Polemic with the International Communist Current: Revolutionary Organization or the Revolutionary Publication?

In defense of Marxism

Internationalist Voice
Explanation:

Years ago, faced with the ambiguities of the ICC regarding the class consciousness, role and function of the revolutionary organization and the fact that it practically reduced its role, duties and function to the level of a revolutionary publication, a series of articles critiquing the ICC under the title of Class Consciousness and the Revolutionary Organization was published. These same articles with new edits and new sections have been published as a booklet.

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

“The danger of councilism therefore does not confine itself to the negators of the party; it can even menace an organization as well armed as the ICC. What is all the more dangerous is that councilism often does not announce itself by its name and hides itself behind a formal recognition of a programmatic framework and centralized organization.” The ICC

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1 https://en.internationalism.org/content/2971/function-revolutionary-organizations-danger-councilism
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1. Introduction

“Up till now, the philosophers have only interpreted the world. The point, however, is to change it.” Marx

Class consciousness and the revolutionary organization’s role and task have been among the most discussed issues of the working class’ history. A lot of questions can be asked. What is consciousness in general? What is proletarian consciousness? What is ideology? What distinguishes ideology from proletarian (class) consciousness? What is the revolutionary organization’s role and tasks?

How have these questions been answered during the history of working class? How we can learn the lessons of our past? What are the Marxist perspectives?

The aim of this text is to try to find answers to all these questions, from a Marxist perspective and with a Marxist coherence. The aim and ambition are going to be, with the help of historical materialism and without ending up with idealism, to try and address all these issues throughout capitalist development and with reference to the lessons of the proletariat.

This text is not a set of “holy verses”, which cannot be amended; rather, it is an attempt to offer an internationalist perspective, which is still in the development process. That is why we sometimes are going to ask questions without there being any answers.

Finally, we hope this text will make a small contribution to the proletariat which, with its class consciousness and its revolutionary organization and by staging the communist revolution, will sound the death knell of capitalism.

2. Class consciousness

“Both for the production on a mass scale of this communist consciousness, and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is, necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a revolution; this revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class overthrowing it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew.” Marx, The German Ideology

Consciousness in General
The consequence of primitive society’s maturity was the division between manual and intellectual work. This resulted in the creation of a specialized layer whose role was the defence and the development of ideas. Thereafter, the source of ideas or consciousness has been the preoccupation of class society ideologues. In ancient society, philosophers such as Plato declared that ‘ideas are creatures’, which we can only grasp by thinking about. When the idealists arrived on the scene, they stated that God is the source of mankind’s consciousness.
With the development of capitalist society, bourgeois materialists became visible. With the support of science, it was declared that the substantive universe existed independently of us, while contact with this universe is the source of consciousness.

Bourgeois’ materialists see consciousness in terms of individual consciousness. Then comes historical materialism which states that consciousness is not an individual consciousness but a historical and social phenomenon. Incidentally, historical materialism is dialectic as well.

**What Is Class Consciousness?**

If we try to define class consciousness in a short sentence, then we can say that it refers to the proletariat’s consciousness of its **historic task**. It is the result of the historical experience of the class as well as its material existence. The development of class consciousness is a dynamic process. The revolutionary organization’s function as a **part of the class** is to **develop and deepen**, and then generalize and homogenize this class consciousness, by intervening in class.

**Different Views on Class Consciousness**

The question of class consciousness was not established at the start of the working class; instead, it is an issue which has been under constant development on the part of the working class.

There have been two different views on class consciousness’ development process within the working class. We shall look at these, as well as their strengths and weaknesses, and how the working movement has been marked by such preoccupations.

**2.1 Class Consciousness Is a Product of the Working Class’ Own Struggle**

The view, which we believe is the Marxist view, describes class consciousness as a product of the working class’ own struggle, that is, the result of the class’ historical experience and its material existence. The International Communist Current (ICC) is one of the currents representing this view. Although the ICC has a dynamic conception of class consciousness, it is still confused class consciousness’ development, as we will see.

From the ICC point of view:

> “The revolutionary organization is a product and a part of the class ... The revolutionary organization functions as part of the class to disseminate and homogenize this consciousness by its intervention in class.” [1]

The question is, what should be disseminated and homogenized? First of all, something must exist in order for it to be disseminated. The question thus becomes, how can we describe what it means to disseminate and homogenize? The ICC does not believe that class consciousness is the result of economic struggle, stating that:

> “The idea that class consciousness does not arise in a mechanical way from economic struggles is quite correct” [2].
Then, how does the class consciousness occur? The following statement describes the ICC’s view about class consciousness:

“Only the proletariat is able to constitute itself into a class based on international solidarity. This solidarity is a forerunner of what social relations will be like in a communist society, and it springs up spontaneously in the struggle. It is an unbelievable phenomenon. Workers, who scarcely spoke to each other yesterday because of the infernal pressure of work, who even sometimes felt in competition with each other, suddenly find themselves talking together in the heat of the struggle, closing ranks and helping each other, feeling so united that it takes all the power of the bourgeoisie with its unions and police to break apart their iron solidarity. This is the starting-point of class consciousness!”[3].

The ICC asserts all the time that the proletariat must learn the lessons of its bygone political and theoretical struggle, such that:

“For a qualitative stage to be once more passed beyond, the proletariat must learn the political and theoretical lessons of its past experiences” [4].

The question still remains about how the proletariat can learn the lessons and analyse and develop them. According to the ICC:

“It’s necessary for the proletariat to sow the seeds of its struggle by drawing sufficient lessons from its past actions in order to use such a favorable situation to generalise its political understanding. It must bring about this generalisation of its experience even in times of lull in the struggle. In such periods, the proletariat can reflect upon its past experience and draw up a balance sheet of the victories and defeats it has lived through, thus preparing itself for the future. It is in this sense, that the development of class consciousness is not the immediate reflection of a given situation”[5].

It is still unclear and also abstract. Who should create this balance sheet? The whole Proletariat! The ICC view is:

“A more combative vanguard thus appears spontaneously within the proletariat, so as to stimulate and generalise to the maximum its own determination and consciousness”[6].

“In periods of social calm, the great majority of workers submit to the pressure of bourgeois ideology. The task of generalizing political gains and homogenizing class consciousness falls to the most decided, the most combative elements of the class. Thanks to this fraction, to this part of itself (defined from a political point of view), the proletariat can collectivise its gains in consciousness by raising itself above immediate contingencies and partial experiences. Because this fraction has arrived sooner at an understanding of the goals of the movement, it enables the working class to reinforce the tendency to break down the isolation and divisions which fragment and weaken its struggle. In this way, a powerful and conscious class can oppose itself to capitalism and triumph over it.
In order for these elements of the class to carry out their tasks properly, they must regroup themselves into revolutionary communist organizations”[7].

As can be seen, there is a repetition of the word “generalize”. Repetition of this word does not help us to explain the problem. First and foremost, something must be developed in order to generalize the whole class. It should be remembered that the class consciousness process is a dynamic process, which means in practice that, after a wildcat strike, a worker can learn a great deal; however, this is far from class consciousness.

The ICC rejects entirely and quietly rightly the councilists’ philosophical and idealistic vision of class consciousness and the role of revolutionaries:

“For the councilists the role of revolutionaries must be limited to a philosophical one, simply as intellectual spectators; this immediately places them outside the concrete struggles of the class. Neither of them understand that a correct and dialectical conception of class consciousness and its flowering goes hand in hand with an understanding of revolutionaries as a living and active part of their class”[8].

Then, how can this issue be resolved? If one is determined enough to find a “development” view of class consciousness in the ICC literature, one will need enough patience to read a pamphlet which is 124 pages in length. We managed it. Page 97 of the ICC pamphlet states:

“In fact, the role of revolutionaries can be summed up in one sentence: it is to organize themselves on the basis of the proletariat’s historic interests with a view to giving the movement a clear political orientation and actively to aid the development of class consciousness ”[9][our emphasis].

We see a paradox and a lack of clarity in the class consciousness view of the ICC. The conclusion is that the ICC lowers its outlook on class consciousness to a revolutionary publishing level. Unfortunately, this paradox and lack of clarity have an unpleasant and harmful consequence. We are satisfied with one example from the ICC about Rosa Luxemburg’s view in this regard (we must stress that Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin are the biggest Marxists that the working movement has seen in its history after Marx and Engels):

“Thus the party cannot “skip a period in our historical development” and make up for the consciousness of the “great mass”. But does this class consciousness always appear as the widest majority movement? In 1916, when Rosa Luxemburg wrote these line, could the Social Democracy, which had dragged the proletariat into the war, be said to express the class consciousness? And yet the great majority of the proletariat continued to have illusions in this organization. Was this a sign of maturity and political consciousness?”[10]

It must be pointed out that the ICC has a quite correct view about class consciousness and believes it has two different dimensions:
1. Class consciousness is deep and not something that disappears; it is something that expresses itself through historical experience and learning, as a communist programme.

2. Class consciousness’ dissemination is determined by the immediate balance of power between the proletariat and the bourgeois class at any given time.

The ICC describes class consciousness’ various dimensions:

“The communist minority is the clearest, most resolute expression of the world’s historic dimension of class consciousness. It has no monopoly on this consciousness. Even in periods of retreat, the class is not dissolved as a whole to a history-less fusion of individuals. Class consciousness is a collective product or nothing, and it is enriched constantly by each subsequent phase in the class movement, from the most immediate defensive struggle to mass actions of an explicit revolutionary nature.” [11]

The ICC distinguishes between class consciousness and the consciousness of the class, although this does not overlook their mutual impact on each other.

“Even if they are parts of a unit, which have an impact on each other, it is incorrect to identify class consciousness with class’ consciousness or the consciousness of the class, which is its spreading at a given time ... It is necessary to distinguish between the expressed continuity of the proletarian historic movement: the progressive development of its political positions and of its programmes, which is subject to factors relative to the circumstances, namely, how these positions and programmes are spread, and their assimilation by and influence on class.” [12]

Class consciousness is the proletariat’s consciousness about its history, its past experiences and even its revolutionary future. When the proletariat observes this, it is easily to see that it does not exist only for the time being, but on a historic level as well. Marx describes this in his famous work, *The Holy Family* (Chapter IV):

“When socialist writers ascribe this world-historic role to the proletariat, it is not at all, as Critical Criticism pretends to believe, because they regard the proletarians as gods... It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat, at the moment regards as its aim. It is a question of what the proletariat is, and what, in accordance with this being; it will historically be compelled to do.”

### 2.2 Class Consciousness Would Have to Be Injected into the Working Class

This view declares that the working classes can only achieve class identity through class struggle. Class consciousness develops outside of class and thereafter transfers to the working classes. It needs be pointed out that Lenin did not clarify this matter, due to some ambiguity on his part, which he inherited from the Second International. But, later, he offered more explanation. Lenin in his work, “What Is to Be Done?”, unlike economists, defended the idea
that class consciousness would have to be injected into working class. Economists preached that the working classes would not interfere in politics as their task was to participate in economic struggle. Economists left political struggle to the bourgeoisie’s intellectuals. Lenin evolved his thinking about class consciousness in works such as Revolution and State” and April Theses.

The formulation of the idea about injecting class consciousness into the working class is a completely wrong conclusion from the perspective of absolute logical thinking and interpreting. What is right and what is the wrong? That class consciousness is not a direct consequence of a class struggle, but should be developed in a dynamic process from a historical perspective by the revolutionary organization, is absolutely correct.

The idea and concept, whereby revolutionary organizations and the party are necessary elements for the development of class consciousness, such that they constitute an important factor for revolutionary victory, is absolutely correct.

The wrong conclusion is that this view does not consider the revolutionary organization as part of the working class and, as a result, class consciousness should be injected into the working class by the revolutionary organization. This view is problematic in that it regards revolutionaries’ activity as a product and an active part of the proletariat’s struggle. What determines a political party’s class nature is not the sociological background of the individual member of the party, or the leadership of party, but its political programme and activity.

Revolutionary organizations and its revolutionaries are part of the working class and its struggle. This view confuses class origin with class belonging. We are not stating that Marx, Engels, Lenin, Rosa Luxembourg and other revolutionaries were workers; however, they devoted their lives to the working class struggle. Let us continue with an example from the ICC, which states that:

“Thus, when revolutionary organizations arise within the working class, they arise on the same basis, and out of the same necessity which forces the proletariat to organise itself in councils. Revolutionaries are, then, a spontaneous and voluntary product of their class. Spontaneous, because their existence is a product of the struggle and is enriched by the practical experience of their class. Voluntary, because they come from the historic necessity of the class struggle and not just from simple, limited, mechanical, economic factors”[13].

2.3 Differences Between Ideology and Class Consciousness

The split between physical and intellectual work resulted in the creation of a special layer of class whose role was the defence and development of ideas. These intellectuals became ideologues. The consciousness of the ideologues was an individual consciousness. Bourgeois consciousness, religion etc, are also consciousness and, therefore, they have their ideologues. On the other hand, the consciousness of the proletariat cannot be ideology and, therefore, the proletariat has no ideologues!
There are two important criteria for distinguishing ideology from the class consciousness. Firstly, the proletariat has no economic power and, therefore, cannot create an ideological superstructure. Therefore, in all ideologies, people and their circumstances appear to go upside-down. Marx describes this in his work, *The German Ideology*, very well. On page 19, he writes:

“If, in all ideology, men and their circumstances appear upside-down, as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process.”

The second important consideration is that, unlike the proletariat’s consciousness, which developed as part of a collective process and is thus a collective consciousness, ideology developed individually and is an individual consciousness. In order to be more accurate, we need to emphasize that the consciousness of the proletariat is not an individual consciousness as ideology, but a historical and social phenomenon.

“Ideology, even if it expresses very well the domination of a social class, is never a truly collective product. Like a mirror broken into a thousand fragments which all reflect the same image, ideology imposes itself on all individuals” [14].

Ideologues have a task, as part of class society’s superstructure, to ruminate the ups and downs of society. Thanks to ideologues and their enormous resources, the dominated idea is the dominated class’ idea. Marx describes this on page 60 of The German Ideology, as follows:

“The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance.”

Unlike the ideologues’ advice, human liberation is a historical phenomenon. That is why the proletariat cannot liberate itself, unless all humanity is liberated.

“‘Liberation’ is a historical and not a mental act, and it is brought about by historical conditions, the development of industry, commerce, agriculture, the conditions of intercourse” [15].

Another consequence of the view about injecting class consciousness into the working class is that it provides an ideological view of class consciousness. As a result, revolutionaries become ideologues. Finally, in contrast with the councils, class consciousness’ highest expression is not the worker council but the revolutionary political organization.
“Unlike the councilist ‘ultra-democratic’ advice, the ICC asserts that class consciousness’ highest expression is not the worker council, which is developed with difficulty and lots of challenges and by a large number of errors, the revolutionary political organization, which is the place where the proletariat’s valuable historic experience is accumulated and crystallized. Rather, it is the most developed, concentrated form of the proletariat’s collective memory, which is only created with significant magnitude before the revolutionary period condition, then, the class finds itself again in a very united way.” [16]

3. Revolutionary Organizations During the Capitalism Era

The structure and the impact of revolutionary organizations have been taken into consideration and discussed within the workers’ movements. The reason is that this issue has not been analysed in any proper way and not fixed by the proletariat from the beginning; but some steps has been taken during the development of working-class history. During the different periods of capitalism, revolutionary organizations have had various forms, functions and roles.

Therefore, it is very important to analyse this issue during different periods of the capitalism era.

As has been pointed out before, the proletariat has no economic power, and this means that the proletariat has no ideologues, in short, the proletariat is nothing other than its solidarity, class consciousness and organization.

“The only material strength that the proletariat has is its organization. This is why organization constitutes for the proletariat, still more than for other classes, a decisive and fundamental condition for its struggle, its capacity for self-organization is the measure of its passage from a class-in-itself to a class-for-itself, from a simple economic category within capitalist production into an historical class”[17].

As also previously mentioned, the revolutionary organization is a product and a part of the class. The class creates the revolutionary organization as an instrument for its development, deepening and homogenizing class consciousness. But this does not mean that the revolutionary organization (International and Internationalist Communist Party) is the exclusive carrier of class consciousness; instead, it means it is the brightest and clearest component of the class.

It is necessary to regard the revolutionary organization and the party as part of the proletariat. Not any part, but a part that attracts the most militant and brightest class elements earlier than others, namely those who understand the movement’s historical tasks and goals.
3.1 During the Upward Phase of Capitalism

During this period, the task of revolutionaries was, as representatives of the movement’s overall and ultimate objective, to participate actively in the organization of the class. Unions were a school for the fight, and the fight was a school of communism. Reform was an opportunity for the working class to achieve a lasting improvement in capitalist society. Capitalist society had a reform opportunity to deliver humanity through its everyday struggles.

“In the upward phase of capitalism, the party was the organ of the unification body of the class, which campaigned for parliamentary reform and in which the revolutionaries could defend the proletarian revolutionary programme. In parallel to the political party, the trade unions were representative of an economic view. These two types of unit organizations could exist in society in a permanent manner; therefore, capitalism would be able to provide some reform to the working class.” [18]

3.2 During the Decadence Phase of Capitalism

“The sailor Khorrin tells in his memories how the seamen who considered themselves Social Revolutionaries would in reality defend the Bolshevik platform. This was to be observed everywhere. The people knew what they wanted, but they did not know how to call it by name” (Trotsky, History of the Russian Revolution, Vol. 2).

During the period of capitalist decadence, proletarian political organization could only take the form of revolutionary minorities whose task was not to organize the working class or take power on its behalf, but constitute itself in terms of political leadership. Prerequisites for a communist revolution can only exist if revolutionary organizations have clarity and influence within the working class.

What is the Marxist definition of the party? The party is the political organism that the proletariat creates to develop and deepen its class consciousness and, by providing political leadership, orientation and focus, lead the proletariat in the direction of a frontal attack on the state and capitalist society in order to build a communist society.

The main ambiguity in the organizational view of the ICC is that the ICC does not have a political leadership view of the revolutionary organization or the party. This is a logical consequence of the ICC’s unclear view about the development process of the proletariat’s class consciousness.

When the proletariat’s class consciousness does not need to be developed and deepened in a dynamic process, only generalized, then it is entirely logical that the revolutionary organization (or the party) reduces its role and activity to a publishing level, because a publisher will only generalize class consciousness. Therefore, political leadership becomes insignificant.
The only publication that we have seen from the ICC regarding its view of political leadership is an article from Issue 5 of the Internationalist Journal, entitled “Partito Comunista Internazionalistas (PCInt) 6th Congress”. But there are also texts from the ICC which reject political leadership as Leninist perceptions. In the article, “Association Workers’ Power or the council socialism as Leftist Radical Conscience”, in Issue 2 of International Revolution, the ICC writes about: “Leninist perceptions of the party’s leading role”, while page 37 of the same issue states that:

“The party’s leading role is in our opinion, a principle which does not at all correspond to the experience of the working class or the problems of the revolution”.

We do not even known how the ICC feels about Leninism!? Would not the terminology of the ICC lead to confusion within the working class? We agree with the ICC when they say: “No to ‘Leninism’, yes to Lenin and the communist left!” Leninism (Stalinism, Trotskyism, Maoism) represents counterrevolutionary treason against Lenin. “Leninism” means a split between Lenin and Luxemburg, from the Bolshevik faction and the other leftist factions. Note that all the time, “Leninism” is written in quotation marks.

The ICC says:

“It has shown us that revolutionaries, far from imposing on the proletariat a political leadership brought from outside, far from adopting a voluntarist attitude worthy only of petty corporals, far from forcing the course of events, simply worked to make the proletariat as a whole conscious of its historic interests” [19].

And the ICC continues to equate “leading” with “ordering or commanding”.

“Orientating the proletarian movement is too passive a task for their taste. They want something a bit spicier, a bit more lively. Thus they slide away from the idea of ‘orientating’ or ‘giving a direction’ towards a false political interpretation of the role of revolutionaries. By making the apparently simple jump from ‘giving a direction’, to ‘leading’ in the sense of ordering or commanding, they give the impression of according greater importance to the activities of the party. In reality, they do nothing of the kind”[20]

The consequence is a paradox in the organization’s view of the ICC. On the one hand, the ICC stresses the importance of the responsibilities of the party; on the other hand, it treats “leader” as “commander”. Of course, our perception of “leadership”, which is collective, is not the same as that found on the left of capital or conservative organizations (parties), which is individualized.

“But some revolutionaries mistrust such simplicity, which seems to them to hide some unpleasant trick. In their eyes, such simplicity can only be an easy way out, an ignorance and underestimation of the party’s lofty responsibilities. To put a bit more shine on this ‘simplicity’ and surround the party with its full glory, they feel obliged to give it the role of ‘leader’ or commander”[21]
Councilists often call themselves “anti-Leninists” and “anti-Bolsheviks” instead of “anti-capitalists”, who despise the political leadership of the party for its view of Leninism and the idea of doing two things at once. The first thing they do is to disarm the proletariat from its main instrument, the party and its role in terms of political leadership. Second, they create confusion within the working class, with Stalinism, Trotskyism, Maoism, etc. described as the continuation of the Bolshevik faction. An example from Russia describes how political leadership works in practice. “The sailor Khorrin tells in his memories how the seamen who considered themselves Social Revolutionaries would in reality defend the Bolshevik platform. This was to be observed everywhere. The people knew what they wanted, but they did not know how to call it by name.”

The political leadership of the party is a collective leadership, not an individual leadership, which is popular among bourgeois parties. The leadership of the party is a political leadership and will not be reduced to a technical level. It is not important what the various groups of the proletariat calls themselves; what is important, however, is that they are defending the party’s platform, which means that the party’s political leadership is a reality.

3.2.1 The View of Substitution Within the Working Class

The question of organization is not something that has been decided from the beginning of the working movement, but an issue that has been under development for the proletariat. Bourgeois ideologues accuse the Bolsheviks of having been power hungry and that their goal was to establish a political dictator; nor should it be forgotten that the anarchists, councilists etc., joined this faction in a shameful way. The Bolsheviks had no view of substitution from the beginning but they said “all power to the soviets”.

“No party substituted itself for the practical and decisive activity of the workers. The Bolsheviks acted in a decisive way within their class but they did not take power in the place of the workers” [22].

With the revolutionary wave having failed, especially in Germany, the revolution in Russia was condemned to isolation. It was the isolation of the revolution that strengthened the substitution view among the Bolsheviks, which had its roots in the Second International ambiguities. The question is, should the Bolsheviks be condemned or can we draw lessons from their experiences?

“The progressive degeneration of the Communist International provoked an upsurge amongst the most healthy revolutionary elements. But how difficult this upsurge was! Those who today pretend to invent everything anew and who judge history from their superior intellectual heights in fact adopt a purely infantile attitude, imagining what ‘should have been’ in that period and condemning every thing that goes outwit their abstract schemas. We don’t judge history, but draw from it lessons for the future. It would also be ludicrous for us to analyse the reflux of the revolutionary wave and the death agony of the Communist International as if they were the products of the machiavellian plans of the Bolsheviks!” [23]
In fact, the view of substitution was not only influenced the Bolsheviks, but also by Spartacists and Rosa Luxemburg. Rosa Luxembourg said that they would not take power until they were supported by the majority of the proletariat.

“The Spartacist League refuses to take over the power of government merely because the Scheidemann-Ebert element have completely discredited themselves... The Spartacist League will never take over the power of government otherwise than by a clear manifestation of the unquestionable will of the great majority of the proletarian mass of Germany (Proposed programme adopted by the KPD at its foundation in 1918.)”[24]

3.2.2 The View of a Mass Party Within the Working Class

“The experience of history strengthens this idea. Thus, while the Bolsheviks showed a bitter determination to organise outside the current of the old Social Democracy – and so threw all their weight into the progress of the revolution – the left of the German Social Democracy hesitated to cut rapidly the umbilical cord attaching it to a corpse, and in doing so put a brake on the historical course of the world revolution.” [25]

Rosa Luxemburg was and remains a source of inspiration to revolutionaries and proletarian political organizations. She was one of those who correctly stated that class consciousness is a product of working-class self-struggle and should not be injected from outside, even though she had doubts. She understood the development of capitalism, which, in her time, had entered its decadence period. Regardless of her explanation of the crisis mechanism of capitalist decadence, the view made sense, especially the phenomenon of imperialism. Meanwhile, she understood the development of capitalism and also how this understanding had influenced her organization’s views.

“Rosa Luxemburg and the German revolutionaries of severing completely the umbilical cord which tied them to Social Democracy. It is true that Luxemburg was the first to break from the doctrines of Kautsky. When, after 1910 she accused him of opening the floodgates to opportunism she was not supported by any Russian Social Democrat, and most notably not by Lenin, who found her accusations ‘exaggerated’. However it was Lenin and not Rosa who urged most clearly and most rapidly for an organizational split from the most opportunist elements of the Russian Social Democratic Party: the Mensheviks. Luxemburg and Kautsky were, in contrast, in agreement for once since both criticised this ‘splitting’ policy and called for the reunification of Russian Social Democracy.”[26]

Luxemburg defended the idea that the revolutionary organization is a product of the working class, but her view of the revolutionary organization (or party) was not entirely correct. Even if she had understood the great period of capitalist decadence, she got caught up with social democracy which is ideal circumstances for the rise of capitalism. For her, the party loses its significance, which is why she despised the importance of the Party Central Committee.
“Up until events forced the creation of the German Communist Party in 1919 (KPD) Luxemburg remained hesitant. She hesitated to leave the Social Democratic Party (SPD); she hesitated to form a separate organization which, at first, ran the risk of being a minority organisation; she retreated before Lenin’s persistent desire to create a new Communist International… What imprisoned Luxemburg and made her hesitate was her general conception of mass revolutionary action and the consequences of this for the role of the party.

This militant, who had passed through the school of Social Democracy, developed such an unconditional attachment to the mass character of the revolutionary movement that, for her, the party had to adapt itself to anything which bore this character. Because of her attachment to the Social Democratic vision of the mass party, Luxemburg was reluctant to go in advance of the movement. She hesitated to leave an organization in which the ‘mass’ of workers still had confidence. Even after the overt and definitive demise of the SPD and the IInd International in 1914 Luxemburg continued to reiterate that it was for the mass movement to overcome opportunism; revolutionaries could not accelerate this movement.

For her the “errors” committed by a truly revolutionary workers’ movement are historically more fruitful and more precious than the infallibility of the finest central committee. (Organisational Questions of Social Democracy)”[27]

In fact, Luxemburg’s ambiguities or her incorrect understanding of the revolutionary organization’s role and functionality are the perfectly logical result of her doubts about the proletariat’s class consciousness. Organizational problems are essentially political problems. When it is no longer necessary for the proletariat’s class consciousness to be developed and deepened, only generalized, then the consequence is that the organization loses its significance.

“Luxemburg never came to understand the fact that the collective character of revolutionary activity is something which grows and develops. The homogenization of proletarian consciousness is not made once and for all.”[28]

And the ICC continues:

”Thus the party cannot “skip a period in our historical development” and make up for the consciousness of the “great mass”. But does this class consciousness always appear as the widest majority movement? In 1916, when Rosa Luxemburg wrote these line, could the Social Democracy, which had dragged the proletariat into the war, be said to express the class consciousness? And yet the great majority of the proletariat continued to have illusions in this organisation. Was this a sign of maturity and political consciousness?”[29]

An important question is, how did the German Social Democrat Party mobilize the proletariat into a world war when it was among the most experienced parties at the Second International. A key factor was the Spartacists, headed by Rosa Luxemburg, who had problems understanding the revolutionary organization’s role and the functionality of capitalist decadence during that period. Consequently, they hesitated to break with social democracy. The consequence was that they poisoned the working class and ultimately betrayed the proletariat by joining the campaign of the bourgeoisie.
“Thus, in January 1918, the first great strikes to break out under the impact of the Russian revolution were consciously held back and misled into bourgeois legality – in other words, to their death – by the Social Democratic Party. Confronted with these maneuvers (which, moreover, were generalized throughout Europe), the Spartakists, the left wing, which had not yet broken with had not yet broken with Social Democracy, REMAINED COMPLETELY IMPOTENT.”[30]

The result of the Spartacists’ hesitation to break with the German Social Democrat Party became a tragedy. The proletariat was mobilized for the bloodshed and slaughter in World War I. Thereafter, bloodhounds killed two of the proletariat’s most important players. This led the proletariat to move more and more towards a state of political confusion and depression. One of the most important factors in the German Revolution was the hesitation of defeated Spartacists (and their leader Rosa Luxemburg) to break with social democracy and establish a Communist Party according to the Bolsheviks. Their mistake was a major obstacle to the revolutionary wave and world revolution.

“Still later, the Spartakists came to realize that their hesitations had been a dangerous error, and were to form an independent political party. This is why the Communist Party – the KPD (Spartakus) – was at last created in December 1918. Sadly, its birth came late, and in January 1919 the Communist Party was still shot through with the same fear of decisive intervention, the same eternal wranglings before any action could take place, the same lack of direction and of any clear political perspective.”[31]

And the ICC continues:

“In Germany then, all the work of propaganda and political agitation on a clear programmatic and organisational basis was completely lacking. Later on, the KPD was to continue on its opportunist path, and merge, in December 1920, with the ‘left’ of the Social Democracy, the VKPD. This hazy attitude provoked a reaction of the healthiest elements of the political vanguard and their organization in an independent party, the KAPD. Sadly this reaction came too late – ie in April 1920. The world revolution was already on a more difficult footing, and was to struggle through defeat after defeat to its final extinction in 1927. The revolutionaries had failed in their task – they had not organized early enough.”[32]

3.2.3 The Example of Poland and the Absence of the Revolutionary Organization

In the early 1980s, the Polish proletariat started to raise its voice. By observing its movement, it was so obvious that proletarians want to get rid of the current conditions. They made history by holding copious demonstrations and making sure they were heard. It was claimed that the class struggle would sweep Poland and ring the death knell for capitalism. However, in the end, we saw how Lech Walesa stooped and kissed the Popes hand, and as we know the Pope is a sign of capital's ideology.

There are two important factors for the proletariat’s defeat in Poland:
• First. The class struggle was isolated within the nation. Although there was a class struggle on a smaller scale in certain countries, unfortunately it did not spread to others.
• Second, there was no revolutionary organization which could develop and deepen class consciousness. Furthermore, there was a lack of any political leadership that could provide true direction to the proletariat. The lessons that have been learned from the proletariat defeat in Poland confirm the necessity to develop class consciousness in a dynamic process in order for it to succeed.

4. The Tasks for Today’s Revolutionaries

Since the environment and current situation do not allow revolutionaries to have a major influence over the working class, developing, working on theories (learning lessons from the history of the proletariat and its experience) and forming cadres are higher priorities than agitation. In short, the formation of cadres, together with theoretical work, which is the first step in the formation of an internationalist party, is the task for today’s revolutionaries. Then, the question that must be asked is, when can the party be formed? There are two views within the working class about when the party can be formed.

• The formation of the party is a subjective and involuntary factor. This view believes that the establishment of a revolutionary party depends on individuals’ desire, militants and their level of consciousness. In other words, this perception views party formation as a subjective and volitional action to be determined by revolutionaries.

• The formation of the party is a direct product of the development of the class struggle. This perspectives views the formation of the party as an element in the development of class consciousness, which is directly linked to class struggle, among the balance of power between classes at a given moment. This view believes that, for the party to really exist, it is not sufficient to indicate its general historical necessity, without its formation depending on the economic, political and social situation at the time, along with the legacy of struggles in the past and the short- and long-term perspective for struggles in the future.

5. The Question of Factionalism

Based on the current situation, a revolutionary party cannot be formed; the only way that revolutionaries can organize themselves is in a faction or a particular organization. A faction is a special organization with specific tasks aligned to a specific situation where a party cannot exist or be formed. A few examples from the history of the proletariat can make the discussion much clearer. The first example is from the Bolshevik Party.
“The Bolshevik Party after 1905 could not be seen as a party; it was a faction within the Russian Social Democratic Party, which was split into several factions and tendencies. This was the only way to save the Bolshevik faction which was later able to serve as a central core in the formation of the Communist Party in 1917. This is the true history of the Bolshevik Party.” [33]

The second example is:
“Another example is the dissolution of the Communist League after the 1848-50 revolution’s stormy years. While Marx believed that the revolutionary period had not yet ended, despite heavy defeats and losses, he continued to keep the Communist League alive, in order to regroup forces and to strengthen the organization. However, once he was convinced that the revolutionary period was over and that a long period of reaction against that begun, he announced that it was impossible to maintain a risk retreat in favour of more modest. As a result, based on the current situation, less spectacular, but more genuinely fruitful, developments of the theoretical work and the formation of more cadres have better outcomes.”[34]

6. Organization’s view of the German and Dutch left

"The Dutch Left is dying as a revolutionary current. It is not up to the Dutch Left that its theoretical legacy would pass on to the new elements that may arise in class. To understand and move on from this heritage is up to the revolutionary organizations and not individuals, or some groups who are debating it. "[35]

The German and Dutch Left played an important role in the early 20's against the degeneration of the Communist International, and thus became a pole to defend the revolutionary positions. The German and Dutch Left had a very clear idea of the unions, parliamentary, and so on. Unfortunately, after the 20's could not defend the revolutionary positions as a pole and a part of the German and Dutch Left began to develop positions that would reject the Marxist method, and even make concessions behind.

“The German left’s main contribution - primarily, the KAPD - was that it did not realize the need for the party in the revolution. The KAPD, which was formed as a party in 1920, did not necessarily say as much. Its fundamental contribution was that it understood that the party’s function was no longer the same during the period of capitalist decadence. It was no longer a mass party, which organized and combined the class - without a party, a nucleus, which regrouped the most active and conscious proletarian fighters. As a special part of the class, the party must intervene in the class struggle and in the organs that the class struggle gave rise to: strike committees and workers’ councils. The party was a party that fought for the revolution; it no longer wanted gradual changes in the organs that the proletariat no longer had anything to do with (trade unions and parliament), but to destroy them. And, finally, just because the party was a part of the class and not its representative or its director, it could not be a substitute for the class in its struggle or in the exercise of power. Class dictatorship was the dictatorship of workers’ councils, not the party. In contrast to the Bordigist view, it was
not the party that created the class, but the class that created the party. This did not mean - as the populists or Mensheviks argued - that the party was in the service of the class. The party was not a valet who passively adapted to any doubt or discrepancy in the class. On the contrary, its task was to develop the proletarian class consciousness even at the cost of being at odds with the broad masses." (Theses on the Party’s Role in the Revolution, KAPD, 1920). [36]

Although the KAPD understood that party functionality would change during different periods of capitalism and that the period of capitalist decadence is no longer a mass party, but a core of the most conscious proletarian fighters, there was still much confusion in the KAPD, which led to its KAPD. The ICC describes these ambiguities and the cause of the KAPD’s disappearance as below:

“The fact is that it formed at the point when the German revolution was approaching a declining trend after its defeat in 1919. The KAPD finally defended the idea that it could get away a degeneration of the revolutionary proletariat by implementing a coup tactics. During the mass action in central Germany in 1921, the workers at the Ieuna Factory near Halle started an uprising against their will. This action showed a thorough misunderstanding of the role of the party, a misunderstanding that led to its dissolution. The KAPD still hold fast to the idea of the party as a ‘military headquarters’ of the class when it is above all a political vanguard for the entire proletariat.

Similarly, when the KAPD faced the collapse of the workers’ council and was trapped in its voluntarism while defending the idea of a permanent dual organization of the proletariat, this diluted the confusion about the difference between the proletarian unity organs, which resulted in and the fight for the [general assemblies, strike committees and workers councils] and the organization of the revolutionary minority which intervenes in the unit organs in order to bring to life to their thoughts and actions.” [37]

One issue that could be raised is as follows: on the one hand, the KAPD understood that the party’s functionality would change during different periods of capitalism, and especially during the period of capitalist decadence, and that the party was no longer a mass party, which organized and combined the class - without a party, a nucleus, the most conscious proletarian fighters; on the other hand, the confusion in the party ultimately led to its disappearance.

“The German left always suffered from the general immaturity of the proletariat in Germany, and from the inability of revolutionaries in this country to forge a revolutionary party, armed with theory and ready to face the wave of proletarian struggles. For a long time the elements of the left of the SPD had hesitated to break openly with Social Democracy and form an independent party. For this reason, the KAPD appeared as a young organization with little experience.”[38]

6.1 Organizational Retreat of the German-Dutch Left
The German-Dutch left, due to a lack of clarity in matters of organization and its weaknesses in the dialectical method during the terrible burden of counterrevolution, began to develop positions that would reject the Marxist approach and make concessions, and even retreated
from some of its organizational positions. The ICC explains the confusion and mistakes on the part of the German left by describing its inability to understand the party’s role and function in capitalism’s decadent period. The question which remains is, did Rosa Luxembourg, the most important element on the German left, have a very clear view about the decadence of capitalism and did the KAPD had a clear view about this question? Why was the German left dissolved before it could complete its tasks?

“The German-Dutch left, during the terrible burden of counterrevolution, made more and more concessions on the role of parity regarding the proletarian political approaches.”[39]

“Several serious confusions developed within the German Left.
1. Because of an incorrect analysis of the Russian revolution as both a bourgeois and a proletarian revolution (1921), and then as a bourgeois revolution, a tendency developed within the KAPD which saw the existence of a political party as the reason for the bourgeois nature of the Russian revolution.
2. By theorizing the correct refusal to consider itself as a parliamentary party which should take power, a tendency was formed within the IAPD-AAUD around clearly ‘antiparty’ positions. This ‘anti-intellectual’ current was found in the Essen tendency of the KAPD, and then in the League of Council Communists. But the most well-known split with the KAPD-AAUD, at the beginning of the twenties, was the one which formed the AAUD(E) around Otto Ruhle.
3. As it reject the separate existence of a political party as such, the AAUD(E) advocated the development of organizations that were half way between the party and the councils: the General Workers Union(AAU). Pursuing this analysis to its final conclusions, some elements ended up by splitting and by disbanding themselves on the basis of an anti-organisational analysis. In 1925, Ruhle himself was to give up all organized political activity.”[40]

6.2 Death of Gorter and the Disappearance of the German and Dutch Left

On the one hand, the vagueness, ambiguity and confusion of the German-Dutch left and, on the other hand, the pressure following the degeneration of the Comintern, that is, the beginning of the counterrevolution, resulted in its disappearance. On 15 September 1927, Hermann Gorter died. With his death, the most important and influential militant within the German and Dutch left, and the only one who was able to hold the KAP (Communist Workers Party), was gone.

In 1927, a series of discussions was held between members of the Dutch KAP and German revolutionaries about the problems of a transition period. These discussions resulted in the foundation of the “Groep van Internationale Communisten” (FIC; International Communist Group). Undoubtedly the GIC was the most fruitful group within Dutch councilism. From the 1930s the German-Dutch left disappeared as a revolutionary movement. The remaining elements gave up on the Marxist method and became antiparty heroes.
Another important figure was Pannekoek, a great revolutionary who played an important role in the German-Dutch left, but then he turned his back on the Marxist method and began to offer confusing theories about the working movement. If Gorter died as a representative of the proletariat’s strength, Pannekoek died as a representative of the proletariat out of weakness and confusion about overcoming the counterrevolution.

Pannekoek could have continued to defend the revolutionary positions and perform an immortal historical service, not only to the proletariat but even for humanity. But he decided to leave the Marxist method behind in its main points: party issues, revolution, etc. He began to disparage and discredit the revolutionaries and the October Revolution. In short, Pannekoek was a great revolutionary who made serious mistakes in the later period of his life.

The most important group that played a role among the ruins of the German-Dutch left was the GIC. This was not a communist group in our view, but the most radical group in councilist communism. The ICC explains the GIC’s organizational view below:

“The GIC brought about the definitive end to the KAPD’s confusion about the unit organizations. Although the GIC was the creator of ‘revolutionary factories’ nuclei’ with the same orientation as ‘working groups’- they would be propaganda organizations at the factories - it made a clear distinction between the central factory organizations and revolutionary organizations” [41].

The ICC describes the continuation of the GIC’s fate as follows:

“The GIC’s theoretical work was continued by Spartacusbond, which arose from a split with the party of Sneeveltett in 1942. Despite a healthier approach to the revolutionary organization’s function, Spartacusbond realized the vital role that the party had to play in the revolution, which was as an active factor in the development of consciousness. In its operation, Spartacusbond had statutes and a central organ, so it eventually became dominated by the GIC’s old ideas about the organization. Today, Spartacusbond is dying, and Daad en Gedachte (almost ‘Thought and Deed’), which left Spartacusbond in 1965, is a meteorological bulletin on strikes in progress.” [42]

Finally, if we were to compare the German-Dutch left with the Italian Left, the former’s main problem was its immature understanding of the revolutionary role in the counterrevolution. It was incapable of establishing a faction to defend the revolutionary positions and to draw lessons from the working class’ struggle of the past, while the Italian left was able to establish such a faction.

“Contrary to the Italian left, which was able to draw up a more realistic balance sheet of the period, the German left showed itself to be weak and unable to understand what would be the responsibilities of revolutionaries during the counterrevolution. Unlike their Italian comrades, the German revolutionaries did not form themselves into a faction capable of defending, with tooth and nail, the gains of past struggles. That is why, today, far from expressing and maintaining a clear and coherent continuity with the past revolutionary wave, far from expressing the strength of the German and Dutch left in
their critique of the Comintern, the present-day councilist organizations are an extreme manifestation of all its weaknesses and confusion.”[43]

6.3 Rühle and the German-Dutch Left

Rühle, the antiparty hero, who is a source of inspiration for councilists, saw the party as a huge machine that sought to control the fight from the top, down to its last components. Rühle did not hold German-Dutch positions and he was excluded by the KAPD.

The KAPD in Germany and the KAP of Gorter in Holland had nothing in common with Rühle, and his tendency in Dresden was excluded from the KAPD at the end of 1920. The KAPD had nothing in common with half-anarchist tendencies which proclaimed that any party was counterrevolutionary in nature, and that the revolution was not a question of the party, but a question of education.

7. The Organization’s View of the Italian Communist Left

“The Italian communist left’s strength was its methodology, and theoretical and organizational strength, which made it passed the counterrevolutionary test much better; and, in the meantime, this made it possible to integrate its ‘balance’ in a more global approach. Although their work process was slow but more thorough, they never rejected basic Marxist achievements.” [44]

The German and Dutch left played an important role in the early 1920s against the degeneration of the Comintern, and thus became a pole to defend revolutionary positions. Unfortunately, after the 1920s, defending the revolutionary positions as a pole and proudly supporting Marxism and revolutionary positions against counterrevolution ended with the Italian communist left.

The Italian communist left worked to create an international faction in order to learn from the proletariat’s past history and lay the groundwork for future uprisings in the working class’ revolutionary struggle. Therefore, its theoretical publication, Bilan (Balance Sheet), sought to produce a balance sheet for the historical struggle of the proletariat. The lessons from Bilan are extremely important for today’s revolutionaries.

“The Italian communist left was not only loyal to those interests, as opposed to those who spread myths about ‘socialism in one country’, anti-fascism, ‘popular fronts’, ‘United Front’ and ‘national liberation struggle’, which was prevalent, it also saw it as its task to draw lessons from the defeat of the October Revolution of 1917 and the Third International degeneration.” [45]

A comparison between the German-Dutch left and the Italian left shows why the German left was dissolved before it could complete its tasks, while the Italian left, thanks to its
methodology, could achieve its tasks and provide powerful lessons for later generations of the proletariat.

“The German left, for comparison purposes, thought it was possible to create a new international, the KAI, in 1922, when it rejected the October Revolution and the Comintern as an expression of the bourgeoisie class, while the Italian left tried in a deeper way to examine the defeat of October Revolution. To this extent, the Italian Left concluded that it was necessary for the working class to exercise close control over the state following the revolutionary seizure of power. It denounced the Bolsheviks’ identification with the state, against the working class, as shown in Kronstadt and the war against Mahkno. Therefore, it did not reject the October Revolution, something that the German left did, which led them to deny the ‘old’ labour movement history. This meant that the German left quickly disbanded before it could complete the tasks that the Italian left had done” [46].

On the Italian communist left, Comrade Bordiga played an important role. The Italian left with Bordiga rejected the substitution perception and the perception that class consciousness would have to be injected into the working class from outside. His understanding the role of parity and its functionality explains the Italian left’s decline, as it was a deviation from Marxist coherence, yet he performed an immortal historical service to the proletariat.

“The Italian communist left current has always, even during 1920, together with Bordiga, rejected the view that consciousness comes to the proletariat from the outside by ‘bourgeois intellectuals’ - in contrast to what councilists assert, which confuses ‘Leninism’ and ‘Bordigism’ (Bordigo-Leninism). For Bordiga, the party is a part of the class, the party is the result of an organic emergence from the class, in which the programme and militants are fused into a single whole. During the 1930s, Billan always rejected the view of the Comintern Second Congress which defended party dictatorship. It was the Italian left’s profound decline after 1945, under the influence of Bordiga, which prompted it to return to the theory of substitutionism, which after 1923 was labelled as ‘Leninism’.”[47]

8. The Emergence of Councilism

“To those who participated in the revolution of November 9, and who nonetheless shower calumnies upon the Russian Bolsheviks, we should never cease to reply with the question: “Where did you learn the alphabet of your revolution? Was it not from the Russians that you learned to ask for workers and soldiers councils?””[48] 
Rosa Luxemburg

Councilism emerged as a trend on the German-Dutch left, but it would be quite wrong if one were to say that councilism is part of the German-Dutch left, or even worse that councilism is a natural development of the German-Dutch left. This argument could be equally applied to the claim that the Bolshevik Party was part of a natural process leading to Stalinism, which is what the bourgeois propaganda machine pretends was the case.
Councilist trends first occurred in the KPD and then in the KAPD. The main spokesman for councilism was the anti-party hero Rühle, who had been isolated within the KAPD; despite this, his councilist ideas still resonated within the German proletariat. The exclusion of Rühle and his friends from the KAPD did not prevent the rapid spread of councilist ideas, while councilist opinion within the working class was developed.

The reality is that councilism was formed as an idealistic approach to the history of the proletariat when the wave of world revolution had started to return; it is against the notion of historical materialism. The fact is that councilist positions not only suffer from a belief in fate, but councilist arguments will eventually lead to a complete break with Marxism, while the nature of councilism will distance itself from any revolutionary view, which is the natural outcome of such positions.

Councilism expresses the weakness of the proletariat, not its strength; as a result, it lures the proletariat away from its historical task, communist revolution. The fact is that there is a very important common denominator between councilism and social democracy: the movement means everything and the goal is nothing. The ICC, in the following, explains how the councilist view, which is to make a virtue of the weakness of the proletariat and pave the path for the next revolution, will fail:

"The councilist trends, which occurred between 1919 and 1921 in the German proletariat, was not an expression of the strength of the proletariat. Although they were not directly responsible for the defeat, they expressed at least one great weakness of the class. Making a virtue of these weaknesses, which the councilists do, is the surest path to lead the revolution to a defeat in the future. The councilist reaction in the German proletariat over the years needs to be understood, to avoid a repetition of these weaknesses."[49]

Councilism denies any proletarian nature of the October Revolution and the Bolshevik Party. Its supporters talk of the bourgeois character of the Bolshevik Revolution and the movement of bourgeois revolution in Russia, a country with a majority of peasants in the population. It should be noted that, in 1917, Russia was fifth most industrialized nation in the world, with many of the greatest industrial factories. The real translation of councilists’ arguments is that, if the revolution were to take place in one of the most advanced capitalist countries, say the UK, the revolution would have a proletarian character and its victory would be imminent. In plain language, socialism on an advanced island like the UK is possible. This is the same common point that councilism has with Stalinism: namely, the anti-Marxist thesis of “socialism in one country”. Against the backdrop of such an idealistic understanding of events, Rosa Luxemburg viewed, from an internationalist perspective, the events in Russia and announced that the fate of the Russian Revolution would be determined by international events, writing:

“From reality and practical point of view, the same doctrine represents an attempt to get rid of any responsibility for the course of the Russian Revolution, as far as that responsibility concerns the international, and especially the German proletariat, and to deny the international connections of this revolution. It is not Russia’s unripeness which has been proved by the events of the war and the Russian Revolution, but the unripeness of the German
proletariat for the fulfillment of its historic tasks. Also, to make this fully clear is the first task of a critical examination of the Russian Revolution. The fate of the revolution in Russia depended fully upon international events”[50].

Given the philosophical approach - and, even worse than that the ideological view - of councilism to the class consciousness of proletariat, does it reject any revolutionary perspective, which is the natural result of such positions. Councilism, by denying the revolutionary organization - in other words, stating that any political organization is absolutely bad - is virtually incapable of understanding the role and function of revolutionaries and the necessity of a proletarian vanguard. As a result, councilism allowed itself to take on an education and training role among the working class. The fact that the life of councilist currents is often short, meaning that they are incapable of any continuous long-term activity, is the natural result of denying their own existential philosophy. Councilism is incapable of understanding that the revolutionary organization is an active and living part of the working class.

The late formation of a proletarian organization in Germany during the revolutionary wave after World War I, with the defeat of the German Revolution as its result, followed by the class struggles resulting in 80 deaths in earlier decades in Poland, proves the unreliability and lack of perspective in the case of councilist positions and explains why there is no Internationalist Communist Party. Without a proletarian political leadership, widespread class struggles, despite their zeal over time, will suffer burnout, and the capitalist state will not be destroyed; without the international and Internationalist Communist Party, the communist revolution is impossible.

“Councilist ideology tends to reinforce these stereotypes in the class through its denial of the indispensable role of the revolutionary organization. However, councilism, by definition, is incapable of any long-term intervention in the class as a whole. This has the most devastating effect on revolutionaries themselves, in that it undermines the very foundation of its existence, reducing them to the role of the best commentators on or observers of the class struggle, without ever being able to determine what the revolutionaries should be: a determined vanguard, which is capable of moving the class movement forward, to revolution.”[51]

9. The Danger with the Question of Organization

9.1 The Danger of Substitutionsim
Substitutionism constitutes a danger, especially in periods where the movement is in a state of decline and stagnation. That is why we are looking at the period after the decline of the revolutionary wave in the early 1920s, when substitutionism becomes dominant among the Bolsheviks. In fact, through the development of capitalism and its consequence, the greater the homogeneity of the proletariat, the growth in technology and informatics, etc., the more the working class will appear international than in the early 1900s. This eliminates or reduces the prospects for substitutionism.
“The future communist revolution will appear in a much more conscious way than before, because it will arise out of an economic crisis that affects every country—not only the defeated and with the most concentrated and most politically experienced of the class sectors as its center. The proletariat can only organize itself internationally, and will only recognize itself in their parties to the extent they will be part of the international workers’ councils, which will arise from a truly international revolution, not from a "French" or a "German" revolution. The geographical isolation of the revolution in one country, which is the objective conditions for the substitutionism, is no longer possible. Substitutionism constitutes a danger especially in periods of decline in the revolutionary wave”[52].

9.2 The Danger of Councilism

Substitutionism constitutes a danger, especially in periods when the revolutionary wave in decline and stagnating. Councilism constitutes a threat, especially in periods of prosperity, therefore, the spirit of councilism (doubt being the follower of the class and suspicion as a whole being present in the party of the working class), means that when the proletariat needs to act quickly and with determination, this saps the self-confidence of the proletariat.

Even in today’s era, where the class struggle is taking place on a smaller scale, councilism plays its destructive role. Councilism which retains a core of Marxism, along with its idealism and with the quasi-cartoon image of Marxism, has had a more devastating impact on the working class, and even on the most experienced proletarian organizations and revolutionaries within it.

Combatting councilism’s influence and its destructive effects on the working class, and especially the proletarian organizations, should be a tireless part of the internationalists struggle, because they creates a barrier to the progress of the proletarian avant-garde and the International and Internationalist Communist Party.

10 The Party and Its Relation to Class

There are no revolutionaries who create the revolutionary class, namely, the working class; rather, the working class is a revolutionary class which generates its revolutionaries and revolutionary organization. They are not the cause of the class movement of the proletariat nor the reason for a movement; rather, they are a product of the proletarian movement. This means that the revolutionary organization is a part of the working class.

Party is a product of class and its formation process is manifested by the class once its struggle has reached higher levels of class consciousness and a much-intensified form of class struggle is assumed. Party is more than anything else a tool of the class in its efforts towards achieving its historical goal and destroy those relationships that made it necessary.

The class can exist without the party of the class, but the party can never exist without a class. Party is not an administrative or executive organ, but a political organ of the class whose task is defending coherent positions crystallized in the communist programme within the class
until the elimination of the class society. Meanwhile, the public and united organs of the class are councils comprising the entire class.

The reason why the party does not take power is because the task or function of the party is not about taking power. Its task is to provide political leadership which is much more important than taking power.

“If the party does not take power, it is because this is not its function, the reason for its existence. Its real and indispensable role thus lies elsewhere. And that does not reduce its importance. Indeed, the understanding that only the proletariat’s conscious will can determine the direction of history and the possibility of the revolution, implies equally the indispensable character of the organization of revolutionaries and of the party”[53].

Confusion and the inability to solve organizational problems, especially under the influence of deviations from academia and activism, make it impossible to understand the relationship between party and class in the course of a period of retreat and the defeat of class struggle or in the rise and progress of class struggle. Activists look for any effects of class struggle which are decisive for the proletariat. This thinking is leading revolutionaries to launch the class struggle and take the class forward. Activism leads to the demoralization and fatigue of militants, who have become disappointed with the weak result of their efforts.

11. The Revolutionary Organization’s Role and Responsibilities

11.1 During the Rise of Capitalism

Much of the political uncertainty and ambiguity, especially organizational incomprehension expressed in revolutionary organizations, is based on an incomplete understanding of the theory of capitalist decency and its practical consequences, or the theoretical implications in the case of revolutionary action.

Not only have the objective conditions for revolution in the rise of capitalism matured, but even the proletariat itself suffers from immaturity.

Huge parts of the proletariat, from rural areas to small workshops, were poured into industry. The proletariat expanded quantitatively, but it was without any political and organizational traditions and often influenced by religion and folksy nostalgia. As a result, socialist education exaggerated its own role, while the revolutionary organization introduced an injection of class consciousness into the working class.

During the rise of capitalism, which coincided with the era of thigh formation of nation states, most came to speak of socialism in a national form. In turn, the performance of the revolutionary organization would also assume a national role, whereby socialism was supposed to be built in each country before creating a federation of socialist states. This is why, at the First and Second International, there was a federation of national units rather than a worldwide, centralized organization.
Therefore, the objective and subjective conditions for involving revolutionaries were different to those of today. Unions and parliament still had a progressive role, while revolutionary organizations could take on a mass form, such that the task of the revolutionary organization during the rise of capitalism had been organizing the working class.

“The fact that the objectives and conditions for the revolution did not come of age led to a specialization of functions which should be organically linked to an atomization of the organization’s functions:

- The theoretical tasks were reserved for specialists (schools of Marxism, professional theorists)
- The agitation and propaganda tasks were performed by the employees of unions and parliamentary representatives, ‘professional revolutionaries’
- The organizational tasks were performed by functionaries who were paid by the party” [54].

11.2 In the Decadence Period of Capitalism

The objective conditions that followed World War I meant fundamental change to the role and function of the revolutionary organization. The task of the revolutionary organization is no longer about physically organizing the class and revolution, but offering political leadership. Revolution is the work of the whole class. Due to changes in objective conditions, the organization no longer has specific groups, such as young people, women, co-operators and so on.

The revolutionary organization is formed both on a national scale and on an international scale, and its programme is identical in all countries, whether in the peripheral countries of capital, or in the metropolitan countries of capital. Some peculiarities still exist today, as a product of the uneven development of capitalism, even in some places where pre-capitalist production remains, but these would never cast doubt over the programme as a whole and its internationalist orientation. The programme of the revolutionary organization in the era of decadent capitalism is a programme with a global orientation and nothing else.

During the decline of capitalism, the objective conditions for revolution have maturated. The concentration of the proletariat has increased, with the overwhelming majority of the proletariat able to read and write (in Western countries, the level is nearly 100%. While the class has become more capable than before, class consciousness on an international scale is more homogeneous. These changes have also changed the form, role and objectives of the revolutionary organizations of the proletariat.

Unlike the rise of capitalism, the revolutionary organization covers a small minority, who are more aware of their revolutionary activities and programme. With class consciousness becoming more homogenous, theoretical work is more a collective responsibility while theory is no longer a product of leadership but a collective product, with individual consciousness crystallized in the collective consciousness.
11.3 Historical and International Dimensions of the Revolutionary Organization

Development of the objective conditions required changes in the forms and functionality of the revolutionary organization in different dimensions; these dimensions give a unified form to the class and the revolutionaries. The revolutionary organization should avoid or prevent natural and artificial divisions of the working class. The revolutionary organization, by destroying the national framework set out by the bourgeoisie, is aroused; and, through the involvement and internationalist defence of the class struggle in all countries, the internationalist dimension of the revolutionary organization will be defended. On the other side, the revolutionary organization, as the most advanced part of the class, has a historic responsibility towards the class. This is because it is the revolutionary organization that transfers the irreplaceable experience and historical memory of the working class from the previous generation to the new generation of the working class; and so, the revolutionary organization is a bridge between the proletarian struggles of previous generations and new generations of proletarian struggles. By acting as a bridge between periods of remission in the class struggle and periods of acute class struggle, the revolutionary organization should be able to actively maintain through force and express the historic goal of the most conscious of the world proletariat, and this expression should be the historical dimension of the revolutionary organization.

11.4 Activity of the Revolutionary Organization

Activities undertaken by the revolutionary organization should be in a logical relationship with its tasks and, as a whole, coherent in terms of understanding. The activities of the revolutionary organization change depending on the process of the class struggle. During the acute class struggle which is going on, the task of the revolutionary organization is at the forefront of the struggle in order to help to advance and developing it to the highest possible level. But, during that class struggle is a recession mode; and, with the class influenced by bourgeois ideology, the revolutionary organization is forced to fight against the tide, as outlined below:

- Theoretical activity – the active involvement of developing, spreading and troubleshooting class consciousness and then generalizing it to the entire class in a dynamic process. Class consciousness is neither something comprehensive nor completed; but, over time, it should always be developed according to historical and objective conditions.
- Activities within the class struggle - active involvement in the class struggle is the main practice of the revolutionary organization, where theory becomes the weapon of struggle through revolutionary propaganda and agitation.
- Organizational activities - developing and strengthening various organizational bodies in order to advance the organization.

Debate, political confrontation, confronting different ideas for overcoming isolation and sectarianism are not only necessary, they are also vital. This is only possible through the discussion and confrontation of different points of view within the proletarian political milieu, especially in a publicly documented form, which will help to advance internationalist traditions and principles.
11.5 Revolutionary Goals of the Organization

Certainly, the goals of the revolutionary organization have changed during the decline of capitalism. Having brought together productive forces, they have now achieved a degree of development whereby the capitalist mode of production has attached itself like a ball and chain to any further progress.

There is no room for permanent reforms in the capitalist system, but the proletariat has been at the forefront of a major alternative: the communist revolution or the destruction of humanity. This means that the organization, rather than engage in struggles, such as those for civil rights, for women’s rights or against racism, it should only take part through its direct action, directed towards its goal: fighting for the worldwide communist revolution.

“As the Russian Revolution shows, revolutionaries only arise and exist in the class, a class from which they can never demand either rights or privileges. They are no substitutes for the class and they neither acquire power nor [exercise] state power on behalf of the class.” [54]. Revolutionaries’ basic role is to intervene in all class struggles until after the revolution in order to fulfil their irreplaceable role in the development of class consciousness and the defence of the communist programme until elimination of class”[55].

12. Defending the Proletarian Nature of the Revolutionary Organization

Since the growth of the working class is not linear, different political tendencies emerge, and this is quite natural. The existence of different proletarian organizations does not reflect the sectarianism of proletarian organizations, but reflects the different tendencies of the proletarian political milieu. With the rise and development of the class struggle, which reflects class consciousness, convergences will increase. Until then, all efforts must be made to replace convergence with divergence in the proletarian political milieu. Revolutionary organizations are the avant-garde of the proletariat and an active factor in the evolution, development and generalization of class consciousness, which play an important role in the class struggle. Without the revolutionary organization, the class struggle would not be able to rise to a higher level and, without the International and Internationalist Communist Party, it would not be possible to win the communist revolution.

Therefore, defending the revolutionary organization is to defend the proletarian political milieu and its internal tendencies in the sense of defending communism, defending those who fight against capitalism in a nearby trench, but on one side, on the same front. The proletarian political milieu, though comprising many tendencies, is characterized by three major tendencies, the Internationalist Communist Tendency (ICT), the International Communist Current (ICC), and the parties operating under the name of the International Communist Party. These currents are rooted in the internationalist faction of the communist left of Italy, which has defended Marxism during the domination of the anti-revolutionary black period.

Although we defend the proletarian nature of the different tendencies of the proletarian political milieu and evaluate their basic positions as proletarian and communist, this defence
is not a religious belief nor a blind obedience, but a dialectical belief and a defence of communism. Of course, each of these currents has also made serious mistakes. Are these serious mistakes destroying the proletarian and communist nature of these currents and bringing them to the counter-revolutionary camp? Definitely not. It is not inconceivable that we emphasize the past experiences of the working class and the lessons learned by working-class political organizations during the history of this class. It is important to mention one of the experiences of the communist movement.

A few months after the first congress of the “Communist party of Iran” in early 1920, in a coup attempt by the Bolsheviks, 12 of the 15 members of the central committee elected by the first congress of the party, including Avatis Sultanzadeh, were dismissed from the leadership of the party. The reason for this was the non-progressive evaluation of the national bourgeoisie in Iran by Avatis Sultanzadeh, because he believed that direct communist struggle and attempts towards World Revolution should be the main priority. This opinion was not supported by the Political Bureau of the Caucasus and Azerbaijani Bolshevik; they had illusions about the progressive role of the national bourgeoisie. The ambiguities of the Comintern with regard to the national bourgeoisie strengthened Reza Shah in Iran and Atatürk in Turkey.

Those who sacked the great theorist of the communist movement from the Central Committee, namely, the Bolshevik Political Bureau of the Caucasus and Azerbaijan, neither were theoretically at the level of the Sultanzadeh nor had the experience of the Sultanzadeh. However, the Sultanzadeh never questioned the proletarian nature of the Bolshevik Party, but strongly opposed the Bolshevik policy of the Caucasus and Azerbaijan, as well as wrote articles exposing this destructive policy and the role it played in Iranian society and the proletariat class movement.

With these explanations, we return to the ICC, which, despite its confusion, its ambiguities and its mistakes, still defends the proletarian position. It continues to emphasize world revolution and believes that socialism is possible only at the global level. The ICC believes in internationalism and, from this perspective, has evaluated all wars since the First World War as counter-revolutionary and reactionary. Thus, its evaluation of wars such as those in Rwanda, Afghanistan and Iraq is completely Marxist.

The ICC has a good understanding of the evolution of capitalism and consequently been able to evaluate national movements as counter-revolutionary and part of the imperialist politics in imperialist tensions. It has been able to declare that unions have been permanently merged into the capitalist state and that the form of organizing the proletariat has changed. It has declared that the mass party has lost its meaning and that the revolutionary organization only comprises a small minority. It does not believe in the left of capital, while it evaluates the Stalinists, Maoists, Trotskyists and official anarchists (those who merged with capital institutions) as counter-revolutionary.

Although the ICC has doubts about the evolution of class consciousness and the role of the revolutionary organization, as well as made some serious mistakes and errors in other areas as well, just as the Bolshevik Party has done, the proletarian nature of the ICC cannot be
questioned, just as the proletarian nature of the Bolshevik Party was not questioned. In this regard, we have criticized and will continue to criticize some positions and practices of the ICC in various contexts, but a Chinese wall separates the criticism from discrediting revolutionary currents.

13. Consequences of the Ambiguities of the ICC Regarding Class Consciousness and the Revolutionary Organization

“The danger of councilism therefore does not confine itself to the negators of the party; it can even menace an organization as well armed as the ICC. What is all the more dangerous is that councilism often does not announce itself by its name and hides itself behind a formal recognition of a programmatic framework and centralized organization.” The ICC

First of all, it should be emphasized that the issue of revolutionary organization and class consciousness is not only, at its highest level, a political one but also a vital one. Therefore, ambiguity or weakness on this issue can lead to highly destructive consequences, or even to the dissolution of the revolutionary organization. That the ICC has repeatedly faced an organizational crisis is the result of the ambiguities of the ICC regarding proletarian class consciousness and the role and function of the revolutionary organization.

In the 1970s, the parties operating under the title of the International Communist Party were, organizationally, the strongest communist left currents. Unfortunately, these currents were in crisis and severely weakened. In an article entitled “A crisis which illustrates the weakness of a conception of organization” [58], it is clearly explained that the root cause of this crisis should be found in the weakness of organizational understanding. The ICC writes:

“The crisis can’t be explained by mistakes ‘made by the leadership' or by 'tactical errors', as both the splitters and the remaining ICP seems to believe. The mistakes are programmatic and lie at the very root of the constitution of the ICP.”

Unfortunately, the consecutive splits have weakened the ICC and made it less effective. It is important to note that not every split weakens a communist current; rather, it can lead to its strengthening, provided that the split is the product of a theoretical struggle and a reflection of the class struggle. Like the split of the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks in the Russian Social Democratic Party, it can definitely be said that the divisions within the ICC were not the product of a theoretical struggle and a reflection of the class struggle. Discontent grew in the ranks of the ICC because of the ambiguity in its organizational role and function. Finally, the compression of discontent manifests itself in the form of organizational crisis. The ICC writes in this regard:

“We have particularly emphasized the petty-bourgeois, anti-organizational nature of the divisions that have taken place in the history of the ICC, which have never been motivated or justified by political differences.” [59]
During the divisions that the ICC has gone through, most people who have left the ICC were not the young, inexperienced, new or possibly adventurous members, but the experienced, determined, transparent and highly trained militants. Many of those who have left the ranks of the ICC have been members of the central organ. Viktor, one of the founders of the ICC, once stated that not even a crane could pull him out of the organization [60]. There was no need for a crane: organizational ambiguities led him to leave. The ICC said of Victo:

“A comrade who was involved in forming the ICC, a comrade whose reputation for honesty, honour and militant conviction were spread far beyond the ICC.” [61]

The ambiguities of the ICC regarding proletarian class consciousness, the role and function of the revolutionary organization, and the low party spirit open the way for the destructive influence of anarchism and councilism. What is important is that we are not confronted with an attitude that defends the platform of councilism, but with an attitude that hides its anarchism and councilism behind a formal recognition of a programmatic framework and centralized organization. Therefore, it is very difficult to counter the views and actions of such an attitude. We look at parts of the destructive influence of anarchism and councilism in the language of the ICC. Concerning the impact of the anarchist function within the ranks of the international communist movement itself, it states:

“We believe that the ICC could never have survived if we had not been able to define the anarchist function that existed in our own ranks.” [62]

The ICC assesses the danger of councilism not only as a threat to the political milieu, but also as a threat to those in its own ranks who believe in the Party and writes:

“The councilist danger is a menace against which the ICC must be particularly armed, right into its own ranks.” [63]

Another problem arising from the ambiguity in the organizational role and function is the growth in the circle spirit. The destructive influence of anarchism and councilism, of course, provides the basis for the growth in the circle spirit. In this regard, the ICC says:

“Experience has shown how difficult it has been to break old habits of the past and to overcome the circle spirit that has prevailed in our organization for many years, even for experienced militants who have been involved in building it since the formation of the organization.” [64]

Unfortunately, the destructive influence of anarchism and councilism on the ICC was not short-lived but was a long-term influence. Councilism is genetically anti-organizational. The ICC, in this regard, writes:

“Unfortunately, councilist ideas continued to be expressed in an indirect manner - and that is all the more dangerous - within our organization.” [65]

The ICC evaluates that councilism is the greatest danger to the revolutionary milieu, which is partly true, and writes:
“In the wake of this debate - which is not yet finished - the ICC has seen a tendency among the comrades with minority positions towards conciliation to councilism, (‘centrist’ oscillations in relation to councilist ideas). Although these comrades claim the contrary, we think that councilism constitutes the greatest danger for the revolutionary milieu of today. And, much more than substitutionism, it will become a very great danger for the intervention of the party in the future revolutionary struggles.” [66]

One of the important features of the splits in the ICC is that the splitters actually lost their revolutionary potential and function after the split. This really needs serious research and cannot be answered in a stereotypical fashion. The question is, why can’t those who split from the ICC continue their revolutionary activity and function as a small group or a circle and often play a destructive role?

The “most respected” of them is Controversies website which published articles of Dr Mohammad Qaraguzloo, who recently shifted to the right wing of the left of capital.

Controversies website published articles by one of the Islamic bourgeois ideologists. Those who are unfamiliar with the Persian language might have thought the website publishes articles by internationalists in Farsi. We only mention two of them.

The doctor, an ideologist of capital, in his praise of octopuses, such as the Ministry of Intelligence of the Islamic bourgeoisie and the Supreme Leader of the Islamic bourgeoisie, once wrote:

“Taken together, these two goals, first and foremost, would drag Mohammad Khatami’s seizure policy into a completely blind and dark impasse. The conspiracy was barred by the intelligence of the Supreme Leader, the pursuit of the President, and the intelligence, tact and rationality of the Ministry of Information and the enlightenment of the press.” [67]

The same ideologue, with regard to the ideological superstructure of the Islamic bourgeoisie, which has created a real hell on earth for the working class, questioned whether Marx recognized Shiite principles of justice, while believing that religion is the opium of the working class? He wrote:

“The rise of Marxism, which claimed religion as the opium of the working class, saying that ‘In the event of a radical change in productive relations and the abolition of capitalist exploitation, religion will disappear’, in terms of credibility, it is a kind of historical reaction to theocratic governments. Here, without going into the context of this process, it is not too far-fetched to ask whether Karl Marx was acquainted with the fundamental ideas of Islamic civilization and, in particular, Shiite principles of justice; and, instead of dealing with medieval priests, whether he would have argued with a philosopher like Mullah Hadi Sabzevari to insist that religion is the ‘opium of the masses’ and a barrier to historical progress, and justify ‘bourgeois-proletarian’ tyrannical relations?” [68].

Following the publication of articles by the bourgeois ideologue who has shifted to the right wing of the left of capital, we sent a letter to Controversies and objected to their publication. Controversies stopped the publication of Dr Qaraguzloo’s articles and, as a result, no formal
positioning was required. Of course, later on, we noticed that, in other languages, they still published similar content.

Their most charlatan among them at the International Group of the Communist Left (IGCL) resort to gangster practices. Proletarian and communist values and principles are trampled into the mud. Just their latest ‘masterpiece’, their readiness to broadcast an internal bulletin of the ICC, reflects their real nature. Unfortunately, in this political milieu, there was no reaction to this gangster-like attitude, which was considered to be a problem of the ICC. The defence of proletarian values and principles has been reduced to the level of the problems of the ICC. It is important to note that such actions taken by anyone must be condemned, and that proletarian values and principles must be defended under all circumstances. The communist left represents not only a number of political positions but also communist and proletarian values and principles.

In fact, as long as the ICC does not see the link between the destructive influence of councilism and anarchism on the crises that the ICC has suffered, and doesn’t put on its agenda the reinforcement of ‘party spirit’, it will not be able to analyse the real cause of its organizational problems, and the crises will continue to recur. It will be problematic not only for themselves, but also for the whole proletarian political milieu. The influence and penetration of councilism are a perfectly logical consequence of the ambiguity of the ICC towards the development and evolution of the class consciousness of the proletariat and the role of the political leadership and the low spirit in the Party. After each crisis, the ICC declares that it has overcome its problems and that the organization will continue to operate without another major political crisis.

14. Conclusion

“Strengthening of the ‘party spirit’ is the only way to strengthen the revolutionary organization.” The ICC

Class consciousness is the proletariat’s consciousness about its historical task. This is the result of the class’ historical experience and its material existence. The growth in class consciousness is a dynamic process. The function of the revolutionary organization as part of the class is to evolve, develop, deepen and then expand and homogenize this consciousness through its intervention in the class.

There are two important criteria for distinguishing ideology from the class consciousness of the proletariat. First, the proletariat has no economic power and therefore cannot create an ideological superstructure. Another important point is that, contrary to the class consciousness of the proletariat which is formed in a collective process, ideology is individually developed to form an individual consciousness.

In the epoch of decadent capitalism, revolutionary organizations may only take the form of revolutionary minorities, whose task neither is to organize the working class nor take power in its stead, without being a political leadership, or a political compass, where revolutionary
organizations’ political clarity and influence on the working classes are the fundamental elements for the implementation of a communist revolution.

The party is the political organism that is created by the proletariat in order to develop, expand and deepen its own class-consciousness and through the exercise of political leadership (by directing, guiding and leading the proletariat) it aims to destroy the capitalist state and system in order to build a communist society. The task of the party is to defend the communist programme until the elimination of social classes has been achieved; with the disappearance of social classes, the party also loses its necessity. The party is neither the class itself nor the mass organization of the class (the councils during the revolutionary period) but a vanguard of the class. In the revolutionary period the working class exercises its dictatorship through global councils. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of the organized class through the workers’ councils, not through party dictatorship.

The ICC is ambiguous about the process of the evolution and development of class consciousness and reduces its task in relation to the class consciousness of the proletariat and the function of the revolutionary organization to the level of a revolutionary publication. The main ambiguity concerning the ICC in relation to the organizational issue is that it has no perception of political leadership in the revolutionary organization or the Party. This is a logical consequence of the ambiguity of the ICC in relation to the process of the class consciousness of the proletariat.

The German and Dutch left played an important role in the early 1920s against the degeneration of the Communist International and thus became a pole to defend revolutionary positions. Unfortunately, after the 1920s, revolutionary positions as a pole could not be defended, and a part of the German and Dutch left began to develop positions that would reject the Marxist method, and even make concessions. In this regard, the ICC wrote:

“The Dutch Left is dying as a revolutionary current. It is not up to the Dutch Left that its theoretical legacy would pass on to the new elements that may arise in class. To understand and move on from this heritage is up to the revolutionary organizations and not individuals, or some groups who are debating it.” [69]

The Italian communist left worked to create an international faction in order to learn from the proletariat’s past history and lay the groundwork for future uprisings in the working class’ revolutionary struggle. Therefore, its theoretical publication, Bilan (Balance Sheet), sought to produce a balance sheet for the historical struggle of the proletariat.

“The Italian communist left’s strength was its methodology, and theoretical and organizational strength, which made it passed the counterrevolutionary test much better; and, in the meantime, this made it possible to integrate its ‘balance’ in a more global approach. Although their work process was slow but more thorough, they never rejected basic Marxist achievements” [70]

The ambiguities of the ICC regarding proletarian class consciousness, the role and function of the revolutionary organization and the low spirit in the Party pave the way for the destructive
influence of anarchism and councilism, which has prepared the contexts of organizational crises. Unfortunately, repeated splits have weakened the ICC, while the circles that have split from the ICC have failed to deliver revolutionary performance. Will the ICC be able to overcome its ambiguities in the class consciousness, role and function of the revolutionary organization and play an important role in future developments and class struggles?

M. Jahangiry
Notes:

[1] IR No. 11
[3] As above, page 42
[4] As above, page 33
[5] As above, page 54
[6] As above, page 93
[7] As above, page 45
[8] As above, page 82
[9] As above, page 97
[10] As above, page 99
[12] Marxism versus Councilism, IR No. 14
[14] Communist Organization & Class Consciousness, page 31
[16] Marxism versus Councilism, IR No. 14
[17] Communist Organisation & Class Consciousness, page 37
[18] Territorial meeting of the ICC – No. IR 17
[19] Communist Organisation & Class Consciousness, page 105
[20] As above, page 104
[21] As above, page 104
[22] As above, page 62
[23] As above, page 64
[24] As above, page 60
[26] As above, page 57
[27] As above, page 58
[28] As above, page 59
[29] As above, page 99
[30] As above, page 100
[31] As above, page 101
[32] As above, page 103
[33] The tasks for today: The formation of the party or the formation of cadres - IR No. 9
[34] As above
[35] Organization’s view of the German and Dutch left – IR, No. 12
[36] As above
[37] As above
[38] Communist Organisation & Class Consciousness, page 79
[39] The German-Dutch Left is not a branch of anarchism. IR No. 81
[40] Communist Organisation & Class Consciousness, page 78
[41] The Communist Left in the Netherlands and the question of the party - IR No. 9
[42] The organization view of the German and Dutch left IR, No. 12
[43] Communist Organisation & Class Consciousness, page 79
[44] The Italian Communist Left, 1926-45 - IR No. 48
[45] As above
[46] As above
[47] Marxism versus Councilism, IR No. 14
[48] Rosa Luxemburg, On the Spartacus Programmers
[49] Marxism versus Councilism, IR No. 14
[51] Marxism versus Councilism, IR No. 14
[52] As above
[53] Communist Organisation & Class Consciousness, page 92
[54] The role of the revolutionary organization, IR No. 8
[55] As above
Basic Positions:

- The First World War was an indication that the capitalism had been a decadent social system. It also proved that there were only two alternatives to this system: communist revolution or the destruction of humanity.

- In our epoch, the working class is the only revolutionary class. Furthermore, only this social class can deliver the communist revolution and end the barbarity of capitalism.

- Once capitalism entered its decadent period, unions all over the world were transformed into organs of the capital system. In turn, the main tasks of unions were to control the working class and mislead them about its class struggle.

- In the epoch of decadent capitalism, participating in the parliamentary circus and elections only strengthens the illusion of democracy. Capitalist democracy and capitalist dictatorship are two sides of the same coin, namely, the barbarity of capitalism.

- All national movements are counterrevolutionary, against the working class and the class struggle. Wars of national liberation are pawns in imperialist conflict.

- The reason for the failure of the October Revolution was the failure of the revolutionary wave, particularly the failure of the German Revolution, which resulted in the isolation of October Revolution and afterwards its degeneration.

- All left parties are reactionary: Stalinists, Maoists, Trotskyists and official anarchists etc. represent the political apparatus of capital.

- The regimes that arose in the USSR, Eastern Europe, China, Cuba etc., while being called “socialist” or “communist”, only offered a particularly brutal and barbaric form of capitalism: state capitalism.

- The revolutionary organization constitutes the avant-garde of the proletariat and is an active factor in the development and generalization of class consciousness. Revolutionary organizations may only take the form of revolutionary minorities, whose task neither is to organize the working class nor take power in its stead, without being a political leadership, or a political compass, where revolutionary organizations’ political clarity and influence on the working classes are the fundamental elements for the implementation of a communist revolution.

Political belongings:

The current status, positions, views and activities of the proletarian political tendencies are the product of past experiences of the working class and the effectiveness of the lessons that political organizations of the working class have learned during the history of the proletariat. Therefore, Internationalist Voice can trace its own roots and origins back to the Communist League, the First International, the left wing of both the Second International and the Third International, and the fractions that defended proletarian and communist positions against the degenerating Third International, which was represented by Dutch-German fractions, and particularly Italian Fraction of the Communist Left and the defence of Communist Left traditions.