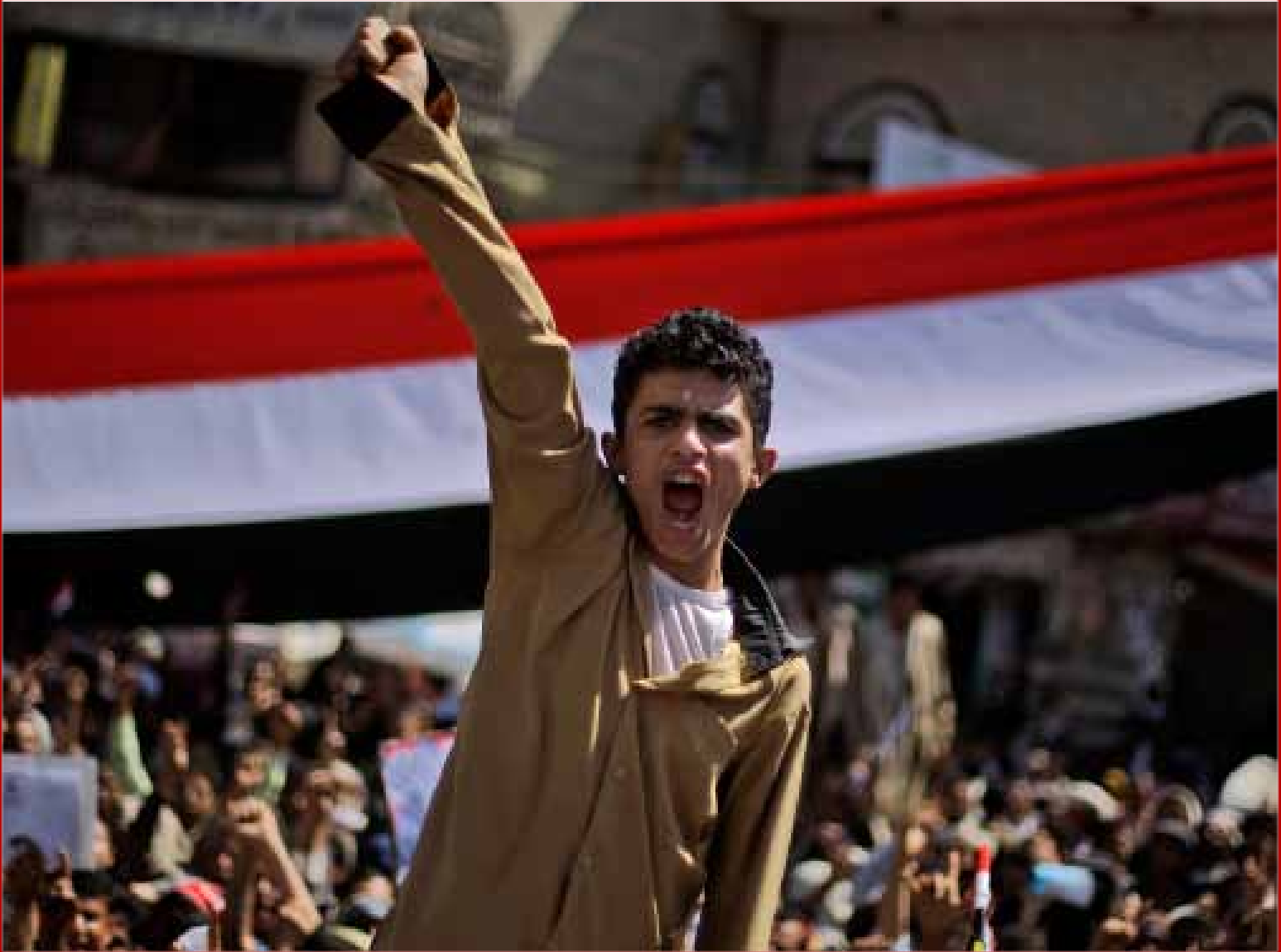




REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE RCIT

ONE WORLD - ONE STRUGGLE - ONE REVOLUTION



www.thecommunists.net

Issue Nr.35

May 2015

Defeat the Saudi-Aggression! Victory to Yemen!

- * War in Yemen, Iran and Imperialism
- * International Workers' Day 2015
- * Brazil: Resist a Fascist Coup

- * Israel: Nakba March, Ramle and more
- * Britain: Strong Signal against Racism
- * Revolutionary Art in Britain

Price: €4 / \$4,5 / £3

English-Language Journal of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), No. 35, May 2015

May Day Statement	p.3
Victory to Yemen! Defeat the Al-Saud Gang of Aggressors!	p.4
War in Yemen, Iran and US-Imperialism	p.6
Macedonia: Stop the Police Violence	p.10
Yemen Under Attack	p.12
Austria: Successful Rally against the Saudi War of Aggression on Yemen	p.13
Israel: A Victory for the bourgeois Zionist right Likud Party	p.18
Israel: Report from Ramleh Meeting	p.19
Israel: Report from Nakba Demonstration	p.20
Brazil: Resist A Fascist Coup By All Possible Means!	p.23
May Day Report from Austria	p.24
May Day Report from Britain	p.25
Britain: A Strong Signal against Racism	p.27
Revolutionary Art in Britain during the late Victorian Aera	p.29
Imperialism-Theory and Permanent Revolution	p.32
NEW BOOK: Building the Revolutionary Party	p.31
Books from the RCIT	p.41
RCIT: What do we stand for	p. 42

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT). The RCIT has sections in Pakistan (Revolutionary Workers Organisation, RWO), Sri Lanka (United Lankan Workers Party, ULWP), Brazil (Corrente Comunista Revolucionária, CCR), Israel/Occupied Palestine (Internationalist Socialist League, ISL), USA (Revolutionary Workers Collective, RWC), and Austria (Revolutionary Communist Organisation for Liberation, RKOB). In addition the RCIT has members in Yemen and Britain.

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May Day Greetings to All Revolutionaries

Workers: Unite in the Struggle against Imperialism and Capitalism!

Declaration of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 26 April 2015, www.thecommunists.net

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) sends its warmest greetings to all revolutionaries around the world who fight against all forms of exploitation and oppression! For 125 years the working class has commemorated May Day as its day of unity and struggle. We send our greetings to the resistance fighters in Yemen who are heroically standing up against the barbaric bombing campaign of the al-Saud gang and its clique of allied kings and dictators. We call for the defeat of the reactionary coalition of the rulers of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, and Jordan, and for the victory of the national resistance struggle of the Yemeni people. We call for the formation of independent workers' and popular councils and militias to lead the national resistance struggle and to carry it forward to revolution. We add our greetings to the courageous militants, who are offering tenacious resistance on the streets – despite the most horrendous massacres – against the butcher of the Egypt people, General as-Sisi. We call for a successful *Intifada* of the workers, youth, and poor against the military regime. We demand the immediate release of all political prisoners and an end of the persecution of oppositional forces including the *al-Ikhwan* (Muslim Brotherhood).

Anti-Fascist Protest

We stand side by side with the militants who oppose the looming coup d'état in Brazil by reactionary forces from the PSDB and other right-wing forces. We call the workers' movements to break with the popular front government of Dilma Rousseff while at the same time defend the latter against any reactionary coup d'état. We call for the formation of anti-coup action committees in the workplaces and in the districts and villages in order to mobilize the working class and the oppressed against the looming danger.

We stand shoulder to shoulder with our brothers and sisters and call for a second wave of the revolution in the Arab world. Such a second wave of revolution – to win real democracy for the workers, fellahin, and all oppressed – must orient itself towards the victory of the socialist revolution.

We stand in solidarity with the struggle against fascist and racist mobilizations, be it in Brazil, in Greece, in Hungary, in Germany, or in Israel against the Palestinian people and progressive Jews. We emphasize the need to smash all fascist forces before they decimate – with the help of sections of the ruling class – the workers' movement.

Defeat the Imperialist Great Powers

We are part of the struggle against the biggest monsters of this epoch – the imperialist great powers: the US, EU, China, Russia, Japan, and others. We support the resistance struggle against imperialist occupation in Afghanistan, Palestine, Mali, Chechnya, East-Turkestan, Northern

Ireland, and other countries. We oppose all forms of interference by the great powers since this can only lead to oppression and super-exploitation. We call for the withdrawal of imperialist forces and military bases from Iraq, Afghanistan, Bahrain, Chad, Mali, the Argentinean Malvinas-Isles, as well as many other countries of the South. In the present conflict in the east Ukraine we don't support either side since it has been transformed into a proxy war between EU/US and Russia.

For a Revolutionary World Party

We stand against the reactionary forces of Dash/IS and call for them to be smashed by the Arab and Kurdish peoples. But we deny the imperialist powers and their proxies the right to fight against Dash/IS. We are opposed to allowing the biggest war criminals – the rulers of the US and the EU – to judge this mad gang of killers for whom they themselves are responsible.

On this May Day we restate our conviction that revolutionaries must unite in the struggle against imperialism and capitalism, for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed, and for the socialist revolution. Our chief task in the coming period is to overcome the crisis of working class leadership and to build a new world party of socialist revolution. Without such an international party with national sections around the world, the working class struggle cannot succeed.

The RCIT is dedicated to building such a world-wide party for socialist revolution – the fifth Workers' International! Join us in this struggle!

Long Live May Day! ■



Victory to Yemen! Defeat the Al-Saud Gang of Aggressors!

The al-Hadi Puppet Government Calls for an Imperialist Invasion

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 8.5.2015

1. On 7 May Khaled Alyemany, the Ambassador to the UN of the al-Hadi puppet government, called on *"the international community to quickly intervene by land forces to save Yemen, especially Aden and Taiz"*. This call for foreign troops under the control of the great powers is nothing but a call for an imperialist occupation of Yemen. It demonstrates once more that the al-Hadi government does not represent any popular forces in Yemen but is a puppet fake-regime living in wealthy exile in Saudi Arabia.

2. Grotesquely, Alyemany also called on the international human rights organizations to document *"barbaric violations against a defenseless population"*. "Accidentally" only hours later US-based *Human Rights Watch* dutifully accused Yemen's de facto ruling force – the so called Houthi rebels – of *"war crimes"* because of their alleged responsibility for the death of two (!) people by gunfire in separate incidents on April 17 and 18 and the detention of 10 local aid workers for 14 days! What a cynicism! The al-Saud Gang of Aggressors – with the support of their al-Hadi puppets – bombards non-stop the Yemeni people. According to the United Nations, at least 1,000 people have been killed since the beginning of the Saudi-led bombing campaign on 25 March. Amongst the dead are 551 civilians of which 115 are children according to the UN's children's agency UNICEF. At least 300,000 people have been displaced. It is the Saudi aggressors and their local puppets, not the Houthi rebels, who have the blood of the Yemeni people on their hands! The bizarre HRW's accusations show once more that a number of NGO's are nothing but hidden lackeys of imperialist powers.

3. The real reason for the Saudi's appeal for an imperialist invasion is their fear of defeat in the Yemeni war. There have been important changes in the military relation of forces on the ground in the recent days. The Houthi rebels, who have the support of the majority of Yemen's population, made significant military advances in the port city Aden (taking control of the al-Tawahi district) as well as Ta'izz. In addition they killed one of the highest ranking members of the al-Hadi forces, Brigadier General Ali Nasser Hadi. The Yemeni resistance forces have also fired rockets and mortars into Saudi Arabia in response to the non-stop aggression of the kingdom. In addition they attacked the Saudi town of Najran (which is mostly inhabited by Yemeni tribes) and successfully captured five Saudi soldiers. This caused panic amongst Saudi's ruling elite since Najran lies about 20 kilometers away from the borders. The regime immediately suspended all flights at a local airport, and shut down all schools.

4. The recent panic of the Al-Saud Gang has also been increased by their failure to persuade their allies to send any ground forces. Until now they have tried to defeat the Yemeni resistance by constant bombardment through their air force as well as shelling from warships. In addition they have imposed a naval blockade against the coun-

try supported by warships from Egypt and the U.S. This however has not been sufficient to stop the Houthi rebels' advance. As a result the Saudi kingdom tries to commit its allies to send ground troops. While King Salman has already ordered as many as 150,000 troops along its border with Yemen, these units have only a limited value for war since many of them – particularly those coming from the oppressed Shia minority – have sympathies for the Shia-based Houthis and cannot be trusted as loyal servants serving the kingdom. In addition, against an initial commitment by the Pakistani government, the parliament in Islamabad decided in a unanimous decision not to send any ground forces to Yemen. In the end, the only regime which the deep-pocketed Saudi tyrant managed to bribe until now is Senegal which promised to send 2,100 troops for an invasion.

5. The recent developments underline once more the character of the war in Yemen. The country is undergoing a revolutionary process which started in August 2014 when the popular masses started to rise up against the reactionary al-Hadi government after it increased fuel prices by 60% to 90%. While this uprising took place under the leadership of the petty-bourgeois Islamist Houthi rebels, it had a profound democratic character. When the al-Saud gang realized that its puppet al-Hadi was about to lose the civil war, it decided to start the air and naval bombardment campaign against the Houthi rebels. This assault has provoked popular outrage and as a result the majority of the population rallies behind the Houthis. However the struggles' progressive character is endangered by the Houthi's leadership's sectarian tendencies as well as its alliance with the forces of the arch-reactionary ex-dictator Saleh. In order to achieve victory of the Yemeni Revolution, the working class, allied with the fallahin,



must organize independently in councils of action and popular militias.

6. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) reemphasizes its defense of Yemen against the monstrous assault of the Al-Saud Gang. We support the military struggle led by the Houthis but reject their political program. We call for the defeat of this band of tyrants of the monarchies of the Gulf States, of the Jordan and Moroccan monarchies, of Egypt's butcher General al-Sisi and the rulers of Pakistan and Sudan. Together with our comrades in the RCIT in Yemen we stress that is the duty of democrats, anti-imperialists, and socialists in Yemen and the Arab world as well as internationally to support the Yemeni peoples struggle for national independence.

7. We repeat that the significance of this war goes far beyond the borders of Yemen. The al-Saud gang of aggressors represents the counter-revolution, the desire of the old ruling classes to crush the Arab Revolution, and to return to the old, pre-2011 order. A victory of the Yemeni Revolution could reverse the advance of the counter-revolution as we have seen in recent years in the defeats in Egypt and other countries. If Yemen is not under the control of imperialism, this would have significant consequences for the capitalist world economy since the country is strategically located for world trade. Whoever controls Yemen controls the Bāb al-Mandab Straits and subsequently the Gulf of Aden and the Suqūtra Islands. Furthermore, whoever controls the Bāb al-Mandab Straits also controls the southern approach to the Suez Channel.

8. A victory of the Yemeni Revolution could inspire a revolt of the oppressed Shia minority in Saudi Arabia and would shatter the kingdom which is one of the foundation pillars of the Arab counter-revolution and the imperialist order in the region. It could also revive the revolution in Bahrain – home to U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and United States Fifth Fleet – after it was brutally crushed by Saudi troops in March 2011. Without the loans of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf monarchies of around US\$20 billion, the Egypt military dictatorship of General al-Sisi would not survive. If the power of the al Saud gang is shattered the whole world economy will tremble given the country's key role in global oil and gas production and export.

9. The Yemeni Revolution can only win as a successful uprising of the workers and fallahin which could result in the formation of a *Worker's and Fallahin government*. Such a government would rely not on the old and corrupt army but on the power of popular councils and armed militias. Such a government would break Yemen's dependence on the imperialist monopolies, and would nationalize the key sectors of the economy under workers' control.

10. In order to ensure the victory of the Yemeni Revolution, the workers need a revolutionary party based on an action program which combines the tasks of the democratic and socialist revolution. Such a party has to be independent of capitalists, imperialist institutions, and bourgeois parties. It should be based on the working class and rally the oppressed peasantry and poor. It should fight against any sectarian divisions along religious lines.

11. The RCIT calls on revolutionaries in Yemen as well as the Arab world to join us in the struggle for an in-

ternationalist, anti-imperialist, and socialist program, and to build a common international organization in the proud tradition of Lenin's Bolshevik party and Trotsky's Fourth International.

12. The RCIT calls upon authentic socialists, on all workers, and the poor and oppressed to:

* *Defend Yemen against the al-Saud Gang of Aggressors! Support the resistance led by the Houthi rebels while not giving any political support to their leadership! No return of the reactionary lackey "President" al-Hadi!*

* *Support the popular campaign to boycott goods made by countries which participate in the Saudi-led war of aggression!*

* *For a mass movement which unites Sunni and Shia workers and fellahin, one which is based on solidarity and respect for all groups!*

* *For a revolutionary Constituent Assembly whose delegates would be accountable and open to recall by the popular masses!*

* *For the founding of popular action councils and armed militias to defend Yemen against Saudi aggression and to advance the Second Revolution!*

* *For a Workers' and Fallahin government defended by popular militias which will expropriate the foreign corporations and the rich domestic capitalists! For the nationalization of the key industries and banks under workers' control!*

* *Defend Gaza! Defeat Israel! For an international boycott campaign against Israel! For a Free and Red Palestine!*

* *Down with the reactionary military dictatorship of al-Sisi in Egypt!*

* *Solidarity with the Syrian Revolution!*

* *For a Second Revolution in Tunisia!*

* *Down with the reactionary monarchy of Saudi Arabia!*

* *Defeat General Haftar's alliance of imperialist lackeys in Libya!*

* *No to reactionary sectarianism! Down with the Salafi-Takfiri Daash!*

* *Renew and extend the Arab Revolution which started in 2011!*

* *For a united, socialist Yemen as part of a socialist federation of the Middle East!*

* *Onward to the building of a revolutionary workers' party as part of a Fifth International!*

For our analysis of the Yemeni Revolution we refer readers to:

RCIT: Defend Yemen against the Al-Saud Gang of Aggressors! No to Sectarian Divisions and Civil War! For a Workers' and Popular Government! Joint Statement of the International Secretariat of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) and the RCIT Yemen, 3.4.2015, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 34, www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/saudi-aggression-vs-yemen/

Mohammed Al Wazeer: ○○○○ RCIT ○○○○ ○○○○ ○○ / Revolutionary Greetings from the RCIT Yemen, Audio messages in Arabic and English, <http://www.thecommunists.net/multimedia-1/rcit-podcast/mohamed-from-yemen/>

Yossi Schwarz: The War in Yemen, Iran and US-Imperialism, 20.4.2015, www.the-isleague.com and <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/yemen-war-us-and-iran/>

Mohammed Al Wazeer: Yemen under Attack, RCIT Yemen, 15.4.2015, www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/yemen-under-attack

RCIT: Yemen: Down with the Price Hikes! For a "Second Revolution" to Establish a Workers and Fallahin Government! 3.9.2014, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 27, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/yemen-uprising/>

Yemen: The Mass Protests continue, Report from a Yemeni Supporter of the RCIT, 4.9.2014, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 27, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/yemen-report-4-9-2014/> ■

The War in Yemen, Iran and US-Imperialism

Revolutionary Program for the Road to Liberation

By Yossi Schwarz, Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine), 20.4.2015

While the Saudi Arabian-led coalition of monarchies and the military Egyptian dictatorship attack Yemen, to the satisfaction of the Israeli ruling class which sees any ally of Iran as the enemy, the attention of the mass media is focused on the question of the US-Iran nuclear negotiations and whether such a deal will be finalized. What they entirely ignore is *why* the Obama and Iran want this deal. While we will touch here on these negotiations, this article will focus mainly on what's happening in Yemen.

The Disagreement between the US and Iran

Among the disagreements between the US and Iran over the latter's nuclear facilities is the timing of the lifting of the economic sanctions against Iran. These sanctions constitute a form of war against the Iranian people. *"In Iran the impact of sanctions has been devastating. Over the last year and a half, families living in poverty rose from 22 percent to more than 40 percent, the Rial plummeted, and the price of food regularly consumed by Iranians — for example, milk, tea, fruits and vegetables — skyrocketed. Moreover, the health of millions of Iranians has been compromised due to the shortage of western medical drugs and supplies. Asian replacements have proved ineffective and often result in severe side effects"* (1). Iran obviously wants the sanctions to be removed immediately, following the signing of the deal, while the US wants to remove them gradually.

Another disagreement relates to technical issues: Iran wants to keep about 10,000 centrifuges to process uranium fuel while the US is prepared that Iran keeps 5,060 centrifuges. In addition, the US wants to convert the bunkered facility at Fordow to one which does not enrich uranium and also demands the right to inspect Iranian's nuclear facilities. Iran rejects both of these last demands and wants a deal that will limit the nuclear program for five years, while the US wants a 10-year limitation.

Last week the US senate passed a bill, which President Obama signed, enabling two thirds of the senate to kill the agreement. Clearly Israel wants the agreement between the US and Iran to be scrapped. The big question is whether the opposition to the deal will be able to muster the two thirds of the Senate needed to kill it.

We don't know whether or not the leaders of Iran want to develop military nuclear capabilities, but if they do, it is certainly within their rights. After all, the US, Russia, England, France, China, India, Pakistan, and reportedly Israel have such weapons, and the only country that has thus far utilized atomic bombs in warfare is the US. Obviously it would be a much safer world without nuclear weapons, but the only way to disarm the vast stockpiles of nuclear weapons is via a working class world revolution. We do not recognize the American imperialists as a power which can legitimately dictate which countries should possess nuclear weapons and which shouldn't. The US wants to retain the monopoly over such weapons so it can continue

to control the world. Serbia, which did not possess such weapons, was attacked by NATO. Iraq, which did not possess such weapons, was occupied by the US. Vietnam, which did not possess such weapons, suffered terribly from the US imperialism's criminal war.

Is Obama Incompetent?

It is a common claim among Zionists, US Republicans, and others that Obama simply does not understand the Middle East. *"Two former US secretaries of state — Henry Kissinger and George Shultz — penned an op-ed for The Wall Street Journal on Wednesday criticizing President Barack Obama for the framework agreement his administration reached with Iran last week."* (2)

The Jewish Press wrote: *"Obama and his foreign policy gurus still hold on to the delusion that if Israel simply would agree to surrender every inch of territory that was restored to the country in the Six-Day War in 1967, the sky would be filled with doves of peace, pooping on Jews, instead of rocks and rockets aimed at Jews."* (3)

In a broader context, Peter Beinart wrote in *The Atlantic* last August: *"There are smart critiques of Obama's tunnel vision, and they come not only from Republicans but from former Obama administration officials like Vali Nasr. Critics claim that by neglecting Iraq because it no longer harbored a terrorist threat, the Obama administration enabled Nouri al-Maliki's crackdown against Sunnis, which helped create ISIS. Obama's failure to do more to strengthen moderate rebels in Syria, they argue, had the same effect. By focusing too narrowly on jihadist terrorism, in other words, the Obama administration ignored the sectarianism and state collapse that ultimately fueled jihadist terrorism. It forgot the proverbial lesson — often preached by liberals — that when it comes to foreign threats, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"*. (4)

What none of these critics of Obama understand is that the US is a decaying power and that it vitally needs Iran so that it can remain involved in the Middle East. At the current time, the US cannot deploy its army to occupy additional countries; therefore, without a regional power as an ally in the Middle East, the US will lose its share of control of the region. Israel and Turkey cannot possibly do for the US what Iran can. Thus Obama is acting in the best interests of US imperialism, a fact which makes him even a worse enemy of the working class and oppressed.

In the past, the US used its military power to intervene in the Middle East, as we saw in Afghanistan and Iraq. But to Syria and Yemen, the US is not sending its army, due to its inability to deal with its economic woes while spending billions on expensive wars: *"After-tax corporate profits declined at a 1.6 percent rate last quarter after increasing at a 4.7 percent pace in the third quarter. Corporate profits from outside the United States fell at an 8.8 percent rate, the steepest decline since the 2007–2009 recession. For all of 2014, after-tax corporate profits fell 8.3 percent, the largest annual drop since 2008."*

(5) Thus, we see that contrary to previous rosy forecasts, the US is not managing to move its economy forward. This no fault of Obama's; it is the endemic reality of declining capitalism.

In its last wars in Lebanon and in Gaza, Israel has demonstrated that it can butcher civilians and destroy homes and infrastructure, but cannot maintain the stability of the region for imperialist exploitation. It could not defeat either Hezbollah or Hamas. Precisely for this reason, Obama is pursuing the deal with Iran. While the US is unable to send its army to Syria or Yemen, Iran on the other hand is involved in Syria supporting Assad, in Lebanon where it relies on Hezbollah, in Iraq where it supports Shia militias fighting against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). Most recently, Iran has become involved in Yemen on the side of the Houthi rebels, a Shia minority in the north who in March toppled the central government and can take power of the entire country: *"In a March 2012 article, The New York Times cited claims by unnamed US military and intelligence officials that the Quds Force, an elite arm of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IGRC) was smuggling significant quantities of AK-47, rocket propelled grenades, and other arms to Houthi rebels in Yemen. And in January 2013, a cache of weapons seized from a ship off the coast of Yemen was reported by CNN to have Iranian markings. It included surface-to-air missiles, C-4 explosives, and other weapons, all allegedly destined for the Houthis"*. (6) While from a revolutionary perspective, Iran's providing the rebels with weapons is a positive thing, it also presents dangers: the possibility that Iran will take control of the rebel movement.

The Huthies

The Yemeni tribes were first converted to Islam by Ali ibn Abi Talib the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, who ruled the Islamic Caliphate from 656 to 661, and these tribes supported his claims to the Caliphate. The Sunnis consider Ali the fourth and final of the *Rashidun* (rightly-guided Caliphs), while the Shias regard Ali as the first Imam after Muhammad, and consider him and his descendants the legitimate heirs to Muhammad.

At beginning of the eighth century – after the death of the fourth Shiite Imam Ali ibn Hussein, the Shiites began to split over his succession. The faction known as the Zaidis chose Ali's son Zaid as the fifth Imam. The other faction, the Twelver Shiites, because they believe there will be twelve Imams in all – chose Ali's other son, Muhammad. The Zaidis firmly believed that Shiites should rise up against the Umayyad Dynasty, while the followers of Imam Muhammad maintained that Umayyad suppression had made Shiites too vulnerable, so they needed to reorganize and work to empower the community until the day when the Mahdi (savior) would arrive.

Uprising against unjust rulers became an essential part of the dogma of the Zaidis, who criticized Imam Muhammad and his followers for inaction against the Umayyad caliphs. Zaid rose up against the Umayyad rulers of the time and was killed in the battle.

The followers of Zaid and Muhammad gradually developed two distinct theological schools. At the same time, many Zaidis and Twelver Shiites left Medina and immigrated to Iran. In 897, a Zaidi named Yahya bin Hussein, who dubbed himself "Hadi" (the guide) and declared that

he was the Imam, left Medina for Yemen. Like Zaid, he believed that it is a religious duty to rise up against injustice. The Zaidis believe that Imams are chosen by consensus of the community's *ulama* (religious scholars). The Twelver Shiites believe that one becomes Imam only if appointed by the Prophet or previous Imam. Zaidi jurisprudence is very close to two Sunni schools of Islamic law, the Hanafi and Shafi'i, which differ significantly from the Twelver Shiite school. (7)

The al-Houthi movement in Yemen was established in the mid-1990s by Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi. They were aligned with the pro-government al-Huqq party and sought to revive Zaidism. After Yemen President Ali Abdullah Saleh aligned himself with the US in 2001, Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi spoke out against the state, and the group held mass anti-government and anti-American demonstrations. The government issued a reward for the capture of Hussein and security forces killed him in September 2004, marking the beginning of the current rebellion.

The al-Houthi movement draws its supporters from the Zaidi Shiite population in northern Yemen and it was primarily active in the Sa'ada and Amran provinces. The background of the rebellion were grievances regarding economic and social marginalization, corruption in the government, close alignment of the state with the US and Saudi Arabia, and excessive Wahhabi influence on state policy and schools. The al-Houthi rebels did not see President Saleh as a legitimate ruler, despite the fact that he is also a Zaidi and the movement was part of the Arab spring. (8)

After 11 years of civil war, the Houthis took over most of Yemen following the resignation of the president and his government which escaped Sana from where they denounced the rebels as "Iranian puppets". The real puppets are the servants of the imperialists who support Saudi Arabia's criminal bombing of Yemen. Nevertheless, the leadership of the al-Houthi called for a two-year transitional phase through a "constitutional declaration," demonstrating that the group's leaders goal is to share power with the old regime on the basis of partnership.

The Saudi Arabian led coalition, backed by the US, has been bombing Yemen since March 26 with the hope of restoring the previous government to power. As Sara Floun-



ders, Co-director of the International Action Center has said: "The air campaign in Yemen led by Saudi Arabia with US coordination will have terrible consequences bringing further destruction and creating millions of refugees." (9)

While the Western mass media are not really informing us exactly what the Saudi warplanes are doing, we can find information from other countries: "Saudi warplanes struck a school in a Sunni-populated district of Yemen's Ma'rib city, and massacred scores of defenseless students, a local source said." According to the source, "the Saudi fighter jets late on Monday staged massive bombing raids on a Sunni-teaching school in the city of Ma'rib, located about 120 kilometers (74 miles) East of the capital Sana. There has been no report on the exact number of the casualties, but the source said the raids claimed the lives of dozens of schoolgirls., The Yemeni army Spokesperson Colonel Sharaf Luqman said in a press conference on Monday. that the bombing destroyed 2;265 houses. He stressed that the Yemeni people will fight to the last drop of their blood to safeguard the sovereignty and independence of their country .The spokesperson said that the Saudi regime is the main backer of all terrorist groups particularly al-Qaeda militants in the region". (10)

Indeed, on the ground the Houthis are facing the military power of the local branches of al-Qaida and the Islamic State. Thus, whereas in other parts of the world al-Qaeda is portrayed by the US as barbaric, in Yemen the Americans are in bed with them.

Clearly the Houthi leadership's plan of power-sharing is backed by Iran. On Friday, Iran's foreign minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, submitted a letter to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon outlining a four-point peace plan for Yemen calling for "an immediate ceasefire and end of all foreign military attacks, humanitarian assistance, a resumption of broad national dialogue and 'establishment of an inclusive national unity government.'" (11)

This brings to mind Hezbollah's refusal to take power following the Second Lebanese War when one million Lebanese wanted to overthrow the government and Hezbollah stopped them. Today Hezbollah is stronger than ever, yet it still does not want to take power for reasons Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution explains.

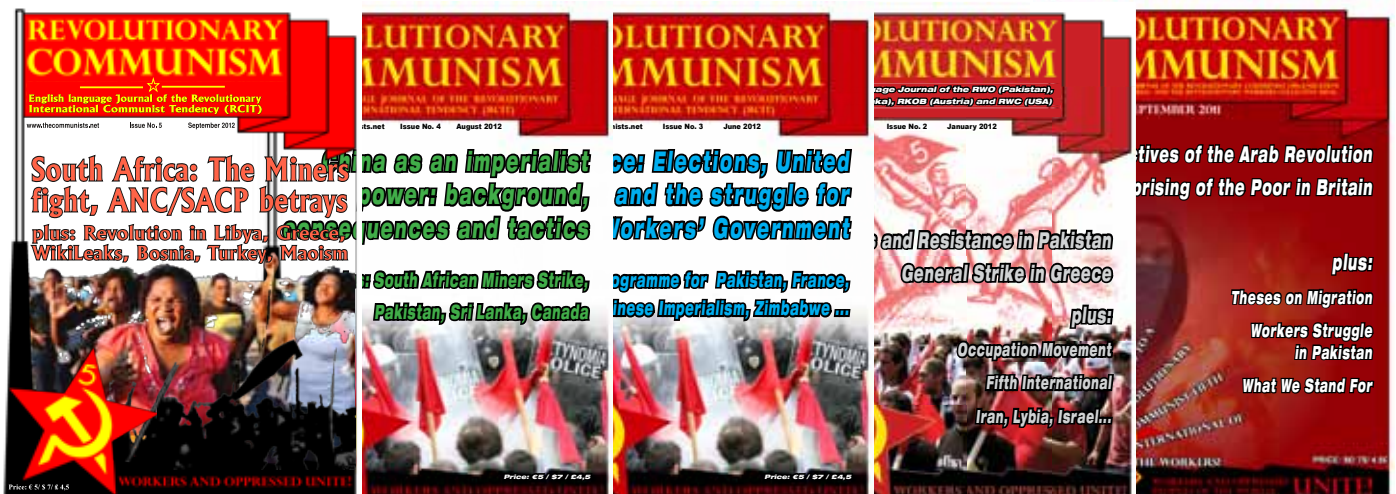
What is Iran's game?

Martin Reardon in Aljazeera wrote: "Reminiscent of the 'Great Game' played out in Afghanistan between Great Britain and Russia more than a hundred years ago, Saudi Arabia and Iran are engaged in their own decades-long strategic rivalry for power and influence in the Middle East, stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the Gulf and Arabian Sea. It is built mostly along sectarian and ideological lines – Saudi Arabia as the leader of the Sunni Muslim world, and Iran as the leader of the Shia Muslim world. While recent high-level discussions between the Saudi and Iranian foreign ministers would suggest a possible thawing in their cold relations, the fact of the matter is, too much bad blood exists between them for any meaningful, long-term rapprochement, at least in the near-term. The more likely state of affairs is that they are simply reassessing their strategies, taking into account all the events in the region, and preparing their next moves on the Middle East chessboard." (12) No doubt there is some truth in what Reardon writes here, but what he misses is that Saudi Arabia is client state of the US, while Iran would like to act as a policeman for the US and other imperialists but whether it would be possible in light of their history has to be seen. In Afghanistan of the late 19th century, both England and Russia were imperialist states fighting for their share of the robbery of the exploited.

A Revolutionary Program

We, the ISL section of the RCIT, have backed the Houthi rebellion from its very beginning. Yet we have warned that their leadership will betray the aspiration of the Yemen's super-exploited workers and poor and have furthermore explained that without a working class supported by the poor peasants, urban poor, women, unemployed, and youth, and led by a revolutionary workers' party that will participate in the democratic struggle and lead it to a socialist revolution, the road to liberation will be blocked. Now is the time for the most dedicated rebels to found such a party by before the imperialists, with the help of Saudi Arabia and Iran, will gain control of Yemen. As our

Order from our contact address past issues of the RCIT's Journal Revolutionary Communism!



Yemenite comrades wrote: "A major step on the path to this goal will be the forming of a Constituent Assembly to formulate a new constitution for the country, one which will unite the workers and poor irrespective of their religious beliefs. Those of us, like we as supporters of the RCIT, who are revolutionaries, would fight inside this assembly for a socialist program. But towards this future step, we the working class, the peasants and the poor must see our main task as being the formation of independent organizations; organizations which will strive for the founding of new, popular, council-based democratic councils of action based on regular assemblies of the workers and popular masses. Among the first actions of such councils will be the formation of popular armed militias – for which we will call upon the Houthi leadership to provide us with arms and ammunition in the context of our mutual fight against the foreign aggressors." (13)

* Defend Yemen against the al-Saud Gang of Aggressors! Support the resistance led by the Houthi rebels while not giving any political support to their leadership! No return of the reactionary lackey "President" al-Hadi!

* Support the popular campaign to boycott goods made by countries which participate in the Saudi-led war of aggression!

* For a mass movement which unites Sunni and Shia workers and fellahin, one which is based on solidarity and respect for all groups!

* For a revolutionary Constituent Assembly whose delegates should be controllable and open to recall by the popular masses!

* For the founding of popular action councils and armed militias to defend Yemen against Saudi aggression and to advance the Second Revolution!

* For a revolutionary workers party as part of the Fifth International.

Footnotes:

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(12) See on this Martin Reardon: Saudi Arabia, Iran and the 'Great Game' in Yemen

(13) Mohammed Al Wazeer: Yemen Under Attack, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, Yemen, 15.4.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/yemen-under-attack/>

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Yemen Under Attack

Report about the Operation Decisive Storm

By Mohammed Al Wazeer, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, Yemen, 15.4.2015

Three weeks have passed since the launching of “*Asifat al-Hazm*” (“Operation Decisive Storm”), a brutal attack by the al-Saud gang and its allies (Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait from Gulf; with Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, and Sudan) against the people of Yemen, who have been trying to win their independence for more than 70 years.

Saudi regime rejects Yemen’s Independence

The struggle between Saudi Arabia and Yemen is an ongoing historical one, as the Saudi regime repeatedly strives to keep the people of Yemen on their knees and prevent any independent revolution against the puppets it places at the head of the state. This began in 1962, following the successful September 26 revolution which brought down the Imam and established a republic. However, since then, Yemen has deteriorated from being a country previously renowned for its exports of wheat, coffee, and other important products into a country that cannot survive without importing basic commodities from the outside world. The Saudi-puppet leadership of Yemen has continually inhibited any serious development of its national economy, including manufacturing, with the exception of some small merchandise.

If the current war being waged by Saudi Arabia and its allies against Yemen continues, there will be widespread

starvation in the country. We have begun to witness the first signs of this grave humanitarian crisis. There have been steep price hikes for all products; there is a severe shortage of oil and the absence of basic commodities like flour. In addition, Sana’a, the country’s largest city, is experiencing frequent blackouts as the result of Saudi air strikes against the electrical power plant at Mareb. Neighborhoods in Aden lack potable water following the destruction of a main water tank in the bombing. Bottom line: we, the people of Yemen, are beginning to slowly die! Sana’a, Taiz, and Houdaidah are the cities with still relatively tolerable conditions. But even there people are hiding in their homes and consuming whatever food is left. Shops and businesses are being closed. And the Saudi warplanes are relentless in their merciless attacks.

The cities of al-Mukalla and Hadramot recently fell to forces affiliated with “El Qaeda.” Strangely, or maybe not so strangely, Saudi warplanes refrain from bombing any such places, and we have even heard that the Saudis are providing the forces in control there with high-tech weapons.

The civilians of Aden, Shabwah, Ibb, Lahj, Mareb, and Al-Dhale’e are living in deplorable conditions. Battles are raging in the streets of these cities; people are trapped, unable to move from place to place. The situation in Aden is by far the worst. A friend there reported that enemy warplanes



War in Yemen: Situation in Aden is by far the worst

and warships are indiscriminately bombing and shelling the city. "It's a disaster," he said. He told how, last week, he heard an old woman incautiously walking outside to look for some bread to buy. Another woman was braving the danger of the streets searching for her little daughter who had still not returned home.

It is just a matter of time until a widespread starvation begins. This is no joke! What, then, is to be done? What can we, the working people and poor of Yemen, do against the Saudi-led attack on our individual lives and national independence?

Defend Yemen against the Saudi-led War

First, many of us are increasingly undergoing a change of political awareness which has made us see that that the foreign attack on our country by the corrupt, reactionary, and imperialist-backed sheikdoms led by the Saudis is now the key threat to our lives and freedom. Having understood this, the majority of the Yemeni people, Shiites as well as Sunnis, have reached the point where we no longer accept narrow sectarianism. Recent events have thus led us to conclude that the Shiite Houthis, those forces which actually drove out the Saudi-backed lackey Abd Rabbu Mansour al-Hadi, and who are now the target of the imperialist coalition, these alleged "terrorists" are the ones who, on the ground, are fighting the fight for all Yemenis, regardless of religious or other affiliation. Therefore, we, Sunnis and Shiites, have come to support the military struggle led by the Houthis against the Saudi aggression. Let there be no mistake: we do not love the Houthis, nor do we harbor any illusions about who they are or what they stand for! Their leadership is a petty-bourgeois, reactionary Islamist force, bizarrely allied with ousted Yemeni dictator Ali Abdulla Saleh, against whom the Houthis actually fought six civil wars during the past decade. This reactionary Houthi leadership is determined to build a capitalist Yemen which they themselves control. Therefore, while we support their military struggle against the foreign aggressors, we give them absolutely *no political support*. Instead, among ourselves, we the working class and popular masses of Yemen must struggle to achieve political unity, so that the day after the defeat of all those attacking us, a defeat to which we have every intention of contributing, we can continue the fight for a truly democratic Yemen by advancing a "*Second Revolution*."

Perspectives

A major step on the path to this goal will be the forming of a *Constituent Assembly* to formulate a new constitution for the country, one which will unite the workers and poor irrespective of their religious beliefs. Those of us, like we as supporters of the RCIT, who are revolutionaries, would fight inside this assembly for a socialist program. But towards this future step, we the working class, the peasants and the poor must see our main task as being the formation of independent organizations; organizations which will strive for the founding of new, popular, council-based democratic councils of action based on regular assemblies of the workers and popular masses. Among the first actions of such councils will be the formation of popular armed militias – for which we will call upon the Houthi

leadership to provide us with arms and ammunition in the context of our mutual fight against the foreign aggressors. In parallel to this vital organizational work, and as an indispensable and integral part of it, the workers of Yemen must found a new party independent of capitalists, imperialist institutions, and bourgeois parties. Only such a party will be able to provide the vision and the leadership for the workers, and enable them to rally the oppressed peasantry and the urban poor while fighting against any sectarian divisions along religious lines. The goal of this party will be the victory of the socialist revolution, replacing the Houthi leadership with a *Worker's and Fallahin government*, backed not by the old and corrupt army but by the popular councils and armed militias we have previously formed. Such a government will break Yemen's dependence on the imperialist monopolies, and nationalize the key sectors of the economy under workers' control. Such a revolutionary workers' party will strive to unite its struggle with those of workers and the oppressed in other countries – from Palestine and Egypt, to Brazil, China, Greece, and the USA. To do this, this party must be part of the Fifth Workers' International. The RCIT calls revolutionaries in Yemen as well as the Arab world to join us in the struggle for an internationalist, anti-imperialist, and socialist program, and to build a common international organization in the proud tradition of Lenin's Bolshevik party and Trotsky's Fourth International.

No future without socialism!

No socialism without revolution!

No revolution without a revolutionary party!

** Defend Yemen against the al-Saud Gang of Aggressors! Support the resistance led by the Houthi rebels while not giving any political support to their leadership! No return of the reactionary lackey "President" al-Hadi!*

** Support the popular campaign to boycott goods made by countries which participate in the Saudi-led war of aggression!*

** For a mass movement which unites Sunni and Shia workers and fellahin, one which is based on solidarity and respect for all groups!*

** For a revolutionary Constituent Assembly whose delegates should be controllable and open to recall by the popular masses!*

** For the founding of popular action councils and armed militias to defend Yemen against Saudi aggression and to advance the Second Revolution! ■*



Austria: Solidarity Action with the People in Yemen

Successful Rally against the Saudi War of Aggression on Yemen

Report from a Rally in Solidarity with the Resistance of the Yemeni People on 17.04.2015, Austrian Section of the RCIT

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) calls upon all socialists and progressives to hold international solidarity actions in support of the heroic resistance of the people of Yemen against the vicious alliance of kings and dictators, led by the Saudi regime, which has been bombing their country in the service of US-Imperialism since 25 March. The RCIT has previously published a statement in support of the Yemeni resistance against the Saudi war of aggression and a report from our RCIT comrades in Yemen. (1)

In addition, on 17 April we organized a rally in front of the embassy of Saudi Arabia in Vienna to directly address the al-Saud Gang of Aggressors.

Despite strong rain, the rally had an animated and militant mood. Slogans were chanted in German, English, and Arabic. Leading representatives of the RCIT, Michael Pröbsting, Johannes Wiener, and Almedina Gunić, addressed the rally in speeches given in English and German. All speakers called for the support of the Yemeni popular resistance against the war and for the defeat of the dictators. In addition to the speakers from the RCIT, a militant Egyptian woman, Saadie Abdelaty, spoke in Arabic against the dictatorships in several countries of North Africa and for solidarity not only with the brothers and sisters in Yemen, but also in Iraq, Libya, and other countries. We know sister Saadie Abdelaty well and have collaborated with her and the Egyptian community of Vienna in numerous actions during the last few years against the dictator al-Sisi as well as against the Apartheid state of Israel, and on many other occasions including the International Women's Day events for 2014.

The RCIT organized this rally because what is currently taking place in Yemen is a central issue in the ongoing struggle between forces of revolution and counter-revolution in the Arab world. In addition, we wanted to demonstrate support for and solidarity with our comrades in Yemen who are living and working under the most difficult conditions. Finally, this action had much symbolic value, because we succeeded in mobilizing activists from both Shia and Sunni backgrounds. This illustrated both the importance and possibility of not being divided along sectarian lines, but rather of working together fraternally against the dictators and their cruel wars. This vital importance of not becoming divided as workers and oppressed, but rather to fight together against the dictators was also emphasized by Saadie Abdelaty in her speech.

Although the weather was against us on the day of the rally, the event itself sent an important political message and was very successful.

Support the work of the RCIT! Join us in building a revolutionary world party of the workers and oppressed!

Footnotes:

(1) Defend Yemen against the Al-Saud Gang of Aggressors! No to Sectarian Divisions and Civil War! For a Workers' and Popular Government! Joint Statement of the International Secretariat of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) and the RCIT Yemen, 3.4.2015, www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/saudi-aggression-vs-yemen/

Yemen Under Attack, Report by Mohammed Al Wazeer, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, Yemen, 15.4.2015, www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/yemen-under-attack ■



Activists in Austria in solidarity with the Yemeni people against the Saudi war

Israel: A Victory for the bourgeois Zionist right Likud Party

A Marxist analysis of the Knesset Election in Israel/Occupied Palestine

By Yossi Schwarz, Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine), 2.4.2015

On March 17, the elections for the 20th Knesset ended in victory for the bourgeois Zionist right *Likud Party* which won 30 seats (out of 120 in Israel's parliament). The bourgeois center-right "Zionist camp" came in second with 24 seats.

The third largest party, with 13 seats, is the "*Joint List*," an electoral alliance of four different parties representing the majority of Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel: *Hadash* (the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality – at the center of which is the Communist Party of Israel) headed by Ayman Odeh, Secretary of the Front; the *United Arab List* (UAL), within which are activists from the southern faction of the Islamic Movement; *Taal* (the Arab Movement for Renewal), led by Dr. Ahmed Tibi; and *Balad* (the National Democratic Assembly) a liberal party led by Dr. Jamal Zahalka and Haneen Zoabi.

With this alliance, the Palestinian citizens of Israel increased their power in the Zionist Knesset by two more seats compared with the number of seats won by its four component parties when they ran separately in the 2013 elections. For now, the major achievement of the *Joint List* is having garnered a significant increase in voter turnout among the Palestinian citizens of Israel. Another achievement, according to our reckoning, is the more highly-resolved picture it has given of the relationship between Palestinian citizens of Israel and the Jewish Israeli left, as the number of Jewish voters for the *Joint List* dropped to almost half the number who had, in the last election, voted for all the parties comprising the list (from 12 thousand to 7 thousand).

As our readers know, the ISL (Internationalist Socialist League) chose to stand together in these elections with the entire Palestinian-Arab population of Israel by giving our critical support to the *Joint List*.

On the surface, it seems as if at the heart of these elections was the struggle between the Likud and the Zionist Camp. However we know that, from a class perspective, at their center was in fact the struggle between two largest bourgeois Zionist parties on the one hand and the *Joint List* on the other, as an expression (even if not entirely unambiguous) of the class struggle.

In this article we will discuss the following questions: (1) Was it correct, in light of the results, to have voted in these elections? (2) Was it correct politically to have established the *Joint List* to begin with? (3) Why did Benjamin Netanyahu win these elections? (4) What must we demand from the leadership of the *Joint List*?

I – The Position of the ISL Regarding Voting for a Zionist Knesset

For us, as revolutionary socialists, the question of whether to vote, to entirely boycott elections, or not to abstain from voting is not a question of principle, but rather one of tac-

tics. When the majority of workers, poor, young, and unemployed still have parliamentary illusions (i.e., the misconception that significant and long-term social change can be achieved by participating in elections and sending representatives to parliament), communists participate in elections, ideally being organized in a revolutionary workers' party. When they do not have a party of their own, communists use the tactic of the united front and call for workers and the oppressed to vote for reformist labor parties (parties which support gradual social change and oppose revolution).

In the absence of a revolutionary workers' party, an additional tactic appropriate for states and peoples suffering from imperialist oppression, is the formation of an anti-imperialist front in conjunction with forces of the bourgeoisie (the wealthy and large employers) and petty-bourgeoisie (small business owners, peasants, and professionals) and voting critically for petty-bourgeois parties as an expression, even when inconsistent, of the mass struggle against colonial oppression.

The various tactics employed by revolutionary socialists are not the result of idealistic whims of politicians, but the result of the accumulated experience of revolutionary movements which preceded us and the lessons of past, centuries-old struggles between the masses of the oppressed, dispossessed, and exploited against their oppressors, dispossessors, and exploiters. Our position on the question of participation in the elections is derived from the experience of the struggle of the Bolsheviks in Russia and the Third and Fourth Congress of the Third International during Lenin and Trotsky's time.

In contrast to our position, some of the radical Palestinians in Israel (especially Abnaa el-Balad [Sons of the Village]) and Northern Islamic Movement) called in this election, as they always have in each past election, to boycott the elections for the Knesset because of the racist and apartheid regime at the head of which it stands. We do not think they are wrong in their analysis of reality, but rather in their tactics for dealing with this reality. In retrospect, the election results show that the majority of the Palestinian masses believe that significant gains can be achieved through the Knesset. The question is how to prove to them that this is an illusion? Abnaa el-Balad's own experience demonstrates that it is simply not enough to repeat over and over again the call for an electoral boycott, a position with which we were partners in the past.

The path which we propose in fact calls for participation in the elections of the apartheid Knesset, but without obscuring its racist character, while at the same time calling for the need for a civil and democratic alternative to Israel's parliament, meaning a constituent assembly of all the inhabitants of Palestine – Arab-Palestinians, including of course the refugees and displaced, and Jewish-Israelis, on the basis of "one person – one vote."

However, as Marxists we must point out that the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie Arab sector in general and in Palestine in particular, because of the web of economic and class interests with which it is bound, is unable to lead to victory the struggle against the apartheid Zionist regime and is incapable of establishing a single democratic republic from the river to the sea. For this reason, the working class must grab hold of the reins of the struggle, since it is the only force with both the interest and ability to lead the Palestinian people and Israeli supporters of democracy and social justice to victory.

Our position, as stated, is firmly rooted in the historical experience of the socialist revolutionaries who came before us. The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, demonstrated in two different situations two seemingly contradictory positions regarding parliamentary elections in Czarist Russia: one called for boycotting them, the other called for participation in such elections. Of particular interest is that the Parliament for which the Bolsheviks adopted the tactic of boycott, was less reactionary than the Parliament in which the Bolsheviks actually chose to participate. The reason is probably that the degree of a parliament's baseness is only a secondary criterion, while what is more important is the relationship between the Parliament and the way the oppressed perceive it. Thus, an electoral boycott was adopted by the Bolsheviks during the 1905 revolution, when people had no illusions about the Tsarist parliament and they began to build popular and electoral alternatives. On the other hand, participation in the parliamentary elections was the tactic adopted by the Bolsheviks when the alternatives had been eliminated by force by the regime and people believed that the only way to exercise influence is by utilizing the right to vote.

II – Was it right to establish a joint Arab electoral front for elections?

The establishment of the *Joint List* was the result of Lieberman's attempt to eliminate Arab representation in the Knesset by increasing the minimum electoral threshold for any party from 2 percent to 3.25 percent. Since each of the separate parties which eventually united to make up the *Joint List* was in danger of not achieving this threshold on its own, it was necessary to establish a common electoral front.

The establishment of a united party for the elections was not an easy step. Some members of Hadash (the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality -- dominated by the Communist Party of Israel) were opposed to forming a combined list for fear of subsequently being increasingly identified as an Arab party. But, in the end, the decision to join such a list was approved in Hadash's National Council. In the *Joint List* there is representation of all ethnic groups and two women were slated in realistically electable positions (Aida Touma-Sliman from Hadash in fifth place, and Hanin Zoabi from Balad in seventh place).

Ma'avak Socialisti ("Socialist Struggle", CWI in Israel), a centrist organization (i.e., one oscillating between reformism on one hand and calling for revolution on the other) tend to the right, and they opposed the creation of the *Joint List*, claiming that a Jewish-Arab socialist camp should be established instead, in other words, one composed by Hadash and *Ma'avak Socialisti*. The latter wrote:

"Unfortunately, Hasash has chosen to identify itself politically with both religious [Muslim] right-wing elements and a narrow-based [Arab] national line, and thus has sacrificed the opportunity to wage a truly independent political campaign which will represent an alternative of the left which will turn to workers and the poor from among Jews as well as Arabs. MK Dov Hanin, who initially opposed electoral cooperation on a national basis, says that 'The challenge before us was and remains the founding of a broad-based Jewish-Arab democratic camp. Only such a camp can reverse the direction in which this country is headed and truly change existing priorities here. We must make every effort to ensure that in the next elections, a broad-based camp of this sort will stand before the public.' It is only proper that Hadash will withdraw from the Joint List immediately after the elections and not only assist in establishing a 'Jewish-Arab democratic camp' 'but build the necessary political alternative of a Jewish-Arab socialist left.'" (Ma'avak Socialisti's public statement on the 2015 elections and the left)

While this position *sounds* like a consistent position of the left, in practice it is one which reflects the Zionist pressure exerted upon this movement. The interesting question is for whom did the members of this movement actually vote, in light of the criticism of its leadership for the *Joint List*? Did they entirely abstain from voting and thereby sabotage the possibility of achieving more power for the *Joint List*, or maybe in the final analysis they voted for a



Zionist party? Or perhaps, despite their leadership, they voted for *Joint List*?

There's no doubt that part of Ma'avak Socialist's criticism on the limitations of the *Joint List* is justified. However, as an alternative they propose establishing a broad-based reformist-left party, which will support a solution of two bourgeois states with "socialist" governments. This, rather than fighting for the perspective of a revolutionary workers' party, which struggles for a single workers' state from the river to the sea.

While Ma'avak Socialist writes a lot on their website about the onslaught of capital against the working class, and they raise correct minimum demands (demands which tycoons grant by relinquishing some of their profits but without jeopardizing their class rule), there is in their writings no trace of transitional demands (demands which on the one hand are not revolutionary but on the other hand ones which capitalists cannot grant without endangering their rule). In addition, their writings make no mention of the racist nature of the apartheid Knesset nor the need to convene a constituent assembly, as we mentioned above. Their website even omits one of the central demands of the Palestinian people: freeing all its political prisoners.

While they write that it is necessary to nationalize private capital, there is no trace of the demand for supervision by the workers, and instead of this demand they make a typical reformist demand: "[...] to cancel all privatizations and to transfer the banks, the large corporations, and all natural resources to public ownership, under public and democratic supervision and management, with the aim of establishing an economy which is organized and managed democratically for the benefit of all." (2015 Elections – To fight for putting forth an alternative).

While this organization identifies itself with the Marxist Trotskyist tradition, it seems that they have forgotten that in the *Transitional Program* Trotsky write that without the supervision of the working class (as distinct from "public" supervision and management which also include the capitalists and the petty bourgeoisie) the demand for the expropriation of capital is meaningless. In his writings on the United States in 1932, Trotsky opposed the call for the establishment of a reformist workers' party and saw it as an obstacle to socialist revolution. In 1938, when a real movement emerged from the trade unions to establish a workers' party, Trotsky recognized the need to join it, but only on the condition that a struggle be waged by the revolutionaries to adopt the *Transitional Program* – the bridge between the prevailing reformist consciousness among the working class and the socialist revolution.

Another centrist-right organization which attacked the establishment of the *Joint List* was the *Da'am Party*, which was abstained from contending in these last elections from considerations of power relations. Yacov Ben Efrat, one of Da'am's leaders, attacked the *Joint List* and wrote that it was a party of "all the Arabs against all the Jews." He compares the *Joint List* with Meretz and concludes that it shouldn't be voted for but instead a Jewish-Arab socialist party should be established. (2015 Elections – For whom to vote? 04/02/2015)

III – Why Netanyahu won the election?

Netanyahu won the election, first of all, because there is

a Jewish majority in Israel which supports the existence of an apartheid state; there is no reason to try sweeping this fact under the rug. However, the difference between the Likud and the "Zionist Camp" is more a matter of style than substance. While the right-wing bloc led by Likud advocates preserving the apartheid state between the river and the sea, clashing to a certain degree with US imperialism under the leadership of Obama on the issue of Iran, the Zionist Camp is seemingly prepared to make territorial concessions on part of the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, while at the same time strengthening its relationships with and providing more loyal services to US imperialism.

But ultimately, despite the differences between these two bourgeois parties, they both reflect the interests of Israel's tycoons and the Zionist imperialist state apparatus. Otherwise it's impossible to explain the positions expressed by the leadership of the Zionist Camp, for example: Support for the assassination in cold blood of Jihad Mughniyeh along with several other members of Hezbollah and the Iranian general Muhammad Alladadi in the area of Quneitra, Syria; Herzog's support for retaining a "united" Jerusalem; and his criticism of Netanyahu's dividing the city by setting up checkpoints at the entrance of Palestinian neighborhoods.

While the "Zionist Camp" is a composite of the Labor Party and supporters of Tzipi Livni, who was until recently Netanyahu's Justice Minister and Israel's Foreign Minister during the Second Lebanese War, it is certainly not a social democratic party with bourgeois elements, but a party similar to the American Democratic Party – a bourgeois party which enjoys the support of the trade union bureaucracy.

Many were surprised by the results of the elections, as polls and samples, including those of election night, gave the two bourgeois parties an equal number of seats. If so, what explains the victory of the Likud? First, since *Operation Protective Edge* last summer, there is a strong movement to the right of the Jewish population in Israel. Secondly, Netanyahu's visit to Washington at the beginning of March and his address before Congress convinced the masses of right-wing voters that his determination to deliver the speech demonstrates personal courage and his unyielding commitment to defend Israel. These right-wing voters were also impressed by the honor paid to Netanyahu by the Republicans during his Congressional speech, on top of which Obama is considered a Muslim by many supporters of the right in Israel. Third, Netanyahu utilized the weapon of fear and racism in his last speech before the election, when he claimed that the left was transporting the Arab masses in buses to the polls and if you, the settlers, not vote for me, a government of the left will be established with the support of the Arabs, and they will drive you from your homes. To this he added that he's committed that no Palestinian state will be established during his tenure. This tactic of his constituted a kind of cannibalism, as he swallowed up whole entire limbs of support for the *HaBayit HaYehudi* ("The Jewish Home") led by Bennett and from *Yisrael Beitanu* ("Israel is Our Home") led by Lieberman. Also, Netanyahu managed to shift not a small number of undecided voters to cast a ballot for the Likud, supporting him as their Savior.

The results of the election, therefore, will lead to the estab-

lishment of a particularly brutal right-wing government. The "Zionist camp," led by Herzog and Livni, will lead the opposition as it consistently supports "Israel's right to defend itself," that is to say intensify its repression against the Palestinian people and the other peoples of the region. This government will exploit even more than in the past the fact that the Israeli working class is almost entirely paralyzed by its loyalty to the state and Zionist ideology, and thereby intensify and deepen the oppression, exploitation, and repression of the workers and the weaker sectors.

IV – So what do we do now?

Just like us, the capitalists and their minions examine, analyze, reach conclusions, and draw up plans based on what can be learned from the election results. This is one reason that, under the circumstances, there was for us no choice but to vote. When capitalists learn that the oppressed and exploited are loyal to them or that they are too weak or disillusioned to fight, they see this as a green light to deepen their exploitation, to further increase their own profits, and to force the workers and poor to foot more of the bill for basic services like welfare, education, health, and infrastructure; to say nothing of the damage incurred by the deepening of the crisis of decaying capitalism.

Aside from the historic democratic achievement of Palestinians-Arabs in Israel, these elections mark a clear victory for the Zionist capitalists, the results of which won't be long in coming. Opposite the Zionist apartheid camp, in all its shades, left and right, and against the rule of the capitalists, there is only one significant democratic force – the *Joint List*. But this force, even for the most naive who believe in the possibility of changing reality through the Knesset, is not sufficiently large to transform the colonial-settler society of Israel into a democratic society.

Therefore, in this context, before the *Joint List* there are two main realms of activity which are intertwined – increasing its strength in numbers and increasing its strength in

quality. The main potential for numeric growth of the *Joint List* is obviously among the Palestinian-Arab population of Israel. Despite the increased voter turnout in these last elections, there will be a long road until the full electoral potential of this population is realized. Justice (even social justice) need not only be done but also must be seen to be done. Therefore, the representatives of the *Joint List* must convince the Arab public beyond any doubt that they are working energetically and courageously to achieve the most modest and minimal demands along the socioeconomic plain, for example: solving the problem of unemployment (especially of women) and pensions; improving the amount and quality of fully subsidized health care and education; eliminating all sectoral and ethnic discrimination for housing and all other areas of life; seriously reducing the amount and severity of violence (especially against women) and the use of weapons (especially those held by criminal gangs) in Arab society. In addition, on the national level: eliminating racial laws which exist and curbing enactment of the new racial legislation; the release of political prisoners; the return of refugees to their homeland; the abolition of the apartheid military regime in place since 1967 and the daily harassment of Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Jerusalem; organizing neighborhoods and villages for self-defense (within the law and the bounds of common sense) against those committing crimes against Palestinian-Arabs dubbed "price tag" and against fascist and Kahanist gangs, and more.

But anyone who is familiar with the political reality of the apartheid state called Israel knows that, in the eyes of the Zionist establishment, even the most modest demands of the Palestinian civilians constitute an existential threat to the state. Thus, just as in all cases in which the oppressed classes, by increasing their power, threaten the rule of the capitalists, the capitalists change the rules of the game and resort to violence (for example in the form of a military or fascist coup), this is what we can expect in present case. For this reason it is not enough to act with force and determination in the Knesset, but rather the public should



be prepared mentally and practically for the possibility that the Zionist establishment will ignore, block, and suppress with brute force any struggle by the Palestinians to improve their standard of living or end their national oppression.

In the not very distant future, boycotting the elections and building an electoral alternative to the Knesset will become a matter of necessity. But we must get to that day fully aware of the implications, from within a struggle, with our heads up and not out of desperation and disappointment with shattered illusions.

The admittedly secondary, but nevertheless critically important potential for growth of the *Joint List* is, of course, Israeli-Jewish society. While at the moment it seems that loyalty to the state and Zionist ideas are matters of wall-to-wall consensus, Israeli society is, after all, a society beset by contradictions and sharp conflicts of interest. Ignoring these contradictions would be a serious error which carries a heavy price. On the other hand, the main problem now is precisely giving too much weight to these contradictions while ignoring the colonial-settler nature of Israeli society. The results of such an approach are hurled at us time and time again, and now, following the elections, even more so.

While all of the "red" organizations in the country, including ISL, support Jewish-Arab partnership, there is a fundamental difference between us and the rest. While most socialist organizations in the country see this partnership as possible on the basis of a compromise between the realization of Palestinian national rights in all of Palestine and the realization of the Zionist fantasy of the Jewish nation-state on the land of Palestine, we negate any such possibil-

ity, and certainly under the present circumstances.

For this reason we must turn to the Israeli Jewish public in order to clearly demonstrate beyond any doubt that the Zionist fantasy is nothing short of a death trap, but also a heavy weight which prevents the development of a significant social struggle between the oppressed and oppressing layers of society. The *Joint List* must strive to increase its power among the Israeli public, but not at the cost of relinquishing any of the modest democratic and legitimate demands of the Palestinian people. This can be done by incorporating in prominent, realistic places in the next election slate, or in the institutions of the parties which make up the *Joint List*, representatives of the most disempowered groups and oppressed peoples in Israeli society -- for example, men and women from Oriental Jewish communities, sons and daughters of the Ethiopian community, women and men from the ultra-Orthodox community, and others who will express unequivocally their ideological and practical opposition to Zionism and support democracy and civil equality. A glance at the social networks demonstrates that such people are rare, but they are out there. They need the *Joint List* and the *Joint List* needs them.

True, we do not see in the *Joint List* itself or in any of its constituent parties a revolutionary party of the working class, nor do we have any illusions that it can act as such or serve as a substitute. However, it can act as a party which mobilizes the masses of the Palestinian people and Jewish democrats for real struggles and for this we will fight with the help of all those who believe in our own way and want to join us in building a real socialist alternative. ■

New Book!

Michael Pröbsting: Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new book. It's called *BUILDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE*. The book's subtitle is: *Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*. The book is in English-language. It contains four chapters on 148 pages and includes 42 pictures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

A few months ago, our movement commemorated its 25th anniversary. In the summer of 1989 our predecessor organization, the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) was founded as a democratic-centralist international tendency based on an elaborated program. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) continues the revolutionary tradition of the LRCI. Below we give an overview of our history, an evaluation of its achievements as well as mistakes, and a summary of the lessons for the struggles ahead. This book summarizes our theoretical and practical experience of the past

25 years.

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Bolshevnik-Communists' theoretical conception of the role of the revolutionary party and its relation to the working class. In Chapter II we elaborate on the essential characteristics of revolutionary party respective of the pre-party organization. In Chapter III we deal with the history of our movement – the RCIT and its predecessor organization. Finally, in Chapter IV we outline the main lessons of our 25 years of organized struggle for building a Bolshevnik party and their meaning for our future work.

You can find the contents and download the book for free at <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/rcit-party-building/> ■

**Building the
Revolutionary Party
in Theory
and Practice**

*Looking Back and Ahead after
25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

Occupied Palestine: Popular Neighborhood Committee

Report from the Committee of ar-Ribat in Ramle

By Boris Hammerschlag, *Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine)*, 12.4.2015

The municipality of Ramle recently published on its website plans to demolish 30 homes belonging to Palestinian citizens on the grounds of "illegal construction." Eleven of these homes are located in the Bedouin neighborhood of ar-Ribat. Police squads have been cruising around the neighborhood to intimidate the population and warn them that the demolitions are imminent. Most of these homes were built on privately-owned land which was maliciously zoned by authorities as "commercial" rather than "residential," despite the situation on the ground – this mis-zoning constitutes the legal pretext for the threatened demolition. Ten years ago, the relatively destitute families who live in these homes pooled together their scarce resources and paid the equivalent of 35,000 EUR to prepare and present formal plans to the municipality so that their homes would retroactively be recognized as legal. The municipality has ignored these plans ever since, regardless of previous informal agreements which signaled that they would be approved. The municipality, from its side, has offered no alternative plans. The Popular Committee has taken up this problem for the entire Palestinian population of Ramle, and is determined to take every legal step to prevent their becoming refugees on their own land.

On April 11 the Popular Committee held its first public meeting. Around 50 people attended among them a delegation from the ISL (myself and our local youth representative Rotem Elisha), MK Abd el-Hakim Hajj Yihye (MK Southern Islamic Movement), MK Aida Toma-Sliman (Hadash), and Awni K'hel from the local branch of the Communist Party of Israel (CPI). Outside, there were slogans written on placards which read: "*Jew and Arabs refuse to be enemies!*", "*No to house demolitions!*", "*For equal (municipal) planning and housing for all!*". Most of those who attend-

ed came to the meeting as a result of their having being mobilized to do so by the Islamic movement. At the beginning of the meeting an Islamic prayer was conducted and around 90 percent of the participants joined in. Aida Toma-Sliman, who is Christian, invited both Rotem and me (Jews) to sit beside her while the others prayed.

Aida (as mentioned, a Member of the Knesset from Hadash-Joint List) was the center of attention, as residents of the neighborhood appealed to her to mobilize the Joint List's 13 MKs to solve their problem. Toma-Sliman replied that she is merely a representative of the public, and that the people themselves should organize and tell her what they want to do and not the other way around. She requested that the committee draft a 1–2 page statement detailing the history of their problem as well as presenting their demands. At the present time, Aida said, she can do very little since all parliamentary action is suspended until a new government is formed. However, if necessary it is possible to call for an emergency sub-committee meeting to halt the demolitions.

Noteworthy during the meeting was the very positive attitude towards the Joint List (the composite list formed by Hadash and three Arab parties in the run up to the recent election in order to ensure their all passing the raised electoral threshold). One participant in the meeting suggested that all four parties belonging to the Joint List should formally merge into a single party.

The *Internationalist Socialist League* strongly agrees with this brother. We call for the component parties forming the Joint List to form a single party which would allow the creation of factions. The ISL would join the new party and form its own faction which would fight to make this a revolutionary workers' party. ■



Occupied Palestine: Annual Nakba March

Report from the “March of Return” 2015

By Boris Hammerschlag, *Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine)*, 26.4.2015

Last Thursday, April 23, was “*Yom HaAtzmaut*” in Israel (Independence Day), commemorating the founding of the Israeli state in 1948. Annually, this public holiday is celebrated according to the Hebrew calendar, and not on May 15th, the day 67 years ago on which the state’s existence went into effect with the termination of the British Mandate over Palestine. As it is a public holiday, most people don’t work on this day, plants and offices of most places of business (except restaurants, etc.) being closed, as are all public institutions. For the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, a counter-tradition to the festivities has developed to commemorate the *Nakba* on this day, and since 1998 a “*March of Return*” is organized by the Committee for Internally Displaced Palestinians. “Internally displaced” persons are Palestinian citizens who, based on a draconian law passed by the Knesset in the early 1950s, are not allowed to go back and reclaim their land, homes, and other property inside Israel, because they were allegedly “absent” from these places on an arbitrarily set date when the 1948 war was still raging.

The anti-Zionist NGO Zochrot, launched to document, map, and educate primarily Israeli Jews – but also Arabs – about the villages depopulated and destroyed during and after the *Nakba*, and to promote the right of return, organizes a chartered bus every year from Tel-Aviv to the site of the “*March of Return*.” We took advantage of this ride: As in the past, the *Internationalist Socialist League* (ISL) participated with a contingent in this year’s march, distributing all 200 copies of its bi-lingual (Arabic/Hebrew) statement in a manner of 15–20 minutes. The weather posed some problems: rain had been forecast but instead there were very strong winds which probably caused few-

er persons to attend than in previous years. Nevertheless, around 1,000–2,000 people participated in the March and subsequent rally.

Other than our ISL contingent, no other organization belonging to the Israeli “left” participated as a collective. Individual members of Hadash (the front dominated by the Communist Party) came, hiding their regular communist and socialist symbols, apart from an occasional Ché T-shirt. Apparently the organizers think it inappropriate to display partisan symbols during a “national” event. Substantiating this impression was the reaction of people to our leaflet, which proudly displayed our hammer and sickle based logo. When fellow (non-ISL) communists received it, they smiled and revealed their own hammer and sickle symbols as well, covered up under a sleeve, on the red part of a small Palestinian flag, as the motif of a tattoo, etc.

Some of these recipients of our statement asked why we are not members of the Communist Party of Israel. We responded that the CPI wouldn’t accept us as members because we don’t support a two-state solution. To this, our questioners responded with a sympathetic nod.

In our statement we expressed solidarity with the Palestinian national liberation struggle and called:

** For the formal establishment of a Joint, Democratic Anti-Zionist political party!*

** For the transforming of such a party to a revolutionary workers’ party!*

** For the return of all Palestinian refugees!*

** For a free, red Palestine in all the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea! ■*



Brazil: Resist A Fascist Coup By All Possible Means!

Joint Statement of the Revolutionary Communist Current (RCIT in Brazil) and the Fração Trotskysta- Vanguarda Proletária, March 27, 2015

The pro-coup demonstrations called by sectors of the right-wing and extreme right last March 15, which were highly inflated by the unmistakable mobilization of the television media, in particular the powerful Globo television network, had as their main objectives the limited fight against corruption (i.e., *only* in Petrobras) and the demand to impeach the president-elect, Dilma Rousseff. Participating in these demonstrations were at least 100 thousand people, not much different in number than the event called by the Trade Union Confederation (CUT) two days earlier which bore precisely the opposite message. The social composition of the thousands of people in the pro-coup demonstration consisted mostly of the middle and upper classes, predominantly white. These were the very same people who filled the football stadiums during the World Cup games in 2014, and shouted insults at President Rousseff. The poor (of all colors), the blacks and mulattos, were not in the World Cup stadiums in 2014, nor did they attend on the golpist rally on March, 15, 2015.

Among the organizers of the pro-coup demonstration were the following groups: The movement "Vem Pra Rua" ("Come to the Street), the "Revoltados on Line" ("Angry People Online"), and the "Free Brazil Movement" (MBL). The press pointed out that the "Come to the Street" movement has as its sponsor the Brazilian billionaire from the AmBev brewing company, the biggest brewery in Latin America and the fifth largest in the world. This group is linked to the presidential candidate defeated in the election campaign of 2014, Aécio Neves, from the PSDB. "Angry People Online" has as its figurehead Congressman Jair Bolsonaro (PP-RJ), a representative of the military, who openly advocates the return of the military dictatorship which ruled the country from 1964 to 1985. The "Free

Brazil Movement" (MBL) is the main proponent calling for the coup. Headquartered in São Paulo, it defends the impeachment of the president. The Brazilian magazine *Carta Capital* contends that the American billionaire brothers, Charles and David Koch, finance the MBL.

The pro-coup argument for impeachment based on corruption falls apart when we recall that the current opposition, which ruled during more than 30 years the state of São Paulo, the richest state of the country, is stuck in the mud with its budgetary deviations for the expansion of São Paulo Subway coming to more than US \$ 200 million. These facts were reported by the *Wall Street Journal* and *Der Spiegel*, but "strangely" ignored by the Brazilian press, especially during the presidential election campaign of 2014. The same can be said of the water crisis (the massive lack of water in the state of São Paulo's reservoirs), which hit of over a year ago, and which is today necessitating a brutal rationing of water for millions of people from the largest metropolitan area in the country. This, too, was only reported as serious by the media after the election of the main official responsible for the disaster was guaranteed: Governor Geraldo Alckmin of the PSDB. The media's presenting to the public at large the government of the People's Front (PT), led by President Dilma Rousseff, as being "the most corrupt of all time," has fueled the presence in the streets of angry and resentful middle class mobs – racist, xenophobic, and anti-communist.

The growth of right-wing movements in the country, encouraged by the economic crisis which began in 2008, has spread around the developed world, and in Brazil began to peak in 2014. From 2008 to 2014, such a crisis was partially contained by the Popular Front government of Lula da Silva, which had granted a strong and steady supply



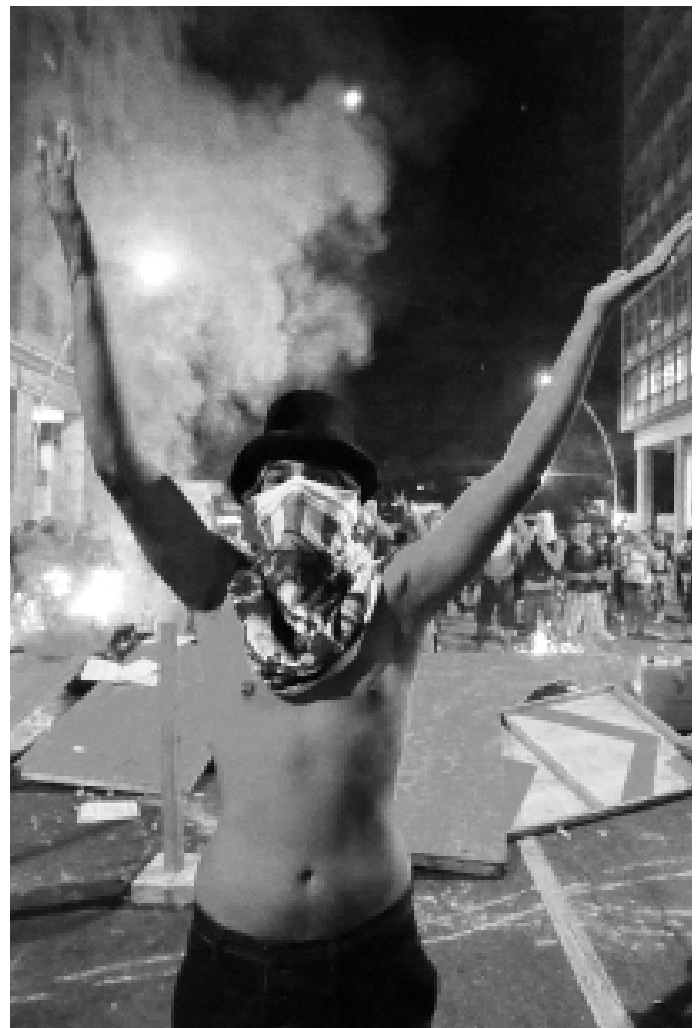
of long-term credit to consumers as well as tax subsidies to big business, especially in the sector of agricultural exporters and the automotive industry, but such subsidies resulted in a significant reduction of budgetary resources of the Brazilian State and, worse, did not guarantee jobs when the economic crisis exacerbated (e.g., in the automotive industry). During the “generous years” the financial sector was not neglected but received help provided by the Popular Front government. In fact, when Lula da Silva was in office, he even claimed that the bankers had never earned as much as in the eight years of his government. But then the credit bubble burst, along with Brazil’s public accounts, as a result of the subsidies and tax breaks, and finally the crisis, which had been latent, exploded last year. The richest and most conservative bourgeoisie, along with the middle class, “suffered” from the strong effects of the recession and was paying high taxes, so they teamed up against the Popular Front leading to a huge growth in the opposition, and bringing along with it a virulent reactionary sector, very similar in philosophy to the Tea Party movement among US Republicans, i.e., the worse it is, the better and easier to overthrow the elected president. President Dilma only won reelection because the votes of the (poorer) northeast region, which historically votes for the Workers’ Party, along with those from the State of Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro, gave her a narrow victory, defeating her opponent by only 3%.

Meanwhile, the president, to maintain the “governability” and under intense external pressure from US and European imperialism, soon after taking office enacted laws that rescinded labor rights, reduced pensions rights, lowered budgets for education, and increased demands from the unemployed to receive unemployment insurance. Thus, the PT and its leaders became discredited in the eyes of millions of workers, as their victory against the defeated candidate Aécio Neves was in large part based on Rousseff’s disparaging the challenger, claiming how much he would take away labor and social rights if elected.

So the coup movement which had emerged and grown as the final result of the June 2013 protest movements returned with a vengeance after an extremely aggressive election campaign, particularly as investigations into corruption at Petrobras began, with members of the company and the government being involved in corruption charges. From an internal perspective, it is mistaken to assume that the primary reason of these pro-coup demonstrations is an authentic fight against corruption. If this were really the case, the impeachment of the governor of São Paulo Geraldo Alckmin (PSDB) would have to be undertaken, following allegations that the misuse of billions in funds to renovate São Paulo’s subway system left the State of São Paulo’s reservoirs dry after Alckmin had been warned for years by technicians that this is exactly would happen if there were a serious drought. In fact, the main reason for the impeachment demands is that the bourgeoisie does not need and does not want the government of the Popular Front to remain in power, which is governing with its phony ally, the PMDB party. With the deepening crisis, high inflation (7% in the last 12 months), a great number of cars remaining unsold by automakers (resulting in thousands of job layoffs), the devaluation of the Brazilian currency against the US dollar (3.25 reais per dollar), an increase in the price of fuels, decreased tax revenues, decreased pri-

mary surplus, the traditional bourgeoisie wants to manage the new retirement pension-schemes themselves, and demands the complete privatization of Petrobras along with the conglomerate’s pre-salt oil reserves, as well as the privatization of the only state-owned banks still left (the Bank of Brazil and Caixa Economica Federal); all this in addition to the promotion of a strong wage squeeze and the loss of social and labor rights for workers. The Workers’ Party, despite having appointed a finance minister chosen by US imperialism and Wall Street, the Chicago-school-bred Joaquim Levy, despite its own attacks on the rights of workers at the start of the government, will ultimately not be willing to lose control of Petrobras and the two state banks.

From an international point of view, American and European imperialism have never accepted the proximity of the Brazilian government with Chavez and deeply reject the plans of the BRINCS group (Brazil-Russia-India-Nigeria-China-South Africa) to create its own bank, a real threat and challenge to the IMF and the World Bank. This at the same time that Western imperialism is confronting Russia because of the Ukraine and is intensely competing with China which in turn is expanding its investments in the region that US imperialism considers its own backyard, i.e., Latin America by, for example, by constructing a canal through Nicaragua which will directly compete with the Panama Canal. Several organizations behind the pro-coup demonstrations, NGOs and foundations operating in Brazil, are financed by US imperialism.



Character of the March 15 Coup Movement

As previously indicated, this is a massive reactionary and rightist movement, led by a wealthy section of the bourgeoisie organized around the conservative Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB – which, despite its name, has nothing in common with social democracy). Its demonstrators take to the streets dressed in Brazil's national colors, yellow and green, while disguising their submissive policy of delivering the nation's wealth to US and European imperialism. The movement's initial aim was simply to give a bloody nose to the Popular Front government of the PT-PMDB, but with the spread and growth of the demonstrations, a coup became its openly-declared goal. Currently they support the impeachment of the president Rousseff, based on the recent models from Honduras and Paraguay. There is a fascist minority within the movement, led by current and former military personnel who openly call for a military coup, as happened in Venezuela in 2002 or even in Brazil in 1964. As a whole, this coup movement is the biggest threat to the (few) rights within Brazil's bourgeois democracy which remain for the working class and the oppressed.

The Working Class has Also Mobilized

The CUT and social organizations have proven that, if they want to, they can still mobilize thousands of workers as they used to do in the late 80s. It is estimated at least 100 thousand workers were present on March 13, 2015 demonstration on Paulista Avenue in Sao Paulo, and thousands more participated in demonstrations in other important cities, primarily Rio de Janeiro and the capitals of North-east, like Salvador, Recife, Sao Luis, Joao Pessoa, etc. Participating in the demonstrations were workers from the rank-and-file of mass trade and popular movements: metal workers, civil servants, the homeless, landless, workers from commerce enterprises, oil, banking, public school teachers, etc. Even if the official demands of the demonstrators were the defense of Petrobras and against the recent austerity measures instituted by President Dilma Rousseff, what we saw and what we heard from the speakers was the total rejection of any impeachment attempt and a return to the military dictatorship. That is to say, the demonstrators are no longer making only economic demands but political demand as well. This event was extremely important for the working class in Brazil.

Characterization of Rousseff's Governance

Rousseff's is a Popular Front government, so its policy is pro-bourgeoisie. Although the government has provided some meager social benefits in recent years in the form of grants (family-school-college), it also made extensive concessions to the bourgeoisie while implementing an austerity package against workers. This is not a common bourgeois government as it counts on the active support of organized sectors of the working class and the poor. For revolutionaries, it is not possible to support this type of Popular Front government during an election campaign. The aim of revolutionaries is to step aside from an electoral campaign and ultimately cause the workers to break with such a so-called Popular Front.

Polarization

The current polarization can easily lead to a pre-revolutionary crisis. Most of the bourgeois sector is dissatisfied with the Dilma government, and the working class, while defending the government against the coup movement, is nevertheless dissatisfied.

What to Do?

The Revolutionary Communist Current-CCR and the Fração Trotskysta-Vanguarda Popular-FT-VP call upon workers' organizations to resist the threats of coup (as the revolutionaries did in Venezuela in 2002 and Honduras in 2009). We call for the formation of resistance committees (or anti-coup committees) in companies, neighborhoods, in the popular communities, favelas, etc. We also call upon the CUT, the PT-PSTU, PSOL, etc, to organize such resistance committees. In the present situation, it is necessary to create armed groups for self-defense against the coup and in defense of Petrobras, while at same time opposing the government's austerity measures.

CCR and the FT-VP condemn the PSTU and PSOL parties and the PCB for their centrist position of standing by idly as neutral observers in the face of the coup threat. We call upon their members to break with this policy and join the resistance.

The Revolutionary Party

In light of the above situation, and facing the real threat to the few remaining rights remaining for workers and the poor in Brazil, the CCR and the FT-VP call upon revolutionaries in Brazil to unite in order to build a pre-party organization whose ultimate goal is the founding of a World Revolutionary Party. ■



Macedonia: Stop the Police Violence!

Support National Self-Determination of the Albanian Minority!

Brief Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 7.5.2015

Thousands of people have demonstrated against the right-wing conservative government after the social democratic opposition published wiretapping material, exposing corruption in the ruling VMRO party as well as the conspiracy of the government regarding the death of a 22 year old Martin Nešovski who has been beaten to death by a police officer in 2011.

In addition, the Albanian minority – constituting at least ¼ of Macedonia's population – has started again protesting against their long-time discrimination. They staged an armed uprising in 2001 under the leadership of the petty-bourgeois nationalist UCK.

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) supports the democratic protests against police violence and against the conservative and chauvinist government. The workers and youth must create self-defense units in order to fight back against police brutality and to defend their democratic rights. We say: As long as the capitalist class and their puppets in the army, police and judiciary have the power in their hands, the working people will remain oppressed and exploited by them! The only road out of the misery is the seizure of power by the working class! Equally the RCIT fully support the struggle of the Albanian people for national self-determination. Our support includes the Albanians right to separate and create a joint

state with their Albanian brothers and sisters in Kosova, Albania, Serbia and Montenegro.

The RCIT opposes the interference of the imperialist powers – be it the US, EU or Russia and China. They all try to subjugate and exploit Macedonia in order to utilize its crucial geographical position in the Balkans (e.g. for the route of energy supplies from Russia and Turkey to Western Europe).

We repeat that the lessons of the past show the necessity that the workers and oppressed people create a revolutionary party as part of a world party for socialist revolution! The RCIT is an international revolutionary combat organization with sections and activists in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Tunisia, Israel / Occupied Palestine, Brazil, Britain, USA and Austria. We ask all revolutionaries to join us in the struggle to build such a world party!

** Stop the police violence! For the creation of self-defense units to defend demonstrations and oppositional political activities!*

** Down with the conservative and chauvinist VRMO government! For a workers and peasants government!*

** Support the Albanians struggle for national self-determination including the right to secession! For a socialist federation of the Balkan people!*

** No to imperialist interference! US, EU, Russia and China: Hands off Macedonia! ■*



Activists in Macedonia need to form self-defense units against the police violence

Austria: May Day 2015

Report from the Demonstration in Vienna

By the RKO BEFREIUNG (Austrian Section of the RCIT), 2.5.2015

Every year, an important event in our tradition is the May Day demonstration, in which the Austrian section of the RCIT May Day raises the revolutionary banner of international working class solidarity. This is all the more important, because on this very same day the social democratic party as well as numerous shades of Stalinism also demonstrate, but mix the justified protest of workers and oppressed against the misery of capitalism with the pernicious praising of various forms of reformist betrayal.

For example, the social democratic party promotes its policy which it has implemented for many years from within a governmental coalition in collusion with the conservative party. The ex-Stalinist Party of the European Left cheers SYRIZA's capitulating policy in Greece; the Kurdish PKK celebrate Öcalan who is capitulating to imperialism; and various Austrian and Turkish Stalinist groups praise Assad's tyranny against the Syrian people.

In contrast to these varieties of reformist betrayal, the Austrian section of the RCIT demonstrates every May Day in the spirit of revolutionary working class internationalism. This year we chanted slogans of solidarity with the liberation struggle against the reactionary dictatorships in Egypt and Syria as well as with the resistance of the Yemeni people against the Saudi-led war of aggression. We expressed our unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian liberation struggle against the continuing Zionist oppression. Similarly, we proclaimed slogans against racism in Austria, which is in particular directed against migrants coming from Muslim countries.

In this year's March, our internationalism was reflected not only in the slogans of our contingent – numbering more than 70 people – but also in its multi-national composition. A significant share of our contingent was composed of Egyptian migrants with whom we have demonstrated repeatedly in the past against the bloodthirsty dictatorship of General al-Sisi. In addition, many of our members and sympathizers come from Bosnia, Kosova, Serbia, Poland, Estonia, Chechnya, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Philippines, and Thailand.

At the concluding rally, *Saadie Abdelaty* from the Egyptian community delivered a speech in Arabic in which she expressed her protest against the ongoing repression by the military regime in her country. She emphasized the importance of the struggle for democracy.

Simon Müllauer, Spokesperson of the youth organization RED*REVOLUTION, emphasized in his speech our solidarity with the national liberation struggle in Kurdistan as well as Palestine. He also sent his greetings to the courageous freedom fighters in Egypt and emphasized the need of a socialist revolution, there and worldwide.

Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the RCIT, denounced the hypocrisy of Western imperialist "democracy" and its anti-democratic content as demonstrated in the racism against Muslim migrants, as well as in its numerous wars of aggression in the Middle East. He showed how the only solution to abolish this misery is socialism, in which all forms of exploitation and oppression will be abolished. ■



Contingent of the RCIT-Section in Austria at the May Day Demonstration 2015 in Vienna

Britain: May Day 2015

Report from the Demonstration in London

By Laurence Humphries, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), Britain, 3.5.2015

The annual May Day demonstration in London on 1st May always starts from the Marx Memorial Library which has a collection of books on Marxism. The March of 15,000-20,000 people always marches onto Trafalgar Square where there are speeches by trade union bureaucrats and others.

The March is always organised by the South East Region of the TUC. There were a number of political tendencies present as well as trade unionists representing the different trade unions in Britain. There were banners from the RMT Newham Trades Council Unison, PCS, the NUT and other trade unions. There were many other international banners from various political tendencies around the world, including the Iraqi Communist Party, the Worker Communist Party of Iran, Iranian Solidarity Committee, the Turkish Communist Party, and a number of Kurdish Groups marched as well. The Frontline Socialist Party of Sri Lanka had a banner with a number of young comrades. There were a number of British leftist organisations who had stalls. The biggest and most numerous were the SWP and the Socialist Party. There were also various small groups from Socialist Appeal and the AWL, there were other sporadic small groups selling their papers including the Spartacists and several Anarchist organisations.

The Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) marched behind a banner of Josef Stalin and there were also a number of Turkish, Greek and other Stalinists. It is the only time that they march and show their colours.

We then marched from Clerkenwell Green to Trafalgar square with many slogans being shouted in several lan-

guages. There were many young comrades on the march especially from the south, including Turkey, Kurdistan, Iran Iraq and Pakistan.

Reformist Speakers

When we arrived at Trafalgar Square we met many workers in the PCS Trade Union who are on strike at the National Gallery. The first speaker was Paul Novack, Assistant General Secretary of the TUC. He stated that we are stronger in the global movement nationally and mentioned the heroic battle of the PCS workers at the National Gallery which is right next to Trafalgar Square.

The next speaker was Mary Turner, President of the GMB, who mentioned the closing of our maternity and A&E Units and the consequence for workers and their families. She mentioned the support of Ricky Tomlinson who was jailed as one of the Shrewsbury building workers.

Matt Wrack, General Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union and a leftist, spoke about the May Day marches in Istanbul in Turkey. He hoped that the election would be the end of appalling attacks on public services. Interestingly none of the bureaucrats mentioned the Labour Party by name and insisted that politics was not be used in a Trade Union March. Wrack further said that these attacks will continue and austerity will be the policy of whoever is elected on the 7th May. He reminded everyone that working people are paying the price for this crisis with the rich getting richer. The housing crisis has meant that housing has become the playground of the super-rich. He said as a



Socialist he believed in a truly democratic society and the necessity to organise the fight back.

Candy Unwin, the suspended shop steward from the National Gallery, said that PCS workers at the National Gallery had been 23 days on strike. The gallery management was trying to privatise services and make it only for the super-rich. We need a wider audience, she said. All the management want is events for bankers or corporate sponsors. This privatisation hopefully will be got rid of next week. She said her members had voted to escalate the strike. We want an end to austerity. She said we are not going to have an anti-austerity government.

A speaker from Kurdistan spoke about the role of Kurdish fighters against what she called the ISIS gangsters and she saluted the victory at Kobane. What we want, she said, was a Revolution. On the 7th June there is to be a general election in Turkey and she wanted a victory for the HDP, the Democratic Party in Turkey, and to remove the AKP government in Turkey.

Steve Hedley, Assistant General Secretary of the RMT, talked about the attacks on his members in the London Underground where they are planning to shut ticket offices and get rid of our staff in Network Rail. We need a national strike throughout the country. He said that he had lived under a Labour government and they hit working people very hard. We should strive for a new Workers Party.

Mark Serwokta, General Secretary of PCS, another Leftist called for a vote against austerity. He claimed whoever wins this election we are going to have a fight for a welfare state. We need solidarity with the unemployed and the disabled. We need a decent welfare state to end the benefits sanctions. He said the trade union movement has failed to stop austerity. We need to take strike action against the public sector as well as the private sector. He saluted the strikers at Bromley, Barnet and Barking. We must stand up against privatisation. He saluted his members at the National gallery and said the result of the general elec-

tion should stop privatisation or we would escalate the strike. He said there would be a 30th May Demonstration in support of Candy Unwin, the sacked PCS Steward at the National Gallery, and the other PCS members who are on Strike. He finished by saying that we need to win these disputes against austerity.

Hot Air Speeches

Most of these bureaucrats who spoke exhibit a lot of hot air and nothing else. Both Serwokta and Wrack have been involved in public sector strikes over pensions, pay and conditions. Both these leftists have called off strike action and caved into government demands. The role of the trade union bureaucracy as always is to capitulate in front of capitalism. They are always looking to have crumbs from the masters table. Their history is littered with betrayals and cowardice. Both left and right bureaucrats are part of the capitalist state and are always ready to blame workers when the situation does not improve. Serwokta is typical of the bureaucracy who blames workers for not fighting against austerity.

The RCIT has pointed out time and time again that the crisis of leadership in Britain is the main question. Serwokta in his speech denounced benefit sanctions but does not think that he has responsibility in this matter. Many poor and unemployed claimants have sanctions issued against them by members of Serwokta's Union the PCS in the Department of Work and Pensions. If he feels that sanctions by the government are wrong he should persuade his members not to operate the sanctions regime. To date he has done nothing. This speaks volumes about the character of the trade union bureaucracy in Britain today.

The RCIT Britain calls all revolutionaries in this country to join us in the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party as part of the new world party of socialist revolution which will be the Fifth Workers International! ■



Britain: A Strong Signal Against Racism

"Stand Up To Racism" March on 21th March 2015 in London

By Laurence Humphries, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), Britain, 8.4.2015

This was a very large demonstration of about 20,000-30,000 people, officially organised by TUC together with the SWP front organisation *Unite against Fascism*, in which banners and slogans against Racism were displayed. The largest contingent by far was the *Socialist Workers Party* who had organised their members to carry placards and sell the *Socialist Worker*. The next biggest contingent was that of the *Socialist Party of England and Wales*, the local section of the CWI. Both these centrist parties had organised their members and they were very prominent in the demonstration. There were also contingents from local Labour Party branches as well as from the Green Party which is trying to parade itself with a left face. There were also many trade union banners from *Unite*, *SERTUC*, *NUT*, *PCS* and others. Addition contingents were from the *Communist Party of Britain*, the RS21 grouping as well as various small groups.

Also represented were black and ethnic organisations, like *Black Lives Matter* and *Muslim Lives Matter*, and the ASLEF and UCU trade unions.

Finally, there were some international organisations represented like ANPI Londra, a small group of comrades campaigning against Islamophobia called *SORT IT OUT*, as well as Antarsya UK.

The marchers paraded from Oxford Street through Piccadilly and onto Trafalgar Square where speeches were made by a range of organizational representatives.

In his address to the marchers, Weyman Bennett, a mem-

ber of SWP and representing *Unite against Fascism*, stated that the march was important to demonstrate our opposition to hate crimes perpetrated against migrants and others. First it was Breivik in Norway and now it's Golden Dawn in Greece. The slogan today is *you shall not pass* meaning the scapegoating of Muslims; we remember the past under fascism in Germany of the Holocaust and gas chambers. Bennett claimed that the current general election campaign in the UK is the most racist campaign, regardless of party, he has ever witnessed. Farage (Leader of UKIP) is a racist, Bennett maintained, and he tells lies against migrants. Don't blame migrants, he advised, rather UKIP and their supporters are to blame.

What about Mark Duggan

Carol Duggan, the aunt of Mark Duggan who was gunned down by police just before the 2011 riots, said that "Stand Up to Racism" is a wonderful campaign, representing the view of all those participating in the march – that we can all live in harmony and the police will be made redundant. Ms. Duggan related how, on the 4th August 2011, they [the police] murdered her nephew Mark Duggan who was from Broadwater Farm housing estate where PC Blakelock had been murdered. We, Mark's family, paid the price for Blakelock's murder. But, she asked, are the police actually searching for the murderer of Mark Duggan? The IPCC police internal complaints commission claims to still be



investigating who is responsible, but the police have done nothing to find who killed Mark Duggan. The IPCC are so inept, forcing us to investigate the death of our Brothers ourselves. The police are born liars and will do anything to keep their pension, look at what they did at Hillsborough. Support the Public Meeting and find out the truth about Mark Duggan's execution. NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!

Janet Elder spoke of how her son died in police custody and linked it to 25 years of whipping up racism and Islamophobia in this country. Many persons are murdered by the police, she claimed, but the Crown's Prosecution Service will not indict police officers. And police officers get away at being racists to people on the streets. She too concluded, NO JUSTICE NO PEACE!

Several Speeches Against Racism

Marcia Rigg spoke of her brother Sean Rigg who she said died at the hands of police officers 7 years ago. Sean had mental health issues, he was in a psychotic condition and couldn't breathe, and after 11 minutes collapsed. The police officers who held my brother in custody had treated him like a dog, none of them cared and they allowed him to die. Metropolitan police officers are guilty of perjury in this case and said that On Saturday 21st October a march will be held by grieving families in which they intend to march on Downing Street. Here too, Ms. Riggs speech concluded with the slogan NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!

Stephanie Patterson from the United Families for Leon Patterson told how Leon Patterson was killed 22 years ago while in police custody and that the second inquest into his death determined that it was caused by an unlawful killing. Nevertheless, the authorities still refuse to give me a death certificate. Since 1967, she claimed, no police officer has been prosecuted and every six days someone dies in police custody.

Steve Hart from Unite spoke about multi-culturalism and talked about the electoral victory of SYRIZA in Greece, and how the positive message is that we are winning. UKIP which is against immigrants wants to drag us back to the National Borders. But we have to say, look at Golden Dawn in Greece – they will all be in prison soon. The battle is being fought in Greece by Syriza and in Spain by with Podemos. We are going to win!

Billy Hays, General Secretary of the CWU said that the march held today is a broad-based action against racism and for Multi-culturalism. UKIP plays a big role in contemporary racism in the UK, as it scapegoats immigrants. Farage is following in the path of Enoch Powell regarding immigration. Hays said that we need to build a massive Anti-Racist Movement. Break the sieges against the Muslim movements and speak up against imperialism, its wars, racism, and Islamophobia.

Fight Against Islamophobia

Mohammed from the Muslim Council of Britain said that Islamophobia poses a challenge to those battling against all kinds of racism. We must stand up against all forms of hatred. Our struggle must be against racism and injustice. The Muslim Council of Great Britain hopes to form a United Front on this matter.

Christine Blower General Secretary of the NUT said that

we must stand up to racism and fascism, and say no to Islamophobia. As human beings, we value diversity. Our slogan should be *they shall not pass*.

Labour MP Diane Abbot reiterated a resounding no to Islamophobia and down with UKIP and its forces. We must confront and oppose their argument at every level. She denounced Trevor Phillips and his racist stereotypes. She finished by imploring "Stand Up and say no to racism and Fascism!"

Respected MP George Galloway said that his heritage was from Ireland and that racism and bigotry had not gone away during the course of the years. Rather there is still much work to do. We must stand up against racism and anti-Semitism which, still exists in the UK. Today Muslims are targets of witch hunting; therefore we must demand police protection for mosques and Muslims. We should have a Respect Agenda which calls for respect for everybody.

The march included workers of all ages and youth; approximately 30% of those participating were black people, other people of colour, and migrants.

As important as this demonstration was, it can only be a start for a more serious campaign against racism, one based on the working class and the oppressed (blacks, Asians, and migrants) and their mass organizations. Revolutionaries have to energetically support such a campaign and fuse it with a program for socialist revolution. ■



Revolutionary Art in Britain during the late Victorian Area

About the Pre Raphaelite School of Art

By Laurence Humphries, *Art History Blog*, March 30, 2015

The Pre-Raphaelites were a revolutionary Art movement founded in 1848 and influenced by the Political revolutions taking place in Europe and Britain. The Chartist movement the first working class political movement was active at this time. "The PRB as its adherents liked to call it set out with the objective of reforming British art". [1]. The PRB was launched in 1848 by 3 earnest and rebellious artists Dante Rossetti (1827-1910) William Holman Hunt (1827-1910) and John Millais (1829-1910)". [2].

They had a philosophy which was to reject what they felt was arid and boring academic art represented by Sir Joshua Reynolds an artist and President of the Royal Academy. They used the name Raphael to paint mythological and religious paints in Raphael's method of painting. Their philosophy was "to have genuine ideas to express, to study nature attentively, to sympathise with what is direct and serious and to produce thoroughly good pictures". [3].

As commentators have suggested Historical and religious pictures were used. "The PRB depicted both Historical and modern day subjects through a beguiling mixture of sharp realism and fantasy creating a brash new style that they felt harked back to medieval tradition". [4].

They painted in a particular style as many art critics have suggested "Details such as the minimal realistic shadowing and the grass in the foreground gesture to a pre Raphaelite desire to faithfully represent nature". [5]. "The Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood valued the example set by artists from the late Middle ages but they also cared passionately that their art should be relevant in the Modern world". [6]. When Rossetti was befriended by Ford Madox Browne it was obvious that the Genre would change. In his painting called Work Ford Madox Browne is concerned with Class

society . n a barge you can see members of the working class busily at work while observing them is the Bourgeois represented by Carlyle a know cultural critic of the time. Frederick Engels a friend and political ally of Karl Marx was to pay some aspects of Carlyle's work.

Other artists were also to be part of the Pre Raphaelite tradition particularly John William Waterhouse 1848-1917), Evelyn de Morgan (1855-1919) Lawrence Alma Tadema (1848-1917)

Two important artists would join Rossetti during the latter period of his life Holman Hunt and Millais had already left. John Millais would be an important artist in the late Victorian period and Holman Hunt would concentrate on Paintings with a Religious theme.

The two artists to join and inspire Rossetti would be William Morris and Edward Burne Jones. "It was through Morris and Burne-Jones that Pre-Raphaelitism would briefly blossom anew in a different guise leading to the Aesthetic movement". [7]. Other critics have suggested that Rossetti's art would lead to the Symbolist movement of Paul Gauguin and Others "Meanwhile Rossetti one of the great creative geniuses of his time came later to be seen as a precursor of the important European Symbolist movement which believed that Art should represent absolute truths (Idealism LH) which can be described only indirectly using symbolic imagery". [8].

This period was changing through the Industrial Revolution the development of Capital with its Nemesis the working Class. This was the period when Marx and Engels writing in the communist Manifesto would foretell of the death knell of Capitalism and the construction of socialism. This was the emergence of class society in Britain



reflection great wealth and great poverty. "Ford Madox Browne provided a commentary on the place of Labour in contemporary society in his painting 'work'". [9].

William Morris would be the only Pre Raphaelite who would join the Revolutionary Marxist Movement in Britain. He also established a Printing press Kelmscott Press. "The Printing press of Kelmscott run and owned by William Morris later took an interest in publishing; he established his own printing press". [10].

The other aspect of Pre Raphaelite art was the female muse Jane Burden and others went to live with Rossetti, Jane Burden who was later to be Morris's wife left him to live with Rossetti for a time. "Female muse, Jane Burden, fanny Cornforth and Elizabeth Siddal the flame haired pale skimmed pre Raphaelite Beauty with her thick neck, long jaw aquiline nose and sensual gaze". [11].

"Along with Burne-jones William Morris became a friend and follower of Rossetti in the 1850's. Morris was influenced by Rossetti's Medievalism which he reinvented as his own taking Pre Raphaelitism in a new direction. Morris abandoned Oil Painting and focused on decorative and Book arts. He became an inspiration to the arts and craft movement, unlike other members of the Pre Raphaelite circle Morris Revolutionary artistic conviction coincided with Radical politics". [12].

The Pre-Raphaelites continued according to Bethan "Pre-Raphaelitism has survived because it was an artistic Revolution .the intense vibrant look was a catalyst for rigorous new styles in field of art as diverse as Printmaking, interior décor Painting, Drawing and Book Binding". [13].

Edward Thompson, a political Revolutionary and Historian has written a very useful Biography of Morris. "In the 1850's however Morris abandoned the effort to analyse the cause for his hatred of civilisation and surrendered to the attractions of Romance. For it was just at this time that he came under the influence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti". [14]. There is also evidence that Politics Radical politics had touched members in the Pre Raphaelite movement.

"Political revolt was present in the movement although it was not uppermost in young Morris or Burne Jones mind.



Hunt and Millais had been touched by the spirit of 1848. They had joined the chartist procession on April 10th". [15].

Morris would go on in 1883 to join a Marxist Organisation in Britain The Social Democratic Federation led by Hyndman, Both Edward Aveling the Husband of Eleanor Marx the youngest of Karl Marx's daughters together with Belfort Bax and Engels were members of the SDF. Thompson comments "But underneath the shy gruff bohemian exterior of the young William Morris were qualities the others lacked-the qualities of a fighter". [16].

In December 1884 the SDF split and Morris with the Majority went on to form the Socialist League.

"When he became converted to Socialism by studying Capital early in 1884 he accepted Marxism as being in the strictest sense a Science". [17].

I have here given an exposition on the development of the Pre Raphaelite Movement and its importance to British Art during the Late Victorian Art. This was the nearest the British got to an Avant Garde Movement.

NOTES

- 1) 100 PRE RAPHAELITE MASTERPIECES PG.6
- 2) DITTO PG.6
- 3) DITTO PG.7
- 4) DITTO PG.8
- 5) THE PRE-RAPHAELITES BETHAN STEVENS PG.6
- 6) DITTO PG.12
- 7) DITTO PG.12
- 8) DITTO PG.14
- 9) DITTO PG.12
- 10) DITTO PG.13
- 11) DITTO PG.24
- 12) DITTO PG.23
- 13) DITTO PG.32
- 14) DITTO PG.32
- 15) DITTO PG.94
- 16) EDWARD THOMPSON WILLIAM MORRIS PG.40
- 17) DITTO PG.61 ■



NEW RCIT PUBLICATIONS ON RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM!

Russia as a Great Imperialist Power

By Michael Pröbsting, March 2014



Introduction

I. What are the Criteria for an Imperialist State?

Imperialism and Super-Exploitation

II. Russia: The Nature of its Monopoly Capital and Empire

Monopolization

State Capitalism

Excuse: The Breakdown in the 1990s

Russia's Rise as an Economic Power

Capital Export of Russian Monopolies

Russia as a Great Political and Military Power

III. Rebuilding the Empire

Russia's Internal Colonies

Putin's Eurasian Union and the Semi-Colonies

Migration and Super-Exploitation

IV. The Distinguishing Characteristics of Russian Imperialism

V. The Arguments of Our Critics

WIVP (South Africa): Russia is a Semi-Colony of German Imperialism

LCFI: From "Imperialist" to "Pre-Imperialist" China and Russia

The LCFI's Schematic Understanding of Imperialism

The Great Imperialist Powers before 1914

Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks on Russia as an Imperialist Power

An Ultra-Left Version of Kautskyianism

Inverted Social-Imperialists

VI. Appendix: The Capitalist Restoration in Russia (2001)

Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and the Rise of Russia as a Great Power

By Michael Pröbsting, August 2014



Introduction

I. Four Currents in the Workers' Movement

II. Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and its Revisionist Distortions

Marx and the Centrality of the Production Process

Imperialism is Based on the Capitalist Value of Production

Is There a Capitalist Country Not Dominated by Finance Capital?

Monopolism as the Essence of Imperialism

The Role of the State in Monopoly Capitalism

Disparity between the Imperialist Powers

Can Only the Richest Countries be Imperialist?

The Disparity between the Great Powers in Lenin's Time, before 1917

Are the US and British Models of Imperialism Pure Robbery?

Explaining Eastern Imperialist Power before 1914

A Brief Overview of the Imperialist Powers Today

The Theory of the "Transitional" or "Sub-Imperialist" State

Is Inter-Imperialist Rivalry Intensifying or Minimizing?

Excuse: The Maoist Origin of the Super-Power Theory

Modern Apologists for Karl Kautsky's Theory of Ultra-Imperialism

Explaining Eastern Imperialist Power before 1914

III. Social-Imperialism as a Caricature of "Anti-Imperialism"

"Third Campism" and the "Anti-Imperialist United Front

with Putin and Xi" in the Struggle between Imperialist Rivals

Inverted Social-Imperialism as a Variation of Class-Collaboration

IV. Again on Russia as an Imperialist Power

Russian and Foreign Monopolies in Banking

Who Controls Russia's Monopolies?

Russia's Foreign Investment and Foreign Policy

Excuse: Eurasianism and Putin's Bourgeois Allies in Western Europe

VI. Summary

Is Lenin's Theory of Imperialism Incompatible with the Concept of Permanent Revolution?

Some Notes and Answers to Arguments by Our Critics

By Michael Pröbsting, *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)*, 5 May 2015

Some of our centrist opponents – the so-called *Liaison Committee of Communists* (LCC) as well as the *Liaison Committee for the Fourth International* (LCFI) – have recently published polemics against the RCIT's analysis of the emergence of China and Russia as new imperialist powers and the program of permanent revolution.¹ Most of their criticism is just reshaped accusations against our tendency which we have already answered many times.²

Basically, the LCFI denies China's and Russia's imperialist character and calls for an "anti-imperialist united front with Putin and Xi" against the Western imperialists. The same crude method led them to call in the past for a "united front" with the Libyan dictator Gaddafi and the Syrian tyrant Assad against the popular uprising in those countries. In short, as we have shown in earlier documents, that the LCFI are pro-Eastern social-imperialists who, perhaps unwittingly, have aligned themselves with the counter-revolution in important class struggles today.³

In contrast to the LCFI, the LCC recognizes the imperialist nature of China and Russia and stands on the correct side of the barricades in Libya and Syria. Unfortunately, the LCC fails to break consistently with their ultra-left, indeed Bordegist, method of refusing to acknowledge the important difference between bourgeois democracy and bourgeois dictatorship from the perspective of the working class' liberation struggle. Hence they fail to defend democratic rights against open counter-revolution.⁴ As a result, the LCC takes a neutral position in Egypt, Thailand, and Brazil, standing aside when it is crucial to mobilize the working class against right-wing counter-revolutions.⁵ Equally, they rehash the worst economist nonsense and actually deny the progressive content of national libera-

tion struggles, even denying – in a manner typical for arrogant social-imperialists – that small peoples like the Kosova Albanians or the Bosniaks constitute nations.⁶

As Trotsky stated in the *Transitional Program*, those who are incapable of defending the most basic democratic and social gains will inevitably fail to achieve any new gains: „*The Fourth International does not discard the program of the old "minimal" demands to the degree to which these have preserved at least part of their vital forcefulness. Indefatigably, it defends the democratic rights and social conquests of the workers. But it carries on this day-to-day work within the framework of the correct actual, that is, revolutionary perspective.*“

I. The Decay of the Old Imperialist Powers and the Shift of Capitalist Value Production to the South

However, here we want to focus on the discussion of Lenin's theory of imperialism, the LCC's denunciation of how we apply it, and the further development of imperialism under the circumstances of the present historic period. The LCC comrades claim that it is impossible for any semi-colonial country to become imperialist, and in the cases of China and Russia this was only possible because they had a past of being degenerated workers' states. Furthermore, they accuse us of violating Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution.

In their mechanistic, dogmatic approach, the LCC resembles the wooden method of those "Trotskyist" dogmatists who criticize us based on the supposed tenet that, in principle, since the days of Lenin and Trotsky it is not possible that new imperialist states could have emerged.

We have already dealt with this argument in various documents referred to the footnote at the beginning of this essay. In particular, we refer readers to our reply to Latin American comrades which we published recently.⁷ Below, we will elaborate and extend our arguments on the application of the Marxist theory of imperialism and its relationship with the theory of permanent revolution.

In our book *The Great Robbery of the South* we have established, among others things, that in the past decades we have seen a decline of the old imperialist powers, the US, EU, and Japan. At the same time a massive shift to the South in the production of capitalist value has taken place. This shift has provided the material background for, on the one hand, an intensification of the super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world and, on the other, the emergence of new imperialist powers, in particular China and Russia.⁸

According to official figures, the share of the old imperialist countries in total world manufacturing declined from 82% (1992) to 65% (2012).⁹ The share of the US alone declined from 32.4% (1985) to 20.5% (2011).¹⁰ (See also figure 1 and 2)



As we explained in *The Great Robbery* these figures significantly *underestimate* the degree of the shift of capitalist value production to the South:

*“The degree of this shift of capitalist value production to the South is massively distorted and underestimated in the official figures produced by bourgeois economists. There are a few reasons for this. First, the category “Gross Domestic Product” (GDP) confuses real and fictional values. Given that the financial sector, which creates no value, is mainly based in the rich imperialist countries, the GDP figures of the North are artificially inflated and hence lower than the share of the South in the World GDP in the official statistics. Second, there is a massive swindle contained in the GDP figures since a substantial portion of the value created in the South is appropriated in the North via the market price on which the commodity is sold in the North. Therefore, a substantial portion of the value created in the South appears in the official GDP figures as created in the North. Third, we have the massive super-exploitation of the workers in the South and the appropriation of extra profits by the monopoly capitalists in the North. Again, these profits are often counted as part of the Northern GDP but in reality are produced by the workers in the South.”*¹³

One gets a more accurate picture of the shift if we examine the development of the world proletariat – the only material source which can create new capitalist value. As we have shown, the massive growth of the global working class was mostly due to the growth of the proletariat outside of the old imperialist metropolises. The process of industrialization has necessarily led to a massive shift of the weight of the proletariat from the imperialist metropolises towards the poorer countries. (See Table 1) A hundred years ago – at the time of Lenin and Trotsky – the proletariat in the colonial and semi-colonial world was still quite small. This has changed dramatically in recent decades.

Figure 1: Developing Economies’ Share in World Manufacturing Value Added and GDP, 1990–2010¹¹

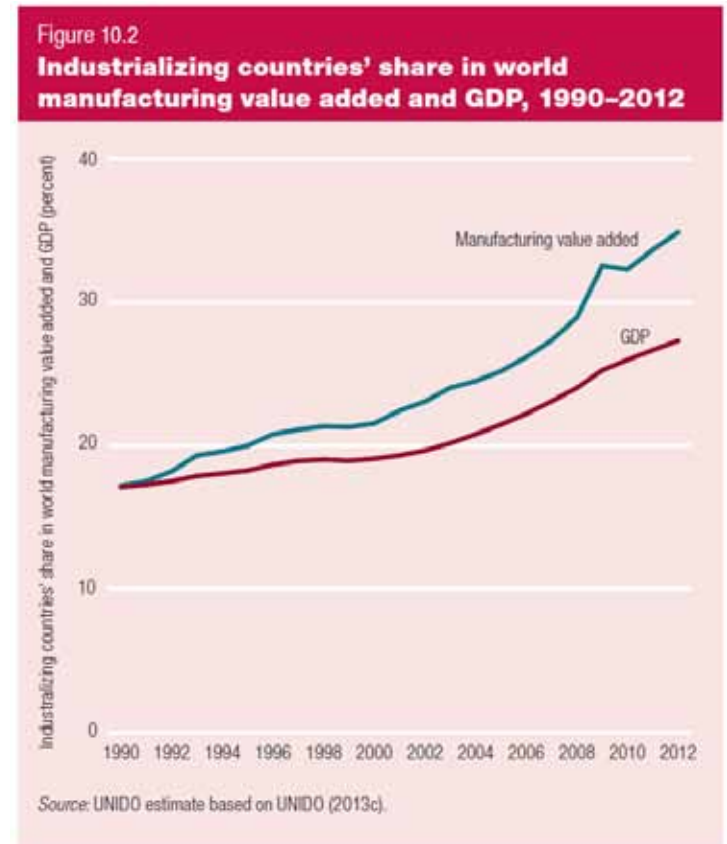
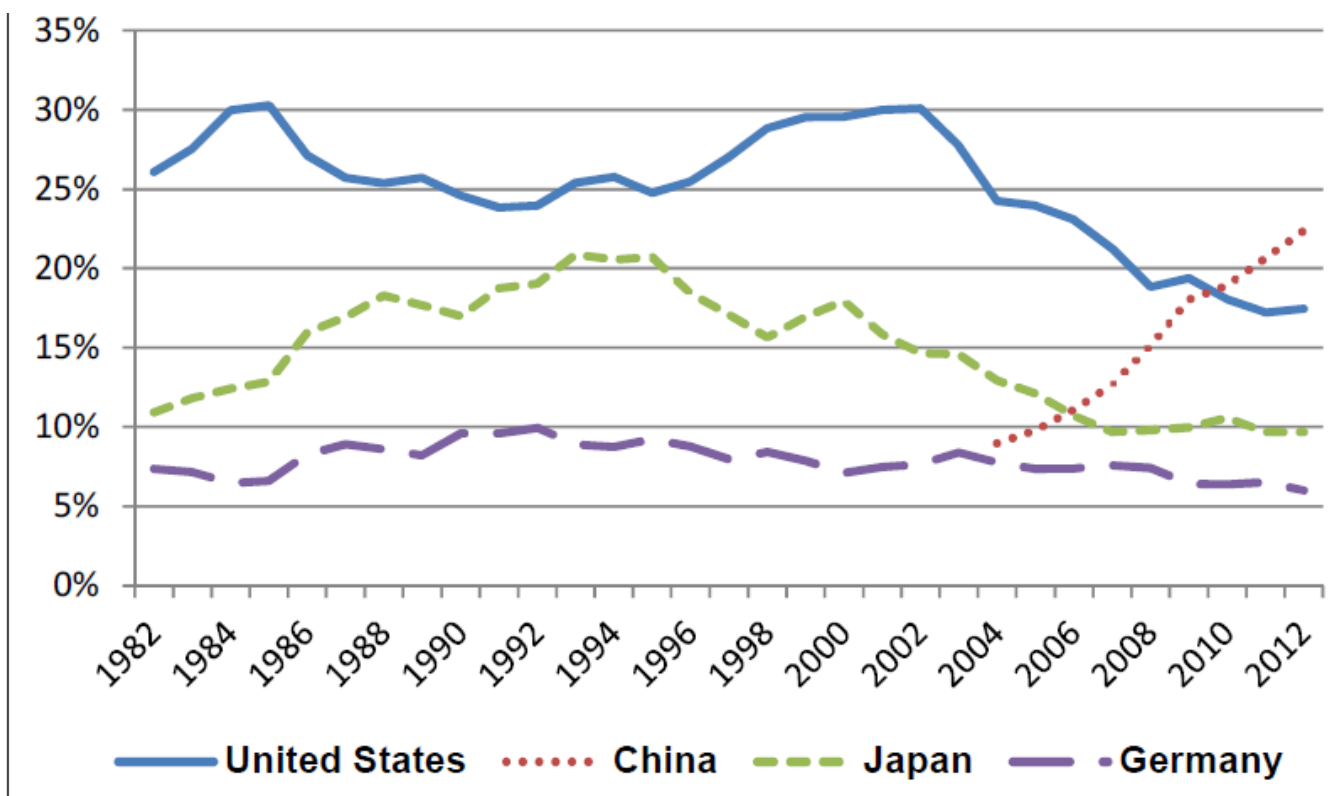


Figure 2: Selected Countries’ Shares of World Manufacturing Output, 1982-2012 (Calculated in current US Dollars)¹²



As a result the huge majority of the world working class today lives outside of the old imperialist metropolises. Three-quarters of wage laborers and 85.3% of all industrial workers live and work in the semi-colonial countries and in emerging imperialist China. (In the year 1950, only 34% of the global industrial workers were living in the South; in 1980 this share was about 50%.)

Table 1: Distribution of Labor Force in Industry in different Regions, 2013 ¹⁴

	Labor force in Industry (in Millions)	Distribution of industrial Labor force
Global	724.4	100%
Developed economies	106.8	14.7%
Eastern Europe & ex-USSR	44.8	6.2%
East Asia	250.1	34.5%
South-East Asia	59.0	8.1%
South Asia	144.3	19.9%
Latin America	58.3	8.0%
North Africa	18.7	2.6%
Middle East	13.0	1.8%
Sub-Saharan Africa	29.3	4.0%

Contrary to the evidence which we have presented, the LCC unabashedly maintains that *“the shift in value production from North to South in the post WW2 period is a totally non-Marxist and non-Leninist conception of the world economy”*(!):

“The RCIT is therefore wrong to deduce that new imperialist powers could emerge since WW1 on the basis of: “...an important shift in the production of capitalist value from the old imperialist countries of the North to the South. We have seen the economic as well as political and military decline of the leading imperialist power, the US, as well as that of Japan and the EU. Under such conditions, is it so surprising that new imperialist powers emerge and fill the void?” This is fundamentally wrong on two counts. First, the shift in value production from North to South in the post WW2 period is a totally non-Marxist and non-Leninist conception of the world economy. This ignores that from the onset of the imperialist epoch value production in the ‘South’ was and still is largely owned by the finance capital of the ‘old’ imperialist powers of the ‘North’. Second, with the concentration and centralisation of capital in this epoch, it does not

follow that the decline of some existing imperialist powers must call forth new ones.”

Why the shift in value production from the North to the South in the past decades should be *“a totally non-Marxist and non-Leninist conception”* is a mystery known only to the LCC. By no means was it seen as a non-Leninist concept by Lenin himself. As we have shown in previous documents, Lenin explicitly argued that, since the productive forces are growing faster in the colonies than in the old imperialist countries, new imperialist powers can emerge among the former.

“Capitalism is growing with the greatest rapidity in the colonies and in overseas countries. Among the latter, new imperialist powers are emerging (e.g., Japan).” ¹⁵

II. The “Impossibility” of the Emergence of New Imperialist Powers: Myths and Facts

Naturally, and as we have demonstrated in *The Great Robbery*, the shift of the value production usually goes hand in hand with growing dominance of the production facilities owners – the imperialist monopolies – over the semi-colonial countries of the South. But there can be exceptions, as we saw in South Korea and Israel in the 1990s and in Russia and China in the respectively early and late part of the first decade of the 2000s. ¹⁶ In the end, these new emerging imperialist powers increase their share of plunder at the expense of the old great powers, while together they increase the imperialist dominance over the oppressed peoples of the South.

So, the LCC’ claim, that Lenin never said that the leap from a semi-colonial to an imperialist country is possible, is simply nonsense.



The LCC transforms – or more accurately, distorts – Lenin’s dialectical conception into a wooden, mechanistic dogma. They explicitly rule out the possibility that *any* semi-colonial country could ever transform its character with regard to other countries except through a successful socialist revolution:

“In other words the Leninist theoretical objection of the comrades of the CSR and PCO (and also of the FLTI who made the same argument against us in 2009) is correct, that once the world economy is divided between imperialist powers, there is no prospect that any colony or semicolon can break out of its dependent status except through permanent revolution.”

Contrary to such theoretical myths, Lenin and Trotsky recognized not only the possibility of the emergence of new imperialist powers – as shown in the quote we cited above. They also assessed such an actual transformation in the case of Czechoslovakia which was transformed from a colony into an imperialist state after 1918. On the other hand, Portugal most likely lost its imperialist status during the last four decades since the lapse of its colonies in 1974.

In order to adapt the “reality” to their new dogmas, the LCC is now busy rewriting its historical position and claims that its long-standing analysis of Australia as a small imperialist country was always flawed and incorrect.¹⁷ Surely, this is not the last position which the LCC will have to abandon. We are neither able nor willing to stop them in this exercise.

III. How Trotsky Allegedly Failed to Understand the Theory of Permanent Revolution, according to the LCC

Desperately searching for a theoretical hook on which to base their notions, the LCC looks to Trotsky who wrote the following in his book on the permanent revolution:

*“With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.”*¹⁸

From this fundamental insight of Trotsky the LCC derives ... that nothing can change in any semi-colonial country at any time without the dictatorship of the proletariat. Poor pedants! From Trotsky’s statement that *“the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation”* (our emphasizes) in the *“countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries”* the LCC distortedly concludes that not even one single aspect of belated capitalist development can change in any country, at any time, anywhere in the world!

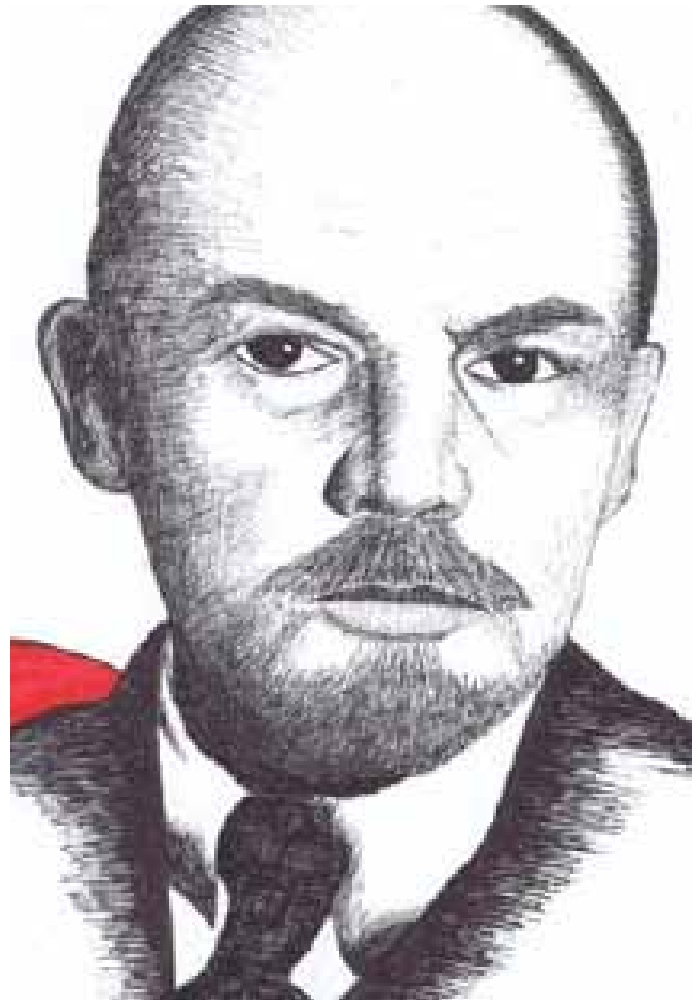
The LCC comrades remind us of those “orthodox” Trotskyists who claimed that, if a petty-bourgeois guerrilla movement without an organized working class base comes to power, it is beyond all possibility that this could result in the formation of a degenerated workers state ... and who were therefore so completely confused by the events in Cuba after 1959. Or similarly, they are reminiscent of those “orthodox Marxists” who claimed that Lenin had become a “Bakunist” and a “mad anarchist” when he published his famous *April Thesis* in Russia in 1917; or those “Trotskyists” who believed that history had refuted

Trotsky’s theory of Stalinism when its bureaucratic dictatorships did not collapse after World War II but only in 1989–91, and who subsequently adapted the revisionist theory of state-capitalism.

Let us first draw the LCC’s attention to the fact that Trotsky himself developed and applied the theory of permanent revolution with respect to the solution of national and democratic tasks not only to semi-colonial countries but also to backward imperialist countries. As is well known – although disputed today by numerous centrist muddle-heads – Trotsky considered Russia to be a backward imperialist country:

*„Its meaning is that Russia was the most backward and economically weakest of all the imperialist states. That is precisely why her ruling classes were the first to collapse as they had loaded an unbearable burden on the insufficient productive forces of the country. Uneven, sporadic development thus compelled the proletariat of the most backward imperialist country to be the first to seize power.”*¹⁹

According to the LCC, though they can’t possibly acknowledge it, Trotsky’s statement quoted above was pure nonsense! How could he speak – in the same sentence! – about the need of *“the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation”* in relation to a backward imperialist country? According to the LCC muddle-heads, this is an impossibility, since Trotsky should have said that, in such a country, the question of national emancipation has already been completely solved?! But maybe the LCC understands Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution better than Trotsky himself?



IV. A Few Examples which "Disprove" Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution

Let us give yet another example which unmask the LCC's wooden, mechanistic way of thinking. In his book, Trotsky illustrated his concept of permanent revolution with the case of Germany. There he explained that the failed bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1848 resulted in the absence of democracy. He elaborated that the failure of the working class to take power not only in 1848 but also in 1918 resulted in a "bourgeois counter-revolution, which was compelled to preserve pseudo-democratic forms."

*"The concept of the permanent revolution was advanced by the great Communists of the middle of the nineteenth century, Marx and his co-thinkers, in opposition to the democratic ideology which, as we know, claims that with the establishment of a 'rational' or democratic state all questions can be solved peacefully by reformist or evolutionary measures. Marx regarded the bourgeois revolution of 1848 as the direct prelude to the proletarian revolution. Marx 'erred'. Yet his error has a factual and not a methodological character. The Revolution of 1848 did not turn into the socialist revolution. But that is just why it also did not achieve democracy. As to the German Revolution of 1918, it was no democratic completion of the bourgeois revolution, it was a proletarian revolution decapitated by the Social Democrats; more correctly, it was a bourgeois counter-revolution, which was compelled to preserve pseudo-democratic forms after its victory over the proletariat."*²⁰

However, it would be pure nonsense to claim that after World War II Germany was still without a bourgeois democracy (irrespective of all the democratic deficiencies which, in general, are characteristic of bourgeois democracy as a form of capitalist dictatorship). Again, in the LCC's

mindset, this post-1945 bourgeois democracy in Germany is an irresolvable mystery. Based on their misunderstanding of Trotsky, they would have to deny that bourgeois democracy exists in imperialist Germany, since otherwise Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is false!

In reality, of course, Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, understood dialectically, is in harmony with the contradictory historical process of class struggle; it is only the LCC's distorted caricature of this theory which rams its head against the wall. Exceptional historical circumstances – first and foremost the counter-revolutionary defeat of the working class by fascism, the abortion of the revolutionary crisis in Europe and a number of Asian countries by the Stalinist parties, the agreement between imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracy to establish a reactionary new world order, and finally the post-war boom in 1950s and 1960s – facilitated the creation of conditions in which imperialism could solve, in a distorted manner, one or another of the unresolved democratic tasks.

Let us give another example to illustrate this dialectical understanding of the theory of permanent revolution. As we have demonstrated in previous documents, Lenin and Trotsky considered Japan, not only Russia, to be a backward imperialist state recognizing, as they did, the "semi-feudal" and "barbaric" nature of its agrarian social relations. "Japan is today the weakest link in the imperialist chain. Her financial and military superstructure rests on a foundation of semi-feudal agrarian barbarism. Periodical explosions within the Japanese army are only a reflection of the intolerable tension of social contradictions in the country. The regime as a whole maintains itself only through the dynamics of military seizures. (...) But Japanese aggression is interlaced with traditionalism. While creating a gigantic fleet of the most modern type, the Japa-



nese imperialists prefer to base their activities on ancient national traditions. Just as priests put their pronouncements and desires into the mouths of deities, so the Japanese imperialists palm off their very modern plans and combinations as the will of the august progenitors of the reigning Emperor. Similarly Tanaka covered up the imperialist aspirations of the ruling cliques by reference to a non-existing testament of an Emperor.”²¹

Again, according to the LCC’s dogmatic interpretation of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution, it should have been impossible to liquidate these “semi-feudal” and “barbaric” agrarian property relations without the dictatorship of the proletariat. Unfortunately for the LCC, the living process of class struggle didn’t take into account abstract mechanistic schemas. As a matter of fact – due to the specific political and economic conditions of the post-war period mentioned above – Japanese imperialism managed to largely overcome these semi-feudal features of Japanese agriculture.

V. Dialectical Essence of the Theory of Permanent Revolution and the LCC’s Distorted Mechanistic Caricature of It

Those who adhere to an undialectical mode of thinking fail to understand that the living historical process develops in leaps. But the LCC’s distorted version of permanent revolution transforms it into a stagnant, gradualist caricature with no leaps and with no uneven development.

All the examples we have provided above demonstrate that the LCC has simply not understood Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution. They transform this theory into a distorted caricature by maintaining that nothing can change in any country at any time without a proletarian revolution. In real life, the social process based on the

global struggle between the classes is much more complicated. The distorted form of a social revolution – Stalinist rule in Russia and China – helped to construct a material basis which enabled these countries to become backward imperialist states some time after the capitalist restoration in the early 1990s.

Likewise, in the case of South Korea, an extraordinary position as an important ally of the imperialist powers, combined with decades of massive exploitation of the local proletariat, could under specific circumstances lead to the transformation of one aspect of the social and economic development of a semi-colonial capitalist country. Or to give another example: Decades of the extraordinary material aid received from the entire imperialist world, combined with the robbery of a land and the expulsion of its indigenous population, enabled Israel to become a small imperialist power. Due to its inability to think dialectically, the LCC is blinded to such phenomena and prevents its recognizing and understanding the complex reality of the modern imperialist world.

Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution did *not* mean that not a single aspect of the democratic program can ever be solved in any country at any time. It rather meant that *in its totality, the full democratic program is not possible without a successful proletarian revolution*. This and nothing else is the meaning of Trotsky’s formulation that the “*complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat*”.

History, therefore, does not at all rebut the theory of permanent revolution if it demonstrates that imperialism, under exceptional circumstances, was able to solve the democratic question in Germany or the semi-feudal agrar-



Contingent of the RCIT-Section in Austria at the May Day Demonstration 2015 in Vienna

ian question in Japan. Furthermore, the course of contemporary history by no means disproves Trotsky's theory because, in its totality, imperialism is exacerbating – and not alleviating – the democratic question in both the semi-colonial world and, increasingly, in the imperialist countries as well. In addition, contemporary historical processes pose new democratic questions, like mass migration and the impending climatic catastrophe.

Neither does history violate Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution if it confronts the emergence of new imperialist powers with the decline of the old imperialist powers. This process takes place in a global situation, in which the emergence of these new imperialist powers augment the super-exploitation of important sectors of their native proletariat (the "migrants" in China), and only adds to the overall global increase of the super-exploitation of all the oppressed people of the South, as well as the migrants in the North, by the composite of imperialist monopolies and great powers.

VI. Summary

In this essay we have shown that the emergence of new imperialist powers does not at all refute Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution. We have explained that the decline of the old great Western powers and the shift of capitalist value production to the South created the material base for the emergence of new imperialist states like Russia and China. In addition, this process has been advanced by the decades-long rule of Stalinist bureaucracies in both countries which helped annihilate the semi-feudal remnants of the past and, in retrospect, created an industrial base for their future emergence as great imperialist powers.

All in all, the emergence of these new imperialist powers has led to an increase of super-exploitation of the world proletariat and oppressed peoples.

Furthermore, we have demonstrated that Trotsky's theory is by no means refuted if this or that aspect of the democratic revolution in one or another country has been resolved without the creation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This was and will remain possible under exceptional historic circumstances. However, in its totality imperialism accelerates – and does not alleviate – the social and political contradictions which also result in a sharpening of the democratic question in the semi-colonial world and, increasingly, in the imperialist countries as well. In addition, these developments pose new democratic questions like mass migration or the impending climatic catastrophe.

In short, the contradictory process of the class struggle and world politics are easy to explain and to understand if Marxists are armed with the dialectical method of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution. For those who replace it with mechanist dogmas, both Trotsky's theory, as well as the living process of the world class struggle, remains a book secured by seven seals.

Footnotes

1 Liaison Committee of Communists: Russia, China, and the Unfinished Permanent Revolution; in: *Class Warrior*, Vol. 1 No. 8 (Spring 2015); Socialist Fight reply to the Liaison Committee of Communists, 8 April 2014, <http://socialistfight.com/2015/04/10/socialist-fight-reply-to-the-liaison-committee-of-communists/>. All quotes, if not stated otherwise, are taken from these documents.

2 For our analysis of China as an emerging imperialist country we refer readers to:

Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism, 2013, Chapter 10, <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/great-robbery-of-south-online/download-chapters-1/chapter10/>

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Michael Pröbsting: No to chauvinist war-mongering by Japanese and Chinese imperialism! Chinese and Japanese workers: Your main enemy is at home! Stop the conflict on the Senkaku/Diaoyu-islands in the East China Sea! 23.9.2012, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 6, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/no-war-between-china-and-japan/>

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For a discussion comparing China, Russia, and semi-colonial countries like Brazil, we refer readers to our document: Michael Pröbsting: The China Question and the Marxist Theory of Imperialism. Again on China as an imperialist Power. Reply to a Polemic from CSR (Venezuela) and PCO (Argentina), December 2014, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 32, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/reply-to-csr-pco-on-china/>

3 For RCIT statements on the civil war in Syria and replies to the pro-Assad propaganda, see among others:

* Yossi Schwartz: Syria, Israel and Palestinians: Free Abdel Qader Altlitha! Free Abdel Qader Altlitha! Free all Palestinian Political Prisoners! Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine), 16.2.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/syria-israel-and-palestinians/>

* Yossi Schwartz: The Myth of Assad's Syria as an Anti-Imperialist Regime, Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine), November 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/myth-of-assad-s-anti-imperialism/>

* Michael Pröbsting: Syria: The Butcher in his own Words. Assad: A Friend of Israel and an Enemy of the Arab Popular Masses, 21.10.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/assad-s-own-words/>

* RCIT: Syria: Down with the Imperialist Geneva Accord! Stop US and Russian imperialist interference in Syria! No imperialist-controlled "peace" negotiations which can only result in a defeat for the Revolution! International Solidarity with the Syrian Revolution against the murderous Assad Dictatorship! 15.9.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/against-geneva-accord/>

* RCIT: Syria: Against Assad and Against Imperialism – Victory to the Revolution! For International Solidarity with the Popular Revolution against the murderous Assad Dictatorship! But Without and Against any Western Imperialist Military Intervention! 27.8.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/syria-against-assad-imperialism/>

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 Michael Pröbsting: Liberation struggles and imperialist interference. The failure of sectarian "anti-imperialism" in the West: Some general considerations from the Marxist point of view and the example of the democratic revolution in Libya in 2011, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 5, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/liberation-struggle-and-imperialism/>
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Michael Pröbsting: The intervention of the imperialist powers in Libya, the struggle of the masses against Gaddafi's dictatorship and the tactics of revolutionary communists, in *Revolutionary Communism* No. 1 (2011), www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa/libya-revolutionary-tactics

4 For the RCIT's analyses of Egypt's military dictatorship and replies to the centrists who failed to oppose the coup, we refer readers to the following small selection of our articles on this issue:

RCIT: General Sisi – The Butcher of the Egyptian People – Sentences another 683 People to Death, 1.5.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-mass-death-sentences/>

RCIT: Egypt: Down with General Sisi's pro-Army Constitution! Boycott the Referendum!, 12.1.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/boycott-egypt-referendum/>

Yossi Schwartz: Israel and the Coup in Egypt. Israel's primary concerns regarding Egypt are the possible fall of the military regime or a descent into civil war, Aug 21, 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/israel-and-egypt-coup/>

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Thailand: Defeat the looming reactionary Coup D'état! Mobilize the Working Class and Poor Peasants as an independent force against the "Yellow Shirts", Army Command and Monarchy! 4.12.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/thailand-looming-coup-d-%C3%A9tat/>

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Brazil: Resist A Fascist Coup By All Possible Means! Joint Statement of the Revolutionary Communist Current (CCR section of RCIT in Brazil) and the Fração Trotskysta- Vanguarda Proletária, March 27, 2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/brazil-statement-coup-demo/>

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Brazil: Defeat the Fascist Coup in the Streets! Joint Statement of the Corrente Comunista Revolucionária (RCIT-Section in Brazil) and the Fração Trotskista – Vanguarda Proletária Trotskyist Fraction-Vanguard Proletarian, 7.3.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/brazil-statement-coup-danger/>

CCR (RCIT Brazil): Brazil: Right-Wing Opposition threatens with a Coup d'État, 18.11.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/brazil-coup-danger/>

5 See e.g. their statement: "However, the RCIT's slavish application of the bourgeois democratic schema as progressive can be seen in Egypt when the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (SCAF) dismissed the Muslim Brotherhood, elected to power on a reactionary constitution that defended the military regime. The Muslim Brotherhood was a weak Islamic bourgeoisie of the bazaar seeking to replace the dominant military fraction. The RCIT called this dispute between two fractions of the bourgeoisie a coup against 'bourgeois democracy' and an 'historic defeat' for the working class when the election of the Muslim Brotherhood did nothing to advance the interests of the working class. This was proven by the millions of workers who marched against it. Such 'bourgeois democracy' was in reality a reactionary bourgeois regime seeking to appease imperialism and imposing a theocratic barrier to revolution. Its removal meant that the SCAF was now seen openly as the power base behind the Mubarak regime and that it had always been the dominant fraction of the national bourgeoisie. What the national revolution in MENA proves beyond question is that democratic rights are only in the interest of the working class if they actually advance the struggle for proletarian revolution." Obviously, more than 6.000 people slaughtered by the army and tens of thousands thrown into prison do not count as a significant fact for the working class and popular struggle in the eyes of the Bordegist LCC!



(Dis)armed with the same logic the LCC sees no reason to defend the Brazilian popular front government of Dilma Rousseff against a looming coup d'état: *"In Latin America what we see is the method of the LRCI/ LFI inherited by the RCIT. We argued above that this semi- Cliffite method fetishises 'bourgeois democracy' so that the concept of permanent revolution becomes stageist in practice. It defends popular front parties against military dictatorship in Egypt and Thailand."* It is obvious that during the Spanish civil war in 1936-39, when the popular front government fought against the fascist forces of General Franco, the LCC would have taken a shameful neutral position!

6 See e.g. their statement: *"In other words the democratic revolution in the epoch of imperialism can no longer be spoken of as the 'bourgeois national democratic' revolution. The formation of new capitalist nation states can only serve the interests of bourgeois imperialism and the unfinished tasks of that revolution cannot be realised other than by the proletarian revolution."* So, according to the LCC, supporting the struggle of oppressed nations for an independent state only serves imperialism as long as it does not go hand in hand with the proletarian revolution. So they would not support such a struggle if it leads "only" to the expulsion of the foreign occupants and the creation of a new bourgeois national state.

It is only logical that these Neo-Bordegists still justify their shameful betrayal of the national liberation struggles of the Balkan people in the 1990s: *"As we have been at pains to point out to the RCIT for some years now, this flaw in its method is reproduced in its program today. While revolutionary workers defend bourgeois democratic rights they do so only when that defence advances the interests of the socialist revolution. Yet the RCIT has a tendency to turn the permanent revolution into a slavish defence of bourgeois democratic rights, when that defence is clearly not in the interests of workers but serves the bourgeois counter-revolution. Defending bourgeois democracy against the Stalinist military was not an unconditional defence of workers property in Soviet Russia, nor in Yugoslavia. Today the RCIT regards Bosnia and Kosovo as expressing the national rights of national minorities when in reality these 'nations' were the creations of imperialism (NATO and the UN) in the enforced breakup of Yugoslavia. Here the Leninist support for national self-determination is turned on its head as the support for the creation of new NATO capitalist protectorates!"*

7 See Michael Pröbsting: *The China Question and the Marxist Theory of Imperialism. Again on China as an imperialist Power*

8 Michael Pröbsting: *The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by*

Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism, 2013. The book can be ordered via our contact address or downloaded for free at <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/great-robbery-of-the-south/>. A summary of the book can be read here: <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/great-robbery-summary/>.

9 UNIDO Industrial Development Report 2013, p. 171

10 For the figures on manufacturing see UNIOD Industrial Development Report 2002/2003, p. 152 (for year 1985) and UNIDO Industrial Development Report 2013, p. 202 (for the year 2011).

11 UNIDO Industrial Development Report 2013, p. 172

12 Marc Levinson: *U.S. Manufacturing in International Perspective*, Congressional Research Service, February 20, 2014, p. 4

13 Michael Pröbsting: *The Great Robbery of the South*, p. 397

14 Sources: International Labour Office: *Global Employment Trends 2014. Risk of a jobless recovery?*, p. 97 and our own calculations

15 V. I. Lenin: *Imperialism. The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916); in: *LCW Vol. 22*, p. 274

16 We have analyzed South Korea's transformation into a small imperialist power in Michael Pröbsting: *Der kapitalistische Aufholprozess in Südkorea und Taiwan*; in: *Revolutionärer Marxismus Nr. 20* (1996). A shortened version of this article appeared as *"Capitalist Development on South Korea and Taiwan"* in: *Trotskyist International No. 21* (1997), <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/capitalism-in-south-korea-taiwan/>. On Israel as a small imperialist power see Michael Pröbsting: *On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine*, in: *Revolutionary Communism Nr. 10* (June 2013), p. 29, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/permanent-revolution-in-palestine>

17 See CWG(NZ): *U.S.A. became Imperialist, what about NZ, South Africa and Australia?* March 04, 2015, <http://redrave.blogspot.co.at/2015/03/usa-became-imperialist-what-about-nz.html>

18 Leon Trotsky: *The Permanent Revolution* (1929), Merit Publications, New York 1969, p. 276

19 Leon Trotsky: *The Third International After Lenin* (1928), New York 1970, p. 56

20 Leon Trotsky: *The Permanent Revolution* (1929), Merit Publications, New York 1969, p. 131

21 Leon Trotsky: *The "Tanaka Memorial"* (1940), in: *Trotsky Writings 1939/40*, p. 170 ■



Books from the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

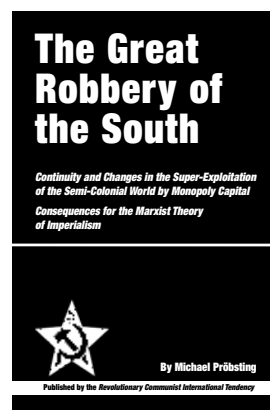
The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new book. It's called *THE GREAT ROBBERY OF THE SOUTH*. The book's subtitle is: *Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism*. The book is in English-language. It has 15 chapters, 448 pages and includes 139 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is *Michael Pröbsting* who is the International Secretary of the RCIT.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting analyses the super-exploitation and oppression of the semi-colonial world (often referred to as the "Third World") by the imperialist powers and monopolies. He shows that the relationship between the small minority of rich capitalist countries and the huge majority of mankind living in the semi-colonial world forms one of the most important elements of the imperialist world system we are living in. The Great Robbery of the South shows that the past decades have been a complete confirmation of the validity of Lenin's theory of imperialism and its programmatic conclusions. *The Great Robbery of the South* demonstrates the important changes in the relationship between the imperialist and the semi-colonial countries. Using comprehensive material (including 139 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that never before has

such a big share of the world capitalist value been produced in the South. Never before have the imperialist monopolies been so dependent on the super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world. Never before has migrant labor from the semi-colonial world played such a significant role for the capitalist value production in the imperialist countries. Never before has the huge majority of the world working class lived in the South – outside of the old imperialist metropolises.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting argues that a correct understanding of the nature of imperialism as well as of the program of permanent revolution which includes the tactics of consistent anti-imperialism is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future.

Order your copy NOW! \$20 / £13 / €15 plus p+p (21\$ for US and international, £9 for UK, €10 for Europe) ■



Look for details of the books at www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net and www.cuba-sold-out.net

Michael Pröbsting: Cuba's Revolution Sold Out? The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new book. It's called *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?*. The book's subtitle is: *The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism*. The book is in English-language. It has 5 chapters plus an appendix, 108 pages and includes 19 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is *Michael Pröbsting* who is the International Secretary of the RCIT.

In *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* Michael Pröbsting analyses the character of the Cuban Revolution 1959-61, its bureaucratic degeneration, and the recent march of the Castro leadership towards capitalism.

The author demonstrates how the Cuban Revolution, despite the initial modest intentions of its leaders, was spurred forward to more radical policies by grass roots struggles of Cuban workers and peasants. In fact, the very abolishment of capitalism by the Cuban regime was no part of the original game plan of either Castro's Movimiento 26 de Julio or of the official Cuban communist party (PSP), but rather was a product of precisely such pressures from below.

Cuba's Revolution Sold Out? describes in detail how a number of relatively recent political, economic, and social measures were

purposely taken by the Cuban government to open the road back to capitalism. Pröbsting elaborates the key role of the world's new great imperialist power, China, in Cuba's state policy as exemplified in the June 2011 Sino-Cuban agreement for a first Five-Year Plan of cooperation between these two states.

Cuba's Revolution Sold Out? examines these developments from the viewpoint of Marxist theory, the nature of the ruling bureaucracy in Stalinist states, and the process of restoration of capitalism under such regimes.

In conclusion, the book proposes a socialist program for political and social revolution in Cuba to halt the advance of capitalism and to eradicate the country's bureaucratic dictatorship.

Price: 8 Euro / 12 US-Dollars / 7 British Pound (plus delivery charges) ■



The Author: Michael Pröbsting is a revolutionary activist since 30 years. He is the author of many articles and pamphlets in German and English language. He published books or contributed to books on Rosa Luxemburg (1999), on the World Economy (2008), on Migration (2010) and the Arab Revolution (2011). In addition to *The Great Robbery of the South* and *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* he also published in 2014 the book *Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice. Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism*. He is the International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency.

What the RCIT Stands for

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) is a revolutionary combat organisation fighting for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. It has national sections in a number of countries. The working class is composed of all those (and their families) who are forced to sell their labor power as wage earners to the capitalists. The RCIT stands on the theory and practice of the revolutionary workers' movement associated with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky.

Capitalism endangers our lives and the future of humanity. Unemployment, war, environmental disasters, hunger, and exploitation are all part of everyday life under capitalism as are the imperialistic oppression of nations, the national oppression of migrants, and the oppression of women, young people, and homosexuals. Therefore, we want to eliminate capitalism.

The liberation of the working class and all oppressed is possible only in a classless society without exploitation and oppression. Such a society can only be established internationally.

Therefore, the RCIT is fighting for a socialist revolution at home and around the world.

This revolution must be carried out and led by the working class, for only this class has the collective power to bring down the ruling class and build a socialist society.

The revolution cannot proceed peacefully because a ruling class never has nor ever will voluntarily surrender its power. By necessity, therefore, the road to liberation includes armed rebellion and civil war against the capitalists.

The RCIT is fighting for the establishment of workers' and peasants' republics, where the oppressed organize themselves in councils democratically elected in rank-and-file meetings in factories, neighbourhoods, and schools. These councils, in turn, elect and control the government and all other state authorities, and always retain the right to recall them.

Authentic socialism and communism have nothing to do with the so-called "socialism" that ruled in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and which continues to do so in China and Cuba, for example. In these countries, the proletariat was and is dominated and oppressed by a privileged party bureaucracy.

Under capitalism, the RCIT supports all efforts to improve the living conditions of the workers and oppressed, while simultaneously striving to overthrow this system based on economic exploitation of the masses.

Towards these ends, we work from within the trade unions where we advocate class struggle, socialism, and workers' democracy. But trade unions and social democracy are controlled by a bureaucracy perniciously connected with the state and capital via status, high-paying jobs, and other privileges. Thus, the trade union bureaucracy is far from the interests and living conditions of

its members, based as it is on the top, privileged layers of the working class – a labor aristocracy which has no real interest in replacing capitalism. Therefore, the true struggle for the liberation of the working class, the toppling of capitalism and the establishment of socialism, must be based on the broad mass of the proletariat rather than their "representative" from the upper trade union strata.

We also fight for the expropriation of the big land owners as well as for the nationalisation of the land and its distribution to the poor and landless peasants. Towards this goal we struggle for the independent organisation of the rural workers.

We support national liberation movements against oppression. We also support the anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed peoples against the great powers. Within these movements we advocate a revolutionary leadership as an alternative to nationalist or reformist forces.

While the RCIT strives for unity of action with other organizations, we are acutely aware that the policies of social democrats and pseudo-revolutionary groups are dangerous, and ultimately represent an obstacle to the emancipation of the working class, peasants, and the otherwise oppressed.

In wars between imperialist states we take a revolutionary defeatist position: we do not support either side, but rather advocate the transformation of the war into a civil war against the ruling class in each of the warring states. In wars between imperialist powers (or their stooges) and a semi-colonial countries we stand for the defeat of the former and the victory of the oppressed countries.

As communists, we maintain that the struggle against national oppression and all types of social oppression (women, youth, sexual minorities etc.) *must* be led by the working class, because only the latter is capable of fomenting a revolutionary change in society. Therefore, we consistently support working class-based revolutionary movements of the socially oppressed, while opposing the leadership of petty-bourgeois forces (feminism, nationalism, Islamism, etc.), who ultimately dance to the tune of the capitalists, and strive to replace them with revolutionary communist leadership.

Only with a revolutionary party fighting as its leadership can the working class be victorious in its struggle for liberation. The establishment of such a party and the execution of a successful revolution, as it was demonstrated by the Bolsheviks in Russia under Lenin and Trotsky remain the models for revolutionary parties and revolutions in the 21st century.

For new, revolutionary workers' parties in all countries!
For a 5th Workers International to be founded on a revolutionary program! Join the RCIT!

No future without socialism!

No socialism without revolution!

No revolution without a revolutionary party!

