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Broadsheet of the Internationalists

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We are all Anti-Capitalist Now

The demonstrations against the WTO, World Bank, and IMF at Seattle and Washington in the last few months are signs that the capitalist system is not "the end of history". But high profile though these demonstrations have been they also show how difficult the road to revolution is.

In the first place, inspiring though it might be, it will not be by demonstrating alone that we will halt capitalism. That still has to be done at the point where its profits are produced. And here it is only the working class who produce the profits who can do this by acting collectively. Only by paralysing the system of production will we bring it down

But another obstacle facing the working class was clear at Washington. Workers in the union part of the demonstration were not only herded away from the various more-or-less reformists demanding that the World Bank etc. become more democratic. They were also treated to anti-Chinese xenophobia by the union leaders of the SEIU public sector union who demanded that China be banned from the WTO since it was "cheap Chinese labour which was taking US jobs". This is similar to the reactionary nationalism that workers in Britain have been subjected to over the Rover closure.

The obscenity of the capitalist system which demands that half the world goes hungry to keep profits up and labour costs down around the planet gradually may have begun to sink home. However it is one thing to be "anti-capitalist". It is quite another to understand what the alternative is. Capitalism reformed is still capitalism. The same problems of exploitation, starvation and imperialist war would always reassert themselves. History doesn't offer a thousand and one solutions. The only alternative to capitalism is a society where production is for need, not for profit; where money, war and national frontiers have all been abolished. It is the same society envisioned by Karl Marx 150 years ago. But to get to communism workers have to embrace the communist programme and create their own class organisations. This is the meaning of the May Day statement we are printing in this international edition of **Aurora**.

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Read our journals:

Revolutionary Perspectives and Internationalist Communist

May Day 2000 — International and Internationalist

Fellow Workers

So called *globalisation* is doing enormous harm to our class, not just in the poorest countries but all over the world. Everywhere unemployment and marginalisation, wage cuts, pension and service cuts are on the increase.

Today's globalisation is the latest step in the process of capital concentration.

1. Five or six gigantic industrial-financial centres operating across five continents either directly or indirectly control 75% of world production of goods and services. Today the big capitalists are able to split up entire productive processes. They can disperse the manufacture of individual parts to whichever country suits them best and reassemble them wherever they like.
2. The volume of speculative financial capital has swollen with the crisis in production and accumulation. Every day the financial speculators shift a far higher amount of capital around the globe than the value traded in goods and services. The result is a potentially explosive situation which is being criticised from all sides. This is the concrete reality of so-called globalisation. It is in capital's interest to try and control it by standardising legal and administrative conditions all over the globe. This is what the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is trying to do through its more or less difficult summits. These regularly fail for various reasons, the first being the usual capitalist one: the clash of interests of one country or a group of countries against the rest.

All countries without exception, North or South, American, European or Asian, operate against the working class and — in the final analysis — against humanity.

The crisis of capital accumulation which began in the early Seventies has been able to go on without a dramatic resolution (world war or proletarian revolution) thanks to two key simultaneous events. These are

- * the microprocessor revolution, which has radically changed the whole process of production and distribution, allowing manufacturing itself to be globalised and above all bringing enormous increases in productivity;
- * the implosion of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact — i.e. one of the victorious imperialist fronts that came out of the Second World War. For the time being this is increasing the success of the international bourgeoisie's campaign against communism, against working class struggle, reinforcing the idea that capitalism can last for ever.

The USSR's "real socialism" was in reality state capitalism. The great lie of Stalinism in the 1930s has been refined to a fine art by the Western bourgeoisie.

Hundreds of millions of proletarians who saw the USSR as the beacon of socialism and who thus provided hundreds of thousands of victims of repression, found themselves...without a beacon, disorientated and open to capitalist blackmail: either under bourgeois democracy or in Soviet-style gulags.

All the forces which prospered on the basis of that myth — from the Communist Parties to the more or less fanatical supporters of liberal capitalism and its needs. Today they have control of the state in many of the metropolitan countries, imposing the cuts in wages, jobs and living conditions that capital requires. Others on the left of the Communist Parties and the unions are reviving the old reformist policies, but with a new image, opposing the form globalisation is taking, and fooling themselves into thinking capitalism can be modified into something less devastating and "more humane".

The result is that the capitalists are now carrying out a real war against the world working class, with hardly any resistance, and the march towards barbarism and the devastation of the planet meets no serious obstacles. Three quarters of humanity go hungry whilst a few dozen billionaires each possess more than the entire gross product of whole states. This is the most dramatic illustration of capitalist barbarism.

Fellow workers

This Mayday 2000 sees the class struggle at a critical point, with the bourgeoisie attacking an unarmed working class

Workers have always had to struggle to defend their own immediate interests but in the past they also had the prospect of changing the world to one without bosses where production will be for the satisfaction of human needs, not profit.

Either we allow capitalism to continue hammering us and following the path to barbarism and war, or we revive our struggle and reorganise the political forces of the international proletarian revolution.

Fellow workers

The international capitalist class, aided by reformist and nationalist forces, sets the workers of one country against those of another:

- * it starts wars to force the proletariat to fight in the name of religious or ethnic fanaticism
- * it paves the way for attacks on wages and working class living conditions by fuelling xenophobia and the division between native and immigrant workers.

Racism and xenophobia, like

nationalism (**all nationalisms**) and religious fanaticism are the worst enemies of the working class. It is only through the revival of working class struggle against the capitalists that we can overcome these scourges.

We have to start from where we are at now. The international division of labour and the destruction of the traditional working class have created new conditions for the organisation of proletarian struggle. It is no longer possible, if it ever has been, to count on the union organisations (of any kind) to defend working class interests. Bargaining with a capitalism desperate for profit can only mean accepting its demands. Serious reorganisation of class action has to start from the bottom through elected and recallable delegates from workplaces and neighbourhoods; and with the creation of mass organs of struggle, in the struggle itself. Great examples from recent decades — like the Polish workers in August 1980 — show that if these organs linger on once negotiations begin, they inevitably become unions where the forces of compromise and reaction (Walesa) gain the upper hand.

It is therefore essential to have a revolutionary political organisation (the international party of the proletariat) working inside these class bodies, giving voice to the revolutionary programme, struggling against compromises (which mean accepting capitalist domination), and leading them in a revolutionary direction. This political force, the international party of the proletariat, must have settled accounts with the counter-revolutionary experience of Stalinism, with the social democratic inheritance of the Third International, and must have established the methodological, theoretical and political basis of the revolutionary programme.

The Internationalists who slowly but surely are gathering in the International Bureau for the Revolutionary Party fight on this level and have already started the process which leads to the construction of the party. We call on working class militants and anyone who sees the political validity of this to join us in this difficult task since without it capitalist barbarism, aided and abetted, however unwittingly by radical reformists of one sort or another, will continue towards its victory.

**The International Bureau For the Revolutionary Party
1st May 2000**

Communist Workers Organisation (GB)
Partito Comunista Internazionale
(Battaglia Comunista - Italy)
Internationalist Notes and Los Angeles
Workers Voice (USA)
Notes Internationalistes (Canada)
Círculo Comunista Internacionalista
(South America)

If you want the sack, wave the bosses flag

Tens of thousands are threatened with job losses due to the planned cutbacks at Rover. This is just part of the bosses attacks as they rearrange production on a worldwide scale. At this moment there are also job losses threatened at Ford, particularly Dagenham, Goodyear tyres in Wolverhampton and throughout the shipbuilding industry.

Many workers marched through Birmingham in April but they were sidetracked by the usual trades union leaders and Labour MP's. Those windbags are not on the side of workers fighting for their own interests. The Labour Party and trades unions are part of the problem. Their job is to manage capitalism. That means they have to find ways and means of getting workers to accept everything that is thrown at them. The fact is that capitalism is in deep crisis and however much we put up with job losses, declining health and social services, harder work for lower wages, they're going to be back for more. Workers are going to have to start fighting on their own account for something new and better. **That means organising across industry, trade union and national divisions.**

Left Nationalists Against the Working Class

The rhetoric of Tony Woodley, a 'left wing' trades union leader, and the rest of the Labour/trades union bandwagon – including their little helpers in the SWP – has all been about defending 'our' British industry against those nasty Germans. The Union Jacks on the Birmingham march were a direct result of that stupidity.

Many marchers were misled into a futile and dangerous blind alley. It's a complete lie that 'British capitalism' can survive on its own and an even bigger lie that British firms care more about their workforce than 'foreign' ones. Such an exercise can only boost the bosses' belief that workers can still be conned by the old patriotic clap-trap.

The bosses of all countries are thrashing around to screw profits out of workers the world over. The British bosses work hand in glove with their national equivalents elsewhere to restructure industries and destroy welfare provision. They have built special organisations like the WTO and the IMF to help in part of this process.

Workers have no country

Nation states are the bosses structures for building and defending their factories and other institutions by which they make their profits from our labours. No state in the world is any different and the same applies to the newer transnational state bodies like the European Union.

Workers' interests are totally different. We have no interest in making more sacrifices to keep up the profits of the businesses and finance houses which leech off our labour. The national bosses' club – the United Kingdom parliament, the civil service, local governments, the legal system – which Labour and the trades unions help to run, all claim to be democratic but they all exist to defend the system where profits come before everything else. They are there to resist any idea that the majority of us can take over and run things for ourselves.

Workers in Britain, France, Germany, the Far East, South America or anywhere else are being forced backwards by their 'own' national ruling classes. Every Union Jack (or English, Scottish, Welsh or Irish banner) on workers' demonstrations is a sign of how we are being divided against each other.

Workers don't own the factories – we have no national interest – Workers of all countries unite!

Our Basic Positions

- 1. We aim to become part of the future world working class party which will guide the class struggle towards the establishment of a stateless, classless, moneyless society without exploitation, national frontiers or standing armies and in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all (Marx): Communism.*
- 2. Such a society will need a revolutionary state for its introduction. This state will be run by workers' councils, consisting of instantly recallable delegates from every section of the working class. Their rule is called the dictatorship of the proletariat because it cannot exist without the forcible overthrow and keeping down of the capitalist class worldwide.*
- 3. The first stage in this is the political organisation of class-conscious workers and their eventual union into an international political party for the promotion of world revolution.*

- 4. The Russian October Revolution of 1917 remains a brilliant inspiration for us. It showed that workers could overthrow the capitalist class. Only the isolation and decimation of the Russian working class destroyed their revolutionary vision of 1917. What was set up in Russia in the 1920's and after was not communism but centrally planned state capitalism. There have as yet been no communist societies anywhere in the world.*
- 5. The International Bureau for the Revolutionary Party was founded by the heirs of the Italian Left who tried to fight the political degeneration of the Russian Revolution and the Comintern in the 1920's. We are continuing the task which the Russian Revolution promised but failed to achieve – the freeing of the workers of the world and the establishment of communism. Join us!*

Capitalism's war against humanity

The proliferation of land mines is a horrific illustration of capitalist barbarism

Communists call on the working class to create a new social order, not simply because a different society could be better, but because the present social system is rapidly sinking in a quagmire of human suffering, where king profit reigns supreme regardless of the multiplication of poverty, unemployment, exploitation and war tormenting the overwhelming majority of humanity not invited to a table reserved for a declining number of billionaires and their lackeys.

If capitalism produces for profit, not for human need, this principle is sickeningly magnified in the production and use of one extremely nasty commodity whose use value of maiming human beings is a vivid reminder of how capitalist profit making necessitates a permanent war against humanity. That commodity is the antipersonnel land mine, so named because its prime target is not tanks or other military vehicles, but people. Some 350 types of antipersonnel land mine have been manufactured, many specifically designed to wound horrifically rather than kill outright. These slow down enemy military operations as a maimed soldier requires assistance that a dead one does not. However, the majority of victims of these antipersonnel land mines are civilians. This is not accidental, the purpose of using these explosives against civilians is to empty territory, destroy food sources, create refugee flows and to spread terror. Consider these examples; the Khmer Rouge during the Cambodian conflict placed mines in rice paddies, virtually halting agriculture. In Somalia, 1988, residents fleeing the bombing of Hargeysa returned home to "discover" land mines placed in their abandoned houses. In Afghanistan and Cambodia, 35% more land could be cultivated if farmers did not fear to tread on the land. A child losing a leg will need around 15 artificial limbs during his or her life, costing around \$125 each. That is equivalent to what most people in Angola earn in three months. Add the immense psychological suffering, loss of earnings and social exclusion which the victims have to endure.

Demining is an arduous process. A single antipersonnel land mine costs between \$3 and \$15 but to remove one can cost hundreds of dollars and loss of life. Take Cambodia as an example. It has been estimated that even if the funds were available, removing all land mines there would take a century. Using current technology to demine the planet would cost \$33 billion and take a thousand years. In most places, demining is done in the old fashioned way. A man, or child, crawls on his belly, probing the soil ahead, inch by inch, clearing 200 to 500 square feet per day. To clear 5000 mines costs the life of one deminer, and injures two others. Once again, the insanity of capitalist logic is exposed. The companies manufacturing mines profit from clearing them. For example, a former mine producer from Germany won a \$100 000 000 demining contract in Kuwait. In Mozambique a \$7 500 000 contract for clearing priority roads went to a consortium of three companies - two of which had developed mines. In Angola, a country with one of the highest concentrations of land mines in the world¹, de-miners face a new problem, mines aimed specifically at them. They have found mines with two types of switch connected to them. One detonates the mine on exposure to light, the other contains a magnetic loop which

detonates when it senses mine sweeping equipment. Angola now has some 70 000 amputees as a result of land mines, the highest in the world. Mines continue to be placed by Angola's warring parties, farmers abandon land, cities are unable to get food supplies. As a result hundreds of thousands face starvation, severe malnutrition, disease etc.

On a world scale, millions of antipersonnel land mines remain buried in the soil of the planet, and more are being put down. The 1997 "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and their Destruction" has not yet been signed by almost 60 countries, including some of the greatest land mine manufacturers².

In all probability this is yet another problem which will only be resolved by the victorious proletariat, as capitalism's economic crisis, the driving force behind modern warfare, manipulated and intensified by the great powers seeking to further their imperialist interests, can only deepen. Like many other important environmental issues, it expresses capitalism's lack of concern for anything but short term accumulation and disregard for our health and livelihood. Any solution to the problems of war, pollution and the proletariat, outside of the revolutionary abolition of capitalism, can only prolong the conditions which aggravate these problems.

Ant

1. Average number of land mines per square mile in the nine most densely mined countries (United Nations Department of Human Affairs, 1996)

Rwanda	25
Iran	25
Angola	31
Afghanistan	40
Iraq	59
Egypt	60
Croatia	137
Cambodia	143
Bosnia + Herzegovina	152

2. The treaty went into effect on March 1st 1999. As of January 6th 2000 it had been signed by 137 countries and ratified by 90 of them.

Public Meetings

Barnsley

Saturday 3rd June 12 Noon
Victoria Hotel
Sheffield Road
Nationalism against the working class

London

Saturday 17th June 2.30pm
Conway Hall (Lobby Room)
Red Lion Square
Holborn
The crisis in the car industry

Newcastle

Saturday 20th May 2.30pm
Central Library (Seminar Room)
Princess Square
Newcastle upon Tyne
The politics of Sylvia Pankhurst