



# REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

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ONE WORLD - ONE STRUGGLE - ONE REVOLUTION



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## Down with the Coup in Brazil!

\* Terror in Brussels

\* Ireland after the Election

\* Corbyn and the UK Labour Party

\* 145th Anniversary of the Paris Commune

\* Marxism vs. Centrism

\* Art: Tina Modotti, Gustave Courbet

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# The Arrest of Lula da Silva – Yet Another Step in Creeping Coup

## For the Organization of Struggle Committees! For Mass Demonstrations against Those Plotting the Coup! But No Confidence for the Pro-Austerity PT-PMDB Government!

*Statement of the Corriente Comunista Revolucionária (CCR, Section of the RCIT in Brazil), 9.3.2016*

1. Friday, March 4, 2016, was a day to be remembered in history. Federal police went to the apartment of former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in Sao Bernardo do Campo, where they arrested him and took him away to the Congonhas airport, from where he was sent to the State of Paraná to appear before a federal judge, Sergio Moro, and from there, depending on circumstances, he may already be under indefinite imprisonment. The huge military apparatus has provided a political reality show for the pleasure of the putschist press, the political sectors of the fascist right, and the angry middle class; a show deliberately orchestrated by order by Federal Judge Sergio Moro, Brazil's national version of the notorious American senator Joseph McCarthy.

2. Lula da Silva was not sent from Congonhas airport to prison in to Paraná just because crowds in various state capitals around the country swarmed into the streets to demonstrate their support for him. In São Bernardo there was an actual confrontation between right-wingers and pro-Lula militants which was broadcast live by the television networks, causing nationwide shock. During the day the demonstrations relentlessly kept coming on.

At Congonhas airport, which was supposed to have been Lula's first stop on his way to prison, there was so many people demonstrating that the federal police tried to explain that "Lula's not being sent to prison, but he's only on his way to a routine investigation so that he can clarify some things!"

3. In order to take Lula away to testify, "forceful coercion" was used. This arbitrary judicial proceeding and clear breaking of the law now used against Lula has previously been used against several politicians and businessmen, mainly linked to the Workers Party (PT). The legal justification of "forceful coercion" as defined by law is the determined taking into custody of someone who refuses to voluntarily give testimony when they are summoned, which was certainly not so in the case of the former president, because Lula was not even accused of this. Rather, his arrest was simply a show of force of the putschist right, supported by the judiciary and the media, in particular the O Globo Group Organization. In this "reality show" the "good guys" are the Federal Police and the "villain" is Luis Inacio Lula da Silva, former president of Brazil. But the heinous schemers have shot themselves in the foot, as



*Mass demonstration against the coup on 18.03.2016 in São Paulo*

Lula da Silva's arrest showed how much broad support he still has from the humblest sectors of population, social movements and trade unions.

4. Lula had previously criticized the actions of the Federal Public Ministry and the federal judge Sergio Moro, who in reprisal authorized his arrest by the Federal Police. The former president had called early actions of these putschists "fireworks displays" saying "*Unfortunately they have preferred to use their predominance, their arrogance, their fireworks. It's unfortunate that part of the judiciary is working in collusion with the press.*" Lula also reiterated that he has not refused to give testimony to the Federal Police, and that an invitation by them for him to appear would be sufficient. Ironically, he said that "*starting next week, whoever wants to conduct a brief conversation with Lula, will have to pay for a plane ticket, as travelling by bus will take too much time,*" and that he himself is inclined "*to make the trip across the country on foot.*" The former president also commented that he felt "*outraged*" and "*hurt*" by the action of the Federal Police. He added that the entire episode has led the PT to "*raise its head*" after having "*been with its head down for so long*" hinting that he may be a presidential candidate in 2018, adding that "*Whoever wants to defeat me will have to face me in the streets.*"

#### **The Creeping Putsch and the Position of the CCR National Section of CCRI (RCIT)**

5. There is no guarantee whatsoever that Lula will actually be a candidate in 2018, nor is there even any guarantee that President Rousseff will herself end her term in office in almost another two years time, given the ongoing impeachment proceedings against her. As we have stated in previous documents, the creeping coup that is process in Brazil is being sponsored by American and European imperialism. The struggle of the judiciary and the putschist press is not the fight against corruption and much less against the supposed "communism" of PT governments. According to our document of 13/08/2015 \* "*What is really at stake for those directing the reactionary mobs on the streets is not the fight against corruption or even the supposed communism of the PT governments. If such pretensions were in fact the case, people like Congressman Paulo Maluf would already be behind bars. Governor Geraldo Alckmin and the PSDB in the State of São Paulo are insufficient in themselves to explain the misappropriation of millions of dollars allocated to the expansion of the subway lines. Much more than corruption, what is at stake for the forces of reaction in Brazil who are doing their utmost to topple the government of Dilma Rousset is their desire to placate the pressure being exerted by imperialism and Brazil's own national bourgeoisie: to bring about full privatization of the pre-salt; to privatize the Bank of Brazil and the state bank "Caixa Economica Federal"; to fully implement the outsourcing of work by contract; to severely limit or even entirely eliminate vacation rights for workers, their Christmas bonus, their maternity leave, etc. Such wide-sweeping, brutal attacks against the workers of Brazil is much more than the PT governments could ever possibly accomplish without entirely losing their social support base among the working masses. It is precisely these last arch-reactionary goals which are what lays behind the current coup movement.*"

6. In the event that the coup movement is successful, all progressives and leftists (or those who are considered

as belonging to the left), all social movements, neighborhood organizations, progressive political parties, strike movements, trade unions, all will in some way suffer at the hands of the advancing semi-fascist repression. However, one thing must be clear: We do *not* support the Popular Front government of PT / PMDB. We must continue to fight not only the coup movement, but also the harsh attacks on the workers and the poor, the measures taken by President Dilma Rousseff, like the privatization of the pre-salt oil reserves and the new pension reforms.

7. We reaffirm our declaration from last August that "*Above all, it is urgent that the working class and oppressed organize without delay to meet head-on any threat of coup. The coup, if it occurs, will not be rescinded by parliamentary agreements or legal maneuvers. It is only the working people, the youth of the cities, suburbs and hinterlands across the country that undertake this fight. We need to organize ourselves in the workplaces, in the neighborhoods, in the favelas and form popular committees which will struggle against the looming coup.*"

8. We call upon the CUT Trade Union Federation, the Frente Popular de Esquerda (Left Popular Front), the MST, militant chapters of the PT and other mass organizations to hold a national congress of delegates as soon as possible. Such a democratic congress should discuss and adopt an immediate plan of action in the struggle against the coup plotters.

9. It is imperative that all popular and workers' organizations break with the Popular Front government so that they organize and struggle independently of it.

10. Furthermore, it is necessary the workers and popular organizations found a revolutionary workers' party for Brazil that will be a part of a new World Party of Socialist Revolution.

\* *No to the coup of impeachment and no to the calling for new elections!*

\* *Mobilize the masses to go into the streets and fight at one and the same time against the attacks of the Rousseff government on the workers and the poor AND against the coup movement!*

\* *Mobilize for a mass antifascist demonstration on March 13!*

\* *For the creation of action committees in the factories, trade unions, neighborhoods, slums and outlying regions in defence of our rights and against any coup movement! For the creation of Struggle Committees! For Mass Mobilizations against the Coup Plotters! But no confidence in the Pro-Austerity PT-PMDB Government!*

1 \* <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/brazil-impeachment/>  
<http://www.thecommunists.net/home/portugu%C3%AAs/contra-golpe-fascista/>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grupo\\_Globo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grupo_Globo)  
<http://www.cartacapital.com.br/blogs/parlatorio/instituto-lula-e-alvo-de-ataque-a-bomba-assista-1529.html>  
<http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/brazil-statement-coup-demo/>  
<http://www.thecommunists.net/home/portugu%C3%AAs/may-day-statement-2015/>  
<http://www.thecommunists.net/home/portugu%C3%AAs/panfleto-29-5-2015/>  
<http://brasilescola.uol.com.br/historia-da-america/macartismo.htm>

## Austria: Rally in Solidarity with the Syrian Revolution

Report from the Austrian Section of the RCIT, 16.3.2016

About 250 Syrian Refugees and Muslim migrants participated in a rally on Sunday, 13 March, in the central square of Vienna to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the start of the Syrian Revolution. The event was organized by the Syrian living community in Austria which invited the Austrian section of the RCIT to participate and address the rally.

In his speech, Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the RCIT, expressed the full solidarity of our international tendency with the liberation struggle of the Syrian people against the brutal dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad. Comrade Pröbsting denounced the imperialist aggression of Russia, the US and European powers, and called for a free Syria in which all religious groups will be able to live together in peace and in which the toilers, and not a few generals and the super-rich, hold power.

Pröbsting's speech reflected a short summary of the joint statement which the RCIT had previously issued together with the Mexican ALS (Socialist Struggle Group).

Other speakers at the rally were a leading Syrian activist, a representative of the Arab minority living in Iran, as well as a representative of the Chechen Resistance.

Comrades of the RCIT participated in the rally with a banner which read "Solidarity with the Liberation Struggle of the Oppressed – LIBERATION" (in German, English, Turkish and Arabic). Despite the language difficulties, our comrades also sold a number of papers published by the RCIT to the Syrian refugees.

The entire rally was broadcasted live by a journalist from *Al-Jazeera*. This video of this broadcast has already been viewed by more than 152,000 people. The *Al-Jazeera* journalist also translated comrade Pröbsting's speech into Arabic for the viewers. The speech, which starts at 17:46 minutes into the video and lasts until 23:30, can be viewed at <https://www.facebook.com/ajmubasher/videos/1260833377262727/>.

View photos and the video clip of Michael Pröbsting's speech at the rally:

Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Z2m\\_InpDgs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Z2m_InpDgs)

Photos: <https://www.facebook.com/RedRevolution.at/posts/928633380586068>



Activists of the Austrian section of the RCIT with Syrian migrants at a rally in solidarity with the Syrian Revolution on 13.3.2016 in Vienna

## Austria: Mass Demonstration in Solidarity with Refugees

Report from the anti-racist Demonstration on 19 March in Vienna by the Austrian Section of the RCIT, 20.3.2016

Thousands of people demonstrated on 19 March in Vienna in solidarity with refugees and against racism. This was a strong signal against the racist offensive both by the Austrian government as well as by the right-wing opposition.

The Austrian section of the RCIT joined the demonstration with a very lively and militant contingent of nearly 100 activists. In addition to the activists of our youth organization RED\*REVOLUTION and the young workers group RED\*RESISTANCE, dozens of migrants and refugees from Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Honduras and other countries – with whom we have organized numerous activities in past years – participated in our contingent.

We shouted many slogans against the racist rabble-rousing, for the opening of the borders, and for solidarity with the Arab Revolution. We used the long demonstration to give a number of short speeches. Leaders of the Austrian Section of the RCIT, like Almedina Gunić, Michael Pröbsting, Johannes Wiener, Marek Hangler and Rahime Berisha, explained our struggle for open borders and for solidarity with the Arab Revolution. We also emphasized the

importance of the struggle for women's liberation

Our contingent varied significantly from other left-wing groups not only because of its size and its militant spirit. In contrast to all reformist and centrist groups, the RCIT in Austria stands in active solidarity with the liberation struggle in Syria, Egypt, Yemen and other countries against the dictatorships and against imperialism. Furthermore, one could see yet once again that we are not merely white anti-racists who are only *in favor of* the rights for migrants and refugees; but that we actively fight *together with* migrants and refugees, and that we are building a multinational revolutionary organization. We will continue this path.

See numerous photos and video clips at the following link:

Pictures: <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.932308580218548.1073741849.172362649546482&type=3>

Videos (including speeches in English language): <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvd6RcGECq1uJBzi7Ls4KYX7b8CKt0sok>



Contingent of the Austrian Section of the RCIT at a demonstration in solidarity with refugees on 19.3.2016 in Vienna

## Terror in Brussels: The War comes Home

### Daesh-Terror is the Result of Imperialist Terror! Oppose any State of Emergency and Repression against Muslim Peoples in Europe!

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 23.03.2016*

1. On 22 March members of *Daesh* (the so-called *Islamic State*) committed heinous terror attacks at the Brussels' Zaventem Airport and at a metro station in the heart of the city. In the despicable attacks 34 persons were killed and another 198 were injured. This happened only three days after the Belgium authorities had congratulated themselves for arresting Salah Abdeslam, the suspected mastermind of the Paris attacks last November.

2. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) unequivocally condemns these attacks as utterly reactionary. Like the Paris attack, indiscriminate deadly violence was directed not against a military target but against ordinary civilians. The ruling class of the imperialist powers will use these attacks to justify and intensify its reactionary offensive against the oppressed peoples of the Middle East, as well as its repressive policies domestically targeting the working-class in general and Muslim migrants in particular.

3. This attack clearly demonstrates yet again the reactionary character of *Daesh/IS*. This hateful organization wages war mainly against oppressed people, not against imperialism or reactionary regimes. The RCIT repeats that it is the task of the workers and peasants organized in popular militias to wage the struggle against *Daesh/IS*. Workers and the oppressed must oppose any actions by the Great Powers and their allied butchers, like Assad, since it is the imperialists and their dogs who are the biggest

terrorists of all, and they are cynically using the struggle against "terrorism" only as a pretext to advance their own interests. We say: Fight *Daesh* by fighting its causes – the exploitation and wars of the Great Powers and their crony dictators in the Middle East!

4. France's Prime Minister Manuel Valls, a particularly right-wing social democrat, announced after the events in Brussels: "*We are at war. We have been subjected for the last few months in Europe to acts of war.*" It is true that the ruling classes of Europe – as well as those of all the other Great Powers – are at war. They are and have been at war against the oppressed peoples in the Middle East for a very long time with the aim of exploiting the region's abundance of natural resources. For these ends the US, Russia, France, and Britain continue to bomb the people of Syria, Iraq, and Libya daily. For these ends they support and closely cooperate with the dictatorships in Egypt, Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf monarchies. Add to this the ongoing terror and ethnic cleansing being conducted by the Apartheid State of Israel against the Palestinian people. As a result of all these military campaigns hundreds of thousands of persons have died during recent years and millions have become refugees. The vast majority of people live in utter misery. It is the brutal aggression of the Great Powers and their allied dictatorships which drive more and more people to despair and to supporting reactionary gangs like *Daesh/IS*.



*Activists of ALS at a rally in solidarity with the Syrian Revolution on 15.3.2016 in Mexiko City*

5. In this light, the Brussels attack is hardly surprising. In fact, the RCIT predicted some months ago the repetition of terrorist attacks like the one in Paris. In our latest *World Perspectives* document we wrote: “The imperialist Great Powers will accelerate their military interventions in the semi-colonial world – first and foremost in North Africa and the Middle East – and collaborate more closely with reactionary dictatorships in order to pacify revolutionary popular uprisings. As a result, terrorist attacks will most likely increase too.”

6. The RCIT reemphasizes the absolute necessity for European workers, migrants and youth to unite in the struggle against racism, state oppression, and attacks on democratic and social rights. Furthermore, it is urgent that we mobilize in order to drive the Great Powers out of the Middle East. We also call upon the workers and oppressed to support the Arab Revolution against the dictatorships and the refugees of the Middle Eastern wars who wish to come to Europe.

\* No to Daesh and its terrorist attacks!

\* Against any “State of Emergency” regime and mobilization of the army in Belgium, France or any other European country!

\* Fight racism and repression directed towards Muslim migrants in Europe!

\* Drive the Great Powers out of the Middle East! Support the Resistance against the imperialist aggressors!

\* Support the Arab Revolution against the region’s dictatorships!

\* Open the Borders of Europe! Down with the EU’s Iron Wall against refugees!

\* Forward in the building of a revolutionary World Party!

*International Secretariat of the RCIT*

*On our position on recent terrorist attack in Europe see:*

RCIT: Terror in Paris is the Result of Imperialist Terror in the Middle East! Stop France’s and other Imperialist Powers’ Warmongering! No Mobilization of the Army inside France! Defend the Muslim Peoples against Chauvinist Hatemongering and State Repression! 14.11.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/terror-in-paris/>

RCIT: World Perspectives 2016: Advancing Counterrevolution and Acceleration of Class Contradictions Mark the Opening of a New Political Phase, Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries (January 2016), 23 January 2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2016/>

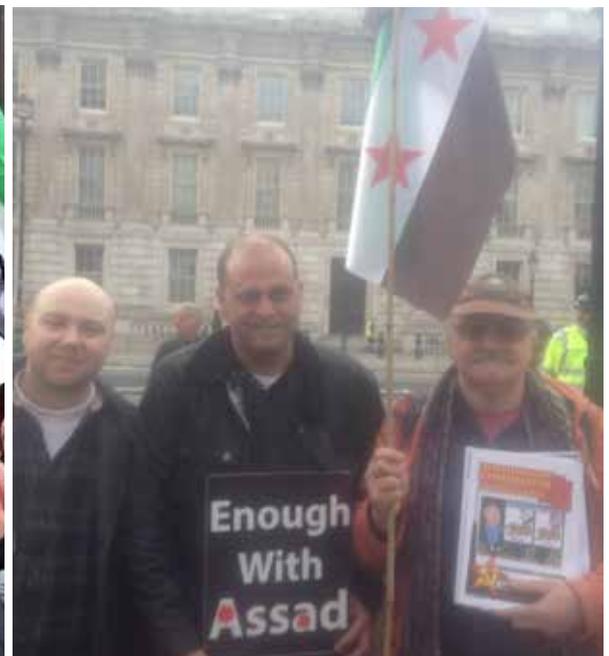
RCIT: Increasing Instability and Militarization in the European Union. On the Tasks of Revolutionaries in the New Political Phase which has Opened in Europe after the Terrorist Attack in Paris, 08.12.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/militarism-in-eu/>

RCIT: France after the Attacks in Paris: Defend the Muslim People against Imperialist Wars, Chauvinist Hatemongering, and State Repression! 9.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/statement-paris-attacks/>

Michael Pröbsting: France: “Communist” Party fails to Vote in Parliament against Imperialist War in Iraq! 15.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/french-pcf-iraq-war/>

Michael Pröbsting: After the Paris Attack: Socialists must Join Hands with Muslim People Against Imperialism and Racism! Reformist and Centrist Forces try to derail the Workers Movement by Failing to Stand up for Solidarity with the Muslims and Against Imperialist War-Mongering! 17.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/france-defend-muslims/>

Michael Pröbsting: The Racist Character of Charlie Hebdo and the pro-imperialist campaign “Je Suis Charlie”. Solidarity with Muslim People! NOT Solidarity with Charlie Hebdo! 17.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/racist-charlie-hebdo/>



Michael Pröbsting addresses a rally of the Syrian community on 13.3.2016 in Vienna (left); Activists of the RCIT Britain on 13.3. in London (right)

# Crisis and Class Struggle in Ireland after the General Election

Statement by Supporters of the RCIT in Britain, 22.3.2016

The result of the recent Irish General election was inconclusive. The results show that the major capitalist party *Fianna Gael* and its coalition party in government, the *Irish Labour Party*, are no longer the government. Ireland has a proportional system of government very different from Britain's (first past the post system). *Fianna Gael* has 50 seats in the new Parliament (the Dael) and *Fianna Fáil*, the other capitalist party, has 44. *Sinn Féin*, a petty-bourgeois nationalist party, got 23 seats. The Labour Party (seen as a party of Austerity) did badly and returned only 7 TD's (MP's). The left-wing anti-austerity electoral alliance – consisting basically of the *Anti-Austerity Alliance* (mainly Socialist Party supporters in Ireland) and *People before Profit* (mainly Socialist Workers Party supporters in Ireland) – returned 6 TD's. Some more radical leftist TD's were elected as independents.

The working class, the youth and the oppressed masses gave their answer to the previous *Fianna Gael / Labour* coalition, a government of big business and capitalism. The biggest issue facing the Irish masses was water charges where both the SWP and the Socialist Party – two pseudo-Trotskyist organizations – had organised a campaign for non-payment of water charges.

*Sinn Féin* and five major trade unions supported the *Right2 Water / Right to Change* policy which unlike the centrists does not call for non-payment. Both campaigns have led to extreme opposition to the government's policies and have reached proportions similar to the non-payment of the poll tax against Margaret Thatcher in the 1980's.

The election result with no clear mandate has meant that there is no government at the moment. Enda Kenny, the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and leader of *Fianna Gael*, the biggest party have not reached any agreement with either *Fianna Fáil* or *Sinn Féin* to form a Coalition partner. Social inequality and indebtedness prominent in Portugal and Spain and other Euro zone countries has produced the same crisis in Ireland. In Spain there is still no stable government and negotiations are continuing between *PODEMOS* an anti-austerity party as well as traditional parties to form a government.

It is clear that the opportunities for revolutionary change exist in Ireland. Unfortunately the centrists show an incapacity to recognise what these opportunities are. Both the SWP and the Socialist Party tag behind the trade union bureaucracy who can offer no solution and for years have been inactive supporting the reformist policies of the discredited Labour party. What these centrists fail to understand is that the trade union bureaucracy are part of the capitalist state, they are the agents of capitalism in the workers movement and must all costs, as Lenin and Trotsky advocated, be expelled and driven out of the movement. (1)

## Brutal Austerity Offensive against the Irish Working Class and Poor

Ireland historically has been oppressed and exploited as a colony by British imperialism in the past and which today

continues to exist as a semi-colonial country subjugated by the imperialist powers – Britain and the EU. This has been confirmed once more in the last years when it suffered – similar to Greece – a brutal austerity offensive under the dictate of financial sharks as well as Brussels and carried out by the Irish government.

As a result, Ireland, like all the Eurozone countries, is beset with extreme poverty, homelessness and social inequality. Over €30bn (£21bn) in austerity measures were introduced – public spending cuts and tax increases (mostly the former), over 15% of GDP. However, two-thirds of austerity went to destroy Irish social and economic life, with unemployment, poverty, liquidations, suicides, etc.

The consequences for Irish workers and poor have been dramatic. The proportion of people in consistent poverty has soared by 100%, according to the Irish think tank Social Justice Ireland. Almost 1.4 million Irish residents, or 30% of Ireland's population, were forced to endure "enforced deprivation" throughout 2013, according to the state's Central Statistics Office. Among them there are over 440,000 children and more than 90,000 pensioners. (2)

This demonstrates once again that capitalism as a crisis-prone system is a barrier to human and social progress and condemns ordinary people to poverty and misery. It also demonstrates that the European Union is an imperialist super-state which enforces barbaric austerity programs on the working class and in particular on economically weak, semi-colonial countries like Ireland or Greece.

## The National Question: An Unresolved Issue

Related to this is the still unresolved national question. Ireland was divided by imperialist Britain in 1922 after Westminster could no longer continue with the colonial occupation of the whole island given the mass resistance of the Irish people. Today, the six counties in the north of the island remain occupied by the British. The Irish national liberation movement has been fighting for the complete elimination of the occupation and the reunification of the island. The RCIT Britain supports this struggle but emphasises that the national struggle must be combined with a socialist perspective for the creation of a sovereign United 32-County Irish Workers' Republic.

Unfortunately all of the centrists have ignored the national question and the incarceration by the British and Irish state of Irish republican prisoners. There is no mention of the important anti-imperialist struggle being conducted by republicans who rejected the betrayal of the leaderships of *Sinn Féin* and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) when they signed the Good Friday agreement with the Blair Government in 1998. There are still a number of Irish political prisoners who are being humiliated, beaten and receiving some of the harshest sentences by both the British and Irish states. Beatings and other forms of torture are inflicted by prison officers. (3) There was no mention of these practices by either the *Anti-Austerity Alliance* or by *People before Profit* during their election campaigns.

### Perspectives

The RCIT in Britain calls for a united front with all the forces fighting social inequality and austerity in Ireland. We put forward the following proposals to unite all sections of the oppressed and working poor in the struggle against austerity.

\* *Stop the austerity offensive!*

\* *For non-payment of water charges! Organise local committees of action to defend tenants and householders threatened with prosecution and imprisonment!*

\* *Cancel all household debts! Occupy empty housing oppose all evictions!*

\* *Legalise the right to strike to withdraw your Labour!*

\* *Oppose all imperialist wars! Free all political prisoners in Ireland!*

\* *For a Workers Government based upon Councils of action and armed popular militias!*

\* *For a United 32-County Irish Workers' Republic!*

\* *For a United Socialist States of Europe!*

In order to enhance the struggle for such a perspective it is crucial to build a revolutionary party in Britain and Ireland as part of a revolutionary workers International,

the Fifth International. The RCIT in Britain and Ireland is dedicated to this task. If you agree with our perspective join us.

### Footnotes

(1) Unfortunately this is also forgotten, once more, by the comrades of Red Flag in their article on Ireland. (See "The Changing Face of Irish Politics"; in: The Red Flag No. 3 (March 2016), <http://www.redflagonline.org/2016/03/the-changing-face-of-irish-politics/>)

(2) On the austerity offensive see e.g. OXFAM: The True Cost of Austerity and Inequality, Ireland Case Study, September 2013; Patrick Honohan (Governor of the Central Bank of Ireland): Debt and austerity: post-crisis lessons from Ireland, 17 November 2015, London School of Economics and Political Science; Michael Taft: Ireland is no model for Greece, 10 July 2015 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/economics-blog/2015/jul/10/ireland-no-model-greece-troika-austerity>; Russia Today: 'A social obscenity': 30 percent of Ireland's population living in 'enforced deprivation', 21 Jan, 2015 <https://www.rt.com/news/224851-ireland-poverty-crisis-debt/>

(3) As a side note we remark that these police men and guards are, in the eyes of the centrist Socialist Party, "workers in Uniform" which they support and invite onto their platforms.

## Book from the RCIT

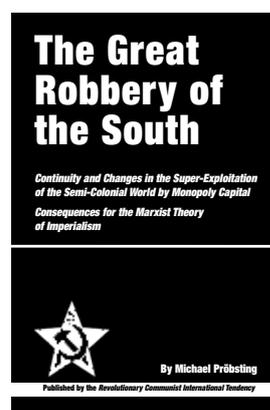
### Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book 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](http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net)

The Author: Michael Pröbsting is a revolutionary activist since 34 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.

# UK: No to Cameron's Trap: Neither YES nor NO to UK membership in the EU! For Abstention in the Referendum!

**We call on Momentum to create a "Third Camp"  
and to launch a socialist and internationalist campaign!  
For international Unity of the British, Migrant and European Workers!**

*Statement of RED\*LIBERATION (Bulletin of Socialists in the Labour Party), 25 February 2016*

1. Prime Minister Cameron has announced that the referendum on Britain's membership in the European Union will take place on 23 June 2016. RED\*LIBERATION, a Bulletin of socialists in the Labour Party, calls on all workers, youth and socialists to avoid Cameron's trap and to vote neither for British nor for EU-imperialism in the referendum. In other words, we propose to boycott Cameron's trap and to abstain in this referendum. We call on *Momentum* to launch a socialist and internationalist campaign for "Abstention" together with all the progressive forces inside and outside the Labour Party!

2. We call the referendum a trap because it presents two equally bad forms of capitalist state organization as a pseudo-alternative. It is no accident that both camps – the pro-EU as well as the Brexit camp – are dominated by reactionary, chauvinist and pro-business forces. The referendum asks people to choose between two forms of racism where in fact both camps – Cameron and the EU as well as Nigel Farage's Brexit – are deeply racist. Cameron calls for the UK to stay in the EU by praising his "success" at the latest negotiations with the EU where the latter adopted massive restrictions for migrants' access to the welfare system. The EU itself is demonstrating day-by-day that it wants to expel as many refugees as possible and that it attacks the democratic rights of migrants (e.g. Hollande's "state of emergency" regime in France which has resulted in about 3,300 raids on Muslim households since mid-November.) Of course, the reactionary hate-mongers like UKIP's Nigel Farage are no better but have made racism a cornerstone of their program. This demonstrates once more that those who champion the rights of migrants and refugees must neither support UK's membership in the EU nor the Brexit campaign.

3. The referendum asks people to choose between two forms of imperialist militarism where in fact both the Cameron government and the EU as well as the right-wing anti-EU forces have a long history of waging wars abroad. British imperialism has always waged war around the world and tried to keep its Empire respectively its global spheres of influence by any means necessary. They did so before as well as after joining the EU.

4. The referendum asks people to choose between two forms of capitalist exploitation where in fact both the Cameron government and the EU as well as the right-wing anti-EU forces are champions of attacking labour rights. Have we not seen the British government and the Brussels bureaucrats calling for deregulation and privatization for years and decades?! And are the leading forces of the Brexit campaign not advocating exactly the same?!

5. RED\*LIBERATION therefore calls on all socialists

to take an authentic socialist position independent of the Blairite bureaucracy, Jeremy Corbyn as well as the pro-Brexit "Labour Leave" campaign. It is rather necessary to create a third, socialist and internationalist camp. It is obvious why the Blairites will vote YES in the referendum. They always supported the interests of the corporations and voted for the EU and the US's wars abroad. It is a shame that the party's leadership around Jeremy Corbyn is working together with them instead of making a clear rupture! How can a party which calls itself a party of the working people tolerate such friends of business and wars in its ranks?!

6. Jeremy Corbyn has joined now the pro-EU camp too. In an article in *The Guardian* (20 February 2016), he wrote: "It's because being part of Europe has brought Britain investment, jobs and protection for workers, consumers and the environment. We are convinced that the EU is a vital framework for European trade and international cooperation in the 21st century, and that a vote to remain in Europe is in the best interests of our people." He claims: "People will be voting on far more important issues: jobs, investment, employment rights, environmental protection, peace, security and international cooperation." These arguments are false through and through. Unemployment and poverty have increased inside the EU for many years. So why should the EU-membership help to reduce unemployment in Britain?! The referendum is about "peace, security and international cooperation"? But the Great Powers of the EU have waged a number of wars in the past years (Serbia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Mali, etc.!) The EU has imposed sanctions against Russia – an imperialist rival. In which world is Corbyn living?! It is hardly surprising that the huge majority of Britain's corporations want the country to remain inside the EU. But why do the leaders of the Labour Party rally behind the bosses' EU?

7. We say that Corbyn must not again adapt to the Blairites and the bosses' demands! If the Corbyn leadership really wants to support workers' rights, they should put their resources to mobilize against the government's austerity policy. If the Corbyn leadership really wants to support workers' rights, they should compel all Labour councilors to vote against each and every austerity measures. If the Corbyn leadership really wants to oppose imperialist wars, they should expel the pro-war Blairite Labour MP's. If the Corbyn leadership really wants to support workers' and migrant rights, they should publicly denounce their fellow party "comrade" Francois Hollande and his reactionary "state of emergency" regime. We call on the Momentum NC to publicly put such demands on Corbyn and to criticize his pro-EU stand.

8. The pro-Brexit "Labour Leave" campaign is no better. Why should nationalist isolationism be in the inter-

est of the workers, migrants and youth? Why should the creation of new borders be in the interest of workers and refugees?! Why do they believe that an isolated Britain would be more progressive or more peaceful than a Britain as part of the EU?! Are rich capitalist countries outside of the EU – like the US or Japan – more progressive or more peaceful?!

9. We also totally condemn George Galloway's appearance as a "surprise guest" at a "Brexit" rally and his coalition with Nigel Farage. Such actions totally undermine Galloway's credit of standing up against imperialist wars and against racism in the past.

10. RED\*LIBERATION maintains that socialists must refuse to support either of these two, equally reactionary, capitalist camps. The most important task now is to fight for the political independence of the working class and the oppressed vis-à-vis either of these capitalist, racist and imperialist camps. There is no *lesser* evil for the working class: On one side are those British capitalists who advocate membership in the war-mongering EU which universally imposes austerity, attacks refugees and democratic rights, who advocate a free trade pact with the US, and who favor waging colonial wars in North Africa, Syria and Iraq. On the other side are those British capitalists who advocate the country's exit from the EU in order to drive out migrants and refugees, attack labour rights and to effectively become the little poodle of the world's greatest imperialist power, the US.

11. RED\*LIBERATION calls on *Momentum* to create a "Third Camp" in opposition to the equally reactionary pro-EU and Brexit camp. Such a Third Camp should launch a socialist and internationalist campaign. It should advocate the following issues:

\* *Fight against austerity both in Britain as well as in the whole of Europe! Force the Labour and the TUC leadership to organize mass demonstrations and strikes to defend our rights! Compel all Labour councilors to vote against all austerity measures!*

\* *Mobilize against Britain's Wars in Syria, Iraq and other countries! Expel all Blairite MP's who have voted for war!*

\* *Open the borders for refugees! Equal rights and equal pay for migrants and refugees! Organize migrants and refugees in the unions in order to obstruct the bosses' attempts to lower the wages!*

12. RED\*LIBERATION calls upon all socialists in Britain to join forces with us in such a campaign on the basis of

\* *For a socialist Britain as part of a United Socialist States of Europe!*

\* *Boycott Cameron's Trap: Neither YES nor NO to UK membership in the EU! For Abstention in the Referendum!*

We also want to draw attention to the following statement as well as pamphlet which's line we politically support:

\* *RCIT: Boycott Cameron's Trap: Neither Brussels, nor Downing Street! For Abstention in Britain's EU-Referendum! For international Unity and Struggle of the Workers and Oppressed! Fight against both British as well as European Imperialism! Forward to the United Socialist States of Europe, 2 August 2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/eu-referendum-in-uk/>*

\* *Michael Pröbsting: The British Left and the EU-Referendum: The Many Faces of pro-UK or pro-EU Social-Imperialism. An analysis of the left's failure to fight for an independent, internationalist and socialist stance both against British as well as European imperialism, August 2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/british-left-and-eu-referendum/>*

## **The British Left and the EU-Referendum**

### **The Many Faces of pro-UK or pro-EU Social-Imperialism**

**An analysis of the left's failure to fight for an independent, internationalist and socialist stance both against British as well as European imperialism**

*A new pamphlet by Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)*

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# UK: How Jeremy Corbyn has capitulated to the Pro-War and Pro-Austerity Wing of the Labour Party

*Statement by Supporters of RED LIBERATION (Bulletin of Socialists active in the Labour Party), 6.1.2015*

Jeremy Corbyn who was recently elected as leader of the Labour Party attracted wide support from the youth and the working class who wanted to see a change of direction from the Party's pro-capitalist and pro-austerity policies.

Corbyn was able to attract such support because he raised a number of progressive demands like:

- \* Against imperialist wars in Iraq, Syria and Yemen;
- \* Partial nationalisation of Rail and other enterprises;
- \* Clear opposition to the Tories welfare proposals;
- \* The restoration of Clause 4 in the Labour Party. [1]

Since his election Corbyn, whose politics has to be described as left reformist, unfortunately has capitulated to the pro-austerity wing of the party. In the recent debate in parliament over the government's decision for air strikes in Syria, Corbyn allowed a significant number of pro-war Labour MP's a free vote to support the government. He allowed Hilary Benn, a pro-war shadow cabinet member, to wind up the debate which made a mockery of Corbyn's opposition to air strikes in Syria.

Furthermore, Corbyn has continued to bow to pressure from right wing Labour MP's over the Tories benefit sanctions.

*"Jeremy Corbyn's plans to oppose the benefits cap have been undermined by members of his own shadow cabinet, as he prepares to face David Cameron in prime minister's questions for the first time.*

*Speaking to the Trades Union Congress conference in Brighton on Tuesday, Corbyn said the benefits cap introduced by the coalition created "social cleansing" and that the party would oppose it all together.*

*But speaking hours later on the BBC's Newsnight programme, the shadow work and pensions secretary, Owen Smith, said the party was only opposing government plans to reduce the cap.*

*The shadow equalities minister, Kate Green, speaking on BBC Radio 4's Today programme on Wednesday, said the Labour Party's present policy position was to support the principle of the benefit cap and that there was some evidence it had helped people into work".[2]*

Recently Corbyn together with John McDonnell (Shadow Chancellor) and Jon Trickett (Shadow secretary of state for Communities and Local Government) have issued a letter to all Labour councillors instructing them to stay within the law and carry out cuts to social services, housing and other vital services.

*"Transcript of the letter sent out by Jeremy Corbyn, Jon Trickett and John McDonnell: The Shadow Chancellor, John McDonnell MP, said in September '...the situation councils are now in is if they don't set a budget, a council officer will do it for them. There is no choice for them anymore.' As you know, councils must set a balanced budget under the Local Government Act 1992. If this does not happen, i.e. if a council fails to set a legal budget, then the council's Section 151 Officer is required to issue the council with a notice under Section 114 of the 1988 Local Government Act. Councillors are then required to take all the necessary ac-*

*tions in order to bring the budget back into balance.*

*Failing to do so can lead to complaints against councillors under the Code of Conduct, judicial review of the council and, most significantly, government intervention by the Secretary of State. It would mean council officers or, worse still, Tory ministers deciding council spending priorities" [3]*

This letter from the Labour leadership clearly shows they are ready to implement the government's pro-austerity agenda. So much for Corbyn's much vaunted anti-austerity program. Corbyn will continue to be a hostage of the Blairites until he breaks with them completely!

It is important that *MOMENTUM*, the campaign organization of left-wing Corbyn supporters, openly criticises the political adaption of the Corbyn leadership group to the Blairites. Furthermore, we demand that *MOMENTUM* operates in a transparent and democratic way. Hence it is important to have a national conference of *MOMENTUM* activists in spring which democratically decides on the policy and elects a leadership.

The supporters of *RED LIBERATION* put forward the following concrete proposals to unite all progressive forces in the Labour Party.

*\* Mandatory reselection of all Labour MP's and councillors who fail to oppose Britain's imperialist wars!*

*\* Oppose the air Strikes in Syria! Oppose all imperialist wars in Iraq, Afghanistan Syria, Yemen and Ireland! Support the Resistance!*

*\* Oppose all cuts in social services, housing and education! Cancel all household debts! Occupy properties threatened with eviction! Organise rent strikes and occupy council offices if necessary!*

*\* Demand that Corbyn, McDonnell and Trickett withdraw the letter requesting Labour councillors to support a legal budget!*

*\* Support MOMENTUM (despite its political weaknesses) and all other progressive forces in the Labour Party campaigning on an anti-austerity program!*

*\* For a general strike to bring down this hated Tory government!*

In order to unite all the progressive forces inside the Labour Party it is vital to bring together authentic socialist and revolutionary activists. The supporters of *RED LIBERATION* are dedicated to this task. Join us if you agree with our perspective.

## Footnotes

1) See on this Corbyn Victorious in Labour Leadership Election, Liberation No 5 October 2015, <https://rcitbritain.wordpress.com/2015/09/16/69/>

2) <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/sep-16/labour-in-disarray-over-benefits-cap>.

3) <https://www.socialistparty.org.uk/articles/21923/18-12-2015/labour-councils-dont-have-to-pass-on-tory-cuts>.

# UK: Which Way Forward for the Labour Left?

## A Critical Assessment of the Labour Representation Committee since the Election of Jeremy Corbyn

By Joseph Adams, Supporter of RED\*LIBERATION (Bulletin of Socialists in the Labour Party), 26 February 2016

The Labour Representation Committee (LRC) held its special General Meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2016 in the Conway Hall in London. The LRC is a left wing organisation which Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell Shadow Chancellor founded some years ago.

John McDonnell, the chair of the LRC, was the main speaker. McDonnell, who is a close supporter of Corbyn, outlined in his speech *“that a future Labour Government would be rebuilding council housing on a massive scale, the labour government would radically alter society with democratic principles. He said they would restore the democratic structures of the party which had been closed down by Blair and Brown. He said that we must have respect for our opponents and have respect for dissent. He concluded by calling for a vision of democratic socialist society”*. [1]

In RED LIBERATION No. 1 we stated: *“Since his election Corbyn, whose politics has to be described as left reformist, unfortunately has capitulated to the pro Austerity wing of the party”*. [2] This has been borne out by McDonnell’s statement that *“dissent must be respected in the party”*. In practice this means that the Blairites can continue to support wars like the one in Syria as well as austerity measures. It also means that they can continue to sabotage the party leadership. The Blairite wing of the party is the stalking horse for pro-capitalist policies in the Labour party. To allow the Blairites to remain and attempt to split the party should be incompatible with membership of a socialist organisation. Blairites that openly support war and austerity should be expelled from the party. The open attacks of the Blairite wing of the party in the capitalist press show the contempt that they have for the Corbyn leadership. Likewise, all members of the shadow cabinet who support war

and austerity and who do not abide by collective decisions should be removed and dismissed.

Much of McDonnell’s speech demonstrated its commitment to electoral politics, hoping that the forthcoming local and mayoral elections in May will return Labour mayors and councils. Much of the youth and workers who recently joined the party expected a radical change in British politics. But for Corbyn and McDonnell anti-austerity is in on the back burner as the Blairites mount a ferocious attack on their policies. Most of the Parliamentary Party are openly critical of Corbyn. In the East Midlands he has appointed Liz Kendall, his Blairite opponent in the election, to run the European referendum campaign.

All this takes place when the Cameron government is accelerating its attacks on social gains and migrants’ rights. The Tories *Welfare and Reform Bill*, their *Housing and Planning Bill* which sets out its *Right to Buy Scheme* intended to see the end of socially rented housing as we know it, are just the most prominent examples of this. Many sections of the working class will be pauperised and Corbyn and McDonnell can offer no alternatives to this unrelenting austerity except support Labour in the coming local elections. Food banks already exist in Britain. Poverty and malnutrition is evident in every corner of society. By the time a Labour government might be elected in 2020, the present government will have destroyed much of what remains of the NHS and the welfare state.

The remainder of the conference was taken up with a statement by the LRC *“LRC STATEMENT AFTER CORBYN’S VICTORY”*. This statement reflects the changes imposed by the leadership of MOMENTUM – the campaign organisation of pro-Corbyn supporters who are

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now attempting to impose bureaucratic structures. It is apparent that far from turning *MOMENTUM* into a broad anti-austerity movement with views from a range of different anti-austerity organisations, the LRC wants to limit it to certain people. *“However we do not believe that those organisations which stand candidates against Labour should be in Momentum and we will push for this to become Momentum’s national policy”*. [3] The LRC document further comments: *“It is not necessary for those standing against Labour to be inside MOMENTUM for Momentum supporters to work with them in campaigns against austerity, war, racism etc.”* [4] This demonstrates that the LRC and the *Momentum* leadership are trying to restrict its activities to mainly Labour party members.

This is a retrogressive step which means that members of socialist organizations like the SWP and Socialist Party cannot participate and be active in *Momentum* – something which we would welcome despite our political criticism on these organizations.

However, the main challenge for *MOMENTUM* remains to fight for a real and radical change of the party’s politics. This means essentially to fight for the party to get rid of the Blairite bureaucracy which is an enemy within – an openly agent of the bosses within the party. We can not successfully fight the bosses as long as we have their open friends inside our own party sabotaging this struggle. We can not successfully fight against war and austerity as long as we have open supporters of war and austerity inside our own party.

Secondly, *MOMENTUM* should change the party’s policy from waiting for the elections in 2020 into becoming an ac-

tivist and mobilizing party. Labour should be transformed into a party which is actively supporting and driving forward mass demonstrations and strikes against wars and austerity. The longer term goal should be to prepare for a general strike to bring down this hated Tory government.

*RED LIBERATION* supporters put forward the following proposals to unite all progressive forces in the Labour Party.

\* *Mandatory reselection of all Labour MP’s and Councillors who support wars and austerity*

\* *A Campaign of Occupations to oppose all cuts in Social Services, Adult care, Children’s services and Disability services. Occupy Council Offices. Organise sit down strikes.*

\* *Occupy any care facility or voluntary service threatened with closure.*

\* *Demand that the MOMENTUM leadership listens to its local activists and accept into membership any person who advocates an anti-austerity and anti-war message.*

\* *Oppose all anti-union laws including the current Trade Union bill which aims to criminalise workers and is an attack on the basic rights of Workers. For a General Strike to bring down this hated Tory government.*

#### Footnotes

(1) Speech by John McDonnell, Chair of the LRC, at the Special Annual General Meeting of the LRC, 20/2/2016, Conway Hall London

(2) *RED LIBERATION* No 1, February 2016, p.1

(3) LRC STATEMENT AFTER CORBYN’S VICTORY, p.2

(4) LRC STATEMENT AFTER CORBYN’S VICTORY, p.3

## 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 book 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 Bolshevik-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 Bolshevik 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

## UK: Defeat Zionism in the Labour Party

Statement by RED LIBERATION, 30 March 2016

A number of Anti-Zionists have been expelled from the Labour party, mainly for their support for the Palestinian struggle. The Blairite, right wing elements in the Labour party are still in a position to wield effective power in the Party. Shamefully, the Labour party historically has a strong affinity with Zionism. The *Labour Friends of Israel* is a very powerful lobby for the Zionists in Britain and they have been active recently helping and assisting the Blairites to expel anyone in the Labour party who supports the Palestinian cause. Unsurprisingly, the Labour government after World War I immediately recognised the state of Israel in 1948.

RED LIBERATION (Socialists in the Labour Party) wholeheartedly condemns these expulsions and states that the Palestine Liberation struggle is a just cause. We support joint activities with other Socialists to highlight and show

the oppression of Palestine by imperialism and Israel – its agent in the Middle East.

Israel is an imperialist enclave in the Middle East supported by all the major Imperialist powers. RED LIBERATION are also opposed to all forms of Anti-Semitism, oppression and exploitation of all peoples carried out by imperialism and its agents.

RED LIBERATION puts forward the following demands.

\* We call on the National Executive Committee to reinstate all expelled persons

\* No to Bans and Proscriptions

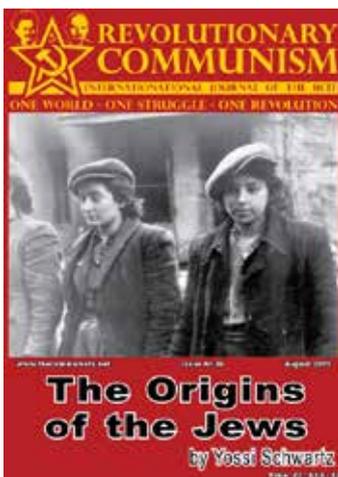
\* Oppose both Zionism and Imperialism in its exploitation of all peoples in Palestine

\* No to Anti-Semitism! For a Free and Red Palestine!

\* For the dismantling of the apartheid state of Israel! For a secular Arab-Jewish workers Republic in the whole of Palestine!



Contingent of the predecessor organization of the Austrian Section of the RCIT at a pro-Gaza demonstration on 16.1.2009 in Vienna



### NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

## The Origins of the Jews

By Yossi Schwartz, July 2015

Chapter I: What are the origins of the Jews?

Chapter II: The Rise of Anti-Semitism

Chapter III: Anti-Semitism and Zionism

Chapter IV: The Russian Revolution:

Bolshevism, the Bund, and Stalinism

# Platform of the British Supporters of the RCIT

## Workers and Oppressed, Unite in the Struggle for Socialist Revolution!

*Platform of the British Supporters of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)*

Britain is a capitalist country, i.e. a state where the small minority of the capitalist class exploits and oppresses the working class and the oppressed. Furthermore, Britain is an imperialist state which extracts huge super-profits from the semi-colonial countries (the so-called *Third World*) as well as domestically from ethnic/national minorities and migrants. RCIT supporters fight for a socialist revolution in Britain as part of a global struggle to overthrow capitalism. Contrary to the illusions of many reformists and centrists the ruling class will not allow a peaceful or parliamentary road towards socialism. Such a revolution must be led by a revolutionary party as part of a new workers' international (which will be the fifth in the history of the revolutionary workers movement). We, the British supporters of the RCIT, call for:

1. An end to all cuts in welfare and housing; no to austerity programs! For mass mobilizations, occupations, strikes including general strikes in defence of our rights! For a radical rise of the minimum wage and the unemployment benefits! Cancel the household debt! For a public works programme to improve infrastructure (energy supply, public transport, education, housing and child care, etc.) and to take action against climate change. Reinstatement of all public utilities that have been privatised by both Labour and Tory-led Governments!

2. Abolition of all indirect taxes such as VAT! Massive reduction in taxes on wages! Drastic increase in taxes on profits and speculation! Elimination of tax loopholes for businesses! Immediate recovery of outstanding tax debts of the companies! For the expropriation of the super rich!

3. The smashing of racism! Full equality for ethnic/national minorities and migrants! For equal wages and equal access to the job market! For the right to use the native language in education and in places of public administration! For all migrants' full citizenship rights and for all their cultural rights including the right of dress! Open borders for refugees and migrants! Organize the oppressed in the trade unions with full representation in all leadership levels! For revolutionary movements of the ethnic/national minorities as well as migrants!

4. Full equality for women, youth and sexual minorities! Equal wages for equal work! For the massive construction of free, well-equipped 24-hour child-care facilities! For a wide range supply of affordable and high-quality public restaurants and laundry facilities! Our goal is the socialisation of housework! For revolutionary movements of women as well as youth!

5. The smashing of fascist and racist gangs! For mass mobilizations and self-defence units against the BNP, EDL and similar threats to the oppressed and workers movement!

6. Repeal of anti-trade union laws! Legalise the right to strike! Down with the imperialist police state! No to ever increasing surveillance! Defend democratic rights! For the right of national

self-determination of the Scottish and Welsh people!

7. An end to the destruction of the environment by capitalism! Replace sources of energy harmful to the environment with renewable and clean sources of energy under the control of the working class and the trade unions!

8. Immediate withdrawal of all British troops from foreign countries! British army out of Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Northern Ireland, etc.! Close all British military bases on foreign soil! Support the resistance against the occupation! Smash NATO!

9. A fight against both British as well as European Imperialism! For abstention in Britain's EU-Referendum! For international unity and struggle of the workers and oppressed! For to the United Socialist States of Europe!

10. Solidarity with the worldwide struggle of the oppressed! Defend the blacks and Latinos against racist police in the US! Solidarity with the struggle of the workers and poor everywhere in Latin America! Victory to the Arab Revolution! Support the fight against the oppressive, pro-imperialist military dictatorship in Egypt! Victory to the revolution in Syria against Assad! Defeat IS/Daesh! Stop the imperialist attacks against and occupation of Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Central Africa, and Chechnya. Down with the Apartheid state of Israel! For a Free, Red Palestine!

11. The formation of action committees in the workplaces, neighbourhoods, schools, and universities to organize the struggle! For a rank and file movement in order to drive out the labour bureaucracy from the trade unions! For a militant trade union movement which is not based on the most privileged sectors of the working class but the ordinary masses, i.e., the lower strata of the working class.

12. *Critical* support for Labour in elections! The Labour Party is a bourgeois workers party, i.e., a party which is based on the workers movement but which has been dominated for more than a century by a bureaucratic caste acting as a willing servant of the ruling class. However, support for left wing candidates with relevant support amongst ordinary workers and youth against the party's leadership is permissible as a tactic to help progressive workers to overcome their illusions. But this is only possible if such tactics are combined with revolutionary propaganda explaining the bourgeois character of the whole bureaucracy.

13. Nationalisation of all banks and corporations under workers' control without paying compensation! For a workers' government based upon councils of action and for an armed workers militia! For a workers' republic in Britain! For a United Socialist States of Europe!

The RCIT has sections and supporters in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Occupied Palestine / Israel, Yemen, Tunisia, Brazil, Austria, Britain and US who fight on the basis of a joint international program – "*The Revolutionary Communist Manifesto*" – for the socialist world revolution. If you agree with this platform, join the RCIT in Britain!

## For new Paris Communes!

### On the 145th Anniversary of the Paris Commune: For the establishment of new revolutionary Workers governments!

by Johannes Wiener, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 18.3.2016

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 145 years ago in 1871 the reactionary government of Adolphe Thiers tried to steal the cannons which protected the working masses of Paris against the German army. This demonstrated to the masses defending Paris that the capitalist government was more concerned about armed masses than it was about Germans occupying their capital. The attempted theft of the artillery provoked a rebellion among the ordinary soldiers who delivered revolutionary justice to the two generals responsible – they were both shot. This developed showed Thiers' government that it no longer held power in Paris, which led it to a withdraw forces loyal to the government forces to Versailles. This opened the doors to the first workers' government in the history of the world. Today, the rise and fall of the Paris Commune remains an important episode in the ongoing struggle which our class is waging against the exploiters. Here, rather than attempt to write a detailed historical analysis of this episode, we will try to outline some important conclusions for us, today's revolutionary workers.

#### The revolution must be expanded!

From the outset, the revolutionary forces in Paris demanded that the revolution not only be focused on the capital city, but that it be expanded. Concretely, this meant that the revolutionary forces must attempt to conquer the stronghold of the counterrevolution: Versailles. However, vital as such a conquest was, it was not sufficient in itself to assure victory; for the revolution had to be spread to other French cities, as well as extending it into the countryside in order to win over the peasants. Thus, the work of the inexperienced 1st International in Paris provides us with important lessons of what could have been, but wasn't; and what must be in the future lest we too fail. In today's world this expansion of the revolution is no less critical, but it is also undeniably possible, as we witnessed in the Arab Revolution. Nowadays it is far easier to spread information and to travel between different locales than was the case at the time of the Paris Commune. But this ease and speed are a double-edged sword cutting both ways; for while they most definitely facilitate the expansion of the revolution and its conquest of minds and territory, the same can also be said of the counterrevolution. Therefore the main issue is which side will expand faster at the expense of the other. In turn, this demonstrates the necessity of suppressing the freedom of the counterrevolutionary forces during a heated civil war. On this Marx wrote:

*"While the Versailles government, as soon as it had recovered some spirit and strength, used the most violent means against the Commune; while it put down the free expression of opinion all over France, even to the forbidding of meetings of delegates from the large towns; while it subjected Versailles and the rest of*

*France to an espionage far surpassing that of the Second Empire; while it burned by its gendarme inquisitors all papers printed at Paris, and sifted all correspondence from and to Paris; while in the National Assembly the most timid attempts to put in a word for Paris were howled down in a manner unknown even to the Chambre introuvable of 1816; with the savage warfare of Versailles outside, and its attempts at corruption and conspiracy inside Paris – would the Commune not have shamefully betrayed its trust by affecting to keep all the decencies and appearances of liberalism as in a time of profound peace? Had the government of the Commune been akin to that of M. Thiers, there would have been no more occasion to suppress Party of Order papers at Paris than there was to suppress Communal papers at Versailles."* (1)

Today the "information" bureaus of the imperialist Great Powers and the capitalist governments react much faster and much more professionally and efficiently in comparison with those of their counterparts at the time of the Commune. In addition, today's military forces are much more agile in their deployment. All the Great Powers possess special military commands which can deploy all over the world in a matter of hours to fight or sabotage rebellions.

On the other hand, today our class is much more able to spread its ideas than the information posters which were glued to the walls of the working class districts of Paris. This information can even trigger mass protests, as was proved in the cases of video footage documenting the murder of our black brothers in the US when they were released and went viral. Undeniably, in today's world our class can learn much faster from the successes or failures of other sectors of the population.

The importance of expanding the revolution was demonstrated by the civil wars in Syria and Libya. In both wars most of the territorial conquests were accomplished in the initial period of the war. (In Libya, the collapse of the regime obviously opened a second phase of the war.) At the start of a civil war, the counterrevolution is disorganized; this gives revolutionaries the chance to expand the revolution rapidly, both by political and military means. This is also an important aspect of Leon Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution.

#### No to parliamentary maneuvering – for revolutionary action!

After Thiers' dogs fled from the masses of Paris to Versailles, the workers' Central Committee took power and quickly organized elections. Out of the 86 elected delegates, 31 had been Blanquists while another 17 were revolutionaries who were members of the 1<sup>st</sup> International of Marx and Engels. In addition, 13 delegates were part of the revolutionary National Guards. Thus, based on the election results, it was clear that the masses in Paris supported the revolution. But this democratic election cost the Com-

more important time; time it might have used to prepare the elimination of the counterrevolution. Simultaneously, Thiers and his hounds of reaction were organizing themselves in Versailles where they regrouped and formed a force that would hover over the heads of the Paris working class like the sword of Damocles. What was actually needed during this fragile and vulnerable stage of the revolution was not an election, but determined revolutionary action to eliminate the threat from Versailles. When the Commune ultimately attempted to attack Versailles at the beginning of April, it was already too late; the counterrevolution was already strong enough to withstand the Communards.

Certainly, we cannot equate the revolutionary Communards with the treacherous leadership of the reformist SYRIZA party in Greece. But the example of 2015 Greece also demonstrated very clearly that only bold revolutionary action can save the masses from defeat and hunger. Before SYRIZA openly betrayed the Greek workers and poor, their sole orientation was towards negotiations with the imperialist robbers of the European Union (not at all surprising, given the reformist nature of this party). What was – and still is – needed for our class brothers in Greece is not chit-chat with Schäuble and Merkel, but revolutionary action against them. In their place, true revolutionaries would not chit chat with the class enemy, but expropriate their banks and financial trusts, while arming the workers and poor!

### The place of the women is in the revolution!

Although the Commune suffered from various limitations regarding the equality of women (e.g., they were not allowed to vote in the elections), it also brought about tremendous gains for them. With the ongoing fight for the liberation of all humanity, naturally the situation of women was dramatically improved. They were allowed to work, “legitimate” and “illegitimate” children received equal rights. It was the first time in history that women received the same pay as men for performing the same work. Women played also an important role in the defense of Paris. Thousands of women died on the barricades with rifles in their hands. Many eye-witness accounts relate how the female Communards were even braver and bolder than their male comrades. Many women also pressured the men to fight more consistently against the reaction which, if victorious, would represent their re-enslavement. For example, Joséphine Marchias, a washer woman, seized a gun during the fighting on the barricades and yelled to the National Guards, “*You cowardly crew! Go and Fight! If I’m killed it will be because I’ve done some killing first!*” (2) Louise Michel, a revolutionary teacher and medical worker, was fighting and commanding the National Guard. Together with the last remaining fighters she participated in the hopeless and heroic resistance at the cemetery of Montmartre. She was captured and dared the capitalist court to sentence her to death: “*Since it seems that every heart that beats for freedom has no right to anything but a little slug of*

## New Book!

### Michael Pröbsting: Greece: A Modern Semi-Colony

**The Contradictory Development of Greek Capitalism, Its Failed Attempts to Become a Minor Imperialist Power, and Its Present Situation as an Advanced Semi-Colonial**

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – *GREECE: A MODERN SEMI-COLONY*. The book’s subtitle is: *The Contradictory Development of Greek Capitalism, Its Failed Attempts to Become a Minor Imperialist Power, and Its Present Situation as an Advanced Semi-Colonial Country with Some Specific Features*. It contains six chapters (144 pages) and includes 12 tables, 35 figures and 4 maps. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

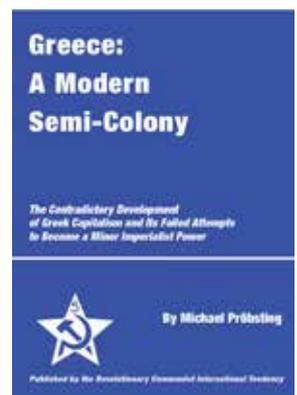
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which gives an overview of its content.

Greece is at the forefront both of the capitalist crisis in Europe as well as of the class struggle. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that what the Arab Revolution has been for the world in the past few years, Greece has been for Europe.

Subsequently, the question of the class character of Greece is of crucial importance both for the domestic as well as for the international workers movement: Is it an imperialist

state, a semi-colonial country or something else, and what are its specific features?

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Marxists’ theoretical conception of imperialist respectively semi-colonial states. In Chapter II we give a brief historical overview of the development of Greek capitalism. In Chapter III we deal with Greece’s failed attempt to become a minor imperialist power. In Chapter IV we outline the historic crisis of Greek capitalism from 2008 until today. In Chapter V we elaborate the most important programmatic conclusions and in the last Chapter we present a summary in the form of theses. The book contains 12 Tables, 35 Figures and 4 Maps. ■



lead, I demand my share. If you let me live, I shall never cease to cry for vengeance." (3) She was later jailed and deported.

The heroic resistance of the women of Paris is similar to the struggle of the women of Palestine against Israel's terrorist forces. Many young Palestinian women give up their lives like the female Communards in order to take along some reactionary soldiers with them. They know that the only road to liberation lies in the united struggle of all oppressed. The Commune and the independent revolutionary organization of *Women's Union for the Defense of Paris and Care of the Wounded* showed that women must fight from *within* the revolutionary movement, not only for the revolution but for their own liberation as well. This lesson is urgently needed by the women of India, who are currently fighting against the brutal violence to which they are exposed. The spirit of Louise Michel and the female martyrs of Paris will guide the way for the women of India and around the world!

### Destroy the counterrevolution or it will destroy us!

The Commune was unable to smash the counterrevolution; this led to the brutal white terror in Paris. The German army assisted their former enemies, the government of Thiers, in defeating Red Paris by providing material aid, blockading the Commune, and releasing tens of thousands of French prisoners of war (desperately needed by Thiers who tremendously lacked loyal forces). While the counterrevolution surrounded Paris, the Communards took hostages from the ranks of the bourgeoisie and the counterrevolutionary forces inside Paris; nevertheless, the reaction moved forward. At the end of May the forces of the counterrevolution began bombarding Red Paris. A furious and heroic resistance took place in the working class

districts where, in their thousands, the masses died on the barricades. Working men and women fought side by side for their future and their city, which now authentically belonged to them. Tens of thousands died in the battles or subsequently executed by Thiers' rabid dogs.

Nevertheless the Paris Commune was an important historical effort to challenge the rule of the capitalists. Lenin summarized its historical legacy. "*But despite all its mistakes the Commune was a superb example of the great proletarian movement of the nineteenth century. Marx set a high value on the historic significance of the Commune—if, during the treacherous attempt by the Versailles gang to seize the arms of the Paris proletariat, the workers had allowed themselves to be disarmed without a fight, the disastrous effect of the demoralisation, that this weakness would have caused in the proletarian movement, would have been far, far greater than the losses suffered by the working class in the battle to defend its arms. The sacrifices of the Commune, heavy as they were, are made up for by its significance for the general struggle of the proletariat: it stirred the socialist movement throughout Europe, it demonstrated the strength of civil war, it dispelled patriotic illusions, and destroyed the naïve belief in any efforts of the bourgeoisie for common national aims. The Commune taught the European proletariat to pose concretely the tasks of the socialist revolution.*" (4)

The massacre of the heroic strugglers of the Commune recalls to mind how the military command in Egypt saw to the killing off of the bloom of the revolution before and after their coup in 2013. The Egyptian revolutionaries were not able to defeat the counterrevolution and the pro-imperialist army command. Tragically what happened was very similar to the Paris Commune; the capitalist army shot down thousands of revolutionaries in the streets and smashed the improvised paving-stone-barricades.



Communards during the Workers' Uprising in Paris 1871

### Smash the capitalist state apparatus and replace it with workers' councils and militias!

For Marx and Lenin, the most important lesson for our class from the example of the Paris Commune is that revolutionary workers cannot take over the capitalist state apparatus, but must smash it. Most of the bourgeois state functionaries in Paris simply fled from the revolution in the early days of the Commune. The officials, together with a large part of the police, escaped to Versailles. Consequently, the revolutionaries who were elected by the masses had to reorganize the state. In doing so, they completely changed its character. Most of the "government" of the Commune was composed of workers, all officials were paid the wage of a working man – not more – and Red Paris abolished the standing army and police.

Lenin wrote about the task of building a new state:

*"The Commune, therefore, appears to have replaced the smashed state machine "only" by fuller democracy: abolition of the standing army; all officials to be elected and subject to recall. But as a matter of fact this "only" signifies a gigantic replacement of certain institutions by other institutions of a fundamentally different type. This is exactly a case of "quantity being transformed into quality": democracy, introduced as fully and consistently as is at all conceivable, is transformed from bourgeois into proletarian democracy; from the state (= a special force for the suppression of a particular class) into something which is no longer the state proper." (5)*

The Commune replaced the dictatorship of the capitalists with the rule of the working class (the Dictatorship of the Proletariat). But, contrary to the Stalinist bureaucratic states, it did so with the aim of granting far-reaching freedoms to the workers and poor, even though it was forced to wage a war of survival. It proved impossible for the Commune to reform the existing structures of the capitalist state for the benefit of the working masses; it had to simply rebuild them entirely. This lesson Marx clearly understood:

*"If you look up the last chapter of my Eighteenth Brumaire, you will find that I declare that the next attempt of the French Revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to smash it, and this is the precondition for every real people's revolution on the Continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting." (6)*

Unfortunately, this important lesson has been ignored by many false-flag "followers" of Marx. From the German Social Democrats, to the Spanish Anarchists who joined the bourgeois government, to the Stalinists who joined numerous capitalist and even imperialist governments, to the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT) in Brazil. It was the PT which saved capitalism by granting the workers and poor some limited reforms (but which, itself, is now forced to attack these very rights), and in doing so dug its own grave. The capitalist state apparatus, which the PT refused to overthrow, is now threatening it with a coup d'état.

### The need to build a revolutionary party!

The central weakness of the Paris Commune can be summed up by the lack of an experienced, steeled revolutionary Party. The 1<sup>st</sup> International was, at the time,

more a conglomerate of revolutionaries and various petty-bourgeois forces who tried to build workers' parties. Their inexperience was not at all the fault of the heroic revolutionaries and the thousands of martyrs of the Commune. They were products of their time and – in contrast to us today – did not have the knowledge of more than 150 years of working class struggle. Naturally, they could not have known about what the future would see: the Russian Revolution, the Spanish Civil War, and other important examples of revolutionary movements. But, during the days of the Paris Commune, it was obvious what was missing was a central organization with dedicated fighters and a sharp and clear program; this is what led to their defeat. Only such a centralized party could have sent agitators and organizers to the peasants and the enemy forces to win over parts of them for the revolution. Only such a party could bring the desperately needed discipline to the heroic masses of Paris. This was the party Marx and Engels were trying to build and many heroic Paris workers such as Emile Duval, a founding worker member of the 1<sup>st</sup> International and martyr of the revolution, contributed to. And this is the party we, the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT), are also dedicated to build!

We, as revolutionary workers living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, have to learn from the weaknesses and strengths of the Paris Commune. Capitalism and imperialism leave us no option but to fight for a revolution throughout the world. It is our task to fight for the establishment of new Paris Communes. Even if we are defeated in the battle, the very battle would send forth a tremendous signal to millions of oppressed people about the way forward. We have to make sure that the work and the struggle of the martyrs of Paris is fulfilled by the future Communes of Gaza, Buenos Aires, Beijing, Delhi and Aleppo!

*The Commune of Paris lives on wherever workers fight and revolutionaries die so that we of our class may all ultimately succeed!*

#### Footnotes:

- (1) Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*, 1871
- (2) John Merriman, *Massacre, The Life and Death of the Paris Commune of 1871*, 2014
- (3) Edith Thomas, *The Women Incendiaries: The Inspiring Story of the Women of the Paris Commune*, 2007
- (4) V.I.Lenin, *Lessons of the Commune*, 1908, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1908/mar/23.htm>
- (5) V.I.Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 1917, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/staterev/ch03.htm#s2>
- (6) Karl Marx, *Letters of Marx to Kugelmann*, 1871



## RCIT: Summary of our main differences with the UIT-CI

By Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT), October 2015

**B**elow we publish a summary of the main differences between the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) and the Morenoite *Unidad Internacional de los Trabajadores - Cuarta Internacional* (UIT-CI).

The UIT-CI is a current which stands in the tradition of Nahuel Moreno, one of the key leaders of post-WWII Trotskyism in Latin America. This becomes obvious from the fact that the UIT-CI runs the website <http://www.nahuelmoreno.org/> which republishes many documents and books of Moreno.

In our opinion, the tradition of Moreno is – irrespective of the heroic and honest activism of many of militants – an opportunist and centrist tradition and not a tradition of revolutionary Marxism and Bolshevism. Moreno's method is characterized by semi-Menshevism which separates the strategic tasks of the democratic revolution from the proletarian dictatorship. Moreno openly argued for the need to revise Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution. (1) The RCIT shares the idea of the importance of the struggle for democratic demands. However, in opposite to Morenoism, we insist that these democratic demands in their totality can only be realized if the working class takes power and expropriates the bourgeoisie.

From this follows that the Morenoite tradition proclaims as a strategic task the creation of non-proletarian ("classless") states. (See e.g. the slogan of a "united Palestine, secular, democratic and non-racist"). This is the same error as the Stalinists did in the 1920s and early 1930s when they repeated the old Bolshevik formula of the "democratic dic-

tatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry".

Related to this, the RCIT rejects the revisionist conception of Moreno that the Constituent Assembly would be a privileged road to install a workers government and socialism "in almost all countries of the world." (2) In fact, Morenoism adapts to the centrist conception of a peaceful road to socialism. Trotskyists should raise the slogan for a Revolutionary Constituent Assembly under conditions of an authoritarian bourgeois regime or where the popular masses retain massive illusions in bourgeois democracy. However revolutionaries must not spread the illusion that socialism could be built via a Constituent Assembly. In contrast, they have to explain that a violent revolution and the smashing of the bourgeois state apparatus are the pre-conditions for a successful socialist revolution.

Related to this, the Morenoite tradition plays down the crucial importance of a revolutionary party in order to have a successful socialist revolution. Moreno claimed that socialist revolutions would also be possible without a revolutionary party. (3) As a matter of fact, only under the leadership of a revolutionary party can a revolution become socialist. Without such a party it will either be crushed by the bourgeoisie or it will become a political and/or social transformation expropriated by the "democratic" bourgeoisie or the Stalinist bureaucrats. As a result, Morenoism traditionally adapts opportunistically to various non-revolutionary forces (e.g. Peronism, Castroism).

As a consequence of this methodological failure, Morenoism believes that all mass movements automatically will

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

**T**he 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.

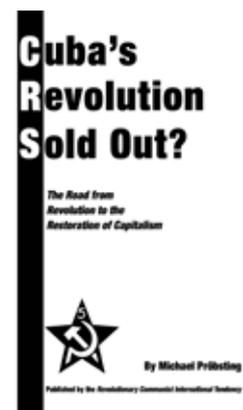
*Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* describes in detail how a number of relatively recent political, economic, and social measures were

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.

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strive into a revolutionary direction. Hence the UIT-CI uncritically supported the reactionary Euro-Maidan movement in the Ukraine and its overthrow in late February 2014 despite its reactionary goals (accession of the Ukraine to the imperialist EU) and its reactionary leadership (right-wing and fascist parties). (4) In contrast, the RCIT supported neither the Euro-Maidan movement nor the Yanukovich regime. We initially supported the spontaneous mass uprising in the Donbass region until the “People’s Republic” became a proxy of Russian imperialism in summer 2014.

Likewise, the UIT-CI views the reactionary mass protests in Brazil as “progressive” despite the fact that they call for a coup d’état against the popular front government of Dilma Rousseff and that they are organized by the right-wing and fascist opposition. (5) In contrast, the RCIT opposes these reactionary demonstrations and supports the working class and trade union mobilizations which mobilize against a coup d’état while at the same time attack the government for its austerity policy.

For the same reason, Morenoism failed to see that because of the lack of a revolutionary leadership the political revolutions against the Stalinist bureaucracy in 1989-91 were defeated and ended in a social counter-revolution.

The RCIT states, that revolutionaries always have to undertake a concrete analysis of a mass movement in order to judge if it fights objectively for progressive or reactionary goals and if it has a spontaneous character or if is controlled by reactionary forces.

Finally, the UIT-CI fails to understand the character of the present historic period since 2008/09 as one of increasing inter-imperialist rivalry. They don’t recognize – as many other centrists – that Russia and China have become emerging imperialist powers. (6)

In summary, we call the militants of the UIT-CI to break with the centrist programmatic method of Morenoism. Fight together with the RCIT for an authentic Trotskyist program and creation of a new revolutionary workers’ international!

#### Footnotes

(1) “It seems that the fact of capitalist counterrevolution has restated the need that we have to have a democratic revolution. And ignoring that what arises in the developed countries where there are a counter-revolutionary regimes is also a democratic revolution, it’s maximalism; it’s as serious as ignoring the bourgeois-democratic revolution in

backward countries. This is very important. I don’t know whether it’s correct or not. If correct, we need to change the entire formulation of the Theses of permanent revolution. It seems to me that it’s correct and that Trotsky was aiming there. If correct, it changes our entire strategy in regard to the opportunist parties, and in good measure in regard to the bourgeois parties that oppose the counterrevolutionary regime. As a step towards the socialist revolution, we’re in favour of the arrival of a bourgeois regime completely different [from the counterrevolutionary regime]. Just as we were in favour of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and we said it was different from the other, [the socialist revolution], that had to be done, the Tsar had to be overthrown, which was a specific bourgeois democratic task, we need to discuss whether there is now a specific bourgeois democratic task, which is to overthrow the counterrevolutionary regime so it can come, at least a bourgeois regime.” (Nahuel Moreno: Party Cadres’ School: Argentina 1984; Ediciones El Socialista, Buenos Aires, 2015, pp. 47-48. See also e.g. Nahuel Moreno: Revolutions of the XX Century, Buenos Aires, 1986, Ediciones El Socialista, Buenos Aires, 2014)

(2) Nahuel Moreno: The Transitional Program Today (1980); in English: Ediciones El Socialista, Buenos Aires, 2014, p. 72

(3) “We believe that in the last 40 years there have been different phenomena to those that Trotsky witnessed, and they force us to start developing between us all – or some of you will in a few years – a new formulation, a new way of writing the theory of permanent revolution, taking into account all these problems. We have to state that it isn’t mandatory for the working class and for revolutionary Marxist party with mass influence to lead the process of democratic revolution to socialist revolution. It’s not required to be so. On the contrary: there have been, and it isn’t ruled out there will be, democratic revolutions that in the economic field become socialists. This is to say, revolutions expropriating the bourgeoisie without having as essential axis the working class – or having it as important participant – and not having revolutionary Marxist and revolutionary workers’ parties at their head, but petty-bourgeois parties.” (Nahuel Moreno: Party Cadres’ School: Argentina 1984; Ediciones El Socialista, Buenos Aires, 2015, p. 15)

(4) See e.g. UIT-CI: The Social and Political drama of Ukraine, in: International Correspondence No. 34 (May-August 2014), pp. 15-17; Miguel Lamas: Ukraine: a revolutionary triumph of the masses, UIT-CI, 4/3/2014, <http://uit-ci.org/index.php/news-a-documents/802-ukraine-a-revolutionary-triumph-of-the-masses>

(5) See <http://unidospralutar.blogspot.com.br/2015/09/o-ato-do-ultimo-dia-18-foi-um-passo.html>

(6) The RCIT has published numerous documents and booklets on Russia and China as emerging imperialist powers. They can be read on our website at <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>. A summary of our analysis can be read here <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-china-and-russia/>

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## RCIT: Summary of our main differences with the FLTI

By Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT), October 2015

**B**elow we publish a summary of the main differences between the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) and the *Colectivo por la Refundación de la IV Internacional - Fracción Leninista Trotskista Internacional* (FLTI).

We certainly appreciate various initiatives of the FLTI comrades, such as sending some of their members to Libya and Syria. We are also in agreement with them in our unconditional solidarity with the workers' and peasant uprisings in the Arab world since December 2010, as well as the struggle against Zionism.

However, the main methodological difference between them and the RCIT is that their analyses and their politics are completely devoid of dialectical understanding. As a result, their analyses are extremely mechanistic and ignore the contradictions between the different imperialist, bourgeois and reformist forces. Consequently their politics are ultra-leftist in the tradition of Bordiga and are thus opposed to Trotskyism. The entire conception of the united front tactic – as was developed by Lenin and the early Communist International and later extended by Trotsky – is alien to the FLTI.

The FLTI's ignorance of the laws of dialectics in politics and economy leads them to ignore the imperialist nature of the emerging great powers, China and Russia. They denounce those who recognize Chinese and Russian imperialism as "*capitulating to Obama*." They claim that these countries are just semi-colonies of US imperialism, and that Putin and Xi are just lackeys of Washington. (1) In fact, they replace scientific Marxism with idealistic conspiracy theories.

Such a mechanistic analysis blinds the FLTI to the fact that Chinese monopolies play a major role in the world economy. If China were only a semi-colony and not a major imperialist economy, how could the recent slump at the stock market in Shanghai provoke a crisis at the Western stock markets?! How could Chinese monopolies have become major foreign investors in Latin America? How

could China's military be able to stand up to Japanese imperialism?

Similarly, the FLTI is incapable of explaining how Russian imperialism could have stood up to the Western Great Powers in Syria in September 2013, in the Ukraine since 2014, and how they can lead a major military intervention in Syria today. (2)

Due to its mechanistic approach, the FLTI ultimately even fails to understand the nature of the present historic period (since 2008/09) as one of increasing inter-imperialist rivalry.

Yet another example of the FLTI's ultra-leftist mechanism is their characterization of Israel as "*fascist*." This is a similar to the Turkish Maoist-Stalinists who for several decades have denounced the Turkish state as "*fascist*." As Trotskyists, the RCIT rejects such nonsensical denunciations of all authoritarian, reactionary regimes as "*fascist*." Fascism is a scientific conception developed by Trotsky. It characterizes a state based on a reactionary mass movement which smashes all forms of democracy and all organizations of the workers' movement. Israel is a reactionary, racist Apartheid state – a settler-state which has become a small imperialist power, existing as it does on the basis of the expulsion and national oppression of the Palestinian people. It has, however, not annihilated all democratic rights and all workers' organizations, as the existence of many Palestinian and progressive Jewish organizations demonstrate.

As an ex-Morenoite tendency, the FLTI also continues to raise the slogan of a "*united Palestine, secular, democratic and non-racist*," i.e., it proclaims as a strategic task the creation of non-proletarian ("class-less") states. True, they do pose this using a more left-wing version than classic Morenoism, as they call for "*a secular, democratic and non-racist Palestinian state of the workers and poor farmers government defended by the self-organised and armed Palestinian masses!*" However, even this version fails to break with Stalinist centrism which called, in China, India and many other countries in the 1920s, for the "*democratic dictatorship of the*

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*proletariat and the peasantry*".

In contrast, the RCIT's section in Occupied Palestine / Israel fights for the smashing of the Zionist state and for a transitional program with the crowning slogan: "For a Democratic, Palestinian, Multinational and Socialist Workers and Fallahin Republic from the River to the Sea." Its agitational short version is a "Free, Red Palestine!" (3)

The FLTI's ultra-left, sectarian method leads it to limiting itself to denunciations of imperialism, bourgeoisie, reformism and centrism as well as calls for militant actions of the working class and oppressed. While these are of course necessary for revolutionary propaganda, the FLTI statements completely lack a dialectical analysis of the contradictions in mass organizations of the working class and the oppressed. This is not accidental but actually necessary for the FLTI, so that it can justify why it completely relinquishes any calls for united fronts or any demands to reformist leaderships.

We see this in Syria where the FLTI usually denounces all rebel groups but doesn't place any demands on them in order to build a united front of struggle against the Assad regime and the imperialists.

The FLTI's recent statements on Greece are yet another demonstration for this. In recent years we have seen a shift of working class consciousness to the left, which was so dramatically, manifested itself in the electoral rise of SYRIZA. Naturally, given the absence of a strong revolutionary party, the masses still lack a revolutionary consciousness. But it would be stupid and criminal to ignore the important changes which have taken place since 2008 or 2010. However, the FLTI has no political characterization of reformist forces like SYRIZA. For them it is *only* a bureaucratic apparatus which serves the imperialist bourgeoisie and which betrays the masses; this is also how they see the Stalinist KKE. What the FLTI ignores is that these parties can *only* betray the working class and serve the bourgeoisie precisely *because* they have organic links to the masses and the latter still trust these leaderships in one way or another. This is why the RCIT characterizes parties like SYRIZA or the KKE as *bourgeois workers parties* (as Lenin characterized the British Labour Party and Trotsky later did the same with other reformist parties). This means that these are parties which are dominated by a petty-bourgeois bureaucracies serving the capitalists, support for which is based on sectors of the workers' movement.

For this reason, we consider it urgent to combine sharp denunciations of these parties with the tactic of the united front. Only if the masses gain experience with these leaderships, and revolutionaries help them cultivate their self-organization, only then can the masses overcome their illusions in reformism (as Lenin already elaborated in his book on infantile communism). This is why we called for critical support for SYRIZA in January 2015 and for LAE (which split from SYRIZA) in September of this year. Such a tactic has to be combined with calls for mass actions like strikes, general strikes, etc., and the formation of action committees. (4)

Unfortunately, the FLTI fails to make any demands on the present (reformist) leaderships of the working class. Worse, they are actually incapable of relating to mass movements like the extremely important OXI movement in Greece in July 2015. Instead, the FLTI simply denounces such movements as a "trap." That such a "trap" can be

a very important political experience for the masses and that revolutionaries must pedagogically assist them in understanding this experience – all this is beyond the political horizon of ultra left-sects like the FLTI.

In summary, we call upon the militants of the FLTI to break with their ultra-left programmatic method. We comrades invite them to fight together with the RCIT for an authentic Trotskyist program and the creation of a new revolutionary workers' international!

#### Footnotes

(1) See e.g. FLTI Majority Document on China as semi-colony of imperialism, 20.2.2010, <http://redrave.blogspot.com/2010/02/flti-majoritydocument-on-china-as-semi.html>

(2) The RCIT has published numerous documents and booklets on Russia and China as emerging imperialist powers. They can be read on our website at <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>. A summary of our analysis can be read here <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-china-and-russia/>

(3) A fuller elaboration of the RCIT's analysis and program in Occupied Palestine can be read here:

Summary of the Program of the International Socialist League, February 2014, <http://www.the-isleague.com/our-platform/>

Yossi Schwartz: Israel's War of 1948 and the Degeneration of the Fourth International, in: Revolutionary Communism, Special Issue on Palestine, No. 10, June 2013, [www.thecommunists.net/theory/israel-s-war-of-1948-1](http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/israel-s-war-of-1948-1)

Yossi Schwartz: Israel's Six-Day War of 1967. On the Character of the War, the Marxist Analysis and the Position of the Israeli Left, in: Revolutionary Communism No. 12, July/August 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/israel-s-war-of-1967/>

Michael Pröbsting: On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine, in: Revolutionary Communism, Special Issue on Palestine, No. 10, June 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/permanent-revolution-in-palestine>

(4) See on this numerous RCIT statements on Greece which can be read on our website at <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/articles-on-greece/>



## Tina Modotti

### TINA MODOTTI – A LIFE BY PINO CACUCCI TRANSLATED BY PATRICIA J DUNCAN ST MARTINS PRESS NEW YORK

*Review by Laurence Humphries, May 27, 2015*

**T**ina Modotti a Revolutionary Photographer and Stalinist Agent was born in Udine Italy 1896. Pino Cacucci an Italian journalist has written a very useful account of Modotti's life concentrating on her political activities as well as her photographic abilities. The Modotti family left Italy and eventually emigrated to America settling in San Francisco where Tina was able to work in the Early Silent Cinema as an actress and a model. While in San Francisco she met and married a fellow actor and Poet Robaux de Richey.

While in the USA she met and became lovers with Edward Weston the great American Photographer. It was from him that she learnt her craft and allowed Weston to take nude photographs of her. She travelled to Mexico City with Weston while still married. Weston was also married with a son.

Modotti while in Mexico City learnt her craft and observing poverty and the ordinary people she became very politicised. In the late twenties the Mexican Communist Party had been turned into a tool of Stalinism. "Modotti joined the Mexican Communist Party in 1928". [1]. Mexico City was full of artists and personalities who would influence her. It was in Mexico City that she learnt her craft of Photography and started taking pictures of poorer people and the Peasants in the countryside. Cacucci shows how



*Tina Modotti in 1921*

eventually Modotti would meet some one who would change her life Vidali Vittorio (Carlos Contreras) the major Soviet Agent in Mexico and the planner who orchestrated the assassination of Leon Trotsky in 1940. "In 1927 Modotti met the a man who would change her life (Vittorio Vidali) An Agent of the Bolshevik GPU". [2].

De Richey by this time put up with Tina's affairs and he himself a weak man died in Mexico City while composing poems for Modotti.

Modotti became more and more involved in the work of Stalin's Communist Party in Mexico and under Vidali's tutelage starting working for the GPU translating and doing secretarial work. She also had affairs with Xavier Guerrero a leading member of the Mexican Communist Party but in 1928 she would meet a young Cuban Communist Julia Antonio Melba who she would fall in love with. Cacucci details how deep this love was with Melba. "Modotti fell deeply in love with Melba and she realised that she had never felt these intense emotions. He loved her with frenetic urgent passion". [3]. Both Melba and Modotti worked together in the Hands off Nicaragua committee. "Together with Modotti he managed the hands off Nicaragua Committee the organisation supporting Augusto Cesare Sandino's fight against Us Occupation". [4].

Mella was not your ordinary Stalinist like some in the Mexico Communist Party, as a young militant from Cuba Cacucci shows that he had revolutionary credentials "Mella was impressed by Lenin and fervently pored over the few Writings that he had managed to obtain, but he was also fascinated with the commander of the Red Army who had guided his men into battle in an armoured Train: Lev Davidovitch Bronstein better known as Trotsky". [5]. "In 1925 he along with Carlos Palino organised the constituted congress of the Cuban Communist Party". [6].

By now Modotti had finished her affair with Edward Weston and was living with Mella. Mella shared some of Andres Nin's criticisms of Stalin and adopted a leftist position although he never openly sided with Trotsky and the Left Opposition. "At the 4th international Congress of the Syndicalist Organisation Mella met Spanish Communist Andres Nin who explained to him the theory of Left Opposition". [7].

Nin would be murdered by the GPU in Spain. Vidali was the executioner together with a number of other GPU assassins. In 1929 Modotti and Mella were out walking together when Melba was gunned down by unknown assassins, Modotti was devastated and the Mexican Police for a time accused Modotti of the murder and was arrested for a few days. That was the end of Modotti's revolutionary zeal from now on she would be a loyal Party Hack following every twist and turn of Stalin's GPU.

"Mella's death marked the point of no return for Modotti. the Party is always right was the anaesthetic that enabled her to overcome her uneasiness The answer to all uncer-

ainties". [7].

She still wrote to Weston and told him that in 1930 she was deported from Mexico city. She comments in a letter to him "I suppose by now you know what has happened to me .That I have been in Jail for 13 days and then expelled".[8].

Cacucci tells the state of Modotti at this time."Modotti was 34 years old had lost all contact with the photographic world , relying on the support of the Communist International was now essential. The price would be the rejection of any doubts or uncertainties any distinction between comrades who erred and Traitors". [9].

Modotti and Vidali returned to Moscow and Caccuci shows how indifferent Modotti is to the situation and her role as a Loyal Stalinist agent. " Modotti continued to participate in all executive committee meetings. She refused to get involved in the controversies about Trotskyism and Bukharism. she was asked if she was in complete agreement with the Party line. She responded with a simple Yes".[10].

This was the period of the purges in Moscow , the Trials , the Killings of anyone who disagreed with Stalin and his Henchmen. Modotti just followed and carried out orders.

Stalin was extremely worried about the situation in Spain. The revolutionary upheavals by Anarchists and Trotskyists meant that Stalin's influence was waning on the world stage. He was determined to eliminate anyone who stood in his way .That meant eliminating all opposition including Trotskyists and anarchists.

Modotti and Vidali travelled to Spain to do work for the GPU. Another commentator has spoken of Modotti's role in Spain." Blinded by tyrannical self-discipline desperation to win the war and belief in the value of correct Ideology the woman who braved hails of Gunfire to save children's lives sacrificed Alberto Beschouhet for what she believed to be the good cause". [11].

Although Modotti never physically murdered anyone

there is evidence that she colluded with Vidali to trap and murder honest Revolutionary fighters who in the end were murdered because they did not carry out the wishes of Commissar Stalin.

Her relationship with Vidali deteriorated and she returned to Mexico City after pleas to be let back in people who were friendly to the Mexican Government were able to arrange for Modotti to live out her Life in Mexico. Modotti was in Mexico City when Leon Trotsky was murdered by a Stalinist Agent Mercader. There is no evidence to link Modotti with the crime. In conversation with Jose Hernadenez she said referring to Vidali in connection with Trotsky's murder "He is just a murderer and he dragged me into a monstrous crime .I hate him with all my heart and nevertheless I am forced to follow him until the end". [12].

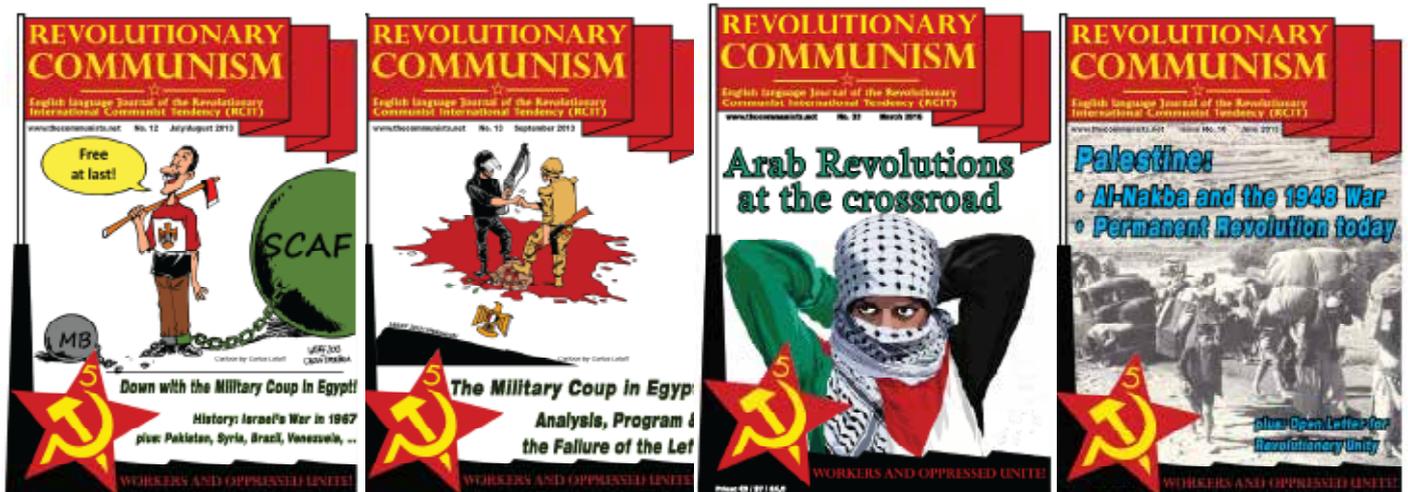
Modotti returned to her Photography and she died in strange circumstances in Mexico City in 1942.

Cacucci has written a very useful Biography which portrays Modotti both as a Photographer but as a GPU agent who in the end deserted her ideals of Revolutionary fervour when she had joined the Communist Party in 1927.

FOOTNOTES.

- 1) CACUCCI. P. TINA MODOTTI A LIFE. PG.51.
- 2) DITTO PG 5.
- 3) DITTO PG.64
- 4) DITTO .PG.66
- 5) DITTO. PG.68.
- 6) DITTO. PG. 76.
- 7) DITTO. PG. 102.
- 8) DITTO. PG.104.
- 9) DITTO. PG.120.
- 10) DITTO. PG.122.
- 11) SHADOW FIRE SNOW, THE LIFE OF TINA MODOTTI PATRICIA ALBERS. PG. 304.
- 12) TINA MODOTTI-A LIFE-PINO CACUCCI.PG. 204.

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## Gustave Courbet (1819-1877)

### Realist Painter Communard Revolutionary and the Revolutions of 1848

By Laurence Humphries, March 4, 2015

**G**ustave Courbet, the founder of Realism lived and painted during the great revolutionary upheavals in 1848 in Europe. Born in the small rural village of Ornans, Courbet would come to represent the great realist tradition of drawing and representing what he saw. Later he would join the French Commune and be instrumental in showing and describing revolutionary art in France. His scope was wider and more important than the Impressionism of Degas, Monet and others.

During his early period Courbet concentrated on Self portraits as a means to establish the status of the artist. "Courbet's self portraits reveal a Romantic painterliness combined with a compositional informality or even awkwardness". [1].

As many commentators have remarked Courbet sought to represent the emerging world about him. "Amid the social transformations of the mid 19th century Courbet produced the most powerful artistic expression of the emerging modern world. Single mindedly committed to his own experiences and thus disdainful of outworn traditions, the ambitious painter from rural Ornans challenged Parisien authority with raw voice of honesty and authenticity". [2].

This new art of realism coincided with the industrial and political conflicts emerging in French society that Karl Marx was to write about in his book 'The civil war in France' and 'the 18th Brumaire'. "Thus the argument made below will be that the innovative technique of Gustave Courbet -more than other artist of the day propelled political change by challenging the existing institutional changes between art and public. Like Jacques Louis David before him Courbet employed a technique alien to the established traditions and audiences for art". [3].

In 1851 Courbet produced for the Salon three great pictures which would catapult Courbet into the limelight of

Revolutionary art. "In the salon of 1851 he showed three huge pictures, the Stonebreakers, the Burial at Ornans and the Peasants of Flagey returning from the fair. He configured out of privacy out of the obscurity of a small town funeral an imagery which was public and political but images which undermined the Bourgeoise sense of what art was. If any artist came close to creating the conditions for Revolutionary art it was Courbet in 1851". [4].

The burial at Ornans shows a cross section of class society by splitting the picture with the dog in the centre. "The burial at Ornans, it is the best image of the 1848 Revolution, the most complex picture of the Bourgeoise. no wonder when artists looked back to 1848 they could not escape from its spell". [5].

Courbet himself described his realism and how it related completely to his art. "I have studied the art of the ancients and moderns, without any dogmatic or preconceived ideas, all I have tried to do is to derive from complete knowledge of tradition a reasoned sense of my own independence and individuality to record the manners, ideas and aspects of an age as I saw them". [6].

Courbet followed these great paintings with further allegories. The Meeting Mr Courbet I presume and the Painters studio which is extremely allegorical. "Their status as artisans alluded to Courbet's self image as worker artist or master painter". [7].

Courbet's Painters studio is a clear cross section of class Society. These were huge canvasses and what upset the bourgeoisie so much is that they tried to represent History paints but history of the Poor and not of Rich grand aristocrats. "In 1855 he composed the 'The Painters studio a real allegory of seven years of my artistic life-Courbet's painting seems to be a coded representation, possibly Fourerist possibly influenced by his anarchist friend the Philosopher Proudhon which depicts two sides of society". [8].



Gustave Courbet, *Self-portrait (The Desperate Man)*, c. 1843-45

Class differences are reflected in all of Courbet's work "The salient features of society Courbet wished to represent now included exacerbated economic differences between rich and poor and a heightened sense of class distinction". [9].

Courbet many times asserted his sympathies lay with the working class and the rural poor. "Courbet turned to politics to the simple statement in his 1850 letter to Wey that my sympathies are with the people, I must speak to it directly draw my knowledge from it live by it". [10].

Tim Clark in his Book on Courbet Image of the people shows how popular art and imagery is interwoven into the Burial at Ornans. "In other words the Burial at Ornans is carefully and subtly constructed. the repetitive forms of popular art are imitated." [11].

Referring to the Peasants of Flagey returning from the fair Clark asserts and demonstrates the class differences and how they are accentuated. "The peasant of Flagey returning from the fair in many ways it is a pendant to the rural proletariat of the stonebreakers and the Bourgeoise of the Burial". [12].

In the meeting Courbet is treating everyone on an equal basis. "The greatness of the meeting is that it gives form to those hopes and their miseries the affection and the absurdity of their relationship. Courbet's picture is close to a parody of the whole iconography in it artists, patron and servant stand apart and equal". [13].

Popular art which had been used in woodcuts and amongst artisans is reflected in Courbet's art. "In embracing popular art and culture-its audience its subjects Courbet was explicitly rejecting the Hierarchism and personality cult fostered by the regime of President and then Emperor Louis Napoleon". [14].

Camille Pissaro an artist friend of both Courbet and Cezanne painted a picture of Cezanne with a caricature of Courbet in the Background. Clark believes that this is a significant picture for the whole of French Art. "The portrait stands at the end of an epoch in French art the time when political and popular art seemed feasible. For a moment in the years around 1848 it seemed as if the art of the ruling classes was threatened with collapse". [15].

Courbet from the 1860's onwards continued to travel and took pictures mainly landscapes and also was involved in painting provocative pictures of nudes as well as paint-

ings of his family.

In the 1870's political unrest led to the Paris Commune of 1871, Like David before him Courbet became an active participant in the Commune. At the Paris Commune of March 1871 Courbet said "Today when democracy must direct everything it would be illogical for art which heads the World to lag behind in the Revolution that is taking place in France at this moment". [16].

The Commune was defeated and Troops occupied the area where the commune had directed operations. Courbet who with others had advocated the smashing of the Vendome column which represented Imperial France. "Like many others who had not fled Paris Courbet was arrested on the 17th June". [17]. Courbet eventually left France after his imprisonment and crossed the border into Switzerland. As one of his Biographers noted "He is obviously the father of various brands of realism that have his own exemplify Lucien Freud "and the Bridegroom". [18].

Courbet died in 1877. He was a Revolutionary painter who like Jacques Louis David changed the face of French Art. A participant in the Paris Commune he put his art into practice unlike many of the Impressionists who literally followed a petit bourgeoisie middle class view of Art, only Courbet was able to truly represent the image of the people.

#### NOTES

- 1) 19TH CENTURY ART A CRITICAL HISTORY PG 228
- 2) COURBET JAMES RUBIN PG 4
- 3) 19TH CENTURY ART A CRITICAL HISTORY PG 227
- 4) THE ABSOLUTE BOURGEOIS ARTISTS AND POLITICS IN FRANCE 1848-1851 PG 180
- 5) DITTO PG 181
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- 7) COURBET JAMES RUBIN PG 130
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- 9) DITTO PG 74
- 10) IMAGE OF THE PEOPLE TIM CLARK PG 113
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- 13) DITTO PG 157
- 14) 19TH CENTURY ART A CRITICAL HISTORY PG 233
- 15) IMAGE OF THE PEOPLE PG 160
- 16) COURBET JAMES RUBIN PG 276
- 17) DITTO PG 280
- 18) DITTO PG 326

# China's transformation into an imperialist power

**A study of the economic, political and military aspects  
of China as a Great Power**

*By Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)*

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# 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 21<sup>st</sup> century.

For new, revolutionary workers' parties in all countries!  
For a 5<sup>th</sup> 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!*



