed us to refound our nation. Within our Constitution were established a series of fundamental conquests that are fundamental for the nation and for the workers. This is the reason why today the government of Venezuela is submitted to attacks, through economic war, using the fall of the price of oil and using the financial manoeuvres of imperialism within the framework of the competition between American imperialism and other imperialisms. And this, this is an attack against the nation, for countries such as Venezuela that produce oil. Within the “Workers and Youth Collective” which publishes El Trabajador, we understand that in spite of the hesitations of our government, the workers of Venezuela must close ranks to face the attack against our country.

In the same movement there must be an independent attitude of the labour movement and its union organizations. We see very clearly that the task of defending the nation is the task of the working class. It is the one and only class capable of going all the way in the confrontation with imperialist domination and with capitalism. This is the reason why our tactics today, which we have discussed in the Congress of the IVth International, is to come out of routine and to go all out in the trade union movement and the labour movement; in order to move forward, meeting the need to unite in the defence of such conquests as the organic labour law. This law is written into the 2000 Constitution. I shall give you a few examples of these conquests: the reduction of the working week to 40 hours, absolute security at work, social protection for maternity, retroactivity of social rights. These same conquests are being attacked to-day by European governments. But the most important conquest, contained in the organic law, is the ban on subcontracting.

Last December’s elections have brought the National Assembly to lose its governmental majority. As a result, today, two institutions are face to face in the country. As we have explained, the electoral defeat is due to three fundamental issues. First, the economic war waged around the fall of the price of oil. Then, the government’s hesitation to move forward and to face up to things by taking the necessary economic measures, summed up as: controlling foreign trade and organising a planned centralised economy. Thirdly, they did not nationalise banks. By not doing so, they allowed the bourgeoisie and imperialism to boycott economy, to organise capital flight and black-market trading of oil. It must also be said that our government, because it is not a workers’ government, hesitates; it tries to find agreements, compromises.

To sum up: the task of Trotskyites in Venezuela today is to defend the government against imperialism, in spite of its hesitations and contradictions. This has to be done by building independent workers’ organisations, this is why we fight for the existing trade union confederation to call for elections that will legitimate and implement a platform for the defence of our sovereignty and of our conquests.

Oral intervention of Mohamed (Tunisia)

Good evening, comrades. I salute you on behalf of the Tunisian section of the IVth International. The Tunisian section of the IVth International has held its first national conference on January 31st, just before the world congress of the IVth International.

To summarize the situation in Tunisia, it may be characterized as follows: we are on the brink of a major turning point in the political situation. We are on the brink of a possible outbreak of a war provoked by NATO troops bursting into Libya. That war will have consequences on the whole region. But in spite of that, the government and its main party are going all out in the trade union movement and the labour movement; in order to move forward, meeting the need to unite in the defence of such conquests as the organic labour law. This law is written into the 2000 Constitution. I shall give you a few examples of these conquests: the reduction of the working week to 40 hours, absolute security at work, social protection for maternity, retroactivity of social rights. These same conquests are being attacked to-day by European governments. But the most important conquest, contained in the organic law, is the ban on subcontracting.

And these strikes and movements are unceasing. They are unceasing because the demand for work, the demand for the recognition of their rights, is ever present, ever since the beginning of the revolution. And the working class is resisting. It is mobilised against the operation waged by the Tunisian government with the support of diplomatic, political, financial apparatuses – the working class is mobilised against an operation to try and close the breaches opened by the revolution, an operation aimed at reestablishing a right-wing government. This government and its main party are going through an open crisis. The main party of the government is dislocating. Every day, a piece of this party breaks away, and creates a group. And the creation of a new party is announced.

In other words, the little Bonaparte, not quite making it as a Bonaparte, relies on a presidential party, and this party is dislocating. Why? Because there is considerable powerful pressure from the working class, considerably powerful pressure for class demands, demands from the unemployed graduates – it is important to know that in Tunisia, we could win the world record in unemployed graduates. That is, there are 500 000 university graduates who are unemployed. And every year, 20 000 new unemployed graduate from university. They have a trade union, they are extremely powerful, and they are very active.
The process taking place right now, at class level, at the level of the social struggles underway, is the start of the process of the working class and these unemployed graduates joining up; the unemployed graduates are outside the labour organisation, outside the trade unions. For the moment the UGTT does not want to recognize them. For the UGTT, they are unemployed; they are unemployed graduates, which means they are graduates who are not in the world of labour because they have never worked. But they are workers! They are unemployed workers.

All the same the joining up process is on the way between these unemployed graduates and the working class in these strikes. We have launched a campaign amongst the workers, amongst the unemployed graduates, to call a national conference which will centre on the main issue: the problem of unemployment cannot be solved with the continuation of the policy of submission to the injunctions of imperialism. The problem of unemployment cannot be solved without breaking the “association agreement” with the European Union. The problem of unemployment cannot be solved if the debt keeps growing (the Tunisian State increases its debt every three months in order to pay public servants.) And it is up to the working class alone to defend the nation by its own means.

I also wanted to speak about one particular issue, which is very important for me: there is a risk of war being waged in Libya, and that will have enormous consequences for our entire region, and by a strange coincidence, in this context, with the threat of the whole of the region being dislocated, there is an attack led by the oligarchy linked to financial capital, linked also to mafia groups in Algeria, I mean the frontal attack against the Algerian Workers Party. For me, as an internationalist activist, the Algerian Workers Party is a point of support to build our party. And for the entire region, not only for us, I know what it represents for the entire Tunisian people. Tunisian workers are very attentive to what happens in Algeria, they know the importance of the Workers Party in Algeria. All this to say that to-day, it is indispensable to rise wherever we are, through the press, using all means of information, to say: hands off the Algerian Workers Party!

**Oral intervention of Andreu Camps (international secretariat)**

There is a very important issue in what is happening in Europe. For years, we were told about “Europe of the South” in order to try and divide the working class from the countries of the centre, Germany, France. And yet to-day, the centre of the crisis is within the centre of Europe itself, in Germany itself. Refugees have not provoked the crisis; the fundamental crisis, the threat of a financial crisis is not due to the refugees. And at the same time, the issue of the refugees accelerates and deepens the crisis which shows the incapacity of the strongest State in Europe to face up to this problem. This shows the powerlessness of the institutions of the European Union, which we told were all-powerful. And this brings us to raise the issue from the point of view of the international labour movement. And we must not limit ourselves to democratic rights, even if we do integrate democratic rights such as the right for asylum, because if we limit ourselves to that, we seek for a humanitarian solution, and therefore we say that in reality the privileges of the European working class are responsible! And it is only by fighting for the integration of foreign workers with the same rights as workers of European countries, it is only by doing that that we can deal with this issue from the point of view of the labour movement.

And from there, I should like to answer the question about what is happening in Portugal, because it links up with what is happening in Greece and in Spain. And that is not because it is in the south. It is because there is a common issue. The comrades may read the articles we have published in *Informations Ouvrières* almost every week, and I invite you, if you have not already done so, to subscribe to *Informations Ouvrières*.

All the right-wing governments have failed. Financial capital was in need of a left cover such as the Syriza government, which has momentarily incapacitated the enormous movement of resistance. The 7 or 8 general strikes by Greek workers have led them to an impasse. But the working class has not been defeated. We must learn from the situation in Greece, we must watch what is happening and in what way it is being repeated in other countries. In Portugal today there is a left-wing government supported by the other parties, and their watchword is to implement international agreements. And that is in contradiction with the aspiration of the masses who have all the same brought this government in existence through elections. And this contradiction is there today, this contradiction which brings the main trade union confederation, the CGTP, to confront the government with the question of workers’ demands. Workers hope that this government will give a positive answer to those demands. And the task of the IVth International is not to say “bla-bla, this traitor government...,” the task is to help the working class to make its demands in order to confront the government with them.

And in the particular case of Spain, we are in an excellent situation. We do not have a government? Very good. I am taking the plane to-morrow, there is no problem. Everything is working. No, this is not a joke. There is a major political crisis. And one of its consequences, if you read the Spanish press, is palace manoeuvrings, there are pages and pages on what government may be formed. The secretary of the PSOE has just promised there will be a government in March. We shall see. But in the meantime it is very important that during this period with no government, submitted to the blocking of the apparatuses, the majority of workers have said: now is the time to move. There were tens of thousands of demonstrators in the streets of Madrid yesterday, demanding the annulment of the trial of the Airbus comrades. And the general secretary of the UGT and of the CCOO were at the head of the demonstration. We the IVth International have been campaigning on this issue for three years. Three years ago, we were the only ones. Today, the slogan to annul the trial, to abrogate article 315-3, is a slogan for the entire labour movement. And we are proud we have achieved that. It is not a victory for the IVth International, it is a victory for the labour
movement. And we are part of it. And tomorrow, in spite of all opposition, all the joint trade unions are calling for a demonstration in the centre of Madrid. It is a victory for the labour movement, to have imposed unity. And the place of the IVth International has been to fight for that, to fight for the Labour United Front. And that is the IVth International.

**To conclude by Lucien Gauthier**

(INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT)

Concerning the question on Palestine: through the question of Palestine, one can grasp the continuity of the IVth International. In 1946, that is, two years before the partition and the destruction of Palestine by the UN – organised jointly by the American administration and the Kremlin bureaucracy in a joint vote at the UN – the Trotskyite group in Palestine had opposed the impending partition of Palestine.

In 1947, before the vote, the IVth International reasserted that position. After the State of Israel was formed, we reasserted the demand for a Palestinian Republic.

All throughout the years, in spite of wars, we have reasserted that. In 1993, when the Oslo agreements were signed, aimed at creating a Palestinian "State" alongside the Zionist entity, we again reasserted the demand for one Palestine on the entire historical territory of Palestine. For decades, we were told that this was utopia, that this was unrealistic.

**Realism** means the day-to-day slaughter of the Palestinian people. **Realism** means the Gaza Bantustan or ghetto where on a tiny strip of land live one and a half million people. **Realism** means ferocious repression. **Realism** means denying a people its right to a nation. **Realism** means a people living for its greatest part in exile, expelled from its family lands and homes.

And today, from the very depths of the Palestinian population, rises the demand to put an end to all that; this demand comes from the realisation that the Palestinian Authority has done nothing but to implement the Oslo agreements, repressing their own people on behalf of the State of Israel. This demand of the Palestinian people is to return to what was in the PLO Chart: one Palestine, on the entire surface of the territories of Palestine. Yes, and that is our position, that is the only realistic position.

The events of the last few months have shown that this mobilisation involves all the various parts of the Palestinian people, in Gaza, in the West Bank, in the 1948 boundaries, and also in the camps in Lebanon, in Jordan, and they all said: "We are one people". Let no one forget that; and the powers-that-be, let them not forget that in 1989, the German people in East Germany were demonstrating, saying: "We are the people" confronting the Stalinist bureaucracy, and then they changed their slogan saying "We are one people". Indeed, that one people brought down the Berlin wall.

A comrade asked a question about Algeria, comrade Mohamed got back on that, I should like to add one thing. In a situation of generalised crisis, there is an offensive of world finance, aimed at bringing down all barriers, all protections, all rules; and a number of these protective barriers and rules were defended by MPs of the Workers Party, they fought for them, they voted them. For example, they voted the Finance Law which said that in case of foreign investments, these investments could not go beyond 49% and that 51% must be Algerian.

This was a law protecting Algeria. This was a law in defence of Algeria. And that is the reason why, in the situation of an offensive against the Workers Party, with attacks, violence, that is why the daily paper "Le Temps" has published a portrait of Louisa Hanoune with a target behind it, and the caption "The end?", that is why the leaders of the Workers Party are being threatened.

And suddenly, came the constitutional reform. The comrades of the Workers Party regretted that the constitutional reform should be voted at the Assembly. They reminded that the Bouteflika government had promised to organize a referendum. But because this was being held at the Assembly, a decision had to be made as to the vote. The Central Committee of the Workers Party decided to abstain, certainly not voting in favour, but not voting against. Why? Because in this constitutional reform, there are conquests which result from the struggle of the Workers Party.

You know that Algeria is one people, but with two components, the arab-speaking and the berber-speaking components. This has been used in order to try and divide and dislocate Algeria. Arabic is the only official language. For decades the Workers Party struggled for Tamazight, that is, the berber language, to become an official language. This is written in the constitutional reform: Tamazight is an official language of the Algerian nation.

In the same way, the Workers Party struggled incessantly against the attacks on article 17 of the Constitution, which states that Algerian soil and subsoil are the property of the Algerian nation. And for decades, imperialism has wanted to get rid of article 17. This article 17 is reinforced now and it remains, that and a series of other measures. In these conditions, the president of the parliamentary group of the Workers Party spoke on a line of party independence, and he said: we have decided to abstain because we do not want to vote against what includes conquests for the people and for the Algerian nation.

That, comrades, is a workers party. And that is the reason why 19 personalities, who have made no agreement with the Workers Party, who for some of them are heroes of the national liberation, have co-signed with Louisa Hanoune an address to the president of the Republic. This seems to disturb some people, who are worried about revolutionaries addressing the President of the Republic.

These militants are fighting not with words but with concrete action, in order to defend the nation, in order to defend the Algerian people, in order to defend Algeria as a sovereign independent nation. And this is a major responsibility. And those who contemptuously criticise the fact that the comrades ask to be received by Bouteflika, those are the very ones who say contemptuously: "Ah, but the Brazilian comrades are saying "Wake up Dilma!""
Yes, the Brazilian comrades are fighting within the working class, as Julio has explained, on the basis that a year ago, the majority of workers voted for Dilma. Yes indeed, they did vote with illusions. Yes indeed, but this government is their government, and yes indeed, they want to defend it against imperialism, in complete independence.

Our comrades have said: "Minister Lévy, out!"; that minister symbolised pro-imperialist politics. What they demanded was not a reshuffling of the government, they demanded a break, and Dilma, faced with the mobilisation, had to get rid of Lévy. She put in his place another minister to implement the same policy, but as Julio has said, Lévy has been fired. And the working class has fired him. And that means that the working class is very present. Julio Turra has been denounced as a labour lieutenant of the bourgeoisie. Ah, Julio Turra has one major fault; he is a member of the executive of the CUT. He is in the highest instance of the main trade union confederation in Brazil. And the activity of Julio Turra on behalf of Brazilian workers, of CUT trade unionists, is to aid the processes of class struggle. There was a reactionary measure called the PPE, a measure to increase flexibility. Our comrades, Julio and other comrades, had succeeded in getting a motion adopted at the previous congress of the CUT against the PPE. Then at this congress of the CUT, what happened is this: certain fractions of the union apparatus, such as the metalworkers’ federation, were already tied up with implementing the PPE. But comrades Julio, with other comrades, thought that in this situation, they were at a risk of being a minority and that the vote on the PPE would be invalidated, that the CUT would pronounce itself in favour of the PPE; and taking it from there, they made an agreement we reassert the position of the CUT and we say that the CUT will “monitor” the experimentation of the PPE.

And Julio Turra and his comrades have managed to maintain the fact that the CUT is formally and nationally opposed to the PPE, and that the vote has not been reversed.

Is that the activity of a labour lieutenant of the bourgeoisie? No, it is the activity of a revolutionary who is helping his class concretely.

Comrade Lybon has explained the struggle in South Africa, comrades in South Africa are fighting concrete struggles. We are told: it is world imperialism.

But world imperialism in South Africa has one colour: white. It is the colour of the white minority. And the struggle for a black republic, as a political prospect, is the practical struggle against the white minority, to drive it out of the lands it possesses, to drive it out of factories, through class struggle; because the fight of the proletariat is the fight of the black people, because the proletariat is black, and imperialism is white.

In Venezuela, any moment there is a risk of a coup and of American military intervention. The comrades are involved in the struggle. They are defending the sovereignty of the nation, whatever the hesitations, whatever the wavering, and comrade Alberto, in the article he had written in *Informations Ouvrières* previously, explained how the hesitations of Maduro had allowed the right to win the elections. Yes, but there is something major at stake. At stake for the people. If tomorrow the right gets back into power – in fact it is in power in Parliament, but not at the presidency – , if it obtains all the power, it can dismantle the entire Constitution by a constitutional revision, and open the way to imperialist penetration. Defending the Maduro government does not mean defending Maduro, it means blocking the way of imperialist penetration, through class mobilisation. That is the politics of the IVth International.

This is why we must all be confident. The results of the 51st Congress (of the French section), the results of the IXth Congress of the IVth International, demonstrate that we have reinforced the cohesion of our ranks, that we have reinforced the cohesion of the ranks of the IVth International.
One needs to state right from the very beginning that the development of the Black Consciousness philosophy had nothing to do with white people but it was a philosophy that addressed itself to Black people and their specific condition first in South Africa and the world.

Steve Biko declared that the most positive call to have come from the Black world over a very long period was that of “Black Consciousness”, he did not see the philosophy only in terms of South Africa but in terms of the world. In 1995 I was privileged to be on the same panel with the wife of the assassinated fiery Black leader, Malcolm X, Mrs Betty Shabazz in a Johannesburg television studio, she was asked a question about “racism” and whether it existed in America and she answered that racism, as an ideology of economic, political and social domination and exploitation especially against Black people existed everywhere and Black people needed to fight with their all against it, even the International Labour Organisation has a convention that especially addresses the issue of racism.

Now in South Africa, after so many failed attempts at artificial multiracialism which Biko described as racism multiplied and non racialism in a society where racism was in the statutes books, Biko, realized that in that given situation white people had made themselves the norm and Black people found themselves having to judge what they do or say in accordance with that norm and standard. The norm had often placed itself at the head of the liberation struggle. Again Steve Biko was very critical of this, saying white people inflict the pain and prescribe then the most appropriate way according to them, to respond to that pain. He expressed his concern at the fact that Black people find themselves at the touchlines, cheering and watching the game they should rightly be playing.

In his view the liberation struggle in Azania the name he most preferred for South Africa, the struggle of Black people, the overwhelming majority needed, as a precondition, to be independent from white people and liberal influences. It also had to place in its centre, Black people, who were both the subject and object of the liberation struggle. Only in this framework would Black people rediscover their eroded humanity and assert their full personhood. The strength of white racism in the world has always been through the dehumanization of Black people promoting an inferiority complex that works to white people’s advantage.

This then meant that Black people needed to take leadership of their struggle, determine their norms and values, interpret their own history, then prioritize their liberation. Indeed Black Consciousness drew from the experiences of so many revolutionary struggles and revolutionary leaders the world over. Black Consciousness was described by Biko as the only scientific and systematic way of expressing and advancing the aspirations of ordinary Black people.

It was not surprising that the Black Consciousness movement took far reaching but correct decisions on issues of land, Black majority rule and the kind of republic they wished to set up, a Black Republic. SASO declared: Black and white people live in South Africa and will continue doing so but white people will “live” or “leave” South Africa on conditions set down by Black people. It was clear even
then that the Black Consciousness Movement did not share the view that South Africa belonged to all who lived in it or worse still, was a European country attached accidentally or mistakenly to the southernmost tip of the African continent. He saw South Africa as a thoroughbred African country, period!

Therefore, the struggle of the Black Consciousness Movement was both that of national self-determination and national sovereignty but it was also a struggle to set up an economic framework that was going to address the inequalities that were created by the twin evils of Apartheid and capitalism. Apartheid and capitalism had a symbiotic relationship that allowed one to continually sustain the other at utter expense of Black people and it was truly not possible to fight one and leave the other.

The building of a strong capitalist economy in South Africa which interacted strongly with western imperialism was based on the condonation of white racism in South Africa, and this happened despite the 1973 UN Convention that declared Apartheid a crime against humanity. The sin of Apartheid was declared a “Heresy” by the World Council of Churches in 1985.

The Black Consciousness Movement had to take serious but conscious decisions to address these twin scourges. However, the far reaching decision was on who were actually “Black People”, especially in the face of great balkanization, divisions, state sponsored tribalism and ethnicity. The term “BLACK” according to the Black Consciousness philosophy was first, to be used as a political term describing certain people who live and experience certain political, social and economic conditions, in the same manner as the term “WHITE” in South Africa is commonly used.

The term “Black” did not refer to skin colour, texture of one’s hair or even the colour of one’s eyes but it had become a political term that referred to all those who were by law and tradition discriminated against, economically exploited and socially degraded and who as a group, saw ‘Black solidarity’ as the first step of fighting against the racist Apartheid system championed by the white minority regime. In the SASO/BPC trial Biko went to great length explaining why it was necessary for Black people to have an independent struggle especially in the face of ruthless white racist rule.

In South Africa white people had achieved that unity in exploiting Black people, so it did not matter whether they were French Huguenots (1688), British Settlers (1820) or the Dutch Settlers of 1652. Their tribes and origins were subordinated to their whiteness. Lots of people of European descent came to settle in South Africa on the simple basis of being “white” and willing to pursue the full program of white racism. On the position and state of Black people, white people, were all agreed and united, even those thought to be progressive could not fathom themselves being equal to Black people, some even proposed qualified franchise to the inferior Black people. They were united notwithstanding the fact that there were exceptions, there are always exceptions to every rule, however, common knowledge and science informs us that exceptions do not negate the rule, on the contrary, they enforce it by the very nature that they are exceptions.

This approach united all those who were at the receiving end of the Apartheid system irrespective of all the privileges afforded to some of them. The so-called Coloureds were made second class citizens, the so-called Indians third class citizens and Africans were the lower class. The problem was never with the receiver of a privilege but the giver who uses privileges to bring about divisions and patronage. It was this institutionalized racism that determined one’s position in relation to the means of production. So, the aspiring capitalist who was not classified white was subordinated to even to a white hobo who by his decision to exercise his right to vote could decide the quality of life for all outside.

The Black Consciousness philosophy became a nation building philosophy that united all the socially degraded, economically exploited and politically exploited people, – the Black majority around their common struggles and experiences.

Steve Biko’s Black Consciousness movement achieved the greatest unity ever for the people of our country and the events of June 16 1976 bear testimony to that. The success of the Black Consciousness Movement brought with it numerous attacks from detractors who obviously were opposed to its political programs especially its non collaborator stand (no collaboration with the oppressor and all its institutions). Biko was very strong on this principle to a point where he refused to meet members of the BCM student formation, the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC) after they went against better advice from the BCM leadership structures and violated this principle by agreeing to meet representatives of the American government, the very government that had in so many ways directly supported the white minority Apartheid regime.

From its nascent years the BCM had clearly identified the leading role played by U.S. imperialism which had declared many liberation movements including the PLO, the ANC, the PAC amongst others as terrorist organisations. This was a ploy to make sure that these organisations should not receive support even from bodies such as the UN where various resolutions in their support were defeated by the U.S’ position.

These positions of the BCM were not only a thorn in the flesh on the side of the regime but also to imperialism especially after the BCM had organized national rallies in support of the national liberation in Mozambique and their leading party FRELIMO. The BCM had to go. A systematic elimination of the BCM leadership had already started with the callous murders of Mthuli KaSezi, Ongkopotse Abram Tiro and Mapetla Mohapi. All this culminated in the brutal murder of Steve Biko, the banning of all Black Consciousness organizations and an attempt at completely dislocating the entire Black Consciousness movement and all its organizations. The detractors succeeded in drying all
financial help both external and internal to any Black Consciousness program.

The formation of the Azanian Peoples Organisation under the banner of Black Consciousness, in those very extreme conditions created by the Apartheid regime and the detractors was both an act of defiance, resoluteness, regrouping and above all continuity. It also demonstrated that the BCM, unlike the older and earlier historical organisations, had prepared ground for its continuity irrespective of any conditions imposed on it. From its very inception AZAPO was threatened by both ‘fire and brimstone’ by the regime. Its newly elected leaders were thrown into prison and came out with banning orders.

It must however, be pointed out that not all elements of the movement continued in a linear and a positive manner. While it was a movement of all Black people, it had a multi class character that allowed contradictory characters and elements to co-exist, a common feature in national liberation struggles for self determination the world over. While liberation was a common goal, beyond political freedom, it was obvious and logical that there was going to be a clash of class interests.

Some of the organizations set up by the Black Consciousness Movement, like some in business became completely reactionary, identifying with both local and international interests of imperialism. The Black Consciousness Movement, though organic in its nature, like all organisations fighting national oppression, had its inbuilt limitations that made some of its sections and formations vulnerable to cooptation. It is no surprise, that in the new situation, in the age of imperialism many of its organizations line side by side, comfortably with imperialism, starting from the Brettonwoods institutions like the IMF and the World Bank and openly subordinating to imperialist inspired organizations.

However, in the main, the political organisations, if willing, had the wherewithal necessary to survive. Some of the organisations like the Socialist Party of Azania are continuing the valiant struggle for total liberation and economic freedom for the Black majority. It is for this reason that SOPA organizes under a revolutionary slogan “BLACK PEOPLE FIRST.”

That said, the positive role played by the Black Consciousness Movement and that which some of its organizations continue to play cannot be overemphasized. It is for that reason and acknowledgement that in the Socialist Party of Azania we say that: We uphold the best practices and traditions of Black Consciousness and the struggle for Socialism. The truth is, the old Black Consciousness (not all the elements of the nascent Black Consciousness of late 60’s and early 70’s) can be brought back but also the key elements of the struggles of the Black Consciousness Movement remain relevant today and cannot be conveniently dumped into the dustbin of history.

The problems that bedeviled the Black Consciousness Movement in the late 70’s, through the 80’s right through to the 90’s still face us today, we can rightly say we are party with little or no support except from members in the country and no external support that can help us carry our program in a meaningful way. The challenges of nation building and sovereignty, Black majority rule and a Black Republic are still relevant as they were during the time and life of Steve Biko. While the Black Consciousness Movement was largely responsible for helping set up trade unions after the Wiehan Commission following the 1976 national students and youth uprising, it has not done enough to encourage and build real working class consciousness though it played a major role in the early labour strikes of the early seventies like the Durban strikes in 1973.

Steve Biko had very correctly pointed out that the struggle waged by the BCM in its struggle for national liberation is intricately linked to the struggle for socialism and he saw real economic transformation that will benefit the Black majority as the setting up of a socialist project. He acknowledged the enormous challenges Black people would have to face in this regard especially considering that they would be coming from an Apartheid past. Biko did not believe that there was a middle road other than Socialism in the quest of addressing the economic imbalances that the Apartheid system had created. He rejected completely all forms of assimilation into elements of the Apartheid economy. He saw the struggle of the Black Consciousness Movement as being that of creating a just and egalitarian society.

What needs to be borne in mind is that the BCM came into being in one of the darkest historical moment in South Africa. There existed the twin evils of the Suppression of Terrorism Act and the Suppression of the Communism Act which gave the state and its security institutions enormous power and control over the lives of Black people. Language alone, the kind of things one says could land a person in prison depending on police interpretations. It was unbelievably brave and some were even saying reckless of Biko and the BCM to display the courage they showed by articulating positions that could land them in prison or even get them killed. As a matter of fact, that is the fate that finally befall many including Biko himself.

At the time of Biko’s death, the BCM was still young, vibrant and developing movement that had made a great impact in the struggle in South Africa. The various policy positions Biko and his comrades had raised were being put into litmus tests by the process of the political struggle itself and not surprisingly they stood the test of time.

When the organisations that were formed and led by Biko were banned on the 19th October 1977 after the regime had begun by brutally murdering him, the BCM had to once more assert itself. Azapo was formed as a continuation of those organisations and it has pursued much the same policies with much added vigour and even became more daring on the question of Socialism. It was like AZAPO wanted to affirm the saying that the “limits of tyrants” is often prescribed by the patience or endurance of those whom they oppress. AZAPO at the time was taking the regime to the limit, it had be-
come a fighting organisation—a feature that characterized it for many years.

The regime made no single concession out of the goodness of its intentions or even the benevolence and magnanimity of its policies. Every single concession that was ever made was a direct result of the political struggle. Despite the setbacks that included the imprisonment, murders and tortures the regime was often forced to go on back foot.

Since the formation of AZAPO through to SOPA the language has been that of socialism but then again we cannot build that project without the direct involvement of the working class and its independent organizations. It is primarily for this reason that SOPA continues supporting the struggles of the labour movement and its organizations. While our commitment to Black Consciousness and its message remain unflinching, we are aware of the great challenges we face. Black Consciousness still remains an integral part of struggles of Black people in South Africa but also in the world. Only Black Consciousness can begin to address the damage done to Black people by white racism and capitalism. That damage began with the horrors of the slave trade, conquests and colonialism, the foreign debt and continued economic subordination cannot be addressed sufficiently without heeding Biko’s call of Black Consciousness.

Lybon Mabasa

Stephen Bantu Biko, as Steve Biko (1946-1977).

At a SOPA rally, on Sep 12, 2005, in tribute to Steve Biko.
FREE FORUM

We hereby publish as a “Free tribune” a contribution from the Japan Revolutionary Communist League (Revolutionary Marxist Faction) which enjoys political relations with the IVth International. This contribution, which does not reflect the point of view of the IVth International, is published for discussion and naturally has its place in this issue of La Vérité/The Truth.

The JRCL in the Vanguard of the Japanese Working Class Fighting against Abe’s Neo-Fascist Government

We start this contribution by expressing our solidarity with French revolutionary workers who are continuing their fight despite repressive measures taken by Hollande on the pretext of the terrorist attacks in Paris. While declaring a state of emergency at home, his government is escalating air raids on Syria in coalition with US, UK, German, and Russian rulers in the name of the “war on terror”. We strongly denounce it.

In this contribution, we will report our present struggle in Japan. But first we would like to put forward our view on the November 13th attacks and the brutal imperialist air raids.

Let us launch an international antiwar struggle against the brutal air raids on Syria! Eradicate the war crisis caused by the confrontation between the US-Japan and China/Russia!

The US, French, UK and Russian governments are bombing Syrian towns and villages on an unprecedented scale. They are loudly reproaching the November 13th attacks for being “an attack on universal values” (Obama). But they themselves have murdered hundreds of thousands of Muslim people in Iraq and Syria. Particularly, since this September, France has intensified its raids on not only Iraq but also Syria, while Russia has also launched air strikes on anti-Assad forces in a bid to support the Assad regime. Now the UK has joined the war. All this has turned Syria into a living hell where people are being killed and injured in cross-fire by the US, French, British and Russian bombings. Innocent people are being sacrificed for the egoistic national interests of the powers that are competing with each other. This is nothing other than an indiscriminate massacre of Muslim people, i.e. state-sponsored terrorism.

We must note that the IS has grown from Muslim people’s hatred and resentment against the brutalities of Western imperialism (and against the former USSR) and so that in every sense the IS is a Frankenstein produced by imperialists. Shamelessly, on the pretext that their own creature has launched terror, they are escalating their attacks on Muslim people.

We consider the IS’s act – even though it was conducted in the name of “retaliation for the air raids” – to be a crime hostile to the working class struggle for liberation, for it killed French working people without distinction from their rulers by branding them as “infidels”. In the name of the world working class, we denounce this act of terrorism conducted by the IS leadership.

We say again, however. What has French imperialism been doing against Muslim people? Air raids on Iraq and Syria, military interventions in Libya and Mali, persecutions and discriminations against Muslims at home – all these acts, having been done under the tricolor flag of “Liberty, Equality and Fraternity”, have caused indignation among Muslims, resulting in the November 13th incident.

We call on the French people, who have been shaking with anger, to first condemn the indiscriminate and merciless state terrorism by the French government.
We call on the working people all over the world. Based on proletarian internationalism, let us launch an international antiwar struggle against the air raids that the US, French, UK and Russian rulers are conducting against Muslim people in the name of the “war on terror”. We in Japan have already started it and are fighting to stop the Abe government from joining the war.

We call on the Muslim people of the world. Indiscriminate terrorism cannot open the future of Muslim masses now suffering from imperialist brutalities. The IS leadership’s fallacy must be overcome. We call on you to band together to fight across borders, beyond sectarian antagonism between Sunnites and Shiites, under the banner “against US imperialism, against Zionism”.

We are issuing this call from the following point of view: Muslim people in the Middle East are complicatedly divided today due to antagonism between different ethnicities (Arab, Iranian, Turkish, Kurdish, etc.), religious sects (Sunnite, Shiite, etc.) and clans – the antagonism has been fuelled and taken advantage of by Western imperialist powers (and the former USSR) in their dominance over the region. That is why we call on Muslim people to band together first to fight against their “common enemy”, i.e. Western imperialism and the Zionist state, beyond sectarian, ethnic and clan-based differences and across borders, that is, on the basis of “inter-nationalism”. We propose this as a transitional demand for revolution in the Middle East, on the basis of the hard reality that the working class has yet to be fully organized and Marxist organizations are practically absent at present.

We repeat. For us Marxists, the fallacy of terrorism is one that has been already overcome. Lenin and Trotsky negated the Narodniks’ naive terrorism and adopted a Marxist tactic of revolutionary struggle that focussed on the self-organization of the working class into soviets with the building of a vanguard party as a lever. They transcended the idea of individual terrorism with that of mass armed uprising based on soviets. The IS’s fallacy is therefore self-evident for us. Notwithstanding this, it is an undeniable fact that many young Muslims are attracted by the IS and are trying to find a way out of their present hardship. Without sharing their indignation and agony, we would not able to fight in solidarity with the oppressed Muslim masses.

To begin with, one of the reasons why today’s resistance of oppressed people against imperialism has taken a religious form such as the IS lies in the weakness of the international working class struggle. This is a tragedy that has been brought about by the decline of the self-styled ‘Marxist-Leninist’ organizations and the “de-ideologization” of the working people on the historical premise of the collapse of the USSR (in 1991) based on false Marxism, i.e. Stalinism. It is therefore crucial to transcend Stalinism.

We must also pay close attention to East Asia. Against the Xi Jinping government of China, which is fortifying the Spratly Islands (Nansha Qundao), the US government advanced its Aegis destroyer into the China-claimed “territorial waters” in the name of “freedom of navigation”. As part of this military action, US forces carried out a massive “exercise” in the South China Sea, taking Japanese troops along with them. US and Japanese rulers carried out this provocative action, and are going to repeat it, with the aim of frustrating China’s challenge. War clouds are hanging over East Asia.

Today we are faced with the danger of a world war growing between the US-Japan and China/Russia with tensions heightened in the two areas: the South China Sea and the Middle East including Syria. We in Japan are fighting against the build-up of the US-Japan global war alliance for aggression, and promoting a revolutionary antiwar struggle, together with the working people of the world, to eradicate the danger of war caused by the intensifying confrontation between the US and China/Russia.

**Struggles against the strengthening of the Japanese neo-fascist ruling system**

The Abe-led government is launching offensives one after another to build Japan into “a state that engages in war”, now that it has changed the conventional interpretation of the Constitution to legalize the ‘exercise of the right to collective self-defence’ and, on this basis, enacted the war law on the request of the Obama-led US administration.

The offensives include: the build-up of the US-Japan imperialist military alliance as a globalized alliance for aggressive war; the incorporation of Japanese troops into US Forces at all levels and the start of a bilateral mechanism for joint military operations; a drastic reorganization of US Force facilities in Japan, with its focus on the new Marine base construction in Henoko, Okinawa; massive increase in Japan’s defence budgets and the reinforcement of its Self-Defence Forces, including the foundation of “Japanese Marines”. The government is planning to build an air station in the Philippines for its military actions against China in the South China Sea. It is also strengthening its base in Djibouti (which it is using now for “anti-piracy operations”) to make it serve as a front base of the Japanese army in the Middle East in the event of its participation in the “war on IS”. All this means the effective destruction of the current Constitution, which stipulates “renunciation of war”. The Abe government is at the same time watching for an opportunity to explicitly revise it.

In order to support these war preparations, the Abe government is further strengthening the Japanese neo-fascist ruling system by means of the National Security Council, which it established in imitation of the US counterpart. It is particularly bent on destroying our ranks, the revolutionary left, and repressing disobedient trade unions, students’ organizations and civil societies.

The Prime Minister is also intent on building an economic foundation for a “stronger Japan”, by which he means a revival of militarist Japan. By raising the slogan, “dynamic engagement of all citizens”, he is trying to intensify the exploitation and expropriation of the working masses. This slogan
show the death while mercilessly cutting expenses for pensions and social welfare. It is an expression of his neo-fascist mindset that regards the aged and the handicapped as useless for the State. On top of that, he regards the arms industry and the nuclear business as the key to economic growth. His government is trying to prolong the life of the Japanese imperialist economy by encouraging monopoly capitalists to become merchants of death. (Note that he is urging Mitsubishi to finance Areva.)

With the aim of overthrowing the Abe government, we are fighting to build an anti-fascist united battlefront based on the working class unity, by overcoming the existing leaderships of the labour movement, which can do nothing but raise a feeble call such as “Defend democracy”.

The Struggle against the War Bill: the Revolutionary Left in its Forefront

A mass movement against the War Bill (which the government dubbed “Peace Security Legislation”) surged up this summer. Tens of thousands of people surrounded the Diet Building. In its quality, however, this movement suffered attempts to emasculate it by official leaderships (including that of the JCP, the Japanese Communist Party), trying to reduce it to a campaign “to defend constitutionalism, democracy and pacifism”, without calls “Against the US-Japan military alliance” or “Against fascism”. Protest actions of the working masses surrounding the Diet Building, with their growing concerns about “Abe’s jingoist rush”, were contained as a whole within a parliamentarianist, petty-bourgeois framework. In order to break through this qualitative limitation with a quantitative surge, Zengakuren students, together with militant workers led by the JRCL, fought day and night in the mass movement.

The JCP leadership was immersed in producing “a single-issue campaign” to defend “constitutionalism” (not the Constitution itself) and accommodating itself to so-called moderate conservatives who support the US-Japan Security Treaty and advocate “another” revision of the Constitution. Dazzled by the quantitative spread of the movement, the JCP leadership praised it unconditionally, saying “Here is a new type of movement, not dependent on trade union-ordered mobilization, but voluntary activities of citizens”. By so doing, this party has openly negated the most important effort of workers to unite themselves in the form of trade unions for their fight. Zengakuren students and revolutionary workers fought to overcome the JCP’s distortion of the struggle into a ‘Defend constitutionalism’ movement with no opposition to the Security Treaty or the revision of the Constitution. They raised the slogans, “Against fascism, against the US-Japan military alliance” and “Down with the Abe government”, which were joined by a great many workers and people in protest actions. Militant students and workers thus realized a qualitative change in the struggle against the War Bill.

This is not all. The Rengo (1) leadership made no efforts at first to organize the struggle since its declared position was “to maintain the US-Japan security alliance”. In opposition to it, revolutionary workers organized the struggle against the bill from within their trade unions and within Rengo’s regional chapters together with conscious union members. Their efforts shook the Rengo leadership and at last compelled it to sponsor “protest rallies” three times in the final stage. This was an epochal struggle in overcoming the degeneration of the Japanese labour movement, which has been degraded as today’s version of the Industrial Patriotic Movement organized in the period of WWII.

Without this struggle of revolutionary workers, protest actions of trade unions would have been extinguished. Most trade union leaders failed to organize the struggle or oppressed it. They were influenced by the DPJ or JCP advocacy of “a new movement of individual citizens not based on trade unions”. Trade union banners were pushed into the background. Not only labour aristocrats but also JCP-controlled and social-democratic trade union leaders altogether bowed to the ideological offensive of the ruling class, which fears the united fight of the working class and presses workers to abandon it by branding it as “an out-dated movement”. This epitomizes the present crisis of the class struggle in Japan.

Revolutionary workers led by the JRCL are struggling to develop the labour movement by breaking the present-day Industrial Patriotic Movement from within. Militant students are fighting together with them. They are the only forces that can change the humiliating situation of the class struggle. In reality, they are fighting in the forefront of the surging mass protest actions in Okinawa against the US base construction.

The Japanese Labour Movement Degraded as an Industrial Patriotic Movement and the Bottomless Degeneration of the neo-Stalinist JCP

In October, Rengo launched a new executive body headed by right-wing officials. President Kozu is from the Federation of Basic Industry Workers’ Unions, which is campaigning for “boosting the defence industry”. Secretary General Ohmi is from the UA Zensen federation, which is waving the flag for “Revise the Constitution!” As soon as it was inaugurated, this leadership issued recommendations to ‘improve productivity for maintaining the GDP’ with the aim of fawning on the Abe government. Rengo has revealed itself more clearly than before as today’s Industrial Patriotic Association, which sup-

---

(1) Rengo [the Japanese Confederation of Trade Unions]: Japan’s largest national centre of trade unions with around 6.8 million members, headed as a whole by pro-capitalist labour aristocrats, supporting the Democratic Party of Japan. Embracing some federations of trade unions led by ‘left social democratic’ officials peculiar to the Japanese labour movement (such as the Japan Teachers’ Union and the All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers’ Union).
ports the Japanese neo-fascist ruling system from below.

On the other hand, the JCP headed by Fuwa and Shii recently issued the proposal of a ‘People’s Coalition Government’ based on “an agreement on the single goal of abrogating the War Law and restoring constitutionalism”, with the House of Councillors elections coming next summer. This party is now busy selling this proposal to other parliamentary oppositions and civil societies. JCP Chairman Shii is reiterating: “A new movement is emerging, based on not trade unions but individual citizens”. He is ordering trade union members of Zenroren (2) to act as “citizens” and mobilizing them into vote-collecting campaigns. What’s worse, he has declared that, for the “Coalition”, the party will “freeze” its policy of “abrogating the Security Treaty” and even that of “defending the Constitution”. He is bent on incorporating workers’ struggles into a coalition with conservaties. This tactic of the JCP leadership is totally criminal. It negates the strengthening of the class unity of workers for overthrowing the Abe government and reduces their struggle into a petit-bourgeois movement of atomized individuals. The ideological grounds for this lie in the present JCP line that gives a strategic position to a “democratic reform within the framework of capitalism”, i.e. a line of modified capitalism. The JCP has degraded itself as a bourgeois parliamentary party that complements the Japanese neo-fascist ruling system from the “left”. As such, it is manifesting itself as an enemy to the Japanese working class.

We are struggling to break from within the present Japanese labour movement controlled by pro-capitalist labour aristocrats. We are also thoroughly criticizing the degeneration of the neo-Stalinist party, and thus winning the JCP-led trade union members, and members of the JCP itself, to our ranks one after another.

Overcoming Stalinism is Required of Revolutionary Organizations!
Let us arm ourselves with true Marxism and strive for the working class liberation!

We must fight for a radical change of the present-day world suffering from wars and poverty. In order to overcome the bankruptcy of Stalinism and the weakening in the working class struggle, we must thoroughly reveal the criminal fallacies of Stalinism as false Marxism, and fight to revive Marx’s Marxism in the 21st century.

Miserable situations are spreading in advanced capitalist countries including Japan: intensified exploitation, massive dismissals and unstable forms of employment; impoverishment imposed upon the working masses by means of the revision of labour laws and cuts in welfare; human alienation of a new type, such as an addiction to computers and smartphones, resulting in a decline in thinking. In this situation, the ruling classes are infusing chauvinistic nationalism into the working masses, thus trying to trap their dissatisfaction into grass-root fascist movements. Dissatisfactions of those who refuse to be trapped are appearing generally in such forms as “unorganized protests of citizens” and “formless revolts of individuals linked via the Internet”, and sometimes in the form of religious terrorism. We see this humiliating situation as the result of the degeneration, or disappearance, of self-styled socialist and leftist parties, the weakening of the class struggle and the “de-ideologization” of the toiling masses after the collapse of the Stalinist USSR, which claimed itself to be Marxist-Leninist. Therefore we say that, in order for revolutionary proletarians in advanced capitalist countries to confront the present difficulties, overcoming Stalinism is an indispensable ideological task.

We revolutionary Marxists in Japan have consistently tackled this task. When the Hungarian working masses rose up under the banner of “De-Stalinization” in 1956 and the Kremlin bureaucracy crushed them with tanks, the late comrade Kan’ichi Kuroda squarely confronted this historic event. He staked his communist existence on this confrontation. By this salto mortale (Italian metaphor for an audacious leap – editor’s note) of Kuroda, the Japanese anti-Stalinist revolutionary communist movement was founded.

Under the banner, “Return to Marx”, comrade Kuroda struggled to reveal the falsehood of what Stalinists called “Marxism” and struggled for a “contemporary unfolding of Marxism”. That can be summarized as follows. Emphasizing the “materialist subjectivity of communists” and basing himself on it, he produced a theory for the creation of a vanguard organization (3), and developed it further in the form of reality-theories of organization (4). He clarified his theory on contemporary USSR and the theory of socialism, both of which were based on his critical studies of Trotsky’s analysis of the USSR, and, with these as theoretical weapons, he revealed the anti-working class and anti-Marxist nature of the contemporary USSR, i.e. its Stalinist nature (5). For world revolution in our time, he created the strategy of “anti-imperialism, anti-Stalinism”. He also sought to revive Marx’s Das Kapital as “a spiritual weapon of the proletariat for their self-liberation” by criticizing the distortions of Stalinists affected by their “commodity-economic view of history” (6).

The bridgehead for these pursuits was the standpoint of Revolutionary Marxism, which Kuroda described as “the creative standpoint of the

---

(2) Zenroren [the National Confederation of Trade Unions]: with around one million members, controlled by the JCP, now social-democratized. Most of the Japanese trade unions are enterprise unions, and enterprise unions form industrial federations, which comprise a national centre.

(3) See Kuroda’s Thought on Revolution.
(4) See his On Organizing Praxis.
(5) See his Stalinist Socialism.
(6) See his What Is Revolutionary Marxism?
(7) See his Engels’ Political Economy and Methodology of Social Science.
communist who gives a contemporary unfolding to Marxism and strives to apply it to the revolutionary praxis”(7). And what underlies his praxis and theoretical pursuit mentioned above is his philosophy of the topos of praxis, which he explored by assimilating the essence of Marx's praxeological materialism (8).

We believe that revolutionary theories, particularly those for the creation of a vanguard organization, which we have developed through our confrontation with Stalinism, and Kuroda's philosophy of the topos of praxis, will give a theoretical, philosophical bridgehead to today's revolutionaries of the world in carrying on their strenuous struggles for the self-liberation of the working class.

We the JRCL are determined to keep fighting to revive true Marxism as the spiritual weapon of the working class of today for their liberation, and to revolutionize the 21st-century world, which is half-rotted and agonizing in a crisis. We revolutionary Marxists in Japan call on the revolutionary Left all over the world. We are with you. Let us go forward together.

(8) The other English versions of Kuroda's works include Dialectics of Society, Studies on Marxism in Postwar Japan, Dialectic of Praxis, Essential Terms of Revolutionary Marxism, Praxiology, Gorbachev's Nightmare, Destruction of the Revolution. Russian versions are also available.
La Vérité - Theoretical review of the IVth International
87, rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis, 75010 - PARIS - FRANCE
arpo8700@gmail.com
Editor : Marc Gauquelin