



LIBERATION

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WORKERS AND OPPRESSED, UNITE!

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Defeat the new Torie-Attacks on workers!

For an indefinite general strike to bring down the Cameron government! For a new revolutionary leadership in the trade unions based upon the most oppressed and exploited!

Statement by the RCIT-Britain, 13 June 2016

The new political situation in Britain is characterised by the introduction of two pieces of legislation which are now law. The Trade Union reform bill and the Housing and planning bill are direct attacks on the working class and the poor. This shows that the crisis of world imperialism is also felt in one of the oldest capitalist nations Britain. The RCIT has shown in its world perspectives document the crisis of World Imperialism¹ and the onset of a World recession affecting the majority of the Imperialist nations.

In Britain the bourgeoisie faced with this world crisis wants to impoverish and attack the organisations of the Working class. The Trade union reform bill attempts to restrict the right of workers to strike and resist against capitalist Employers to protect themselves against rising inflation, poverty and homelessness. The TUC at its last Congress in 2015 set out the dangers of the new Trade Union Reform bill for workers, undermining strikes and making it easier for employers to resort to the capitalist courts to challenge strike ballots.

"The government's proposals set out to:

** undermine the right to strike by letting employers use agency workers as cover for striking workers * introduce unreasonable hurdles such as fines if workers set up a Facebook account without*

employer claim damages against a union if a picket supervisor forgets to wear their armband

** introduce undemocratic strike ballot thresholds." ²*

The TUC leadership which is growing closer and closer to the state refused to organise any effective action to prevent this bill becoming Law. In fact they engaged in diversionary actions such as a march on the Tory Party Conference in Manchester which was ring fenced by police in riot gear and marchers were prevented from going anywhere near the Tory party Conference. For this they had the support of the right wing Labour controlled city Council. The TUC leadership together with the rest of the labour bureaucracy has proved to be impotent in front of this concerted attack by the state against workers and their families. This once again shows the bankrupt and reformist leadership in Britain which is moving closer and closer to the capitalist state. Leon Trotsky's warning about the nature of the reformist leadership in Britain in 1938 is truer than ever today. *"The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat." ³*

The so called lefts on the TUC General council have once again been exposed as little more than left talkers. No campaign of direct action or strikes has been called. All that has happened has been a Lobby of Parliament, although



Defeat the Bosses' attack via militant workers' action, prepare for a indefinite general strike!

to stop the passage of the Bill. As The Socialist party, a leading centrist group in Britain stated. *"Disgracefully, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) has not organised a single national demonstration against the bill. It's one lobby of Parliament last November saw hundreds of union members refused access to the venue in Westminster because the TUC had only booked half the seats, such was their pessimism about how many would turn up!*

Fortunately, because the FBU had their fire engine outside, I was able to speak to what became an open-air rally. It was the only way the NSSN (National Shop Stewards Network Industrial arm of the Socialist Party) was going to get on a platform that day! I raised the necessity for the TUC and the unions to connect together the fight against Tory austerity with the fight against Cameron's anti-union plans.

This would show the whole union movement and the wider working class that the Tories

Recognise the potential power of the unions - still with over six million members - as the major barrier to their cuts, if they are mobilised in mass demonstrations and coordinated strike action. The heroic struggle of the junior doctors only emphasises how broad layers in society could be united in a movement against this week, divided and damaged government. The TUC's

Opposition has been reduced to lobbying the House of Lords. They celebrate the pruning of some aspects of the bill. But the utterly undemocratic voting thresholds (which, if applied to local elections would mean that hardly a councillor would have been elected) are still enshrined in it, as are measures to victimise lead pickets.

*The NSSN calls for an emergency TUC congress to discuss how the Act can be resisted. This is what happened when previous Tory Prime Minister Heath brought in the Industrial Relations Act in 1971 and was subsequently defeated after a whole series of strikes. Such a congress, which should be opened to thousands of shop stewards and union reps, should be a 'council of war' that takes inspiration from the junior doctors, as well as teachers who are balloting for strikes against forced academies, and many others."*⁴

The Socialist party with its correct criticism of the TUC leadership has no other proposals outside an emergency Congress and a one day General Strike. Other centrist groups like the Socialist Workers Party advocates sporadic strike action as a way of defeating Cameron and his government. Syndicalist actions have never led to socialism and have ended up in defeats. What is needed is a perspective to involve the mass of oppressed and exploited sections of workers especially those workers from migrant and ethnic backgrounds who come from the South. The RCIT in its thesis on Trade Unions analysed the correct way to win workers from the global south and to construct a revolutionary leadership in the working class.

"From the above issues, we derive the following set of strategies for revolutionary communists:

i) Building a rank-and-file movement in opposition to the bureaucracy, one which can fight both for more democratic rights and a militant union policy, and which has the goal of liberating the union from the bureaucracy.

ii) Fighting to change the composition of the unions. This involves driving back the influence of the 'aristocratic type' of the upper layer and transforming the unions into an instrument dominated by the 'mass type' of the working class, which means the lower and middle strata - i.e. the huge majority - of the proletariat. "The unionization of the lower strata of the working class (especially the migrants, women, precarious workers, etc.) is an indispensable task. These layers must not, therefore, play the

THIS IS WHAT THE BOSSES' HOUSING BILL PROPOSES:

"High Income Social Tenants

Chapter 3 of Part 4 allows the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring local authorities to charge higher rents to higher income tenants.

Section 80 allows the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring local authorities to charge "high income" a higher rent. Regulations may require different rents for tenants with different incomes and in different areas. Regulations may create exceptions for high income tenants of housing of a specified description

Section 82 allows regulations to give local housing authorities the power to require a tenant or prospective tenant to provide information or evidence relevant to deciding whether they are required to charge that tenant a higher rent (i.e. information or evidence about household membership or income). They may also require a local authority to charge the "maximum rent" to a tenant who has failed to provide information or evidence. The "maximum rent" is defined as the rent payable for that dwelling by a tenant with the highest income.

Phasing out of Life Time Tenancies

Chapter 6 of Part 4, and Schedules 7 and 8 includes proposals to require councils to offer fixed term tenancies of two to five years to nearly all new tenants, and to reform the law on succession to secure tenancies.

Schedule 7 amends the Housing Act 1985 to add new sections as follows:

Requires all new tenancies to be for a fixed term of 2 to 10 years except where the tenancy is offered to a household including a child under 9, when the tenancy may last until the child is 19, or as specified in section 81B.

Specifies that "old-style" secure tenancies (i.e. not fixed term) may be offered where a local authority requires a tenant to move, or in other circumstances specified in regulations.

Pay to Stay

It also requires tenants with household incomes above the governments income thresholds of £31,000pa (£40,000 in London) will be required to pay higher rents from April 2017.

As an example a couple living in a council house outside London with a current rent of £73.09, working full time, one earning £25,000pa and the other £15,000pa, will be expected to pay an additional rent of £25.96pw on top of the normal rent for the property. The total amount they will pay is expected to increase to £99.05pw from April 2017 - unless the market rent for their home is lower.

Councils will be required to charge a full market rent to any tenant who fails to provide details of their household income.

Any additional monies collected by stock retained councils under 'pay to stay', over and above the normal rent for the property, will be required to be paid over to Central Government to reduce their overall budget deficit."

Source:

<http://e-voice.org.uk/crera/social-housing-information-new/13-2016-housing-and-planning-a/>

role of the infantry in the union, but should play a central role and should also proportionally be represented in the trade union bodies according to their share among the employees.”

iii) *Striving to utilize every class struggle to build action committees which organize the militant workers (including the unorganized workers) independent of the bureaucracy. “In every battle and in preparation for this the Bolsheviks-Communists are therefore keen to establish rank and file committees outside the bureaucratic control. They will often bring together the most active and most militant elements in Action Committees.”*⁵

The other area of attack on the working class and poor has been on the issue of Housing. The Cameron government has decided that social housing including council housing, housing associations and cooperative housing should not be available anymore except in the private sector where private landlords charge exorbitant rents. The new act seeks to reduce considerably the opportunity to rent. Social housing has been the only way for working class families to obtain cheap housing. The Housing act proposes to introduce a right to buy scheme as well as putting a number of restrictions on housing in this sector.

Many housing organizations and tenants groups have highlighted the worst aspects of this Act which will mean Housing in Britain will be for the very rich and privileged and the working class and poor will either be homeless or living in slum type Housing, tenement blocks very reminiscent of appalling housing conditions that Frederick Engels highlighted in his important work ‘The Condition of the Working class in England’. Housing associations have shown that parts of the act requiring Councils to sell Higher income property to fund discounts for the right to buy, there is also clauses to charge higher rents in the pay to stay section as well as removing secure assured tenancies which will mean homelessness will increase and the slum housing that Engels talks about in Victorian Britain will return under the Tories.

The London school of Economics and Trafford Hall a training enterprise for social housing tenants has shown the effect of welfare reform on Housing Tenants. They write about the Bedroom Tax: *“The bedroom tax is causing financial hardship and stress for many tenants with many in debt.”*⁶ Attacks on vulnerable people and Benefit sanctions for those facing homelessness as well reduction of benefits this is the bosses’ policy on the housing issue!

“The system singles out people who are already vulnerable – single parent families, old people and the disabled. Many people are experiencing increased stress and worry. People are sanctioned

*but not informed. Sanctioning causes debt and stress and the appeal process is lengthy. Under 25’s are excluded from housing benefits –people face eviction and homelessness.”*⁷

The RCIT IN BRITAIN says the only lasting solution to both the new political crisis is to overthrow Capitalism and to establish Socialism. Revolutionaries in Britain must unite in a principled United Front for a programme of working class power.

- *Build action committees in all work places. Purge the trade unions of bureaucrats and capitalist collaborators. For democratic rank and file control over the trade unions. Build Revolutionary Communist fractions inside the Trade Unions!*

- *For a sliding scale of wages!*

- *For the rights of self-determination of all oppressed peoples! Full equality for Migrants and ethnic/national minority’s.*

- *For an indefinite General Strike to bring down the Cameron Government!*

- *Occupy Empty Housing and distribute to homeless and poor people! Reinstate secure assured Tenancies. Repeal the 2012 act criminalising squatting!*

- *Ensure that Local authorities have enough affordable Housing. Build council housing without the right to buy, this should be financed by the rich!*

- *Establish Rent Tribunals to fix a fair rent! Abolish the Bedroom Tax! Cancel all household debts.*

- *For a Workers government allied with the urban poor!*

- *Fight for a new World party of the Socialist Revolution the 5th International!*

The RCIT in Britain calls for revolutionaries and socialists to join us in the first step to build a pre-party organisation in Britain leading to the formation of the 5th International the world party of the Socialist revolution.

Footnotes:

¹<http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2016/>

²https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/TUC_Campaign_Plan_MkIII_2015_LR.pdf

³<https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1938/tp/tp-text.htm>

⁴http://www.socialistparty.org.uk/keyword/Socialist_Party_and_CWI_public_figures/Rob_Williams/22739/06-05-2016/trade-union-bill-becomes-law

⁵<http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/theses-trade-union/>

⁶<http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/cr/casereport86.pdf>

⁷<http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/cr/casereport86.pdf>

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France: Defeat the El Khomri Law!

For an Indefinite General Strike against the Hollande Government!

Form Action Committees and Self-Defense Units of the Workers and Oppressed!

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 02.06.2016, www.thecommunists.net

The Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT; in French: Courant Communiste Révolutionnaire Internationale) stands in unconditional solidarity with the workers and youth of France who are struggling against the El Khomri law. This new law, if adopted, would allow 12-hour days and, in “exceptional circumstances,” employees could work up to 60 hours a week. Furthermore, annual leave entitlement, break-time pay, and other workplace rights are also endangered by the proposed law.

The El Khomri labor law is justifiably called by the workers “the bosses’ law”. It is a fundamental attack on workers’ rights. It will not create more jobs, but it will weaken the position of those who have jobs and therefore, by extension, automatically worsen the position of their unemployed brothers and sisters. And this in a country where unemployment already stands at 10%!

The workers and youth have shown their determination to fight against this law during several national days of action, with over a million of participants in more than 170 cities, indefinite strikes, blockades of oil refineries, the occupation of schools, administrations, and assemblies in public squares, militant demonstration, etc. The trade unions, first of all the CGT, stand in the forefront of the struggle together with migrants and youth organizations.

What we are witnessing in recent days is the biggest expression of class struggle in France since the six week-long general strike in the autumn of 1995. Then, workers blockaded transport and strategic enterprises, school students occupied their schools until they were forcefully evicted by the police, and undocumented immigrants demanded the legalization of their work status by successfully occupying the Directorate General of Labor in Paris.

The El Khomri labor law once again reveals the deeply antisocial nature of the reactionary social-democratic Hollande government. This government has done everything to expose itself as the arch-enemy of the workers, youth and migrants of France: from the occupation of Mali and the Central African Republic, the bombardment of Syria, to the anti-Muslim laws, to the profoundly undemocratic “state of emergency”; and now comes “the bosses law.”

It is hardly surprising that Marie Le Pens’ reactionary racist Front National is getting stronger all the time.

The unabashed surrender of the left-wing of the social democrats, as well as the left reformist Front de Gauche, to their arch class enemies, manifested in their support for the Hollande’s state of emergency and imperialist wars, gave legitimacy to the authoritarian and racist ideology of the FN and thus inevitably strengthened it.

The mass movement against the El Khomri law, the militant strikes, blockades and occupations show the will of the masses to fight for another Europe – a Europe not of austerity and racism, of barbed wire and NATO bombs. What we need is a Europe of the workers and

oppressed, the United Socialist States of Europe. But such a Europe can only be achieved through resistance to the imperialist European Union, without reverting to reactionary nationalism, as many left reformists and Stalinists advocate.

Furthermore this movement in France is also a blow against the counterrevolutionary offensive of the imperialists which has characterized both France and the whole continent since autumn 2015. Since then the ruling class has utilized the reactionary Paris attack to create a “state of emergency regime”, to whip up a wave of Islamophobic racism against migrants and refugees, to suppress democratic rights and to intensify their colonial wars in the Middle East and North Africa.

The current mass struggle in France has the potential to change the situation in Europe fundamentally – under the condition that the workers and oppressed in other European countries don’t leave our brothers and sisters in France alone. We have to understand the importance of this struggle, especially because the right-wing racists can only be stopped if we show the popular masses a credible alternative of the working class. We call upon the trade unions in the other European countries to take advantage of the workers offensive in France and organize solidarity actions that should be combined with the fight against austerity and for workers and migrant rights. This is the way forward!

What is needed is a new strategy that unites all oppressed people in France under the leadership of the revolutionary workers party to fight not just against the consequences of capitalism – but the system itself. Revolutionaries in France have to try to unify the different struggles of the workers, the school and university students, the Muslims and migrants in general. In fact we have already seen some important joint actions done instinctively by the workers and oppressed themselves!

It is also important that the workers, youth and migrants use this movement to hold mass meetings in the factories, schools, districts, enterprises, harbors and refineries. This meeting should create action committees and elect representatives which can organize the movement democratically nationwide. Such mass meetings should also create committees for self-defense that take on the police – the racist watchdogs of the rich – and defend the movement against these brutal attacks.

** Down with the El Khomri law!*

** For an indefinite General Strike till the government backs down!*

** Build action committees of the strikers, in the schools, factories and enterprises! For a national assembly of the delegates of these committees that should decide how to go forward!*

** Build self-defend units of the workers, youth and migrants to defend the movement against the police violence!*

** For a rank and file movement in the trade unions against the bureaucracy!*

** Down with the state of emergency regime! Down with the Bonapartist constitution of the Fifth Republic!*

** For a public plan to end unemployment and to develop the country in the interest of the workers and poor. Such a program should be under control of the trade unions and it should be financed by the rich!*

** For a workers government based on mass assemblies of the workers, migrants and youth. Only such a government will serve our class and not the rich!*

** Build a really revolutionary workers party to combat racism and capitalism!*

** For a new, revolutionary Fifth International!*

