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Political

Platform

***Failure in the East!**

***Imperialism and Dominated
Countries**

***Failure in the West?**

Booklet # 1

Communist marxist leninist Organization VOIE PROLETARIENNE

FRANCE, April 1994

Contents of the 4 booklets

of our platform:

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ORIENTING, STIMULATING THE POLITICAL DEBATE

This political platform comes in time. Indeed, we are living in a period *of great confusion*.

A confusion brought by the collapse of so-called “socialism”; by the failure of the reformist left, by the withdrawal of labour movements, by the transformation of national liberation movements into dictatorships over the people, by the unending capitalist crisis, by the rise of religious fanaticism, of nationalism, etc.

We had to contribute to the reconstruction of a working class policy. In order not to be on the defensive, not only to be *against*, and to open real revolutionary outlooks, we have above all to *clear things up*.

Our previous platform, published in '77, was getting old on several points: our reflexion and our experience had shown us the errors and the shortcomings it held. We had to take into account our evolution.

For two years, we have been working on a synthesis of our political achievements and we debated publicly on the platform project. Which were our basic aims ?

We needed to gather our viewpoints scattered in our publications; to take stock of our achievements and of our shortcomings and errors. We needed to present in a few dozen pages the general line of our organization, so that it could be judged and debated.

It is also a necessity that all anti-capitalist militants can find their *position* in regard with our orientation. This is how we want to play a unifying role and to do so, the first thing was to outline our own position. Indeed, we wish that a clear debate should open concerning the essential matters in today's class struggle. We want to smash the sectarian withdrawals, and the desperate curling up of certain militants, their self-cocooning, useless but full of good conscience.

We didn't want to elaborate a *theoretical* program, but a *political* platform, answering today's questions. This is why the analysis underlying our political line and tactic will not be found here. Readers, please refer to our other publications (Unfortunately only available in French, so far !).

This platform, as you see it, with its strong and weak points, is a *necessary and sufficient* tool for the political and organizational unity of all who wish to be real communists.

Necessary to have a common political practice. Necessary to fight sectarianism. Are we not witnessing today, among the dominant individualism, the falling back to their narrow entrenchments of many a political organization, or "mass" organization, and even of many an isolated militant ? Are we not witnessing localism consolidate, its partial activity continues on unruffled, though we are convinced that, sooner or later, it will have to widen ? But what miracle could help us build a global fight without finding the means to do so ; and especially the main one : the Revolutionary Party ?

Sufficient today to answer the essential problems of the class struggle. This is not the time to stress the details that could divide us, but it is to unite on an orientation, to implement and develop it.

The Executive Committee of Voie Prolétarienne.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOKLET #1

The first booklet of this platform (the one you are holding in your hand) makes a general survey of the world situation and draws its main characteristics.

To begin with, it deals with the countries that belonged to the former Eastern Bloc, in order to understand that they were far from socialism and communism – rather they were under state-capitalism, and this state-capitalism failed.

*Later, we shall examine the so-called “Third World” countries – in fact dominated by **imperialism**. A domination which is still alive and kicking, and which holds on, thanks to the help of the local bourgeoisies of these very countries, and also thanks to humanitarian aid.*

At last, this booklet deals with our countries of “liberal democracy”, where the exploitation and the alienation of a multi-national working class is still fierce, where periods of crisis follow periods of expansion and vice versa in a permanently restructuring capitalism.

Booklet #2 starts from these established facts to take stock of the revolutions in the Eastern countries as well as in the Third World countries. It draws the main lessons for the construction of a new revolutionary project.

Booklet #3 brings the attention back to the situation in France and on the responsibilities of revolutionaries in this evaluation. What kind of tactical axis ? What kind of slogans for the main matters ?

Finally, Booklet #4 deals with the means to reach the following goal, and to implement the following policy : the reconstruction of a truly communist party. It is the logical conclusion of this platform.

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100 - FAILURE IN THE EAST

110 - IN THE EAST, IT WAS NOT COMMUNISM

The bourgeois are getting much profit from the fall of Eastern Countries to convince us of the definitive failure of marxism. They'd like to persuade us that it is useless and dangerous to fight against exploitation, that the struggle for social liberation is the struggle for a Utopia. But their attempts only show one thing : that **the "specter of Communism" is still scaring them out of their wits.**

111 - In the USSR, it was not communism, but state-capitalism.

The difference between socialism and capitalism does not lie mainly in **the juridical form of property : private or state property.** It is essentially **the social relations of production, the relation between the classes** which differentiate them.

In the East, just like here, **these relations were relations of exploitation, oppression and domination;** and not relations of cooperation and solidarity. On the one hand, the almighty leaders with advantages and privileges thanks to the working class's labour. On the other hand, the managed ones, the working masses, doomed to undergo shortages and to submit to the decisions of those who are claiming that they represent them.

Factory despotism, submission to foremen, to the bureaucracy and to the police,... were all daily aspects of the workers' lives. Repression and dictatorship weighed on the rebelling workers and all the opponents. It may seem to have been used **more systematically** there than in developed capitalist countries, but it looked very much like what **the people of most dominated countries must endure.**

This bureaucratic system was entirely built to produce more and more, **whatever the social cost.** It only led to an economic disaster, an ecological disaster (e.g. Chernobyl or the Aral Sea...) and a social disaster. Man was just a pawn in a game. Be it state or liberal, capitalism always has **the same priorities.** To ensure its domination, the bourgeoisie of the USSR fed chauvinism, nationalism and anti semitism. The relations that the USSR kept with the so-called "socialist" nations were made of domination, inequality, and attempts to dominate other peoples by all means, economic or military : Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, Ethiopia... Was this communism ? Certainly not ! It was pure **imperialism !**

What went bankrupt in the East is therefore **capitalism under its state-capitalistic form.** What went bankrupt in the so-called ex-"socialist" countries is exploitation under this particular system.

If the bloc ruled by state-capitalism collapsed, it is because it had been coming, during the 80s, to a state of **economic freeze,** worsened by a world crisis of the imperialist system.

Beside these economic freezes, there were also several **labour uprisings** in Poland and Rumania, nationalist turmoils, all consequences of the economic crisis and the unequal development in the ex-USSR, as well as of the sinking into the Afghan War. This situation led to the Gorbachevian reforms : Glasnost and Perestroika. Far from easing the contradictions of the USSR's **state-capitalism,** these reforms sparked their collapse. The bitter return of economic liberalism shows how the conditions were ripe, while any real worker opposition was absent.

112 - The exploited are still exploited.

These upheavals made **significant transformations** possible in the bourgeois domination, and new bourgeois elements came to power – although they are often former state-capitalists turned to liberalism. But what changes did it bring to the workers and the exploited ?

We were told that the fall of this state-system would bring abundance. **Never before has such a level of poverty ever been reached.** After the previous shortages provoked by incoherences in the bureaucratic planning and by administrative competition, **massive unemployment** appeared on the scene, as well as **restrictions** imposed, not by shortages this time, but by the drastic decrease in purchasing power.

Privatizations have supported **speculation** rather than production. Most of the time, the former bourgeois “Nomenklatura” has remained at the head of the firms now said to be “free”. It has not been difficult for the former bourgeoisie to adapt itself to the new situation. Democracy and liberty were announced : today workers are still exploited, their combative organizations still repressed. Multi-partyism and strife between bourgeois factions to share the crumbs have stood on the deserted battlefield. Insomuch that **the discredit of the parliamentary system is growing quickly**.

Peace was announced; but never before have **nationalist conflicts** been so murderous, both in the former Soviet empire and in Yugoslavia. Never before had the minorities of the new states been so oppressed.

In short, the bourgeois ideologists had promised us a new world, but all we can see around is damn old. The labour and all the other exploited workers have merely seen a change in **the form of their exploitation**. Yesterday, this exploitation was perpetrated in the name of a falsified socialism. Today, it is perpetrated in the name of liberal democracy.

120 - AN ALTERNATIVE IS NECESSARY ! BUT WHICH ?

121 - The collapse of the USSR : an illusion is vanishing.

The example of the USSR is particularly important. The October 1917 Revolution had involved the country into a transition toward communism. But **the class struggle was holding on at every level** : Party, State, relations of production, foreign policy, etc. In the thirties, the bourgeoisie became the ruling class again. The experience of the evolution of the USSR, and the lessons we could draw from it, have been among the bases of the creation of Voie Prolétarienne. If for the international bourgeoisie, the collapse of the USSR is temporarily minus an internal conflict, it is for us, communists, **an illusion widespread in the labour movement that vanishes**. An illusion which was wrongly said to be the alternative. But today, no revolutionary force has yet succeeded in taking advantage of this disillusion.

122 - The alternative has still to be built.

To face the bulldozer offensive that the bourgeoisie has launched following the collapse in the East, **we must make progress on the communist project**, on the tasks of the transition, on the positive or negative evaluation of history. It was already necessary before the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. Today, the wonderings of revolutionaries and of those who refuse the capitalist logic are urgently growing.

To give outlooks to all those who refuse the capitalist order, to all those who are disgusted by the scandals of bourgeois politicians, both right- and left-winged; to avoid that some part of the confused masses turn against foreign-born factions of the working class..., **a communist alternative has to be built**, so that workers and all the exploited progressively have their lives under their own control; instead of giving it to some experts. Including political experts who can turn into bureaucrats, that is, in the end, into new exploiters.

200 - IMPERIALISM IS THE MAIN ONE TO BLAME FOR THE SUFFERINGS OF THE DOMINATED COUNTRIES

210 - IS “IMPERIALISM” AN EXAGGERATED WORD ?

Though the aggravation of poverty in dominated countries is obvious, though starvation and civil wars have become highly mediatized realities, **many deny imperialism today**. They speak of “imbalance” between “North” and “South”, of “more or less advanced” countries, of “unequal development” of capitalism, and even of countries more or less favoured by natural conditions. They are ready to commiserate with the consequences of this situation, but refuse to seek its **causes**. And yet, this imperialist domination is the reality that African, Latin-American and Asian peoples must endure each and every day.

211 - Imperialism is first an economic and financial domination.

Imperialism is before all a **financial domination**, through the role of the dollar, of the IMF, of the World Bank, etc... The most striking manifestation of this domination is debt : a wonderful way to keep the indebted countries under obedience, strangled by so-called “choices” they have formerly made; choices actually imposed by the imperialist powers and their local flunkys.

Imperialism is also made of **industrial investments** in dominated countries, which enables the control by a few countries of most of the world’s production and of the profit derived from the exploitation of workers.

Imperialism is made of **the control of markets, supplies and prices of the main raw materials**, both mineral and plant, which are absolutely essential to development and accumulation in imperialist countries. Example : Oil, a central stake in the Gulf War.

This economic and financial domination causes an international division of labour which forces dominated countries into the role of **raw material and cheap manpower suppliers**, and which prevents them from any autonomous development.

212 - Imperialism is a technological and cultural domination.

Imperialism is also the **cultural domination** exerted by powers which are imposing their vision of the world on all countries, their way of thinking, of consuming, in a word their culture, denying and crushing other peoples’ culture.

213 - Imperialism is a military domination.

Imperialism is composed of setting up, all over the planet, **military bases** belonging to the imperialist powers. It consists of **the intervention** by “Rapid Deployment Forces” in Zaïre, in Chad, in Somalia, etc... It consists in

the sending of North-American “Marines” to Grenada, to Peru; it consists of so-called “anti-drug” or “democratic” actions which are only warring actions against peoples to support dictatorships.

214 - Imperialism is a political domination.

Imperialism is also the existence of **remainders of the colonial empires**. For France : the West Indies, Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, New Caledonia, Reunion, Polynesia, St-Pierre et Miquelon... They are all colonies used as bases of operations for the economic, political and military presence of imperialism all around the world.

But nowadays, imperialism is above all the **keeping of formally independant countries in a state of economic, financial and military dependence**. Their political independence is thus emptied out of any reality. This global dependence can take shape in a semi-colonial kind of dependence toward a particular imperialist nation. This is the case for the African countries of the “Zone Franc” toward France.

215 - Imperialism is all this.

It consists in the progressive penetration, in all regions of the world, of **trade exchange relations** (rapports d'échanges marchands) and, in a more or less developed manner, of **capitalistic relations**. A penetration, though the imperialist domination itself makes it difficult to accumulate on national bases.

Imperialism consists of the inclination to **destroy traditional economies**. It leads to peasant poverty, starvation and hunger riots. It leads to rural depopulation and immigration, as consequences of the competition imposed by the system and of monoculture which is ruining the small peasants and enriching the great landowners – these very landowners who can be found in the governments supported by the imperialist powers.

To sum up, it consists of an economic, political, military, social and financial system ruled by a handful of powers **which are imposing their laws against peoples**. A constituted system armed with many an organization : the World Bank, the IMF and its “structural adjustment programs”, the GATT and its regimentation of world trade, the imperialist monopolies, and so on...

Imperialism is **one stage in the development of capitalism**, which leads to the division of the world between a handful of oppressive countries and a wide majority of dominated countries. If some of the latter succeeded in becoming dependant capitalist countries, such as Brazil, Korea, Algeria or Iran, most of them are kept in a situation of **semi-feudal and/or semi-colonial countries**; i.e. countries where the question of the distribution of the land to the peasants, and the question of national independence, are present and central questions.

220 - IN DOMINATED COUNTRIES TOO, THERE ARE EXPLOITERS AND EXPLOITED.

We haven't made a precise and complete analysis of each and every **dominated society**. But among the diversity of their situations, a certain number of characteristics in local class relations can be found.

221 - Ruling classes have a very narrow margin of action.

Today, most of the dominated countries have obtained their **political independence**. But the various bourgeois factions that appeared in these countries, could remain in power only while maintaining dependent relations with imperialism.

Historically, the first kind of bourgeoisie to appear has been a **compradore bourgeoisie**. Its income was earned thanks to the exportation of raw materials and to the importation of consumer goods. This bourgeoisie was the commercial agent of the imperialist countries.

Then, in many countries, a **bureaucratic bourgeoisie** came into existence, using the State machinery as a tool for its attempt to make a national accumulation possible. This bureaucratic bourgeoisie is the result of a fusion, within the State machinery, between **modernized semi-feudal landowners, local industrial or agricultural capitalists** and **bourgeois working in the State machinery** itself, such as the Army in particular. This bourgeoisie has been able to assert its authority only thanks to the development of State corporatism and protectionism. It opposed the compradore bourgeoisie, who respected economic liberalism since it served its

own interest in a better way. However, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie has not been able to escape from economic, financial, military, and therefore political, dependence toward imperialism.

The contradictions between these two factions of the great bourgeoisie are real ones. But they are in no way the sign of a will to break free from imperialism. Therefore, **they cannot be of any help for the peoples' liberation**. Whatever their ambitions or their means (the control of resources like oil, voluntarist policies...), they cannot break free from the imperialist guardianship. **Neither puppets, nor autonomous**, they can only submit to the rules of the game settled by a market entirely controlled by the great powers. They could at best try to gain a maximum of profit for themselves.

In all cases, knowing the weakness of its economic bases, it is only with **violence** that the bourgeois faction in power can impose its domination over the people.

The **national bourgeoisie**, that is the faction of the bourgeoisie whose interest would be to oppose imperialism, because its basis of accumulation would be essentially local, has become most of the time nearly nonexistent, or very weak. In all cases, knowing imperialist domination, **it cannot hope for any independent development** and, in formally independent countries, it has no revolutionary role anymore.

222 - The exploited : undertakers of imperialism.

In most dominated countries, the exploited masses consist mainly of rural workers. But they are not an undifferentiated crowd. Some are peasants without land, subject to the exploitation of semi-feudal landowners. Others are agricultural labourers, working in large capitalist-like farmings. In these countries, **the question of land, of agrarian reform, is therefore a central question** in the class struggle and in the revolution.

A huge mass of peasants are **driven away from the land**. Some emigrate toward the cities where they survive thanks to small jobs; the others emigrate toward foreign countries where a great majority become part of the proletariat.

The growth of poverty leads inevitably to the multiplication of **mass uprisings**, hunger riots, etc... This is how a gigantic hatred gathers against the ruling regimes and their imperialist protectors.

As part of the international division of labour, capitalist industrial development leads to the creation, on the world scale, of **a young labour class which becomes more and more numerous and politically active**. See Brazil, South Korea, Algeria,... for significant examples. In these countries, **the socialist revolution is up to date**.

230 - HUMANITARIANISM : A NEW JUSTIFICATION OF IMPERIALISM.

231 - Democracy and dictatorship : two winning cards in the same hand.

The aggravation of the economic situation in dominated countries, a consequence of imperialist domination, has lead and is still leading to several **revolts and social upheavals**. Dictators have been overthrown. Multi-partyism and parliamentarism are generalizing. These are the utmost attempts of imperialism to save these regimes from the people's wrath and to preserve their own domination.

Speeches about "Human Rights", democracy, "Interference Duty" (devoir d'ingerence),... are mere **pretexts for the crudest political and military operations**. But these will not make us forget the blockade of Cuba, the intervention in Panama and in Grenada, the Gulf War, the Kanaky, Chad, Lebanon, Palestine, Afghanistan,... all these very interventions and massacres that the imperialist democrats are perpetrating with no hesitation when they consider that their domination is at stake.

232 - NGOs : one of the new masks for reformism.

The disastrous economic and social results of dominated countries are assessed by all the experts, even the ones working for the imperialist governments. For the latter, these results are a **source of great danger**. This is why they are looking for all the possibilities to avoid explosion.

The imperialist penetration is therefore also developing through non-governmental organizations, the well-known NGOs, which are supplying aid of all kinds : nutritional, medical, or to enhance development. Under an

“a-political” or “non-governmental” label, they are actually used to **support the regimes in power**, by slightly greasing the social wheelworks.

The NGOs’ activity today has nothing to do with the small humanitarian interventions of fifteen or twenty years ago. NGOs are enormous machines, dealing with millions of dollars, and their economic and social intervention is **more and more directly linked to the political and military intervention of the imperialist powers**. We’ve had the opportunity to see that in Iraq or in Kurdistan. It is upon these grounds that they must be fought. The former French minister Kouchner was a typical example of these new “humanitarian” reformists.

240 - IMPERIALISM AND ITS UNDERTAKERS.

But the penetration of capitalism everywhere in the world is increasing the **potentialities of its own destruction**.

241 - A huge revolutionary potential.

In dominated countries, there is a considerable potential for revolutionary struggle - and even a **developing revolutionary situation** in many of them. This shakes the imperialist system, though so far, it is not yet threatened.

The main weakness of the mass movement today is the **absence of an International Communist Movement**. For years this situation has been leading to the vanishing of the real anti-imperialist political vanguards. On the contrary, only dead-end ideologies, Islam is an example of the moment, have stood on the unoccupied grounds, thanks to a verbal and militant radicalism, hiding a deep respect for market and competition, and therefore for world capitalism.

The People’s War led by the Communist Party of Peru shows the road to take again toward communism, and the way to a true liberation for the dominated masses. The support for the PCP, even if it is given along with some secondary criticism, is today an **important delineation** for revolutionaries of the whole world.

300 - “LIBERAL DEMOCRACY” IS DICTATORSHIP OF CAPITAL.

310 - IN THE WEST, THE ECONOMIC WAR IS INTENSIFYING.

Are we living, as some people say, in the best of the possible worlds (in a “Brave New World”)? According to these, “liberal democracy” would be the conclusion of human civilization; and the fall of the Berlin wall the completion of the Revolution of 1789. Have we really reached “**the end of History**” ? Is it impossible, and therefore illusive and dangerous, as bourgeois ideologists try to make us believe, to seek a way to build another political system ?

311 - Instability, reorganization and war.

The collapse of the Eastern Block has **tipped the former world order over**, since it was based on the East-West rivalry and balance. The USA is for a while unrivaled from the economic and above all military standpoint. However, the might of Japan and of Germany is constantly strengthening compared to that of the USA. Germany has taken advantage of the opening to the East, and it takes part in the building of Europe where it can have a leading role.

Europe is progressively putting itself together, mastering national resistances, becoming a **new imperialist bloc**, able to rival the USA and to benefit from the new international situation. This process, though it seems irreversible since it squares with the necessity of accumulation, is not without raising contradictions between the different States. It is also not without raising an inner resistance within each of them, as the debates about the ratification of the Maastricht treaty have been showing.

Today this process seems to be slowed down by the dislocation of the EMS (European Monetary System). But **it matches too well the interests of the European bourgeoisies**, French or German in particular, to be abandoned for good. To economically or militarily cope with Japan and the USA, Europe has no other choice than gathering in a unified imperialist bloc.

The burst of the Eastern Block has given way to the **struggle for a new partition of the world**, to the modification of the economic and military spheres of influence. Competition is becoming sharper between the economically declining USA, Europe and Japan. This competition is still essentially taking shape in an economic and customs war, with the GATT negotiations for instance. But the strife between the USA, Europe and Japan will be one of the fundamental elements of the coming years.

A world conflict is not immediately a question of the moment. There is no great power able yet to militarily rival the USA. The USA is balancing its economic weakening with the reinforcement of their role as **police of the world and guardians of the “new world order”**.

But this hegemony will be sooner or later challenged by the growing powers : Europe or Japan. Today’s wars are led by the imperialist powers in order to impose on the dominated countries the respect of their law and order. These wars could then become conflicts where the competing imperialisms would be, first indirectly, then directly, fighting each other.

312 - A “crisis” or an ordinary economic war ?

The thirty years of growth and prosperity that followed the latest war are already far behind. Since 1975, years of crisis, with the collapse of production and profits and the rise of unemployment, take turns with short periods of growth recovery, along with comfortable benefits for capitalists. But meanwhile, unemployment, precariousness and austerity keep on being a daily reality for workers. The “thirty glorious years” had made us forget that, crisis or not, **these evils are inseparable from the ordinary functioning of capitalism.**

Economic wars, restructurings and dismissals, world reorganizations, concentrations, transfer of capital from one branch to a more profitable one, imposition of new exploitation methods..., the contradictions of the system are taking multiple forms, and lead capitalists to never stop looking for **new prey**. Their purpose is unique : to improve profitability in increasing the productive power of labour and competitiveness.

Voie Prolétarienne has not yet made a precise analysis of the economic and social changes since 1975. Everybody usually speaks of a “**crisis**”, insofar as **a breaking has occurred compared to the former period**. But this characterization, which refers to the marxist analysis of the cyclic crises of capital, would deserve to be justified. Indeed, about twenty years after what has been called the “first oil shock”, generally considered as the “beginning of the crisis”, capital seems to have **overcome some of its contradictions** for a while.

Nevertheless, even if they do not constitute a coherent analysis, we have acquired a certain number of reference marks :

a/ It is illusive to dream of a capitalism “devoid of crisis”, or of the return of the post-war growth. We are living today in the normal state of capitalism, of its contradictions and of its permanent crisis.

b/ The contradictions of capitalism are not caused by mismanagement, by errors, or by the will of such or such leader. They are contradictions inherent to the process of accumulation itself.

c/ The economic difficulties cannot be reduced to only one reason, such as for instance speculation, seen by the PCF (French Communist Party, social-democratic), as well as by Lutte Ouvrière (Labor Struggle, Trotskist), as the origin of the crisis. Imperialism without financial capital and without speculation is merely inconceivable.

d/ Capitalism will not collapse on its own, under the weight of its own contradictions. The bourgeois are not passive. They can temporarily overcome some difficulties when the revolutionary struggle of the working class is at its lowest. During the financial crash, they showed how they could limit the damages with the help of agreements on an international scale.

Crisis or not, capitalists must constantly worsen the exploitation conditions, and invest massively, to keep their competitiveness. This is explained by the system’s economic laws themselves. This is why there is no solution within the bounds of this system, and that **it is vain to wish to reform it.**

But it is vain all the same **to wait until its development leads to its self-destruction**, thanks to its mere inner economic contradictions. The “catastrophic” points of view, which link this collapse to the conditions of revolution, are leading to a wait-and-see policy and to economism. The class struggle only, against the assault of the bourgeoisie, with the plan to take power and to change society, can give a solution to the immediate fights.

313 - In the West, the crisis is not only economic.

Capitalism will therefore not self-collapse. But attacks against the working class, unemployment, austerity, poverty and marginalization of an each day greater number of workers and young people... are **necessarily leading to revolts**. For instance the ones that are shaking the suburbs. These reactions can only spring up more and more often, because of the scope of the attacks. They are the basis of the communists’ work. Only they can bring a revolutionary perspective to these revolts.

Though the parliamentary system is not massively put aside, the bourgeois political staff is discredited by corruption and continuous scandals. A growing mass of workers is demonstrating, mainly with **abstention**, its disinterest for such politics, although without turning toward the revolutionary struggle in compensation.

In this society of competition, a certain number of workers who are threatened by unemployment, or who are disoriented by the upheavals following the collapse of the Eastern countries, are aiming their blows **at another**

part of the working class, instead of their real enemies. With the growing **racism**, workers of a foreign origin are pointed out as the scapegoats for all problems.

320 - ALWAYS MORE EXPLOITATION AND OPPRESSION FOR WORKERS.

321 - An old exploitation that takes renewed forms.

The exploitation of workers has not decreased in the imperialist countries. The crisis, the restructurings, and the growth of unemployment they have provoked, **have shaken the workers' resistance**. They have shattered the workers' strongholds into pieces and swept away the social achievements that had been won during the struggle. The systematic use of social plans, individualizing the problems, has enabled the implementation, without any significant response, of massive plans for job cuts.

Exploitation has become at the same time more brutal and more subtle. More brutal because of the development of the multiple forms of **precarious work**, the extension of team and night work; with modifications of the timetables, etc... And ideologically more subtle, with the new forms of exploitation, such as the "**new management policies**".

The latter try to motivate workers, so that they organize and worsen their own exploitation themselves. These management policies are fostering company spirit, economic consensus, and national chauvinism. In a way they are cleverly using the chauvinistic and corporatist policy that the PCF has been developing for decades. This policy has been made easier by the keeping of a high rate of unemployment. In the "cités" (housing estates) and the suburbs, the long-time unemployment, striking the young in particular, **is destroying the collective relations to society**. It strengthens individualism, dependency and marginalization. The housing of lower class families is getting more and more difficult, because of renovation policies and estate speculation in town centers.

Poverty is thus becoming an institution : austerity, wage freezes and actual decrease in incomes for the lower classes. The RMI (Revenu Minimum d'Insertion = minimum income for non-workers for their "insertion") and the "Restaus du Coeur" ("Restaurants of the Heart", providing food to the lower classes who cannot afford it, especially in winter), are the most well-known aspects of this "institutionalization". But the running into debt of households, the increasing number of social guardianships, etc... should be added to the list.

While Europe tends to unify, a nationalism that has spread to the European frontiers is developing. The **rights discriminations**, that non-European immigrants must endure, are globalizing and contribute to the growth of racism. They are : the restriction of the right of sanctuary, the hindrance to family regrouping, the job discrimination, etc...

This is the "end of History" that is proposed. How could we submit to it? The capitalists' problem is that **revolt is rooted deep inside exploitation**. Revolt of the suburbs which, even without any hope or outlook, is making the bourgeois tremble. Revolt of workers which is burning again after some years of withdrawal, even in the formerly restructured firms. Revolt of the state-employees, at their turn struck by the consequences of the economic world war.

Even "**Coordinations**" and other "**Strike Committees**" are appearing, as other attempts to break free from the guardianship of the reformist trade union machineries, widely discredited by their so-called "responsible" acceptance of the system.

What the exploited are lacking is not revolt, but **a meaning to their revolt**. And no coordination will be able to discover this meaning on its own. Because an organization which speaks for **the general interest** of the working class is needed. An organization which is able to give to the working class an **outlook**, and which enables it to gather these scattered struggles, these isolated revolts, and to contribute to the building of another future.

330 - ALIENATION AND THE HOLD OF CAPITAL ON OUR WHOLE LIFE.

331 - But capitalistic domination does not end at the factory's gates.

In opposition to economism, which **reduces it to the relations between workers and bosses**, it must be shown that **alienation lies deep within all the aspects of our life**. By the way, it is in its struggle against economism that Voie Prolétarienne has been little by little enriching its orientation for 15 years.

Capitalism, in its constant search for productivity and profit, develops machinism, automation and division of labour. Meanwhile, **it strips the working masses of any intelligent activity**, it contains them in the most interchangeable possible duties. Since work is ruled by the dictatorship of capital, **man is dispossessed**, man is alienated. This is why the worker has the feeling of belonging to himself only outside of working time. During working time, he feels external to himself.

Today is **the reign of commodity**. Consumption of these precious commodities is accelerated, in order to enable an accelerated accumulation of capital. The mirage of a fake abundance, gadgets thrown away as soon as they're bought, fashion, advertising and commercial pressure... all this becomes a "way of life". Production is not organized above all according to its usefulness, nor according to the use of the produced goods, but according to the market, and to the possibility of making enough profits.

Capitalism is made of the **accelerated pollution of nature**. There is a private appropriation of natural resources : water, raw materials, energy resources, space, pure air, etc... by capitalistic firms. And **the blame for the damages caused by this mode of production is put on the collective** : toxic wastes, destruction of the environment, causes of nuisance, professional diseases, etc... Ecologists have fought on this field in a mainly reformist manner. As for us, except for an analysis about nuclear power, we have worked little on this problem.

Capitalism is made of the bourgeoisie's monopoly of the mass media. It consists of the **pollution of the mind** with the cult of individualism, a brainwash pretending to be a system of information : from T.V. to advertising, from politicians' speeches to journalists' scoops... The pseudo freedom of speech is revealing day after day its true nature : a powerful machine in the hands of the bourgeois, used to make us accept exploitation and the life we must endure.

School plays an important role : in the reproduction of social classes, in the justification of the present social relations, in the integration of individualism and competition values, as well as in the reproduction of the sexual division of labour. **School is not external to society**. Hence the pressure for a school system which picks the best most efficiently, which serves in the best possible way, and at the lowest cost, the needs of industry.

In the relations between men and women, capitalism provokes important changes. But **it keeps oppression and inequality**. Today, reactionary morals are coming back concerning family, and freedom of abortion and contraception. Another question that Voie Prolétarienne has not dealt with enough. It is an important weakness, which weighs on our work towards women, and on our own social composition altogether. The same **reactionary tendency** is spreading in other fields : profitabilization of the health care system, domination of leisure, marketing of sexuality, etc...

332 - Alienation and exploitation : two sides of capitalist domination.

One cannot exist without the other. Because in this society where the omnipresence of commodities is veiling the real process of wealth creation, that is to say exploitation, **the work force of the worker itself is a commodity**.

Alienation and exploitation are inseparable. But it is **on the basis of exploitation indeed, and of the revolt it begets**, that the resulting alienation and submission can be fought. This is an acquired knowledge of Voie Prolétarienne. It is a question of struggling at the same time against economism, which skips alienation, and against idealism, which fights it only in the field of ideas, without seeing its material basis.

340 - HAS THE LABOUR CLASS BEEN BOUGEOISIFIED ?

341 - Chauvinism has objective bases.

France is an imperialist country. Its domination spreads, on the one hand, to its actual colonies, and on the other hand, to its spheres of political and economic influence : Africa and especially the French-speaking area. As any

other imperialist power, France uses these spheres as **reserves of raw material and manpower** : protected preferential markets of the “Zone Franc”, bridgeheads to enlarge its influence...

Colonialism, the slave trade, the so-called “discovery” of America, in one word the domination of the world... have enabled the economy of imperialist countries to reach extraordinary levels of productivity. **A productivity which can last only because of a certain international division of labour** based on the looting of raw materials, the over-exploitation of the work force of dominated countries, and the specialization of these countries in sectors producing small amounts of added-value.

The prosperity of imperialist countries is therefore **based both on the looting of dominated countries and on the exploitation of workers in the imperialist mother countries**. It could not be correctly explained if one of these two factors were omitted.

The fact that in mother countries workers have had access to what has been called the “consumption society” **does not mean that they are not exploited anymore**. Indeed, the rise of their living standards represents only a part of the increase in productivity made in the production process; the rest being grabbed by capitalists.

However, the possibility to acquire a certain quantity of the riches creates in their minds the feeling of being less exploited, or even of having something to defend against the “poor from dominated countries”. **This illusion is one of the bases of chauvinism** in the mother countries’ working class. The debt, which leads to a greater transfer of the wealth from the dominated countries to the imperialist mother countries, still does not profit the mother countries’ workers, whose living conditions are meanwhile deteriorating.

Since the beginning of the 80s, we are witnessing the development, in a significant part of the French working class, of a protectionist, chauvinist, and sometimes overtly racist, behaviour. This behaviour strengthens in return the withdrawal and the nationalism of certain immigrants. We must therefore fight against it twice.

342 - The labour aristocracy.

Imperialism shapes the whole society. Nationalism and chauvinism are widespread, not only in every bourgeois party, but also in broad sectors of the population : especially in the **petty-bourgeoisie**, relatively numerous in mother countries; and also in the **working class** itself, which does not escape from this reactionary atmosphere.

The influence of this ideology on **the labour aristocracy**, a privileged sector compared to the working masses, is particularly clear. These layers are bribed thanks to the dominant situation of French imperialism. Their only outlook is the defence of their privileges, that they hope to keep in restoring the “grandeur” of France, of which the P“C”F is a bitter supporter.

343 - Anti-imperialism : an essential axis of our fight.

We must struggle, and not be silent, when a transformer is being repaired for the South-African regime, when armament is being sold to the bourgeoisies of dominated countries, when oil is bought dirt cheap and when France makes a military intervention to defend its supplies, when chemical wastes are sent to the dominated countries and poison entire populations... **A part of France’s wealth comes from this domination**. And a fraction of it is used by the State or by the “consumption society” to buy social peace.

To draw the conclusion then that French workers have been “bourgeoisified”, that they collaborate with their bourgeoisie, is mistaken. **This would revert to forgetting the exploitation they endure each day**, whether they are French or immigrants. This would revert to erasing class antagonisms in imperialist countries and in dominated countries. This can revert to praising the understanding between classes in the dominated countries, whereas their bourgeois leaders are themselves linked to the imperialist system.

350 - DEMOCRACY FOR BOURGEOIS, NOT FOR WORKERS !

The discredit of the Eastern Countries, wrongly said to have been “socialist”, is, for the bourgeois ideologues, the opportunity of their dreams to refresh the image of **their** “democracy”. And yet...

351 - Democratic : the bourgeois State is so only for the bourgeoisie.

Is parliamentarism the nec plus ultra of “democracy” ; the expression of the will and the power of the people ? In fact, it has never been, in the best cases, something more than the means given to the people to choose “representatives” **who always yielded willy-nilly to the demands of capital**. Parliamentary democracy has always been an **illusion**. It is all the more such because the reality of power goes from the parliament to the executive and to the tremendous bureaucratic machinery of ministries and various commissions. **It tends today to fall into the hands of international institutions**. It is more and more often there that, in concert with representatives from imperialist trusts and banks, the economic policy, the laws and orders, are being planned. These decisions will only remain to be endorsed by the “representatives of the people”.

Civil servants of capital are the ones who hold the reality of power in their hands, and who enable, beyond the hazards of elections and political alternances linked to multi-partyism, the continuity of the power and the policy of the bourgeoisie.

The arbitration between the different factions of the bourgeoisie is carried on in the Parliament; but also and especially during clashes of influences in ministerial cabinets and central institutions of the State. However, the preservation of the bourgeoisie’s power makes it necessary that the bourgeoisie exert its dictatorship over the people. Consequently it has never neglected the **machinery of repression : the army, the police, the law...** which are its ultimate barriers. The bourgeoisie knows how to use them when its ideological and political domination does not succeed to make the people accept its exploitation and its submissiveness anymore.

When the bourgeoisie’s power is threatened, **the bourgeoisie does not hesitate to use its weapons**. Several more or less radical reformists have experienced it many times. Allende in Chile, Aristide in Haiti, among others, bore the cost of it.

Today, **in France, the use of these weapons is not up to date**; simply because the exploited are too weak and too unorganized to endanger the bourgeois’ power. It is useless for the bourgeois to tighten up, they would risk provoking a revolt.

Nevertheless, the scandals staining the politicians’ image, their inability to solve society’s problems, their defence of law and order and the gap separating them from the daily reality that the workers live... lead to a **growing grassroots abstention**. But this denial is directed more against individuals than against the political system which produced them. Hence the danger that the exploited turn toward newcomers, as bourgeois as the former.

352 - A democracy each day harder on the exploited.

The sharpening of the economic and social contradictions, like the growth of unemployment, the poverty of the “cités” (housing estates), the pressure of the new immigrants fleeing famine... makes it necessary to take **measures that restrict the rights** of the majority, and to strengthen repression : restrictions in the rights of sanctuary, in the family regrouping, increased repression against moonlighters...

The legal measures go along with **a general tendency toward reaction** on every level : jailing of militants, young people shot down in the “cités”, penal sanctions against struggling workers, glutting of jailhouses, return of morals, sliding to the right of all parties in the trail of the Front National (led by the nationalist Jean-Marie Le Pen), increased control over all aspects of our life... These are only a few examples among many others.

But are we confronted by a **fascization**, that is to say the progress towards an overt terrorist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, as the ones who exclusively blame the “lepenist”

danger claim ? We do not think so. Because saying so would be in a way like setting “democratic” parties against extreme-right parties while favouring the “democratic” ones and giving up the struggle against the government’s policy. **“Le Pen barks, but the PS (French Socialist Party) does bite”**, and all the other parties are about to do the same. Even the “Verts” (Greens) have declared in favour of the stopping of immigration !...

360 - THIS SOCIETY IS UNACCEPTABLE ! BUT HOW CAN IT BE TRANSFORMED ?

361 - A society unacceptable to the majority.

The splendid eden of liberal democracy can convince all but those who already have at least their small place in the sun. The others are rather full of perplexity and anxiety. And even more since the collapse of the Eastern countries. The lack of an alternative weighs heavily. However, **the political criticism of capitalism is already a step toward this alternative**. The evaluation of the former so-called socialist countries, and of the dominated countries, also.

362 - The alternative would be :

- To set **the equality of nations** against the destruction and the looting of the dominated countries.
- To acknowledge the responsibility of imperialism in the unequal development, and the necessity to compensate it.
- To set the **international unity of the exploited**, in the struggle against the international bourgeois camp, against division, racism and chauvinism.
- To set **solidarity and cooperation** against individualism, competition between workers and sexual division.
- To set **the transformation of the relations of production and the distribution of the wealth** against exploitation and poverty.
- To set the **collective determination of the needs** and the organization of the economic machinery on the basis of these needs against the market and production laws, as powerful as they are blind.
- To set **cooperation and planning of the economy** against the law of the jungle of the “free” market.
- To set the **actual exertion of power** against the deprivation of each one’s control on its own life. In no way this right and essential responsibility can be handed over to others.

363 - How can these goals be reached ?

The exploited can set themselves free only **if they destroy the State machinery of the bourgeoisie**, which is both the absolutely necessary tool of its dictatorship and its headquarters. In order to do this, the workers must first crush the repression machineries of the bourgeoisie and seize power. Without this, they could not lay down their domination.

But the obligation to destroy the bourgeois State machinery cannot be reduced to this mere necessity. Indeed, after the seizure of power, the exploited must substitute to the political machinery of the Bourgeoisie, and to its bureaucratic machinery, **a State of a new type, based on Labour Councils**.

The future lays in our hands, thanks to the communist outlook we must build collectively. It starts as soon as today, in **taking in hand the construction of the Party** that the proletarians need.