

# the Communist Party

WHAT DISTINGUISHES OUR PARTY – The line running from Marx to Lenin to the foundation of the Third International and the birth of the Communist Party of Italy in Leghorn (Livorno) 1921, and from there to the struggle of the Italian Communist Left against the degeneration in Moscow and to the rejection of popular fronts and coalition of resistance groups – The tough work of restoring the revolutionary doctrine and the party organ, in contact with the working class, outside the realm of personal politics and electoralist manoeuvres

newspaper of the  
international communist party

January - February 2020  
Issue 17 | 25¢ 25p

**The Petty-Bourgeoisie can only rebel helplessly without a party and program  
Without its class unions, the working class cannot manifest itself as its historic class party**

## The Dead End of Inter-Class Street Protests

In Hong Kong, Iraq, Iran, Chile, Bolivia, Colombia, Lebanon, Georgia, etc., the uprising of the middle classes overwhelmed by the crisis of capital manifests itself without the presence and weight of the working class. The proletariat, as a class, still appears absent from the social scene.

Only within its unions and its party could the proletariat impose its direction on these demonstrations of malaise, advancing its class interests, with the methods of the working class and for its superior historical objectives.

Only in this way could the proletariat turn these demonstrations, currently led by the middle and precarious classes, to turn it against the capitalist state, or at least to obtain their neutrality in the revolutionary clash. Otherwise, the ambiguous position of these intermediary classes, composed of small-scale capitalists, traders and renters, makes them available to any orientation, up to the most obtuse nationalism and war-mongering.

This current distance of the working class from the theater of civil war is the result of almost a century of counter-revolution, which has transformed everywhere the once strong and authoritative working class movement and its red unions into effective collaborators with the bourgeoisie. This work culminated in the liquidation of the World Communist Party and the Communist Third International, by Stalinism.

The reorganization of the working class around its loyal trade unions, and the intervention of the party to direct it, is today the most important task, in light of the current events, for Communists around the world.

This process will be long and difficult, as was the reconstitution of the destroyed World Communist Party. But it is an inevitable and necessary battle, which we fought even in the worst counter-revolution, against all the detractors and liquidators who have turned to the enemy's side.

This reorganization will be fully expressed only with the return of the proletarian masses to the struggle all over the world.

Here lies the real fear of the world bourgeoisie, which today proves to be only clumsy in containing the desperate impatience of the crowds.

Today, with the same words and in the same centuries-old historical line of the class, the Party, faithful to Marxist principles after so many decades of counter-revolution, and on the eve of the great global economic crisis, is preparing to lead the revolution of tomorrow, towards its final goal: full communism, which will sweep away all the misery and suffering of the world of Capital.

### Uprisings in Iraq and Iran Harshly Repressed

The wave of protests that has been shaking Iraq since the beginning of October represents a new factor in the panorama of the Middle East, squeezed in the grip of imperialism and tormented in recent decades by wars between states, and through ethnic and confessional rivalries.

But in this case, for the first time in decades, social struggles have overcome the sectarian barriers between Sunnis and Shiites, which once divided the middle classes during a phase of advanced proletarianization. Hostility manifested itself towards the religious parties whose seats were assaulted and set on fire, expressing a rejection of the sectarian and confessional order of the existing state.

The demonstrations, which have been going on for two months now, have had as their theater the capital Baghdad, the important city of Basra, the Shiite religious centers of Karbala and Najaf, and numerous other urban centers, including Nassiriya, which has been the scene of particularly violent repression.

Protesters clashed everywhere with their bare hands against a security device that responded by shooting to kill. The

casualties are estimated at around 420 dead and 16,000 injured, including as many as 3,000 mutilated.

But this daily succession of bloodbaths does not stop the desperate young people who have been trying for weeks in Baghdad to attack the so-called Green Zone where the main government buildings are located.

Their demand is that the executive and the entire corrupt political class get out of the way. "The people want the fall of the regime" is the slogan that echoes in demonstrations in which the crowds defy the leaders.

Added to this are boycott actions such as the strike and the intermittent blockade of the port of Umm Qasr, on the Persian Gulf, where many commodities arrive from abroad, on which the country strongly depends. The motorway linking Basra to Umm Qasr has recently been blocked by demonstrators.

There are also reports of the involvement of oil and gas workers in the governorate of Basra, while according to a few unverified reports trade union aggregations have been formed in Baghdad and also in Basra, Najaf and Karbala. There is still a lack of information to assess how much the working class struggle is present in this wave of protests.

This development is still not inevitable for the dominant class, which will perhaps be able to divert popular anger towards nationalist objectives or a faded institutional secularism, a new Constitution to replace that of 2005, drawn up after the second Gulf War in the context of the US-led military occupation.

As Marxists we are well aware that the trajectory of the class struggle will be imposed on the proletariat by objective economic conditions.

The forces which push the Iraqi proletarians and semi-proletarians to revolt are the lack of economic prospects, the considerable unemployment rate (around 25% among young people), low wages, the bullying of a political class designated by the confessional communities, and the armed militias rampaging throughout the country, especially pro-Iranian ones.

It is precisely this cumbersome presence in the politics and economy of Iraq that feeds the nationalist and anti-Iranian folds of the revolt. This resentment of part of the Iraqis emerged at the beginning of November in the assault on the Iranian consulate in Karbala, stopped by the security forces killing 4 demonstrators, and then in Nassiriya, where the Iranian consulate was set on fire with more dead. It is a fact that some in the parades wave the national flag of a country that sees itself "humiliated by the foreigner" and that one would like "free and independent". All these are signs of how a classist maturation in the proletariat is still to come.

And it is precisely the lack of development of an independent role for the working class that, despite the dramatic situation, still leaves the bourgeoisie room to maneuver. At the end of November, a speech by the Shiite religious leader al-Sistani, advocate of the emancipation of Iraq from cumbersome Iranian protection, invited the government led by Adil Abdul Mahdi to step aside, obtaining the immediate resignation of the premier.

Yet it is precisely the political and economic ties that unite Iraq and Iran that are causing popular protest to spread and infect its powerful neighbor. Objective factors lead to a rebellion that has already crossed borders.

Since the beginning of the Iraqi revolt, the attitude of the Iranian government has been ruthless, with the protesters accused by the so-called Revolutionary Guide, the Ayatollah Khamenei, of being in the pay of Saudi Arabia and the United States, the latter a country with which Iran exercises a sort of condominium over Iraq. In fact, the Iraqi destabilization has assumed the character of an "internal problem" for Iran and for the theocratic regime of the

Islamic Republic.

It is no coincidence that a large part of the victims of the repression in Iraq were caused by the "Forces of Popular Mobilization" (in Arabic, Hashd al-Shaabi), a coalition of over 60 Shiite militias in arms, mostly pro-Iranian, which contain up to 150 thousand men. These have acted on several occasions, usually at night, assaulting the gathering of demonstrators with automatic weapons and sowing death and terror.

In recent years, especially since 2014, the role of Shiite militias in Iraqi society has been greatly increased by the war against the Islamic State, thus opening a parenthesis of growing religious fanaticism, in some ways unprecedented in Iraq's recent history.

Iran's strong influence on Iraq is not only military but also economic. 45% of the electricity supplied to Iraq comes from Iran, the exchange between the two countries amounts to 12 billion dollars a year, while the Iraqi economy draws considerable resources from the Iranian pilgrims who visit the Shiite shrines of Karbala and Najaf in the millions every year.

But it is not only through imitation that in mid-November a wave of protests also shook Iran, whose economy has to deal with the sanctions imposed by the US after President Donald Trump announced the unilateral withdrawal of the United States from the failed Iranian nuclear agreement in May 2018. Although Iran has become a considerable industrial power on a regional scale in recent decades, its finances have been affected by a significant drop in oil sales, a figure that accounts for 40% of Iranian exports. Where before the sanctions Iran exported 2.4 million barrels every day, these have now fallen to 500,000. With sanctions and trade wars, the big imperialist countries are trying to pass their crisis on to the poorest countries and the second-rate powers.

It is not surprising that in Iran, in recession with an inflation rate of 35% and a devaluation of the rial against the dollar which was 60% in 2018, the protest was triggered by a 50% increase in the price of gasoline from 20 to just over 30 cents per liter and a reduction from 250 to 60 liters in the rationing quota above which the price rises by 300%. As soon as the government measure was announced in many cities of the country, tens of thousands of Iranians took to the streets, giving rise to demonstrations that immediately took on a very violent character.

The Ayatollah regime responded to the attacks on banks and state institutions with an angry repression that caused perhaps more than two hundred deaths, to which was added a propaganda that, as in Iraq, tried to pass the protest off as an orchestration by the United States, Israel and Saudi Arabia, according to the abused script aimed at denying everywhere the social character of the riots in order to smuggle them as internal facts to the conflicts between states, ethnic groups and religions. The state media also showed images of a looted mosque in a suburb of Tehran where demonstrators allegedly set fire to copies of the Koran. This circumstance, if not a staging of state propaganda, would be another sign of growing intolerance towards those who claim to rule by divine investiture.

The propaganda of the Shiite clergy in power in Tehran could also rely on the stances of the US administration which, through the mouth of Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, said it supported those who demonstrated in the square. After a speech by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on the alleged foreign conspiracy, the regime called its supporters together in pro-government demonstrations.

In the meantime, however, the executive has been forced to quickly mitigate the social effects, granting subsidies to about 60 million citizens (out of a total population of 80 million) deemed most in need. But this measure did not stop the demonstrations, which were only sedated after a bloodbath. The government has also totally blocked the Internet, cutting Iran off from the world.

The death penalty has already been announced for the leaders of the protest while mercenary militias have been unleashed everywhere inside and outside the country, including in Iraq and Lebanon.

In fact, in Lebanon, the inter-classist, but also inter-confessional demonstrations that are agitating the country are questioning the sectarian order of the State, and for this reason they are clashing with the pro-Iranian Hezbollah squads.

The wave of Middle Eastern discontent that is overflowing beyond the borders between the States is confronted everywhere with the worn flag of religious obscurantism, utilized with ever more brazen arrogance by both Iran and its regional arch-enemies such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

But it will be up to the Middle Eastern proletariat to reject every ethnic and religious flag as well as bourgeois nationalism, which alternately presents itself as secular and liberal or totalitarian and confessional, but which is nevertheless devoted to the nauseating idolatry of the money fetish.

The working class will then recognize itself for what it really is, above all frontiers, in war against the power of the bourgeoisie class, in all its infinite social components cloaked in their multifarm and iridescent ideologies, superstition, and empty illusions.

Then the red flags and the clear, unmistakable and proud words of the working class and communism will once again rise above the crowds.

Our leaflet distributed in the Middle East

### Social awakening in Lebanon

Since October 17, there have been protests in the streets of Lebanon. This time it is not a new bloody civil war fomented by the various imperialist forces, nor is it the armed intervention of any state in the region. The proletarians and the middle class, in a rapid process of proletarianization, have taken to the streets with unusual demonstrations and calls for unity and solidarity among the various ethnic groups and religious groups, to denounce their living conditions, constantly threatened by the economic and governmental crisis into which the country has plunged, expressing hatred for all the politicians and their corruption.

Lebanon, at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, home of various ethnic, religious and national groups, holder of a glorious past, a place of constant conflict and maneuvering of the various regional imperialist interests, is now in a new situation.

The past governments of Lebanon in recent times, due to the composite subdivision of its people, are unstable and the result of sectarian agreements between the different ethnic groups, and in turn of these with whatever imperialism is currently dominant. This is the case of the current government, led by President Al Harari, which is the result of the consultation of various bourgeois political sectors, including Hezbollah, Christians, Sunnis, under the aegis of the international bourgeoisie.

But the economic situation of the country - with a debt among the three largest in the world, 152% of GDP, with unemployment of up to 37% among young people, still in the reconstruction phase after the bloody civil war - is unloaded on the young Lebanese proletariat.

The government, in constant deficit, resorts to the users of global capitalism, who in turn demand guarantees. This "help" is for the benefit of a bourgeoisie fully consenting and participating in the capitalist chess game; it is not for the improvement of the living conditions of the proletariat against which the measures of the cuts are directed "for the good of the country".

The austerity measures imposed by the government, such as the cut in pensions, in the salaries of civil servants and, the last straw, the tax on WhatsApp of 6 dollars a month, drove the revolt. In

### UK Election Solves Nothing

We can only present a short comment on the recent UK election. We promise a proper discussion on what it means in terms of the "bread" rather than reviews of the "circus".

Our attitude towards elections should be well known to our readers. As we said about the 2019 election in Italy:

"That it is the electors who choose [government] is just a cock-and-bull story: the whole of the mass media, which easily shapes so-called public opinion, is owned and controlled by big capital, who use it to spread their lies; and if they quarrel among themselves it is just for show or due to internal conflicts within its colossal interest groups."

In all bourgeois elections there are lies on all sides. But in this election, the lies and false promises were particularly egregious. And the biggest liar of all won the day. What is most striking is those who voted for the winner accepted that everything he said was a lie. Their attitude was "all politicians lie, so let's vote for the biggest liar".

The media has been on about the defection of Labour voters to the Conservatives in England's North and Midlands. It would be too easy to write something trite, misleading and dangerous based on a relatively small number of votes cast. But there is a lie at the heart of this too, the lie that the historic decline of British industry is due to membership of the EU and that Brexit will change all that.

The demise of the Corbynist project should be seen as the last gasp of Stalinist popular frontism in the UK.

Moreover, the outcome of the election indicates further trouble ahead for British capitalism, which is taking a harder stance towards the EU, with the clear intention of sidestepping certain aspects of the bloc's regulatory environment.

Finally, the huge majority vote for Scottish nationalism and the first ever nationalist majority in the North of Ireland mark the further political fracturing of the UK.

a country where most of the working class does not earn more than \$300 a month and unemployment among the youngest is so great the explosion was only a matter of time and opportunity.

Capitalism on a global level is showing the beginning of a new general economic crisis, the bourgeoisie is desperately trying to raise the rate of profit, through various measures that worsen the living and working conditions of the proletariat, the working class, the class that produces surplus value. Instead it is constantly falling.

The series of demonstrations all over the world appear in reaction to austerity, claiming better living and working conditions, showing a tendency to awaken the proletarian class, which does not distinguish between nation, race, or religion. Ecuador, Chile, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Haiti, now Lebanon.

In the case of the Middle East, in a small country that has experienced an endless and bloody civil war, fueled by the tactics of dividing the bourgeoisie into groups of sectarian unity, the unity of action that workers today show around the defense of their common economic interests is a step forward. This in somewhat new "national unity", however, sees Palestinian Arab proletarians, Christian Arabs and Muslim Arabs, and others, side by side around the same needs.

The former unity of Arab capitalism, pan-Arabism, is today showing itself as a forgotten fraud of the past, which is giving way to the real and only progressive struggle: that of the classes, first claiming better living and working conditions, then a revolutionary political future.

### Mobilizations in Latin America

Popular mobilizations are going on in several Latin American countries: Chile, Bolivia, Colombia and Ecuador. Even in their diverse situations they have a common denominator: proletarians, semi-proletarians and petite-bourgeois take to the streets to express their (*over*)

