

Socialist Fight

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Only a United Anti-cuts Campaign based on strikes and occupations will defeat the Coalition assault

"London calling to the faraway towns
Now that war is declared—and battle come down"

LONDON

THURSDAY 9TH DEC

12 NOON ASSEMBLE AT ULU MALET STREET

TUITION FEES VOTE! DEMAND YOUR MP LISTENS TO YOU!

From 1pm Mass lobby of MPs on the day

Evening Candlelit vigil

LOBBY 2010

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION FROM ULU TO PARLIAMENT

University of London Union London Region London Student Assembly n u s



Contents

- Page 2: Editorial: Only a United Anti-cuts Campaign based on strikes and occupations will defeat the Coalition assault.
- Page 5: Three days in the life of an Unemployed Workers Centre.
- Page 6: Ireland on the Rack: Defend the welfare state, defend the Republican Prisoners By AJ Byrne.
- Page 7: After the Irish bailout: The financial wolf pack targets new victims By Nick Beams.
- Page 8: Ireland: The Creepy Millionaires' Budget By Michael Taft.
- Page 9: Jimmy Reid: "It cannae be Lenin — he's deid" Obituary By Tony Fox.
- Page 12: The Jerry Hicks Campaign: Good Trot, Bad Trot and Trot in the Middle By Gerry Downing.
- Page 14: Obama's America: The Furlough—Intent and Impact By Jake Cooper.
- Page 16: Mumia Abu-Jamal, on Pennsylvania's death row for 29 years By Dave Lindorff.
- Page 18: Class Struggle in Zimbabwe by Ady, RIL - FI (Zimbabwe).
- Page 20: Trotskyist Turn in Nepal? By Rajesh Tyagi (New Wave).
- Page 20: Comment on the above By Ret Marut.
- Page 21: Women's Oppression: Two opposing views of the sex industry.
- Page 24: Letters pages.
- Page 28: Dubstep rebellion - the British banlieue comes to Millbank By Paul Mason
- Page 29: The Recession and Theories of Imperialism: It has to be Lenin! By Ret Marut.
- Page 31: Debating the Thermidor: "Me No Dirty Commie" By Gerry Downing.
- Page 33: Ark Tribe....Battle for Workers Rights in Australia By Aggie McCallum.

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Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the SF EB.

Unity is strength, L'union fait la force, Es la unidad fuerza, Η ενότητα είναι δύναμη, اتحاد قدرت است, đoàn kết là sức mạnh, Jedność jest siła, ykseys on kesto, யুনিটি শ্রু-ল, Midnimo iyo waa awood, hundeb ydy chryfder, Einheit ist Stärke, एकता शक्ति है, единство наша сила, vienybės jėga, bashkimi ben fuqine, אחדות היא כוח, unità è la resistenza, 団結は力だ, A unidade é a força, eining er styrkur, De eenheid is de sterkte, الوحدة هو القوة, Ní neart go chur le céile, pagkakaisa ay kalakasan, jednota is síla, 일성은이다 힘, Workers of the World Unite!

Only a United Anti-cuts Campaign based on strikes and occupations will defeat the Coalition assault

Editorial

All serious revolutionary socialists must agitate for strikes and occupations as the basis for the unity of all the local and national anti-cuts campaigns to defeat the government assault. These are an expression within the working class of the urgently felt necessity to fight to survive the deepening crisis of capitalism. But of course the leaderships of these local and national campaigns are not revolutionaries (despite the protestations of some!) and have in general an ill-conceived radical reformist solution to the crisis and not a revolutionary one. In fact most of these leaders are totally opposed to revolution, denouncing those that propose transitional demands that tend in that direction as 'sectarians' and 'trouble-makers'. How could this be otherwise given their history of centrist practice for decades?

We have to therefore ask these fundamental questions of the campaigns. Are they merely seeking to address tasks that start and end in 'resistance' or 'defence'? If that be so it is a correct starting point; no rational mind can argue against making defence of those social gains that resulted in common welfare interests in today's society. Those who cannot defend old gains can never make new ones.

The first and most vital question then is; what then, what is their perspective, to where do they want to go after 'resistance and defence'? The second question is insolubly linked to the first; what forms of organisational structures are needed to enable that work to proceed in the most democratic form which can give voice to the struggles of the ranks of the working class and those who fight best for their cause of revolutionary socialism?

To win this struggle we must have strikes and occupations as our basic weapons. To achieve those we must fight the trade union bureaucracies. To effectively fight those we must build a rank-and-file movement. That was why we participated in the Jerry Hicks for Unite General Secretary campaign and that is what we are seeking to build out of the various elements that precipitated in that movement and others.

The Coalition of Resistance Conference

The Coalition of Resistance (CoR) Conference on 27th November has shown by its 1,300 attendance that many old and new factors are on the stage and in the audience declaring readiness to combine for a fight with the present government. The conference was organised mainly by Counterfire, the right wing grouping that split from the SWP. It combined elements of bureaucrati-

cally controlled syndicalism (Unite's Len McCluskey), parliamentarianism, the British Road to Socialism, (Tony Benn) and abstract theory as a cover for thoroughgoing right-wing opportunism (John Rees).

What serious class fighter is not today inspired by the militant response of the students in Britain to the Con-Dem coalition cuts through educational fees increases? The students have shown by example, have inspired the ranks of the working class and have thereby put huge pressure on all trade union leaders to make some token resistance of their own. This is what happened in France back in 1968, but we must work for a better outcome today.

The bureaucrats have worked might and main over the years to contain the struggles of their members within individual TU regiments using the 'anti-union laws' as an excuse. They are top down wary of any initiative which may provoke 'a break-out' of uncontrollable militancy which may/can subsequently then fall into the hands of the rank-and-file militants. This could escape their direction and control and then offer the prospect of a real fight and real successes to an aroused and united memberships.

Students, despite their youth and militancy, start from a separate existence in an educational environment and are not the working class, cannot substitute for it or become a new 'revolutionary vanguard'. They cannot become either junior ranks or officers in this class war against the government. Moreover they are fighting on a very limited and politically naïve basis, which is itself hostage to many years of false hopes promoted by the parliamentary democracy obfuscation of which Benn and his left-talking ilk are front-rankers.

The students are being channelled primarily into exposing the Lib Dem MPs' hypocrisy on tuition fees thereby taking the pressure off the Tories who lead the Coalition. Nevertheless, in their size, mobilisation and militancy they have demonstrated a great latent potential and must be encouraged to adopt a deeper labour movement orientation and link up with the working class in the various anti-cuts campaigns now proliferating throughout Britain, Ireland and Europe.

We must fight the class struggle where it is at, in the mass trade union movement and in the Labour party. Here putting theory into practice is very problematic for Counterfire. It supported Len McCluskey in the Unite general secretary election and is obviously tracking close to those elements within the SWP who supported him in



John Rees and Lindsey German at the CoR conference: supported McCluskey in the Unite election and are obviously tracking close to those elements within the SWP who wanted to support McCluskey to enhance their careers and 'influence'.

opposition to the more leftist rank-and-filer Jerry Hicks for General Secretary of Unite. Their aim was to advance their own careers in the TU bureaucracy and so increase the 'influence' of the SWP within the labour movement. That path is strewn with hidden minefields; we have already seen what it leads by the opportunist trajectory of Jane Loftus, the CWU (post workers union) President eventually forced to resign from the SWP for backing the CWU Executive in the sell-out of the strikes a year ago. Counterfire's Alex Snowden, in his introduction to Brian Pearce's classic article *Some Past Rank-and-File Movements*, justifies the group's capitulation to the left bureaucrats thus:

"There are two basic divisions inside the trade unions. One is the division between left and right - including contests between left-wing and right-wing candidates for leading positions in the unions. The other division is between the bureaucracy and the grassroots members."

So the CoR supported a left bureaucrat against a more left rank-and-filer because these are two unconnected basic divisions of the class struggle!

Two other tendencies are involved in the CoR. The movementist Socialist Resistance (USFI) who had split from Respect over George Galloway's intention to stand for the Holyrood parliament in Glasgow next May. SR are committed to supporting the Scottish Socialist Party, currently acting as super grasses for the state and the News of the World to jail Tommy Sheridan. Workers Power are also involved in an attempt to win some more student recruits. The traditional weakness of Workers Power, its lack of working class members, will only be made much worse by this new opportunist orientation.

National Shop Stewards Network launches its own anti-cuts campaign

At its Steering Committee meeting on 4 December the Socialist Party-dominated National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) decided to form an NSSN All-Britain anti-cuts Campaign by 22 votes to 16. Against this sectarian move, opposed by the Chair, Dave Chapple, and others, the SP put forward various leftist arguments and correct

criticisms of the RTW and CoR like "we wish to collaborate with all local and national organisations. However, we cannot accept a top-down approach adopted by some organising the fight against the cuts". They pointed to the 'success' of the anti-poll tax campaign as the model for the fight. Leaving aside that this was a pyrrhic victory, the poll tax was replaced by the only slightly fairer council tax and John Major was elected for the Tories in the subsequent general election the real comparison was with the rate capping struggles led by the left Labour councils in the mid-to-late 80s, in particular those in the GLC, Lambeth and Liverpool. So when the Socialist says "We cannot accept smaller cuts over a longer period, as advocated by Labour-in-opposition against the big axe and swingeing cuts of the Con-Dem government" we must fully support the political sentiment but we must remember that is just what the parent organisation of the Socialist Party, Militant, did in Liverpool back then. We are therefore obliged to examine just what did happen in Liverpool.

Workers Liberty fills in the details:

"In early July (1884) the council leaders announced... that they had done a deal with the government. The Tories would give Liverpool a little more money. They would permit fancy accounting to shuffle deficits into the following financial year. The council would make a 17% rate rise and balance its budget.

Militant hailed this as "a 95% victory". Actually, Derek Hatton of Militant (formally deputy leader of the council, but in fact the chief figure) would recount later, in an autobiography that they had been told by a Tory MP what was really going on. "We had to tell Patrick [Jenkin, the Tory government minister] to give you the money. At this stage we want Scargill [the miners' union leader]. He's our priority. But we'll come for you later".

Militant left the miners in the lurch, in return for a sop. And now it complied. That was the point at which Ken Livingstone broke decisively from his left-wing past. He called for the Labour left to reconcile itself with Labour leader Neil Kinnock, who was shifting the party to the right as fast as he could, and declared blatantly: "I'm for manipulative politics... the cynical soft-sell"...In 1986 Liverpool, still under Militant leadership, would set a routine cuts budget" <http://www.workersliberty.org/>

They had made the self-admitted "major tactical error" of issuing 90 days' notice of redundancy in September. This "purely legal device" destroyed their credibility with the workforce and was used as a sick to beat them by the hostile mass media and all establishment political parties. Their call for a council-wide strike was rejected because it was too late and their ridiculous vacillations made clear would never openly confront the government and state. Just to confirm this analysis after the poll tax riot of 1990 Militant and the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation leaders Steve Nally and Tommy Sheridan denounced the 'rioters' on TV and threatened to 'name names'. And this 'model' the SP now wish to emulate.



Dave Chapple: Chair of the NSSN opposed the launch of yet another anti-cuts campaign in order to preserve the NSSN as a viable organisation. The SP did not see it that way.

What demands on local councils?

The Guardian online on 13 December exposes the vicious class hatred behind the cuts:

"deprived inner-city areas of London and large cities in the north are facing the most drastic reductions of up to 8.9% this year alone, with the shires and county councils relatively protected by their burgeoning council tax revenue. The Local Government Association labelled the cuts the "toughest in living memory".

Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Manchester, Rochdale, Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Doncaster and South Tyneside are among the 36 local authorities that take the maximum cut of 8.9%. Meanwhile Dorset gets a 0.25% increase in funding and Windsor and Maidenhead, Poole, West Sussex, Wokingham, Richmond upon Thames and Buckinghamshire all get cuts of 1% or below."

What demands do we make on Labour councillors? The *World to Win* blog, where Ted Knight has big influence, in 'Carrying out orders' is no defence for Labour councillors suggests:

"If any of them had an ounce of political courage, Labour councillors who control most major authorities would resign their seats and fight bye-elections on the pledge of refusing to draw up and pass a cuts budget. They would mobilise their communities and council trade unions to fight the Coalition in the way Lambeth Council of the early 1980s fought the Thatcher government. But don't hold your breath on this one. Instead, they intend to pass on the cuts and smash services."

The resigning tactic may seem ultra-left to some because it would mean the end of the careers in the Labour party for the rebels. But the names of the councillors in the 1921 Poplar Rates Rebellion and Clay Cross in Derbyshire in 1972-3 are remembered as true fighters for the working class. Derek Hatton, Livingstone and their ilk are rightly despised as sell-outs.

Underwhelmed by the CoR conference

Pete Firmin, chair of Brent TUC, made the following points in contrast to those who were blinded by the large numbers attending the CoR conference without looking at the quality offered.

"I was in that small majority that was under-

whelmed by the conference. Most people, including, apparently, Liam (MacUaid, in whose blog this first appeared), saw the numbers and didn't look too closely at the content. The inordinately large number of platform speakers in the plenaries (which, apart from anything else, meant no discussion) either told us what we already knew in terms of the government plans or resorted to large dollops of hyperbole, promising actions which, with a little reflection, are undeliverable. Such may provide for warm feelings, but does little to help the movement get to grips with the real problems facing it.

The real "elephant in the room" though was the total absence of any mention or discussion of the role of the Labour Party and Labour Councils in relation to the cuts. Many anti-cuts committees around the country face the issue of how to relate to Labour Councillors and Labour-controlled councils. They are many different views on the left about what we do. Not a mention. In fact the workshop on "What should political representatives do" didn't have anyone who could speak with any authority on the Labour Party on the platform. Bizarre. I'm afraid I even heckled Paul Mackney when he declared from the platform that "the Coalition of resistance works closely with the Labour Representation Committee", pointing out that the LRC had never once been approached by the CoR.

I'm told some workshops had useful discussions. Good. I'm also told that others limited floor discussion to two minutes. Almost as problematic is the fact that the left seems to want to ignore that the three biggest unions – Unite, UNISON and the GMB are almost silent on the cuts. Yes, action by FBU, RMT, UCU, NUS etc. is great, but it shouldn't blind us to the obstacles we face. Maybe McCluskey will change this, but excuse me if his record around the BA dispute doesn't inspire me with confidence.

This weekend London region UNITE were supposed to be organising a 'weekend of action' (stalls etc) against the cuts, which they abandoned due to lack of interest....And why is it that virtually no section of the left mentions the government's first wholesale privatisation, which is likely to be passed by parliament before the end of the year? Excuse me if I think that accepting 122 people on to the National Council from the conference isn't the epitome of democracy when conference isn't even informed as to who they are. But no worries, no doubt our now permanent leaders of campaigns – Rees, German, etc are safely in the leadership of CoR"

Workers' democracy is the lifeblood of the labour movement

There we have it. This is a left version of 'we're all in this together' with a conference that was really a rally to enhance the credential of the leadership, self-appointed and no facility for real discussion or any decision making at all. All big meetings of the left today have plenary sessions filled with 'big name' speakers; the same old faces who make the same old boring (once you



Militant Editorial Board 1983. Dented Shield vs. Loony Left was always a Tory lie. Today we must demand that councillors refuse to cut and unite workers and users around strikes and occupations leading to a general strike.

have heard them for the umpteenth time) reformist speeches about 'uniting the left' behind the parliamentary road to socialism. Tony Benn is becoming more and more insistent that the 'sectarians' (read revolutionaries) must be driven out of the movement, Bob Crow and Mark Serwotka propose a left TU version of the same message and the likes of Dot Gibson seeks to unite everyone under the populist Morning Star-drafted British Road to Socialism that is the Peoples Charter. The format is well established now over the last fifteen to twenty years, really since the eclipse of the left in the Labour party following the collapse of the rate capping struggle and after the defeat of the miners in 1985 and the Wapping printers in 1986-7.

In fact the only one of these events that was inspiring of late was the Right to Work launch in Manchester in January 2010 where the invited 'big names' opted for the Morning Star event in London instead and we were 'left' with the far better rank and file militants to inspire us.

Here is the list of speakers: Tony Kearns (CWU), Pete Murray (NUJ), Jerry Hicks (Unite), Mark Smith (former Vestas worker), Paul Brandon (Unite bus worker), Nahella Ashraf (chair, Greater Manchester Stop the War), Dave Chapple (Chair National Shop Stewards Network), Clara Osagiede (RMT cleaners' secretary), Dot Gibson (General Secretary, National Pensioners Convention). Whatever disagreements we may have with these the majority are from the ranks of the working class and so a vital part of the struggle.

There was a far more democratic, if haphazard election, to a limited steering committee of 25, unlike the ridiculous 122 'elected' without being named at the CoR 'conference'. When Blair practically shut down democracy in the Labour party conference and throughout the party the 'far left' mimicked his bureaucratic imposition with a left version of it themselves. The Labour Representation Committees conference is the only one that adheres to some democratic structures; motions can be submitted, discussion is organised on these and a national committee is nominated and elected at the conference, even if the politics is far more obviously reformist.

The NSSN has some good democratic practices like refusing union officials votes but no motions are allowed and democratic debate therefore signifies nothing beyond the speeches of delegates who wish to make 'points' which can never be tested by motion and voting. Bob Crow always sets the limits on where the NSSN is going, and

non-interference in the internal affairs of unions means they can never support any candidate for elections although clearly a majority far larger than the SP itself supported the bureaucrat McCluskey against the rank-and-file Hicks in the Unite Gen Sec elections. And is a one-day conference from 10am to 5pm (max) really long enough to debate and decide anything of substance? - we need at least two days to make any progress, with 'rallying' speeches condensed to a few current disputes. Serious work not bombast!

Therefore it is the responsibility of all serious revolutionaries to fight for the unity of the anti-cuts campaigns on this type, i.e., on a democratically structured class struggle basis. Crucially we must have a revolutionary perspective, which is what Militant, Livingstone and Ted Knight lacked in the 80s. If we strike and occupy to prevent the cuts we must build up local Committees of Action which have the possibility of moving in the direction of dual power. To do this they MUST be democratically structured, in defying the government they must be prepared to bring down the government in general strike action. Calling for a general strike without such preparation is simply ultra-left posturing and could only lead to a disastrous defeat like 1926.

That is what Militant and the left Labour councils could have done in 1985 alongside the miners. But that would raise the question of state power. Having established unchallenged control of the NSSN the Socialist Party are clearly set to embark a separate project for their own party building schemes. Will that not be at best a replay of the Hatton debacle in Liverpool? They have developed from the 1950s a theoretical justification of the disastrous parliamentary road to socialism adopted in Liverpool. There they refused to raise the possibility of a decisive confrontation with the Tories. Rather than facing down the government in such a confrontation they accepted the sop, as the Tory MP put it.

All three rival Campaigns, the Coalition of Resistance Against Cuts & Privatisation, the Right to Work and the National Shop Stewards Network reject these cuts as "simply malicious ideological vandalism, hitting the most vulnerable the hardest" (CoR) and not as a reflection of the structural crisis of capitalism. Therefore their central perspective is the 'soft power' of rally and protest to force reform and not the 'hard power' of strike and occupation which raise the question of workers' power. Was it the student revolt in France in 1968 or the General strike, the great British miners' strike of 1984-5 or the poll tax riot of 1990 which fundamentally threatened the future of capitalism? The struggle can never move forward in a revolutionary direction while it is dominated by such perspectives which put the sectarian needs of groups before the needs of class as a whole. Without workers' democracy, the lifeblood of the labour movement, we cannot forge the ideological cohesion needed to make this transition which can alone lead to victory.

Three indissolubly-connected strands; the economic, the political and the ideological

The class struggle consists in essence, of three indissolubly-connected strands; the economic, the political and the ideological. To neglect any of these or to overemphasise any strand will tend to weaken the integrity of the class struggle as a whole. If we look at the class struggle as a cable which is both itself a supportive tether and a social umbilical cord for united class action we will begin to understand better. To give the analogy a contextual meaning; we are, as it were, building a road-bridge over a dangerous sea, and must establish strong, unbreakable foundations along the way, but until we reach our destination, we will be buffeted by ill winds from all sides. There have been and will continue to be those that choose to jump bridge after heeding the siren voices of the captains of capital. But without constancy and clarity along the way the course can be seriously distorted ensuring at best miserable progress and ultimately outright defeat at an important stage.

So if we violate the integrity of the class struggle, if we seek to simplify the objectively posed tasks so that 'ordinary workers' can understand the propaganda we will develop a perspective that leads to reformist aims and refuses to see the looming counter-revolution brought about by the historical crisis of capitalism. If we fight on the economic plane alone, strikes and occupations, etc. we will be reacting with a defensive trade unionist consciousness which is dependant on unity with the masters of capital who own the means of production (capital) and have deeper pockets than the workers. This narrow outlook, best described as syndicalism and workerism, has a theoretical/ideological disregard for the capacity of the working class to rise to the tasks posed to them by history; to overthrow capitalism and forge a socialist and future communist society of production based upon human need and not private profit.

If we fight on the political plane alone we are liable to become prisoners to the limited democracy of the capitalist parliament and to see the economic struggles of the working class as just a stage army of voting fodder to force 'progressive legislation' through parliament. That is the outlook of the Labour lefts, however sincere, which looks at serious class struggle as a threat to capitalist well-being, out of which socialism is supposed to emerge organically and gradually. But that scenario will never come to pass.

Then there are those that would fight on the ideological plane alone to become simply arm-chair revolutionaries or sects who substitute 'dogma' for original, living thought and debate by endlessly setting themselves up as a model for revolution but always avoiding meeting the real objective source and consequences of developments which are in transition and require practical verification in the class struggle itself.

Three days in the life of an Unemployed Workers Centre

Class Struggle

This is the account of three days in the life of an unemployed workers centre. Names have been changed to protect identities but the emails are real, reflecting their will to fight and to organise and combine for the long struggles ahead against this vicious ConDem coalition government.

Date: Thu, 11 Nov 2010 15:18

I seriously think that we should organise a national demo of the unemployed in light of today's news. These wankers can't be allowed to get away with forcing people into doing shitty degrading jobs or be sanctioned for 3 years. Well done to the students yesterday we should do the same. Please discuss.

Joan

Date: Thu, 11 Nov 2010 22:21

We do need to mobilise the Unemployed right across the country. But we need to build locally in every locality, and then join them. We agreed today to restart our demos, with two per month one at the ATHOS offices from 08.30 to 10.00 on the second Tuesday of each month and one starting at 10.00 - till 11.00 at the Job Centre every 4th Tuesday of each month. (So please block book every 2nd and 4th Tuesday for Mobilising Unemployed Workers exactly as per your wish.

I believe this will help to motivate the large number of unemployed people in the area. If / when the Kentish Town Unemployed Workers Group gets off the ground we will be working towards a bigger mobilisation. Unfortunately that is the only way I know to organise unemployed workers. Not all unemployed people are coming to us. Malcolm saw at least 5 persons filling out "appeal forms" in the Job Centre, we are only aware of three or four cases of sanctions, so we have a lot of work to do even to get people to believe in us when they are under attack. Hopefully we will be able to show a bit of fighting spirit with our demonstrations, and that will make 'sanctioned' people and Jobcentre staff aware that we mean business. We are going to draft two leaflets. One for each location. If we can get money from our 'sponsors' or supporting TUCs we will then be able to have some printed very quickly.

Tom

Date: Fri, 12 Nov 2010 12:01

It is important to take on board what "sanctioned people" believe that sanctions are worse than Jail. Because sanctions can leave people without food, particularly warm food, warmth, (leading to illnesses in British winters) warm bathing water) essential transport, unable to fulfil child care obligations. Jail does not deprive a job seeker of life's basic necessities. We

still have no idea of the psychological effect of such Sanctions. But I have witnessed the severe distress it causes to victims of such unilateral decisions. I am shocked to hear victims of sanctions say that they would prefer to spend that time in Jail. Perhaps like the poll tax "sanctions" victims will opt for going to jail. Can anyone advise if victims of "sanctions" can opt for a jail sentence, or do they need to break a law? There appears to be far more careful consideration of the application of criminal law that does **not lead to potential deprivation of basic necessities of life** like warmth, food, child care responsibilities, essential travel costs, etc.

I attach a short extract from the magistrates courts sentencing guide lines to show that some actions deemed 'criminal' are treated more favourably than 'alleged' failure (not proven in court with a chance to defend the allegation) to comply with an arbitrary conclusion by those whose job it is to decide who "not doing enough to find a job". It is clear from the extract attached that what at least 3 "sanctioned" job-seekers are saying "that Jail is a better option". We have not even considered the situation of vulnerable people with cancer, HIV, diabetes, and other illnesses that reduces the efficiency of their immune system and makes them more vulnerable to such barbaric sanctions, especially during the harsh British winters. Your comments would be much appreciated

Tom

Date: Fri, 12 Nov 2010 12:20

Quite right. There will be people dying out of this. In a country like Britain, this is barbarism started. Meanwhile, the suffering is immense, and people try too hard to hide their suffering and their poverty. They are made to feel guilty about it, they are made to feel failures! It is barbarism parading in the guise of democracy. This measures the depth of the degeneration of British and world capitalism. For there was a time when it could pillage from the colonies enough wealth to seem to offer at least a decent standard of living in the metropolitan countries. That time is gone, and in a way, it is a good thing that colonies do not let themselves be pillaged any more.

When jail becomes publicly acknowledged as "the better option", be sure the capitalists will turn the jails into privatised Labour Camps, with 'advisors' in charge. These will decide whether you deserve to be raped, drugged or killed by accident. Some of this is already happening in the US. The 'advisers' are trained in Iraq, Afghanistan, Honduras, etc. Tom, perhaps you could write full articles along the line of what you say below? We could then make small booklets in small quantities, adding what other comrades have to say, perhaps even photocopied, and raise the political level?

Susan



The Kilburn Unemployed Workers Group on the campaign trail, this time protesting outside the Cambodian Embassy with Brent Trades Union Council on the ill-treatment of Cambodian Trade Unionists.

Date: Fri, 12 Nov 2010 13:33

It does appear on the face of it to be a shocking truth. I hope other comrades in the group give it some thought, and provide some feedback. People did choose prison as an alternative to paying the Poll Tax which was another 'shoot from the hip' Tory government initiative, although in fairness to the Tories they may not have gone down this extreme road had they not been able to rely on the Liberal Democrats. The feedback from the demos too will be vital especially if we can get a couple of small RED banners with "end sanctions now" on both of them, perhaps from the red material you purchased for the original banner. Then sew a little fold at both ends and I will provide 4 bamboo canes for 2 poles for each one. Job-seekers will then see clearly before they arrive what we are doing and that we are on their side, and hopefully join us. I can make these if necessary. Mo and I will be making a video of all the events from now on too, so we build up a library of stuff.

Tom

Date: Sat, 13 Nov 2010 08:58

Shoplifters of the world unite, is a song by the Smiths. It has just made me think what a great title and also made me think about what we can call our shoplifters union when there are thousands of us on the streets stealing out of necessity.

Jail is something that I have talked about too. Yes you would have to break the law to receive a prison sentence. I personally do not want to live in a lawless society however if my benefits get slashed including my housing benefit and I ended up homeless as I am fearful will be the case for many I would not think twice about stealing my food from one of the 4 or 5 huge capitalistic supermarket chains that profit massively out of controlling what essentially is a basic need of people. How long would it be before I got jailed I wonder? The condemn government have stated that they are to reduce prison numbers as part of their cost cutting measures so what would they do with thousands of people continually breaking the law?

Ireland on the Rack: Defend the welfare state, defend the Republican Prisoners

By AJ Byrne

"If you remove the English army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organization of the Socialist Republic your efforts would be in vain. England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through her financiers, through the whole array of commercial and individualist institutions she has planted in this country and watered with the tears of our mothers and the blood of our martyrs."

James Connolly Shan Van Vocht January, 1897.

Ireland is in its deepest economic crisis since the foundation of the state in 1922. This crisis will have momentous political consequences. The Donegal South West by-election saw the election of the Sinn Féin's Pearse Doherty with 40% of the first preference vote. Fianna Fáil's Brian O'Domhnaill got only 19% in a rural/fishing seat where they have traditionally polled over 50%. Belfast-based Gerry Adams, the leader of Sinn Féin (SF), has signalled his intention to enter southern politics. Fine Gael, Labour and Sinn Féin voted against the EU/IMF imposed austerity Budget on 7 December. And this is of immediate concern to us and to the incarcerated Republican prisoners north and south because in is now clearer than ever it was that the national question cannot be separated from the social question and why the name of James Connolly still reverberates with the Irish working class in the Labour party and amongst its more radical political formations.

A general election will certainly be held within months and Fianna Fáil (FF) face meltdown. FF has been the political glue that has held the southern state together since being first elected to office in 1932. It has held office for 53 of the 78 years since then. It emerged from the defeated anti-Treaty side in Civil War, Fine Gael from the counter-revolutionary victorious side. FF is a political party somewhat similar to the Peronist in Argentina, always with a strong working class and small farmer base because of the national question. These have now deserted it. Fine Gael, the other mainstream capitalist party, is the obvious rallying point for the right but has scarcely improved its poll ratings since the onset of the crisis, even falling at some points to the level of Fianna Fáil. At its foundation in 1933 it incorporated the small fascist 'blueshirt' movement, whose leader, Eoin O'Duffy briefly became the first leader of the new party. The potential for the emergence of a mass far-right neo-fascist party in Ireland is now obvious when the middle classes turn their anger from capitalist bankers, on which it is now focused, to the working class when they begin to resist the imposition of austerity in earnest.

What do we make of Sinn Féin as a 'left' party? It is certainly pitching very left now but its propaganda is merely vaguely radical populist and just over the border from Donegal they are

in governmental alliance with the far right DUP, imposing neo-liberal austerity on that working class and presiding over the incarceration of dissident republican POWs. Doherty is a pro-life bigot opposed to Sinn Féin party policy of a woman's right to choose. The hypocrisy is not lost on southerners, nevertheless he was elected. His election speech was full of nostrums like: "It's a vote for a fair economic policy based on tax reform, ending waste and stimulating the economy to create jobs... As a Sinn Féin TD I will also work to end partition which has been detrimental to Donegal and to our country North and South." This is a Fianna Fáil mark II with no better politics but without the corruption. Nonetheless the national humiliation imposed on Ireland is likely to give Sinn Féin up to 12 seats in the next general election, now likely in mid March 2011.

In Donegal the 'left' got 60%, (if Sinn Féin are reckoned as 'left') in a country now overwhelmingly working class and urban. Ireland is a divided nation, a fact studiously ignored by all the main protagonists in this crisis, including, shamefully, by the new United Left Alliance (ULA) formed in Dublin on 24th October. It involves the People Before Profit Alliance (a Socialist Workers party [SWP] front), the Socialist Party (SP), the Tipperary Workers and Unemployed Group (with origins in the French Trotskyist group, the OCI), and Councillor Declan Bree leader of the Sligo/Leitrim Independent Socialist Organisation. The ULA is a "new, left, anti capitalist formation to represent working people". Not only does it totally ignore the border but specifically excludes the two far left groups in Ireland, the IRSP and Éirígí, who seek to combine both class struggle and the national question, albeit on the basis of James Connolly's Marxism and not on the basis of Trotsky's Permanent Revolution. Not all self-professed Trotskyists shun the connection between the national and class question however. At a conference in Limerick on 30 October: *Rebirth of a Marxist tradition in Irish Universities?* John McNulty of Socialist Democracy says:

"At my own presentation, "The Hunger Strikes - A defeat for Republicanism, a defeat for the working-class", caused some shock. It was clear that it had been some time since the majority of the participants had considered the national question as a class question and equally clear that a number had accepted the propaganda that the Good Friday Agreement had resolved the national question." <http://www.socialistdemocracy.com>.

NI POA officers, taking a break from torturing Republican prisoners at Maghaberry, attended the 2010 Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival and Rally in Dorset, their membership of the labour movement endorsed by the 'Trotskyist' SP recruitment of their former General Secretary Brian



NI POA officers, taking a break from torturing Republican prisoners at Maghaberry (above), attended the 2010 Tolpuddle rally, their membership of the labour movement endorsed by the SP recruitment of their former General Secretary Brian Caton.

Caton. They provided a marching band and offended socialists by flying the Ulster flag and singing Loyalist bigoted songs at night. The SP has two editions of its paper, one for the North and one for the South, lest news of nationalist Ireland insult Loyalist public opinion. They are far more pro-imperialist than the SWP. Although the SWP's Eamonn McCann supports the Republican prisoners Richard Boyd-Barrett wants to keep all talk of socialism off the ULA's literature, lest 'ordinary' people be offended.

An article in the Irish Times on 11 December by Noel Whelan points to an opinion poll in the *Irish Sun* which puts the 'left' made up of the left of centre Independents and Sinn Féin, but excluding Labour, at 24%. Labour got about 10% in the last election, it peaked in the polls at 33% a few months ago, because it was the only party in the Dáil to vote against the bank bailouts in 2008, but is still running at about 25% despite indicating a willingness to enter coalition with the right-bourgeois Fine Gael (about 27%) and impose cuts, albeit at a different pace. In other words many coalitions are possible here; a right-left Labour/FG coalition or a Sinn Féin/Labour/left Independent coalition. We may also heal the Civil War wounds and see a FF/FG coalition.

And here the second major error of the United Left Alliance is apparent. Dismissing Labour as another establishment party is wrong because it ignores the working base of the party (militant syndicalists), its links with the trade unions and crucially, for the far left, it avoids the conflict with the trade union bureaucracies, which are the main obstacle today to the development of the class struggle. Unite are making the most left sounding noises in Ireland right now with Jimmy Kelly calling for a general strike etc. but he did sign the sell-out Croak Park Agreement (see: <http://paddyhealy.wordpress.com/>).

The SP and SWP tail end him, uncritically endorsing this former SWP leader from Waterford Glass who famously sought to jail the Belfast Airport shop steward, SP member Gordon McNeill, for fighting his sacking by the company in collaboration with the union. As an industrial Tribunal found. A stronger defender of capitalism, with a bogus left demagogic cover, could

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

not be imagined.

Of course both major errors are inextricably bound together in Ireland. Joe Higgins participated in the Sóivéidí na hÉireann (Soviets of Ireland) production for the Irish-language *Teilifís na Gaeilge* (TG4). In part 5 of the documentary he made a strong case that the Civil War was lost in part because the trade union bureaucrats like Cathal O'Shannon, who inherited the movement from Connolly and Larkin, sold out the strikes, occupations and soviets that appeared mainly in Leinster and Munster in those years.

When the counter-revolutionary 'free staters', led by Michael Collins until he fell in an ambush in August 1922 in Béal na mBláth in west Cork, swept southwards in 1922 and 1923 they not only defeated the anti-treaty 'irregulars' but smashed up the occupations and soviets, already nationally leaderless because of the treachery of the TU bureaucrats. It takes a very able political acrobat to correctly identify an historical treachery but to condone by failing to fight the exact same treachery today.

In Gaelic but with excellent subtitles the series is here: <http://live.tg4.ie/main.aspx?level=Faisneis&content=72024237057>

Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group

The Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group was formed in early 2010 to campaign for political status for Irish Republican political prisoners by the coming together of some left groups and a prisoners support group. It is an umbrella group, non-politically aligned and campaigns for all republican prisoners, regardless of political affiliations. We have a programme of action to highlight the continuing torture and oppression meted out to Republican Prisoners north and south of the border in Ireland. In particular to highlight the plight of four prisoners who were incarcerated for fighting to end British occupation of the six north eastern counties of Ireland:

i) Eddie McGarrigle, ii) Colin Duffy, iii) Michael

Campbell, iv) Michael McKevitt.

Following a confrontation with Republican prisoners in Maghaberry at Easter 2010, when they were denied the right to wear the Easter Lilly, the symbol of the 1916 uprising, the 32 County Sovereignty Committee reported that prisoners were locked in their cells 23 – sometimes 24 – hours a day, having to eat, sleep and go to the toilet in the same tiny space. They faced strip searches every time they had visitors. Some visitors, too, were strip searched. An agreement was brokered in October but the following post in the *Until the Last Rebel* website on 20 Nov tells us that it was broken by the screws before the ink was dry:

"Two POWs were today refused their legal visits when they refused to degrade themselves by opening their mouth and wiggling their tongue for the search team. This is a serious development as no access to your legal team will have a detrimental effect on any future court case."

Some of the events we have organised are pictured on the back cover, including the 20 strong picket of the Ministry of Justice, Petty France, London on 7 August 2010. The picket involved comrades from Socialist Fight, the Revolutionary Communist Group (Fight Racism, Fight Imperialism!), Workers Power, the Irish Political Status Committee and the Free Mumia Abu-Jamal campaign. "End the torture in Maghaberry, political status now!" and "Political Status for political prisoners" were the slogans chanted on the picket to tourist buses and those emerging from St James's Park station.

The political and ethnic diversity of the picket showed that the struggles of Irish political prisoners has powerful resonance not only among serious revolutionary socialists but also among those campaigning internationally for justice for the oppressed. It was therefore enormously heartening to see the Mumia Abu-Jamal supporters and the sacked Unite convenor of Sovereign Buses, Abdul Omer there.

The picket of the Lithuanian Embassy for Michael Campbell (above) was on 17 October. He



Part of the picket of the Lithuanian Embassy on 17 October.

was arrested in January 2008 in an international sting operation involving the Irish and British secret services when he allegedly handed 10,000 euro to an undercover Lithuanian agent posing as a weapons supplier. In a letter to the Irish Political Status Committee (IPSC) on 2 December 2008 he speaks of being held for almost a year without charge, 23 hour a day lock-up, and initially only a hole on the floor for a toilet, two toilet rolls a month between four and says 'the food is very bad, black tea and black bread and a lot of raw fish' and 'I am sure you are aware of the blackmail and other things that have been done out here, mental torturers coming in and doing interviews when not meant to' he writes.

A letter was handed in to Downing Street by the IRPSG on 10 December, United Nations Human Rights Day, protesting the ill-treatment of Irish Republican Prisoners in Maghaberry.

IRPSG Public Meeting,
Bloody Sunday Anniversary,
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,
London WC1 (nearest tube: Holborn),
Monday 31 January 7 pm.
Chair: Gerry Downing, Secretary IRPSG
Speaker: Martin Óg Meehan, Republican Network for Unity

After the Irish bailout: The financial wolf pack targets new victims

By Nick Beams, National Secretary of the Socialist Equality Party (Australia) 1 December 2010

This is an extract from article by Nick Beams from the World Wide Socialist Web (WSWS), <http://www.wsws.org>. It is good as a concise generalised analysis. The problem with WSWS is that they fail politically to intervene in any serious way in the labour movements in different countries; they reject the tactic of the united front in the Trotskyist Transitional Programme by rejecting anything that would facilitate the working class testing out their false leaders day by day—ED.

It is doubtful where there is any greater degree of mystification, in any sphere of economics or politics, than in the way financial market operations are described. The so-called Irish bailout announced last Sunday is a

striking case in point. What has taken place is not the bailout of Ireland. Rather, the Irish government has agreed to the demands from international financial markets that all the resources of the state be deployed to ensure that all Irish debts and financial assets held by banks and financial institutions are paid in full, at the expense of the working class. In other words, it is not "Ireland" that has failed and requires a bailout, but the holders of Irish debt—the European and international banks.

The agreement is expected to cost Irish families an additional €4,000 each, on top of the €4,000 they are estimated to have lost already. And, as if to emphasise that there is no line it will not cross in order to meet the rapacious demands of the

financial markets, the government agreed that pension funds would contribute €17.5 billion to the bailout. No sooner was the agreement announced, however, than the financial wolf pack began lining up its next target ... Portugal, Spain or possibly Belgium. The deepening European financial crisis underscores the fact that the collapse of the US investment bank Lehman Brothers in September 2008 was not the result of a cyclical downturn, which would be followed by "recovery", but marked the beginning of a breakdown of the entire post-war global capitalist order.

The onset of the US financial crisis in 2007 had an immediate impact on European banks. They had been either directly connected to the sub-prime operations of the US finance houses, as in the

case of Germany's state banks, or engaged in similar speculative activity. If that were all there was to it, the crisis would have been over by now. But the initial bankruptcies were only the expression of far deeper contradictions within the global capitalist economy.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, following the end of the post-war economic boom, world capitalism has been characterised by what could be called the rise and rise of financialisation. One significant statistic points to the extent of the process. Some three decades ago, the stock of global financial assets was equivalent to around 100 percent of world GDP. By 2007 it had risen to 350 percent. The implications of such a vast shift are now manifesting themselves in the deepening debt and financial crisis.

Notwithstanding the delusions of various financial spokesmen that money can somehow, by its very nature, indefinitely beget money, financial assets represent, in the final analysis, a claim on the wealth produced by social labour, in particular, the surplus value extracted from the working class in the process of capitalist production. For a time, so long as money kept pouring into the financial

system, this economic law seemed to be held in abeyance, as vast financial profits were accumulated through the appreciation of asset values, especially real estate. It really did seem that money could turn into more money, outside the process of capitalist production.

Eventually, however, the laws of capitalist economy did assert themselves, not peacefully, but in the manner described by Marx ... like the law of gravity asserts itself when a house falls about our ears. The house of finance collapsed in September 2008. Governments responded with bailout and stimulus packages to prevent an immediate plunge into depression. But these measures failed to resolve the crisis, they only shifted it. Trillions of dollars of debt were transferred from the banks and finance houses onto the books of the state. Now these debts must be paid by slashing the living standards and social conditions of the working class...

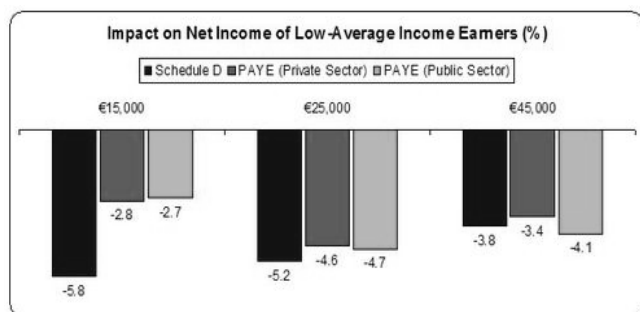
However, the monetary union had significant consequences within Europe itself. Among other things, it removed the possibility for the less competitive or so-called peripheral economies to improve their position in world markets by devaluing

their currencies. The gap in their balance of payments was covered by an inflow of capital from the banks and financial institutions of the so-called core countries, in particular Germany and France. This capital was used to finance real estate developments and tourist projects, and to promote economic growth, in turn providing export markets for the more powerful European economies. A virtuous economic circle was established.

German capitalism enjoyed considerable benefits. In 1990, at the time of reunification, exports constituted around 25 percent of GDP. By 2008 they had risen to 47.2 percent, the highest proportion in the world, much of it resulting from exports to the rest of the eurozone. Moreover, the euro traded at a lower level against other currencies than the Deutschmark would have done, providing a competitive edge for German exports in international markets. This phase of capitalist development, made possible by the expansion of debt, has now come to an end. A new period has opened up, in which all the contradictions that tore Europe apart in the first half of the twentieth century are resurfacing.

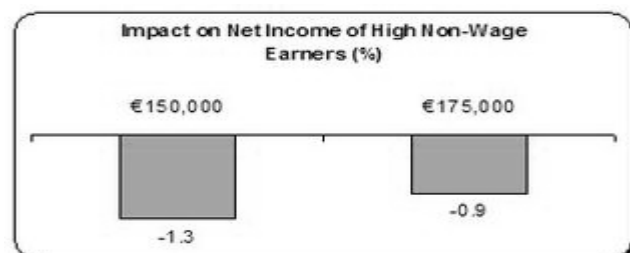
Ireland: The Creepy Millionaires' Budget By Michael Taft of Notes on the Front, 8/12/2010

The 'creepy' is in the detail which the Government didn't reveal. Social welfare rates will fall by 4 percent (except for pensioners). Regarding low-average earners this is what the [budget tables](#) tell us.



All low-average income earners - self-employed and PAYE (both private and public sector) will suffer considerable falls in income.

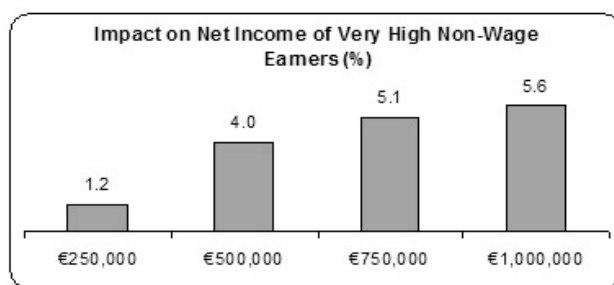
This is where it starts getting creepy. Those who receive income via rents, dividends, interest and self-employment (non-wage income, or Schedule D taxpayers) are, unsurprisingly, the wealthiest in society. When we hit the stratosphere of high earnings - over €150,000 per annum - those who receive income via non-wages make up nearly 75 percent of all income received above that level; the remaining 25 percent comes from high-earning PAYE taxpayers (e.g. managers, executives, higher professionals, etc.).



What happens to these high-income, non-wage earners? According to the budget tables. They get off pretty lightly - seeing their net income fall by approximately 1 percent. Contrast that with low-average income earners, including social welfare income. It's substantially less.

But this is where it gets really creepy.

The budget tables stop their comparisons at €175,000. With the help of the [Deloitte tax calculator](#), we can go higher. This is what Deloitte tells us for non-wage incomes that leave the stratosphere and circle far above the planet the rest of us live on.



That's right - those are not negative figures. Budget 2011 provides considerable tax breaks for those on very high non-wage incomes. If you happen to be a millionaire you are nearly 6 percent better off with Fianna Fáil's budget. How does this occur?

This is how Deloitte breaks down the millionaire's budget. They will pay €11,936 more on income tax and PRSI. However, under the Universal Social Charge, they pay €34,931 less than under the Health and Income levies which the Charge. That really puts the 'Social' in Universal Social Charge.

And at the risk of totally creeping you out, the [ESRI estimates](#) that there will be no wage-growth next year. However, non-wage income (rents, dividends, interest, and self-employment) will grow by 29 percent. So those very high non-wage earners can look forward to not only an increase in their incomes, but tax breaks on top of that.

Truly, a millionaire's budget.

Jimmy Reid: "It cannae be Lenin — he's deid"

Obituary by Tony Fox

Political Polemics

When Jimmy Reid died on 11 August the outpouring of sycophantic praise for this rank class traitor was positively nauseating. He is the type of working class leader we needed today we are told by Gregor Gall, professor of industrial relations at the University of Hertfordshire and frequent speaker on the left circuit in *the Guardian* and Martin Kettle also in *the Guardian*, by *the Telegraph*, *the Mail*, etc. From the liberal reactionary press to the outright Tory all have recommended him to us. Back in 1972 the *New York Times* printed in full his speech accepting the Rectorship of Glasgow University and *The Independent* here did the same two days after he died.

On the 'far left' things were no better. They all either ignored or positively welcomed this 'advice' to us from our direct class enemies. Their class consciousness is indeed at an historically low ebb if they cannot even speculate as to why these would recommend this man and his methods to us as our ideal type of workers' leader. Is it not surely the case that they know capitalism is safe in the hands of such people with a talent for hiding their treachery behind left-sounding demagoguery? The modern equivalent, one reviewer told us, is Tommy Sheridan and we identified him as a political fraud many years ago at an anti-poll tax rally. Although in fairness Tommy has campaigned tirelessly for his beliefs and has gone to jail for them. His miseducation is entirely down to the Ted Grant leadership of Militant who deliberately cultivated such an approach in him, in Derek Hatton and others with a talent for motivating the masses, just as Reid was groomed by the CPGB. And he really does not deserve to be imprisoned by the evidence of the Bertie Smalls amongst his former comrades in the SSP; where is the class consciousness of these people from the city of the Red Clydesiders who turn state evidence on behalf of the News of the World?

The rise of Scottish nationalism too can be dated to this work-in; an appeal to the 'we Scots are all in this together' was a vital component of Reid's approach, which he used to undermine the feelings of class solidarity with the contemporary miners' strike and many other industrial disputes south of the border and with the movement against internment in the north of Ireland.

Every bourgeois journalist's obituary identified what it was about Reid they admired so much: "We are not going to strike. We are not even having a sit-in strike. Nobody and nothing will come in and nothing will go out without our

permission. And there will be no hooliganism, there will be no vandalism, there will be no bevvying because the world is watching us, and it is our responsibility to conduct ourselves with responsibility, and with dignity, and with maturity" said Reid.

We will be responsible non-strikers who will not threaten to expropriate, because the right to private property is the question every occupation of a factory raises and we are not going down that road. Workers Liberty's Dale Street tells us why in his obituary (of which more later):

"There was never anything radical about Reid's politics. As McTernan (Blair's Political Secretary) wrote: "Not for Jimmy Reid the revolutionary impossibility of the hard left ... Reid stood for an austere working-class morality." McTernan was right. In an interview conducted in 1975, for example, Reid described "any other road" to socialism apart from "the democratic and electoral road" as "lunacy". Asked in the same interview for his opinion of the International Marxist Group (today: "Socialist Resistance"), the Workers Revolutionary Party (today defunct) and the International Socialists (today: the SWP), Reid bluntly replied: "I reject them. My main criticism is that they are really elitist in a sense."

Of the 52 comments on the Socialist Unity obituary blog ours was the only dissenting post:

"Comrades, Lenin and Trotsky and many other revolutionaries made speeches far better than Lincoln's Gettysburg address but the New York Times, or any other major capitalist media organ, never praised them and printed them in full ... "Gee, that guy Lenin really hit the nail in the head there with his April Theses, we have to publish it in full in the next edition" we can hear them exclaiming in excitement and admiration. Old William Morris used to get really worried when he got the praise of his enemies saying he knew then he was doing something seriously wrong. And, of course, Reid led a work-in, not an occupation, a popular front measure to defuse the class struggle against the government, which it did. Jimmy Reid was a class traitor back then before he ever wrote for *The Sun*." Comment by Gerry Downing — 30 August, 2010.



Jimmy Reid (front left) and Jimmy Airlie (right), both stalwarts of the Communist party, address the press in 1971 at the height of the shipyard dispute.

Jim McLean thought otherwise:

"Surely the definition of "Class Traitor" is one who works directly against the interests of the proletariat, in the instance of the Work In, this was to the direct benefit of the employees and their families in both social and economic terms. It could be stated that it was a short term solution outwit the class struggle but a betrayal of the working class, I think not." Comment by Jim McLean — 30 August, 2010 @ 10:33 am.

But an ex-Trotskyist, STP, did better two weeks earlier in squaring his circle:

"The tendency of the CP to also capitulate to the union bureaucracy, as they do in Unison, also traditionally kept them with influence. If you are, instead, a principled Trot you know that the union leadership will hunt you down and expel you e.g. Yunus Bakhsh (SWP) & Glenn Kelly (Socialist Party) I can't immediately think of any witch-hunting of CP members by the leaderships since the 60s or 70s (maybe EPTU later?) and that says something.

But I'd welcome a rapprochement. I often read the 'Morning Star' and it is a lot better than say the LRC's statements. I'd like the 'Morning Star' really to be the 'paper of the left', under the control of all traditions and in a united Left party in which we would all genuinely work together and let our experiences guide us forward - and in which doubtless we would make changes to our views." Comment by STP — 14 August, 2010 @ 1:48 am

The Socialist Workers did an Obituary; *Reid led a fightback*, by Dave Sherry

"Under Reid's direction the stewards opted for a work-in rather than a sit-in, which meant cooperating with the official receiver to finish the ships under construction. Concerned primarily with winning public opinion, the work-in was conceived and conducted as a Scottish popular

front and not as a confrontation with government."

Nevertheless, there was something to be said for this kind of popular frontism, in comrade Sherry's opinion:

"Despite these limitations, it raised the hopes of thousands of militants and became a symbol for all those who wanted rid of the Tories. It won massive support and inspired hundreds of other workplace occupations across Britain. This rising struggle and the miners' strike of 1972 shattered Tory morale."

Now we turn to Workers Liberty. Jim Denham wrote a paean of praise from him on 19 August, 2010 and posted his famous 'rat-race' speech in full, following the NYT and the Indy:

"Whatever his faults — and they were many — Jimmy Reid embodied the truth that workers, when united, can force serious concessions out of capitalism."

As with supporting Len McCluskey against Jerry Hicks in the Unite General Secretary election comrade Denham does not look behind the mask lest he see the reflection of his own face. His comrade Dale Street had a few more criticisms on 6 September:

"In August of 1971, when the first wave of redundancies had taken place, 69% of those declared redundant took part in the work-in. By December of the same year, after further waves of redundancies, 27% of redundant workers were involved in the work-in. By June of the following year only 14% of redundant workers were 'working-in', amounting to 2.6% of the retained (i.e. non-redundant) workforce."

Nonetheless:

"Despite the limitations inherent in the idea of a 'work-in', the earliest days of the work-in were inspirational. It sent out the message that job losses and redundancies were not inevitable. It demonstrated that the Tories' policies of withdrawing support from what they termed 'lame ducks' could be defied. It showed that working-class solidarity was not just a slogan but a real social and political force."

There you have it. It is almost as if our self-declared revolutionaries had two mutually exclusive compartments in their political brains, one full of trenchant criticism and justifiable class outrage at the attacks of the capitalists and the perfidy of Reid and the other full of class compromise and capitulation to the masters of life and their servants within the workers' movement. The Stalinists are bagmen for the trade union bureaucracy, but let's all join with them anyway, STP reasons. Why could we not seek to build a party composed of militants like Yunus Bakhsh and Glenn Kelly and not capitulate to these bagmen? Jim Mclean thinks that

"short term solution (which) outwits the class struggle... (are not) a betrayal of the working class". The SWP's Dave thinks it was popular frontism but cannot see what is wrong with a bit of that, the AWL's Denham thinks Reid was just great but his comrade Dale has a few problems with his counterrevolutionary outlook. Nevertheless that particular compromise produced good results, he thinks, so we have to go with it. All this stuff is a repudiation of revolutionary politics, it is just dirty opportunist politics in our view.

A class traitor is someone who betrays the long-term interests of the whole class, and that class is globally constituted with national section, a few temporary concessions to a local workforce to 'outwit the class struggle' in no way excuses this treachery. Anti-EEC/EU economic nationalism was central to Reid's politics and campaigns as was a bogus anti-monopoly defence of small capitalist enterprises, the 'small man' so beloved of US red-necked reaction. Clearly capital-



isms as a whole was greatly assisted by this work-in which removed some of the most militant workers from the political confrontation with Heath. But there must be some forthright opponents of Reid out there. We found just two:

The first was Mick Hume in his blog 'Spiked'. Older comrades will remember Mick with affection as the Revolutionary Communist Party's editor of *Living Marxism* (and LM until it collapsed in 2000 as a result of a libel suit). His piece is called, *Tory David Cameron's debt to Red Jimmy Reid* and is subtitled *How the 1971 UCS 'work-in', led by the recently deceased firebrand, helped to pave the way for today's all-in-it-together response to the crisis*. He makes this case very well in his article and we were almost tempted to contact him for political collaboration until we encounter a very strange phrase half way down the article which brought all those bad old memories flooding back:

"During the historic miners' strike of 1984-1985, Jimmy Reid launched a famous (and not unjustified) attack on NUM president Arthur Scargill for his 'kamikaze' leadership of the dispute."

This is followed by a very good point that Scargill's Plan for Coal was analogous to Reid's defence of capitalism on the Clyde. But who on earth, apart from the RCP and open capitalist reaction itself, could justify Reid's appalling scab-heading attacks on those heroic miners by his vilification of Scargill in the pages of Rupert Murdoch's Sun? We remember that the RCP distinguished themselves, and delighted their yuppy followers (weren't they so well dressed compared to the rest of the ragged left?), by demanding that Scargill call off the strike for a 'democratic' national ballot. They got dubbed Ray Chadburn's Party (the leader of the scabbing Nottingham miners) and some Yorkshire miners dumped a few RCPers in a canal because of this. The blog's blurb explains it all: "Spiked is endorsed by free-thinkers such as John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx, and hated by the narrow-minded such as Torquemada (a leader of the Spanish Inquisition to save your googling) and Stalin." Now anyone who says they can meld the libertarian bourgeois philosophy of Mill (the right to scab!) with the revolutionary socialism of Marx and boast of a consistent line is lying, the two are antipodes, mutually exclusive, socially hostile doctrines.

The other comes from the WSWS website, which is produced by David North's US-based Socialist Equality party. Like Spiked it is a pleasure to read in its attacks on class compromisers and it also correctly identifies the politics of Reid. Until we realise from what political direction that the attack is coming. *Caledonian University Institutional Archive* lists scores of articles and some pamphlet

by the Socialist Labour League and Workers Press on the UCS work-in, far more than other left group, correctly opposing the class collaboration of Reid. Gerry Healy's problem in the SLL and WRP was that he was organically incapable of relating to and incorporating workers into his organisation. Twice he won a substantial working class base, from the CPGB around Brian Behan after Khrushchev's 1956 denunciation of Stalin; a rank-and-file conference drew 500 shop stewards in 1958 and again in the early 70s around Alan Thornett and the Cowley car factory in Oxford. He quickly got rid of these when they challenged the bureaucratic centralist regime he had constructed. Bob Pitt makes the following assessment of the party Healy built at this time in his excellent (mostly) pamphlet, *The Rise and Fall of Gerry Healy*:

"Healy's 'orthodoxy' (which was in fact characterised by ignorance of, and contempt for, the political positions of Leninism and Trotskyism) offered no revolutionary alternative to those he dismissed as 'revisionists'. Healy could attack the IS's intervention in industry for its syndicalism and economism, but the SLL made no at-

tempt to organise a real opposition to the bureaucracy inside the unions. And while Healy could deride Militant's aim of transforming the Labour Party, the SLL failed to carry out even the most minimal fraction work in the party which still held the political allegiance of mass of the working class. As for the IMG, its uncritical attitude to the IRA and its turn away from the labour movement in search of 'new vanguards' were lambasted by the SLL. However, Healy's response to the Irish liberation struggle was to denounce 'the reactionary, indiscriminate violence of the Provisionals' (while engaging in a short flirtation with the leadership of Official Sinn Féin) and to hold the occasional SLL public meeting when Ireland hit the headlines. No serious activity was carried out by the YS among students, and the SLL's position on the women's movement was distinguished by downright political backwardness."

This is an accurate characterisation of Healy's SLL at the time of the sit-in, of which Pitt makes no mention in his pamphlet understandably because the intervention was totally of a literary nature and so no threat whatsoever to Reid, who controlled the forces on the ground. North has taken this method to its extremes. He has erected an ideological justification for never fighting in the mass bourgeois-workers Labour and Social Democratic parties internationally, which still retain the political allegiances of millions of workers in the most advanced countries, because they are simply capitalist parties now he says, never fighting the trade union bureaucracies because he says they are no longer workers' organisations, simply organs of capitalist control and so new unions must be build, of course led by himself.

Similarly he has abandoned the fight for the self-determination of oppressed nations, these leaderships are just capitalists like the capitalist in the imperialist heartlands, there are no longer oppressed and oppressor nations and as for women's oppression he has not advanced one iota beyond Healy's backwardness, today supporting Roman Polanski and dubbing the raped thirteen year old child 'a teenage model' on the make. Without an understanding of Trotsky's Transitional Programme and the method that produced it revolutionaries cannot successfully intervene in struggles of the working class. We tackle this question in the letter pages of this journal.

Now let us look at Reid's "rat-race" speech itself. The first two sentences, "Alienation is the precise and correctly applied word for describing the major social problem in Britain today. People feel alienated by society". This is the totally incorrect basis for the rest of the fraudulent article. Alienation is not the major social problem; it is a symptom of the social problem. The problem is private capitalist ownership of the means of production. Wealth is privately owned and socially produced. So people do not just "feel alienated by society" they are materially alienated from the product of their labour



And the lone objector on the Socialist Unity blog on 13 August:

"Such typical tosh from the Morning Star... Am I really expected to believe that Reid was such a sound chap when he was a member of the CP, but in later years..... well, one par?! A disgrace, and no wonder their journo's threaten strike every year. No wonder the left is in such dire straits!" Comment by Ann Douglas — 13 August, 2010.

And the reply from maestro Andy himself:

"I wonder what her real motivations are?"naiveté? I suspect." Comment by Andy Newman — 13 August, 2010.

What naiveté to condemn the MS for lying to the working class on behalf of the trade union bureaucracy and the capitalist establishment about the kind of leaders we need in this major crisis! We must absolutely trust all these, they have our best interests at heart, you silly woman!

by the objective fact that they must sell their labour power to the capitalist in order to live and perforce enter into a subordinate and humiliating social relation with that capitalist in order to do so. It is useful here to list the four forms of alienation Marx outlined, as extracted from Wikipedia, *Marx's theory of alienation*:

1. Alienation of the worker from the work he produces, from the product of his labor.
2. Alienation of the worker from working, from the act of producing itself. Capitalism removes the worker's feeling of control over the use and exchange of his labor power.
3. Alienation of the worker from himself as a producer, from his or her "species being" or "essence as a species".
4. Alienation of the worker from other workers or producers. Capitalism reduces labour to a commercial commodity to be traded on the market, rather than a social relationship between people involved in a common effort for survival or betterment."

Reid degrades this profound theory into a mere question of bad attitudes; if only we treated

each other better, learned to take decisions together for the good of all things would work out fine. This is how Karl Marx see the elimination of alienation and all capitalist oppression in *The German Ideology*:

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

Reid even quotes Jesus Christ "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?" His message to the Presbyterian students of Glasgow Caledonian University, worried by a radicalising working class, was the rat-race can be overcome by cleansing our souls of greed and evil and he will then guarantee their privileges against the threat of socialist revolution. This is why Reid's moral humbuggery went down so well with the capitalist establishment and its defenders. It had its origins in the crashing banalities of Jesus Christ's Sermon on the Mount, delivered (or later invented to gut the message of the messianic Essenes, Christ's sect, of all oppositional, egalitarian content) to protect the Roman Empire against the impending Great Jewish Revolt led by the revolutionary Zealots (66-70 AD). Its function was to ward off threats of revolution articulated in the main in those days, if not seriously practiced, by the Trotskyist zealots of Gerry Healy's SLL.

Lastly we will sum up by examining the remark of the ship yard worker who misheard John Lennon's name when it was announced that he had given a £5,000 cheque to the work-in and said "It cannae be Lenin — he's deid".

That worker clearly knew who Lenin was, he knew his spirit would be on his side in the class struggle and he had discussed Lenin with fellow workers, no doubt as a result of attending or taking to those who had attended CPGB meetings. Lenin was indeed 'deid' for the CPGB even if they still used his name, with a history of some forty years of class betrayal behind them by then and he is clearly 'deid' for those leaders without enough class consciousness to recognise what was wrong with what Jimmy Reid did and said back in 1971-2. But we are confident there are enough who still understand the revolutionary heritage of Lenin and Trotsky to forge a genuine Leninist-Trotskyist revolutionary party by learning those lessons today.

The Jerry Hicks Campaign: Good Trot, Bad Trot and Trot in the Middle

By Gerry Downing



Dave Osler: formed an 'unfavourable impression' of Jerry Hicks because he spoke to a small meeting with 'the bodily gestures appropriate to a far larger gathering'.

This article was written before Unite's general secretary election result was announced. The result was: 1. Len McCluskey - 101,194, 2. Jerry Hicks - 52,527. Les Bayliss, the open right-wing candidate, came third. Before the election those promoting McCluskey told members that Bayliss would win if the 'left' was divided. Following the result Bayliss has resigned office and now his former right-wing supporters have been embraced by the United 'Left' in the furtherance of advancing their career

positions in the Unite bureaucracy. However there is now a prospect of building a genuine rank-and-file movement from those who supported Jerry Hicks and standing future candidates under its name and spreading the message to all the other unions: a national rank-and-file movement independent of all TU bureaucrats is the only way to defend the working class now and fight the cuts. See: Brian Pearce, Some Past Rank-and-File Movements, (1959) <http://www.marxists.org/archive/>

The Jerry Hicks for Unite general Secretary Campaign has provoked an outbreak of nasty political bile from those elements on the left who have made the strategic decision to row in with the trade union bureaucracy and their Stalinist bagmen. In the lexicon of the bureaucracy these are the "Good Trots". The "Bad Trots" are those who fight to overthrow capitalism and to defeat their agents within the Labour movement, the Labour party leaders and the TU bureaucracy who are the main barrier to the class struggle and so to the advance of the working class to revolutionary consciousness.

The bureaucracy has various rightist, Stalinist and fake leftist "Good Trot" defenders, in reality renegades from Trotskyism, even as they understood it. For example Counterfire, a right wing split from the SWP, supports McCluskey as do the AWL. Note Counterfire are for a "network of rank-and-file activists" not a movement independent of the bureaucracy which Hicks supports and McCluskey bitterly opposes:

"Therefore (for fear right-winger Bayliss might get elected) Unite members should fight for as large a vote for McCluskey as possible - and build a network of rank and file activists to make sure that vote is a mandate for effective resistance to the cuts." [1]

The purpose of this article is to fight for the political souls of those who are vacillating, those "Middling Trots" who are pulled both ways by the class struggle and by their political organisations and by the lure of quick and cheap political advancement over the backs of the working class via the structures of the union bureaucracy or via bourgeois parliament, often a combination of both. Of course there are many other Maoists, Left Communists and anarchist tendencies that are anti-Trotskyist and so 'objectively' act as a barrier to its overthrow but who are nevertheless sincere class struggle fighters and with whom we must ally in the traditional united front tactic to advance the struggle.

In the first place let us mention Dave Osler, the famous blogger, a self-confessed renegade from Trotskyism who puts forward the following reason for not supporting Jerry Hicks:

"I must admit to having formed an unfavourable

impression of the man after watching an extraordinary performance in which he addressed a meeting of around 200 people as if it was a mass rally, including the bodily gestures appropriate to a far larger gathering." [1]

This was a minor "crime", one would have thought, but look at the petty bourgeois fears displayed in the words "mass rally". These words conjure up those tumultuous meetings of the Soviets in Moscow in 1917 and the Hitler's Nuremberg rallies and, of course, those rallies associated with the Iranian Revolution in 1979 which went so badly wrong. Economic collapse may well bring class conflict and mass mobilisations of left and right and where will it all end? Jerry Hicks and his ilk with his "bodily gestures appropriate to a far larger gathering" (making him appear far larger than he is via wild hand wavings, expansive and frightening gestures suggesting desire for revolution?) and "Bad Trots" who support him may awake the sleeping giant, the working class. And this may provoke the fascist monsters of the EDL to attack; where is a radical/conservative middle of the road former leftist to turn after his libel case victory? We mention Osler to highlight the dilemma of the petty bourgeoisie in general.

But the Socialist Unity blog run by Respect member Andy Newman has been the site of most of the Jerry-bashing and very little 'official' support from Andy for Respect member Jerry. On 4 September, 2010 in JERRY HICKS IN TODAY'S SUN, <http://www.socialistunity.com/?p=6595>, KevinM, Anonymous and Doh! launched their attacks on Jerry and this writer:

"#4 KevinM you too have had the misfortune of coming across Gerry Downing who is a particularly nasty sectarian armchair revolutionary. Whoever GD supports is akin to the kiss of death but Hicks is happy to have him distributing his nasty London busworkers leaflets attacking Len McCluskey.

The nasty attacks haven't worked though as most London busworker branches have nominated Len McCluskey including I believe Gerry Downing's own branch. Gerry Downing the leader of no-one and responsible to no-one dispenses with his poisonous bile at anyone who actually does have any responsibility or power, be it a shop steward or general secretary. If Gerry Downing who is a bus driver was such a leader of men and women why is he not been elected as a shop steward? Oh

I forgot he was one a few years ago but only very, very briefly as the members quickly voted him out.

Comment

by Anonymous — 5 September, 2010

In fact my branch did not nominate McCluskey, because the first attempt was before the opening of the nominations with no notice and the second attempt did not follow the rules - no time or place for the nomination meeting on the notice despite repeated requests. But what were the "nasty" bits of the London Busworkers leaflet[2] and that Weekly Worker article,[3] the "poisonous bile" that so upset our opponents? They were, of course, the best bits which tell it like it is:

"Len McCluskey is a 'left' union bureaucrat; even his most enthusiastic supporters have to go back 25 years to find the last time he fought for the workers. Len is a career bureaucrat, one of the 'elites', his militancy is for election purposes only. The right-winger Les Bayliss (an open and genuine bosses' man) has no chance of getting elected. We deserve better! Elect a fighter to fight these Tory-Lib-Dem attacks on all of us. Jerry Hicks will take only an average worker's wage."

And from that Weekly Worker article:

"Jane Loftus was the Socialist Workers Party member on the executive of the Communications Workers Union who voted for the sell-out deal against SWP policy after last year's postal strike. How many more manifestations of the 'Jane Loftus syndrome' do we need before we put the working class before 'influence' and careers in the bureaucracy?" [4]

Inside the United Left itself it was found necessary to clear its Aegean stables of any suspected "Bad Trots". "Mark" was the first ousted and full timer Rhys McCarthy then sharpened his knife:

"Jerry Hicks has been putting it around about setting up a new rank and file group in Unite. Will

he and his little gang please go and do so, then we can all be spared the infantile parasitical anti union behaviour of many of his supporters.

What is hilarious is that first they try and hijack and corrupt the Manchester UL hustings and when that fails they take the sectarian and undemocratic decision (putting their own ultra left grouplets agenda before that of the working class trade union movement) to stand their own candidate whilst wanting to stay in and disrupt the UL. Monty Python's Life of Brian comes to mind. Stop your parasitical and infantile behaviour and have the decency and courage to set up your own group - or haven't you got the guts?"

One Dave Quayle now weighed in, note he raises the question of what is a "Good Trot":

"I have followed this and related correspondence with some interest! I fully agree with Sean (McGovern)'s comment of "goodbye, gobshite" in relationship to "Mark" and the sooner he follows Sean's advice the better. However it does lead on to another much more serious and broader issue that particularly comes up as a result of the GS elections. This that (sic) is how do we, in the UL, relate to and interact with followers of Leon Trotsky's 4th International commonly known as "Trots". Many of us have grown old watching them split reform and split again always showing the same love of conspiracy theory and secrecy. It has personally given me years of mild amusement, but, these days, I must confess that, I have lost the plot as to who is what and where within their ranks.

My own view is that we should continue as we are now and include these people within the UL. We agreed the protocol re Len/Hicks and our network and it has been stuck to more or less notwithstanding Mark's attempts to smash it. When the election is over for GS we will need maximum left unity to fight the real enemy and that's this Tory government and their Lib Dem flunkies. Now I know that this was not always the case in the AUG but it was (again more or less) in the old T&G Broad Left. In Region 6 (now the NW and my own region) we had/have some particularly good and active comrades who came from the Trotskyite end of the political spectrum and in my view they should remain welcome in our ranks.

Let me make it clear my tolerance does not extend to "Mark" and his ilk.

Yours in comradeship, Dave

PS ok, I follow the 2nd International and as I get older even the 3rd!"

Well, comrade Trot, as you can see from the above highlighting you have been warned by the arrogant bureaucrat, you are here on sufferance, the heirs of uncle Joe are running this show and knuckle under or 'goodbye gobshite'. But not all the "Good Trots" are in Liverpool. Eyes (slightly) left to Bronwen Handyside (UL site manager) who might be suspect because of some "Bad Trot" actions in the past, like supporting the Liverpool Dockers and exposing the class treachery of the Bill Morris leadership of the TGWU on that crucial



Bronwen Handyside: "I wish they had not taken that vote on not allowing Alberto Durango to speak" she said. "Don't worry Bronwen, I won't tell a soul what you just did" I lied ironically. "You bastard, you are going to tell everybody". See Socialist Fight No. 3, p 9 or google: "Can't you hear the Gulag calling?"

struggle. She hastened to provide the required political grovel and establish her credentials as the best of the bureaucracy's "Good Trots":

"Hi Dave,

A few points: "By their deeds shall ye know them" - whether 2nd, 3rd or 4th Internationalists.

The deed of calling for a vote for Jerry Hicks in this period is criminally irresponsible in that the risk is that the left vote is split and Les Bayliss gets in (original underlining). This deed has placed the interests of the SWP above the interest of the class - in this case the crucial leadership we need for our union which is historically placed in size and inclusiveness to decisively influence the future course of events in the next period in favour of the working class. I find it truly astonishing that they cannot size up the critical nature of this leadership election (EC as well as GS) and make the correct estimate of the nature of the candidates standing. Fascinatingly, they show themselves to have no clue as to what is at stake. The coming mass movement against the cuts is going to run right over the top of them.

Having said that, I am in favour of lifting the suspension on the SWP on the strict proviso that they do not carry out a similar deed again - because I know with the utmost certainty that they will carry out a similar deed sometime soon and then it will be clear to everyone that is not the United Left who are the splitters, but the SWP who exclude themselves. I want it to be clear (as it will be) that is we in the United Left who seek unity.

You speak in this extremely positive way about 2nd and 3rd Internationalists overcoming what they have been taught about Trotskyists (and also their real life experience of the Trotskyist groups) to recognise that we can (and must) unite to take on the class enemy. This is of course what has

happened in practice for many years. I believe we also need to look at what any group or individual (Trotskyist or otherwise) shows through its actions it believes about unity. Rejecting a democratic vote at a left union-organised hustings meeting because your political party knows better, and organising to split the left vote in the crucial GS election are actions which promote disunity. Though it looks on the surface that we promote unity by turning the other cheek - in my opinion it is not possible to achieve unity by linking up with groups that are opposed to unity. Those that are acting in the interests of unity are acting in the interests of the class as a whole - not in the interests of their own group. We have to make some choices.

Last and least - FYI. I am one of the aforementioned Trotskyists, and we prefer to be known as that, rather than "Trots" or "Troskyites" which are most often used as a term of abuse. I am sure you will agree with me that in the face of the coming battles, when we are in need of the maximum unity, that we shouldn't use terms of abuse to each other, which only tend to make people pointlessly angry.

Bronwen Handyside"

By your deed of voting to stop victimised cleaners' shop steward Alberto Durango speaking at that United Left meeting on 18th July 2009 we know you, Bronwen. "Maximum unity", we note, does not include the likes of Alberto Durango because he was opposed to "unity" when he wanted to fight for his members and found himself betrayed by the Unite bureaucracy!

How good it must feel to be in a position to attack the SWP from a position of authority within the union bureaucracy, apparently just as old Gerry Healy used to do from within the WRP, with your assistance Bronwen. Only he attacked them ostensibly, and often in practice, from the left (mostly in a sectarian way, of course). You are attacking them from the opportunist right to facilitate your advance in the structures of the union. And there are good class fighters within the ranks of the SWP ("Trots in the middle"), as well as those who see the only way forward in accommodation with the bureaucracy ("Good Trots"). That fight is ongoing as is the fight within the Socialist Party, who are supporting McCluskey.

As the Weekly Worker article said, "Last month the SP wheeled out one of its foremost Unite 'lefts', Kevin Parslow, to justify its line...However, Hicks's "programme appears more 'left' than Len McCluskey's. "Jerry is in favour of the repeal of anti-union laws and confronting them when necessary. He would like to see the election of all officials and the general secretary on an average member's wage. He would prioritise public ownership and pensions, and puts forward the need for a public works programme."

A fair degree more "left" than Len, then, but what is the real problem with Hicks? Well, he just does not play the bureaucrats' game: "He is seen as not wanting to explain his policies" - i.e. he

walked out of the stitch-up Manchester hustings. "Socialists have influence inside the left by vocalising the pressure for action. This will be absolutely necessary in the next period. Excluding ourselves at this stage is a mistake" (The Socialist July 30). We are to understand from this that independently mobilising the rank and file is just not to be tolerated."

Jerry wrote a detailed reply to Kevin which effectively demolished the SP's case for McCluskey. Rob Williams defended the line but weakly and apologetically, showing that the left in the SP are still "Middling Trots" unlike the Nellistists who are almost purely electoralist and hankers to be like Die Linke in Germany. Rob concluded thus:

"Socialists have influence inside the left by vocalising the pressure for action. This will be absolutely necessary in the next period. Excluding ourselves at this stage is a mistake" (The Socialist July 30). The UL is still a new organisation and is still to be tested. Just because you call something 'United Left' doesn't make it so. What is important is the UL having its own internal democracy, with full-timers having the right to attend meetings and speak, but not to vote. We continue to fight for this programme within UL. For this and the reasons above we subsequently agreed to support Len McCluskey. Rob Williams"

As Tony Fox said Socialist Fight No 2:

"And, no, you will not get to change anything (in the rules) in future meetings because they have nobbled that too. Note the cute little piece on voting; if 'consensus' or the 'establishment of at

least an overwhelming majority of opinion' – the clapping mechanism (instead of voting we were all urged to clap our approval of proposals) – fails, "In the event of the need for voting mechanisms, a weighted system designed to reflect the relative numerical strength of the regions shall be considered by the National Co-ordinating Committee (NCC)". In other words at the AGM, if by some fluke or explosion of the class struggle, those present succeeded in overturning the Stalinists, the Woodleyites and the Simpsonites then they would simply produce a 'weighted vote' from their pockets, as King Arthur (Scargill) so memorably did with his 3,000 NUM miners' votes, and vote everyone down."

The UL has no internal democracy and there is no chance it will ever get it. It is dominated in personnel and ideologically by full timers and union employees whose career advancement depends on doing the bureaucracy's bidding. They guard the portals of the organisation, if you ever looked like democratising that body and allowing in the ranks who are in struggle it would be "goodbye gobshite". You must know this, Rob. The class struggle will oblige those "Trots in the Middle" to become either the "Good Trots" of the bureaucracy and their Stalinist bagmen or the "Bad Trots" of the working class and the revolution, i.e. genuine revolutionary Trotskyists.



Rob Williams speaks: The class struggle will oblige those "Trots in the middle" to become either the "Good Trots" of the bureaucracy and their Stalinist bagmen or the "Bad Trots" of the working class and the revolution, i.e. genuine revolutionary Trotskyists.

Endnotes

[1] Adrian Cousins, Unite election: Vote McCluskey, build grassroots resistance to cuts. 03 November 2010, <http://www.counterfire.org/index.php/features/38-opinion/7435-unite-election-vote-mccluskey-build-grassroots-resistance-to-cuts#comments>

[2] Unite: Len McCluskey or Jerry Hicks? 29 July, 2010 <http://www.davidosler.com/2010/07/unite-len-mccluskey-or-jerry-hicks/>

[3] View it here: j-downing – Scribd; www.scribd.com/people/.../1544314-gerald-j-downing

[4] Jane Loftus syndrome, Weekly Worker 830 August 26 2010, http://www.cpgb.org.uk/article.php?article_id=1004063

Obama's America: The Furlough—Intent and Impact

By Jake Cooper in San Francisco

Internationalism

California State workers have had 18 months of furloughs; the threat minimum wage in future budget impasses still hangs over our head. The furloughs ended June 30th after 18 months, the courts agreed with the Controller that paying minimum wage could not be accomplished with the current payroll system so, for now, the Governor lost his minimum wage gambit in turn he reinstituted furloughs in August. The message to State workers is contradictory, confusing and changes on a dime. Management says come to work then two days later stay home...yeah State workers are feeling like ping pong balls.

All the while the message to the public from the politicians and media pundits is that the 'budget crisis' is all the fault of the state workers and their pension costs.

From the trenches of Cal-Trans, to the drudgery of DMV offices, to the cubicles in thousands of offices, the facilities and workshops maintained by stationary engineers, the washrooms tenders

on the custodial staff, at the benches of the laboratories and in the Bio-Safety rated clean rooms the sentiment toward the Governor is clear: workers see him as a vindictive bastard who hates workers and loves the rich.

State workers find it hard to make financial plans for our families not knowing if our monthly paycheck will be full pay, partial pay or minimum wage. State workers feel like pawns in the fallout of the world economic crisis as it is impacting the California State budget impasse. All the while the politicians shed crocodile tears for us while they blame their partisan rivals for the budget stand-off. But we know their task is to drive down the living standard of the American workers by crushing the unions. And the sad thing is workers feel there is nothing we can do about these unending attacks on our wages and benefit packages which have been embraced by both Republicans and Democrats alike.

Keeping the workers in line:

Lacking class consciousness workers have not developed a class struggle perspective or a fighting leadership in our organizations. Feeding on and perpetuating this backwardness the union

tops are content to, and indeed are counted on, to deliver the workers for the Democrats at the polls each November regardless of the Democrats ability to deliver. The union class collaborationist leaders limit their resistance to appeals to the bosses' courts and to ineffectual minor mobilizations. While workers wait for the other shoe to drop our various unions' leaderships is intent to keep us sitting passively at our jobs; instead of organizing the rank and file for the militant job actions it will take to defend our salary and benefits for our selves and the workers who follow us in coming generations.

Objectively speaking only a general strike of all state workers coupled with public workers and teachers is the action it will take to defend our wages, benefits and catch up with the buying power lost to inflation over the last decade. To win and defend our standard of living labor needs to unite to smash the barrier of anti-labor laws (such as Taft Hartley which prevents strikes and promotes the concept of being strike legal which keeps us chained to our work-stations). These laws shackle our psychology and set the parameters of labors options preventing us from using our only really effective tools- UNIFIED

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

STRIKE ACTION AND CLASS SOLIDARITY!

Today's labor leaders have long ago accepted the shackles and cower at the thought of confronting them. But to win against the retrenchment today these laws must be swept away by direct action. Only by linking the struggle of the state workers to the recipients of services and linking the struggle of state, county, city workers to the fight for public education, and the unemployed and underemployed is it possible to build a workers movement which can stand down the capitalist crisis. But labor leaders committed to business unionism keep the working class separated into dozens of competing unions whose only joint role is to corral the workers into class collaboration with their exploiters political parties.

We know all our unions are giving money to the Democrats and now we see the SEIU hedging its bets has given \$100,000 to the Republican governors' conference. Ultimately workers have no faith in the Democrats to deliver relief. The only expectation or hope they have is that the Democrats will wield the cuts against us a little less severely. Theirs (the union tops) is a formula for creating disaffected members who become apathetic and resigned to the atomization and alienation we feel as workers without class consciousness. Their role is to assure our organizations (unions) do not seek an independent political role for the workers based on class struggle methods of organization.

The unions do nothing to mobilize the membership they are committed to their dead end policy of depending on the politicians and the courts. The breakdown of government is only a reflection of the generalized collapse of the capitalist systems ability to provide a "middle class" life-style to working people any longer. The post WWII Donna Reed, Leave it to Beaver mythology of the rising middle class in perpetuity is now a faded dream of what the American Dream was. The 35 year decline in workers real wages and should be an indication that the days of "go along to get along" bosom buddy with the Democrats business unionism is not working to even protect our basic standard of living.

While we are told to be happy to even have a job we have to consider what has happened to our income over the years. On top of an inflation to COLA ratio which has diminished out take home pay by 18% over ten years we have lost 15% to the furloughs or approximately 25%. This drive against union wages coincides with the socially generalized decline in the labor share and increase in capital share of the GDP.

The Bosses Agenda: drive down wages and destroy pensions

The ruling class politicians are tasked with administering the economic crisis in such a way that it protects corporate profit at the expense of workers jobs, salaries and benefits. In particular the task is to crush the few remaining unionized sectors of workers. The public workers as the largest remaining unionized sector are targeted here (in CA) and in almost every county, across these United States and internationally. And

judging from the weak response of our unions we have to conclude they are close to, if not, dead already. They have become little more than dues collecting agencies with no perspective of how to fight for workers interests.

The first six State workers unions that signed tentative agreements gave concessions with out even a hint of a fight. The concessions extracted from the public workers will be expected from workers in private industry. Lower wages, weaker benefits are being imposed on workers when (if-ever) the economy picks up and provides new jobs (note the drop in pay to auto workers from



Donna Reed with James Stewart and Carolyn Grimes in *It's a Wonderful Life*, (1946): The post WWII Donna Reed, Leave it to Beaver mythology of the rising middle class in perpetuity is now a faded American Dream.

\$28 down to \$14 per hour). Even before the G-20 meeting in Toronto last month the plan was clear to limit social spending and drive down unionized workers wages.

Beyond the financial burden on workers' families, the 18 months of furloughs (enforced leave of absence) followed by instability in July and August this year which has wreaked havoc on the management of work flow and accomplishment of tasks the state is mandated to attend to by law. Chaos and demoralization of the workforce is leading to retention and production problems which create waste and non-recoupable losses to the tax-payer. While the Governor attempts to drive back the state workers income by 15% he is draining the state economy of millions in lost circulation of retained wages (see furloughs drain California economy).

State and public workers have been made the media scapegoats for the budget impasse. The politicians and pundits point to the pensions of the relatively few top earners who have spiked their earnings and finagled pensions way above average retirees whose checks are under 30K. But these same pundits never point to the majority of State workers who will retire with such bare bones pensions. Indeed the drive by the free marketers today is against defined pensions. Although CalPers is not going away soon the bosses prefer 401K's to defined pension plans. The 401K leaves one with little option but to invest in the market so the bosses friends on Wall Street, who fix the game, can drain our

"investments" through a thousand fees and market fluctuations which tend to kill the small investor who generally has little understanding of or ability to "play the market".

The same hype is used in each attack on public workers. The Sac Bee or the ANG papers will post links to public workers salaries as a way to show the high salaries, this method was used to discredit the BART workers during negotiations last year. But you don't have to scratch too deep to see that a pyramid structure exists in all public works salaries which mimic the income stratification in private industry. A few well paid at the top and the bulk of us far below in the middle. But the media makes hay over the top earners as a way to turn the public against all state and public workers. It would be interesting to post the salary of these media hacks and their publishers along side that of the average state worker.

The attack on pensions and wages is couched in the manufactured anger of those without. State and Public workers are implicitly and in some cases explicitly being told to be happy we have a job because those without have none. We are told to be happy we have health care because so many have none. We are told not to fight the capitalists or their politicians, to sit and wait out the crisis, tighten our belts and continue to vote for the Democrats. This is a combined attack the right and left of the capitalists with the union bureaucracy on board try to keep us complacent waiting for the next court decision when the California Supreme Courts adjudicates the furlough cases on September 8th and the upcoming election in November.

The reformers both among the liberal/progressives and the left/socialist/anarchist milieu clamor on about how the crisis can be resolved by taxing the rich. Oh if only California's budget wasn't held hostage by the 2/3rds rule the progressive Democrats could pass progressive taxes and all would be rosy in California. This is the ideal dreaming of small minds, who seek endlessly to reform that which is can no longer be reformed. Progressive taxes are off the table as is economic reform which favors workers, the unemployed, the dependent and the poor.

The whole question is not how to make the capitalists pay the minimal taxes that their government gently "imposes" on them, but rather who should control the corporations: the capitalists and their government, or the workers?

For labor two win we must revitalize our unions, drive out the class collaborationist leaders, break with the bosses twin political parties and take independent political action. Such action can take the form of an independent workers/labor party but must not rely on legislative or judicial action to win. Political independence for the working class must seek a transitional program to bring us from where we are today through to the development of mass organizations of workers democracy such as work site committees, factory committees, councils of the unemployed and form up regional workers councils which use all means to replace the capitalists' government with a workers' government.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

Mumia Abu-Jamal; on Pennsylvania's death row for 29 years

By Dave Lindorff November 10, 2010

The three-decades-long murder case of Philadelphia journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has sat in solitary in a cramped cell on Pennsylvania's death row for 28 years fighting his conviction and a concerted campaign by the national police union, the Fraternal Order of Police, to execute him, was back in court Tuesday, with a three-judge federal Appeals Court panel reconsidering its 2008 decision backing the vacating of his death sentence, on orders of the US Supreme Court.

The three judges...two years ago agreed with a lower court judge, Federal District Judge William Yohn, that the jury in Abu-Jamal's 1982 trial had been provided with a poorly-worded and confusing jury ballot form and flawed instructions from the trial judge during the penalty phase. The confusion, they decided, could have misled jurors into thinking, incorrectly, that in order to consider a mitigating factor against voting for the death penalty, all 12 of the jurors would have had to agree to it. In fact, under the law, any individual juror can decide that there is a mitigating factor against a death sentence. Only aggravating factors that would argue for a death sentence have to be found by all members of the jury to be applicable.

The 2008 ruling was widely seen as a big victory for Abu-Jamal and his attorney Robert R. Bryan, as it meant either that he would avoid execution, instead serving a life sentence without possibility of parole, or that the Philadelphia district attorney would have to request a new penalty phase trial, with a new jury hearing arguments for and against imposition of a new death sentence.

Last January, however, the US Supreme Court threw a wrench into the case, ruling in an Ohio murder case involving Frank Spizak, a neo-Nazi (he sported a Hitler moustache at his trial) once sentenced to death for random killings of Jews and blacks, that a lower court order vacating his death sentence had been in error. That case had also focussed on the confusing language of a jury ballot form, and of the judge's instructions to the jury.

The high court, which also had pending before it at the time an appeal by the Philadelphia DA of the Third Circuit decision in Abu-Jamal's case, sent that case back down to the Third Circuit, asking Judges Sirica, Cowen and Ambro to review their decision in light of its decision in the Spizak case.

At Tuesday's hour-long hearing, Assistant DA Huge Burns tried to make the case that the issues in the Abu-Jamal jury instructions and ballot form were "almost identical" to those in the Spizak case.

Abu-Jamal's attorney, Widener University law

professor Judith Ritter, who had argued the same issue of a confusing jury instruction and ballot form successfully before the same judges as an assistant counsel in the 2007 hearing, made the counter-argument that the problems with the judge's instructions and the jury form in the Abu-Jamal case were "fundamentally different" from those in the Spizak case. The three judges seemed, in their initial remarks and in their questions, to be leaning towards the defence view.

As Judge Cowen asked, following DA Burns' argument, "Doesn't the jury form in Spizak significantly differ from our form? I found six differences." At another point in the hearing, he said, "Aren't the cases different in more than degree, but in kind?"

Judge Ambro noted that in the Abu-Jamal case, Judge Albert Sabo had told the jurors, "Remember again, your verdict must be unanimous." Ambro observed, "That's sort of a general over-arching instruction." He and Cowen both noted that the Spizak jury had never been told their decision had to be unanimous, while the word "unanimous" was used repeatedly in the Abu-Jamal case, both in the judge's verbal instructions and on the jury form.

Burns tried to counter that while "unanimous" may not have been used in the Spizak case, the jury was addressed as a single entity, at least implying unanimity might be required for the finding of a mitigating factor.

Attorney Ritter homed in on the differences between the Spizak and Abu-Jamal cases, saying, "In Spizak, you had an absence of instructions regarding mitigation that could have confused the jury. Here (in the Abu-Jamal case), it's not silent. Look at number 2 (in the jury ballot form). It starts, 'We the jury have found unanimously...'"

...After which Judge Ambro said, "For example, the word 'unanimous' was not used in Spizak." Judge Cowen added, "In our case, 'unanimity' was used time and time again, and in quite close proximity to where you find things about mitigating circumstances."

Of course, even if the three-judge panel decides to reaffirm its 2008 decision, the DA's office will almost certainly appeal again to the Supreme Court, where the same five judges who ruled against Spizak and referred the Abu-Jamal case back to the Third Circuit panel could vote to reverse the Third Circuit. In that event Abu-Jamal would have his death penalty reinstated. If the high court agreed with the Third Circuit, or if it chose not to take the case and let the ruling stand, then the DA would have to decide whether to leave Abu-Jamal with a life sentence, or to ask for a new penalty phase trial, which would take place back in state court.



The defence is hoping for a retrial of the penalty, since that would at least offer Abu-Jamal the chance to introduce new evidence regarding the shooting of Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. For example, the prosecution made a big point of highlighting the testimony of two witnesses, prostitute Cynthia White and taxi driver Robert Chobert, who both described the shooting of Faulkner by Abu-Jamal as an "execution," with Abu-Jamal standing astride the fallen cop and firing repeatedly at him at nearly point-blank range. The problem with that story is that only one bullet--the one that struck Faulkner in the middle of his forehead--hit the officer, yet no bullet impacts can be seen in crime scene photos of the area on the sidewalk where Faulkner lay, and police investigators reported finding no such marks either.

A test of a gun similar to Abu-Jamal's, firing similar metal-clad, high-velocity Plus-P ammunition at a section of old sidewalk concrete, proves that such impact marks should have been clearly visible. While a rehearing of the penalty phase of the trial would not be able to directly raise the issue of guilt, in a penalty phase re-hearing, the defence could be expected to present evidence that the "execution" scenario presented to the jury by the prosecution simply couldn't have happened, and witnesses would likely be called to challenge the story. That in turn would raise the risk, for the prosecution, that evidence -- or a witness recantation -- could open the door to a new challenge to Abu-Jamal's conviction. Even if the Third Circuit or the US Supreme Court rules against Abu-Jamal, and his original death sentence is reinstated, it is not the end of the road in this long-running case, however. Back on December 18, 2001, when Federal District Judge Yohn tossed out Abu-Jamal's death penalty, he noted in his ruling that he had "mooted" four other defence claims of uncon-

stitutional flaws in his death penalty hearing, on the grounds that there was no need to examine these, since he had already decided to vacate the penalty. As Abu-Jamal defence team attorney Christina Swarns notes, "We have an absolute right to have those claims considered." In other words, if the death penalty is reaffirmed, Abu-Jamal will be back before Judge Yohn again, where other powerful and compelling objections to the way his initial trial was conducted will have to be reviewed. Among the complaints:

* Prosecutor Joseph McGill's use of a statement made by Abu-Jamal when he was only 15, quoting Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Tse-tung that "Power flows from the barrel of a gun," in an effort to sway jurors towards imposing a death penalty.

* The rushing of the case and the inadequacy of Abu-Jamal's legal counsel, attorney Anthony Jackson, with Judge Sabo ordering the penalty phase hearing to begin the day following the jury's guilty verdict, and Jackson not requesting a delay to allow him to prepare. As a result, Jackson called not one character witness to

allow Abu-Jamal to develop a case for mitigating factors.

* Prosecutor McGill improperly advised jurors, with the approval of the judge, that they were "not asked to kill anybody," because there would be "appeal after appeal after appeal." The Supreme Court and the Third Circuit, as well as the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, have all repeatedly overturned death sentences because of prosecutors making similar statements to juries, on the grounds that it tends to remove from jurors any sense of the moral consequences of their profound decision. (McGill himself had a death penalty he had won overturned for this reason.)

* Finally the defence made the claim that the prosecution withheld from the defence information it had that local police and the FBI had called off years of surveillance of Abu-Jamal after concluding that, as the FBI put it in a note calling off monitoring of Abu-Jamal, "In March 1973, per bureau instructions, captioned subject (Abu-Jamal) was deleted from ADEX and no additional investigation conducted concerning his activities. Sources, however, have continued

For all other information and to offer support for Mumia Abu-Jamal, please contact:

**The Law Offices of Robert R. Bryan 2088 Union Street, Suite 4, San Francisco, CA 94123-4117
http://
www.MumiaLegalDefense.org.**

**WRITE to Mumia!
Mumia Abu-Jamal
AM 8335
SCI-Greene
175 Progress Drive
Waynesburg, PA 15370 USA**

to report periodically on COOK (Abu-Jamal's family name) and, although he has not displayed a propensity for violence, he has continued to associate himself with individuals and organizations engaged in Extremist activities."

Where We Stand – Socialist Fight EB

1. We stand with Karl Marx: 'The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. The struggle for the emancipation of the working class means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies but for equal rights and duties and the abolition of all class rule' (The International Workingmen's Association 1864, General Rules).

2. The capitalist state consists, in the last analysis of ruling-class laws within a judicial system and detention centres overseen by the armed bodies of police/army who are under the direction and are controlled in acts of defence of capitalist property rights against the interests of the majority of civil society. The working class must overthrow the capitalist state and replace it with a workers' state based on democratic soviets/workers' councils to suppress the inevitable counter-revolution of private capitalist profit against planned production for the satisfaction of socialised human need.

3. We recognise the necessity for revolutionaries to carry out serious ideological and political struggle as direct participants in the trade unions

(always) and in the mass reformist social democratic bourgeois workers' parties despite their pro-capitalist leaderships when conditions are favourable. Because we see the trade union bureaucracy and their allies in the Labour party leadership as the most fundamental obstacle to the struggle for power of the working class, outside of the state forces and their direct agencies themselves, we must fight and defeat and replace them with a revolutionary leadership by mobilising the base against the pro-capitalist bureaucratic misleaders to open the way forward for the struggle for workers' power.

4. We are full in support of all mass mobilisations against the onslaught of this reactionary Con-Lib Dem coalition. However, whilst participating in this struggle we will oppose all policies which subordinate the working class to the political agenda of the petty-bourgeois reformist leaders of the Labour party and trade unions.

5. We recognise that class society, and capitalism as the last form of class society, is by its nature patriarchal. In that sense the oppression of women is different from all other forms of oppression and discrimination. Because this social

oppression is inextricably tied to private property and its inheritance to achieve full sexual, social and economic freedom and equality for all we need to overthrow class society itself.

6. We fight racism and fascism. We support the right of people to fight back against racist and fascist attacks by any means necessary. Self-defence is no offence! We support 'No Platform' for all fascists but never call on the capitalist state to ban fascist marches or parties; these laws would inevitably primarily be used against workers' organisations, as history has shown.

7. We oppose all immigration controls. International finance capital roams the planet in search of profit and imperialist governments disrupts the lives of workers and cause the collapse of whole nations with their direct intervention in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan and their proxy wars in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, etc. Workers have the right to sell their labour internationally wherever they get the best price. Only union membership and pay rates can counter employers who seek to exploit immigrant workers as cheap labour to undermine the gains of past struggles.

Following the break-up of the International Trotskyist Current over disagreement on Roman Polanski and women's oppression Socialist Fight is now produced by the following Editorial Board:
Gerry Downing,
Ray Rising, Charlie Walsh and Aggie McCallum.

Ireland's Credit Crunch



Keating, Morrison, Corrigan

Kevin Keating is a trade union activist, a long-standing opponent of social partnership in the Irish Trade Union movement and advocate of rank and file organisation. Jonathan Morrison is a researcher with a wide knowledge of the political development of emerging economies. Joe Corrigan is an accountant with a background in economics and author of "Prisoners of Social Partnership," an analysis of the corrosive effects of collaboration between the Irish government and Trade Union leadership. In Ireland's Credit Crunch they discuss the roots of the current crisis in Ireland, the unprecedented scale of the threat to workers in Ireland and Europe and details of the programme that workers should advance to build a real alternative to the economic famine they are facing.

The 140 page book is available for £6 from Resistance Books. Just go to Paypal.com and send your payment to resistance@sent.com, adding £1 for postage in the UK, £2 elsewhere in the EU and £3 in the rest of the world. For bookshop orders use the ISBN number: 978-0-902869-76-9.

Further analysis of the Irish Crisis is available at: <http://www.socialistdemocracy.org>.

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Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

Class Struggle in Zimbabwe

by Ady, Revolutionary Internationalist League - FI (Zimbabwe)

Zimbabwe got its independence from Great Britain way after other African states had done so and only possible after a bloody and protracted war. She was a colony of Britain from 1890 and only attained her "independence" in 1980. The movements or parties that led the struggle against colonialism are today referred to as liberation movements, and in Southern Africa the majority of them are still the ruling parties.

Since Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980 from Britain, it is still using the Lancaster House Agreement Constitution, otherwise referred as the ceasefire agreement by most Zimbabweans - that facilitated transfer of power from former colonial master to majority black rule. The agreement signed by those leaders left the colonial structures intact. The Mugabe regime inherited the status quo and where very comfortable with it that the best they can do was to make 19 Amendments to the document. They had successfully manipulated the people's revolution into a bourgeois / middle class revolution. Thus a thin layer of black middle class created itself in no time just after independence.

Nevertheless, for the better part of the 80s the regime succeeded in giving some reforms, important reforms. For instance primary education was made compulsory and free. Rural schools and clinics were built for the first time ever.

However, as the economy stagnated in 1990-91, the Zimbabwe government turned to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) and adopted Structural Adjustments policies. These led Zimbabwe to a road downwards. These policies precipitated food crises as the country was ill-advised to sell its maize surplus for profit. Zimbabwe was always been a maize surplus producer with stockpiles of tonnes to tide the country over drought years. The food crisis was further worsened by government inspired land invasion of only white owned commercial farms, which was corruptly administered and the disinvestment by Western firms. Zimbabwe used to be the fourth most industrialized nation in Africa but the corrupt regime has destroyed once formidable industrial output. The living standards of working people have drastically fallen by almost 70%. The impact of HIV / AIDS is exacerbating the social crisis. The situation has been combined with growing standards of corruption and self-enrichment by those in political leadership and the elites.

Reacting to the attacks by capital the workers and the ordinary people fought running battles with police in big cities of Zimbabwe. In 1996 the civil servants, the nurses and junior doctors, down tools demanding a wage increase. In 1997 the ordinary people violently reacted to bread price increase, the protests quickly spread out and take the form of destruction and looting targeting big shops like OK, TM, furniture and

clothing shops were not spared. In 1997 the ZCTU (Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions), Zimbabwe's largest labour movement, by pressure from below was forced to call for a five day general strike. 1996 -1999 are remembered as the years which the workers stand up and organize themselves to fight against inequality and unprecedented attack by capitalism. Thus the resoluteness and the radical reaction of the workers showed their dislike of the rule of the old order inherited by Mugabe after 1980.

It is the above conditions which gave birth to the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), an opposition political party which raised the hopes of the ordinary people in particular. The MDC, a bourgeois party with working class supporters disguised itself as a Workers' Party in order to get votes from the disgruntled voters who were itching for change. The MDC contested in four elections since its formation in 1999. It made significant performance in all elections but could not depose Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-PF) Party, the ruling party, from power. The reasons range from autocratic rule of the regime to flawed electoral processes, as the current constitution give executive powers to the President. The ideological crisis of MDC played significantly in ensuring ZANU(PF) survived by outflanking it from the left.

In a move calculated to enhance MDC chances of deposing ZANU(PF) from power, Western governments, themselves handlers and financiers of MDC, imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe. These sanctions imposed supposedly against Mugabe and his inner circle and cronies turned to be feasting on the untargeted victims' flesh, the innocent ordinary poor majority Zimbabweans. Obviously this (the sanctions) was a tactic by imperialism to weaken the working class forces, through loss of employment, low wages / salaries, casualisation of labour, and diverting their focus from real issues and enemy responsible for their poverty and misery.

Besides the achievements by the MDC - its near misses - the social, economic and political crisis remains unresolved. The minority, 1% in the case of white settlers during the pre and post independence era, owned over 80% of arable land, relegating the natives into unproductive land. Draconian legislations were passed in parliament to deprive the natives their fertile land. Settlers drove away the natives to the mountains, forcibly expropriate their cattle and



The MDC, a bourgeois party with working class supporters disguised itself as a Workers' Party in order to get votes from the disgruntled voters who were itching for change.

other belongings. This is the reason the people went to war, yet today 30 years after the protracted war the wealth of the country is virtually still in the hands of the minority, the Anglo-Americans - the only difference is such wealth is also in the hands of a privileged black elite who build their fortunes from crumbs extended to them by their masters - imperialism. They use the pressure of the masses to blackmail capitalism for bigger shares.

In 2008 the people of Zimbabwe resoundingly voted for MDC and it is widely believed that this Popular Front party won the elections, but Mugabe did not yield, off course, hanging on to some silly constitutional technicalities. However, the leader of the opposition, Mr Morgan Tsvangirayi, withdraw his participation in the widely condemned and violent manifested June 27, 2008 run-off election. It must be noted that the attitude of the MDC leader and or his party unquestionably tantamount to pouring cold water to the revolution, worker's revolution. Mr Tsvangirayi's perspective was or is still in sharp contradiction to the radical program of the workers, who needed nothing short of defeat of Mugabe regime, even through violent means.

More than once the working class were ready to confront the Mugabe regime and its state machinery much to the opposition of Tsvangirayi and his inner circle, composed mainly of representatives of business. Against the program of the workers this powerful counterrevolutionary group opted for negotiations, for a round table with Mugabe. They were ready for an elite settlement, which they so far had achieved - that is their (elites) maximum program. A call by the revolutionary left for united front action to face head on the regime and for a general strike to paralyze the country was shot down by right-wing elements, now controlling MDC. 2008 was pregnant with revolution possibilities but as is the practice globally, the counterrevolutionary leadership, the agents of imperialism, in the

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absence of a formidable revolutionary socialist alternative (opposition), betrayed and submitted the workers to the tails of their enemies – to counter a possible revolution. Despite its social revolution potentials the (disputed) 2008 election did not produce an ultimate winner, thus a third hand was required to mediate and possibly break the impasse.

SADC, another manager of imperialism, responded to the Zimbabwean crisis by appointing a mediator to break the impasse. However, still the mediator couldn't go far than coming up with a transitional arrangement in preparation for another election, this time to be held under a new constitution. Thus the political parties made an agreement for Inclusive Government that sees among other things the writing of New Constitution for Zimbabwe. The new people-driven constitution making process which was supposed to start as soon as the Inclusive Government was installed in was delayed by many months due to squabbling between political parties over the formula and allowances (money). The pending process is behind schedule by several months. Fresh elections will be held after the enactment of the new Constitution. This therefore, implies that the crisis in Zimbabwe may remain unresolved until after free and fair elections are held under a new people-driven constitution. Arguing it this way presupposes to mean that the Zimbabwean crisis is a constitutional crisis – far from it. This is purely a class struggle.

Unfortunately, the provision for a new people-driven constitution making process as provided for in Article six of the Global Political Agreement does not reflect the spirit of a broad based process. It reflects more of a politician-making process than a people-driven one. Its mechanization is highly exclusive and anti-people participatory as events have proved. Whilst the politician and the elites are tempted to restrict this to political and civic liberties the civic society and working people movements were mobilizing for a much more holistic process that encompasses the multi-faceted character of the Zimbabwean crisis in particular rights of the working people and other disadvantaged groups who are the majority, many of these rights does not enjoy "constitutional" protection.

Already the elites and politicians had successfully campaigned for a politician making process that will, if left unchallenged, see the imposition of a Draft Constitution "Kariba Draft" that was prepared by six people (representatives) of the three political parties to the negotiations. The 'Kariba Draft' does not only lack mandate of the people of Zimbabwe but lacks constitutionalism because Zimbabweans were not consulted on its contents. Some Workers', Students, Socialist



More than once the working class were ready to confront the Mugabe regime and its state machinery much to the opposition of Tsvangirayi and his inner circle, composed mainly of representatives of business.

and progressive mass based organizations did not participate arguing that a flawed process will result in a flawed outcome. Already, the fears raised by these progressives groups were vindicated by the actual events that took place during the outreach phase, to the extend both formations of MDC are now advocating for a negotiated constitution. They too now argue that that the process was heavily polarized.

Participants were bussed and coached, independent of thought was absent during the whole process of soliciting for views. To that end political parties are mobilizing their supporters to support their respective party positions. But what is more telling are issues that concerns the political parties. Since the inception of the Government of National Unity, also known as Inclusive Government, both legislatures matters more on issues concerning themselves alone – power sharing topping the list and being the most contentious, yet the people have high expectations from this arrangement.

This is despite both political parties in their manifestos talked much on health, education, but no meaningful measures were adopted to address the plight of the people. Mr Tsvangirayi, the Prime Minister, in his opening statement as the Prime Minister promised civil servants a wage / salary increase yet almost two years down there's no increment.

Instead, the civil servants are mooting for a strike, responding to their slave like wages and working conditions. The only notable thing this inclusive government did is introduction of multi-currency – only that. However, the use of multi-currency benefited mostly business than ordinary people. Parents still pay incentives to retain teachers; students pay lectures; the pregnant still bring their candles to the hospitals / clinics; residents continue to fetch water from unprotected sources, do their laundry in streams; cutting down of trees continue un-

abated as this the only source, other than paraffin, of energy for cooking purposes. The list is still as endless as before the inception of the Government of National Unity. Amazingly, that same government has approved extremely exorbitant fees, in both private and public learning institutions. Education and many other services are in abundant to the rich few.

But the inclusive government phenomenon opens door to both common action and argument. Of course one cannot say in advance when the tension between workers and inclusive government will arise-there are too many unknown in the equation. No-one knows what will happen in advance but what one could safely say is conflict will take place, it's inevitable.

This is because the ideological crisis in Zimbabwe is that the people need big change and it seems that inclusive government has no capacity. It is written by Engels that the class struggle takes place in three spheres, the economy, the political and the ideological. There are lots of contradictions in most workers' heads at the moment. But the hatred of ZANU means that workers will give Tsvangirayi the benefit of doubt in his gambling. People can both support and feel unease about both the party and the leadership and this is exactly the mood on the ground.

But the contradictions that exist in the grey matter are less fundamental than those in the material world. Capitalism is in deep crisis, in the social analysis this crisis will demonstrate the bankruptcy of reformism and show the need for communism alternative. What the inclusive government does, even it does not spark massive immediate discontent, can still produce an ideological questioning.

The period ahead is very promising but very challenging for the working class leaders and the revolutionary left. People do not only want change, they want a vision of a better society. The ordinary poor people of this country in the region and internationally will start debating in factories, colleges, churches and in the community what the inclusive government, but more referring to MDC, stands for and what can it offer to the suffering majority of this country.

People will start questioning whether the MDC is truly a people's project as it purports to be. But to expect that change, real positive change could come through putting MDC is building false illusions amongst the working class.

The revolutionary socialists should call for the formation of an Independent Workers' Movement being seeds for the formation of a Revolutionary Workers' Party in Zimbabwe, as part of the call for a World Revolutionary Socialist Party.

Does the Article of Bhattarai Indicates a Trotskyist Turn in Nepal?

By Rajesh Tyagi in New Delhi, 21/10/2009, <http://new-wave-nw.blogspot.com/2009/10/nepal-does-article-of-bhattarai.html>

The summer issue of 'The Red Spark'(Rato Jhilko), official organ of the Communist Party of Nepal has published an article by Baburam Bhattarai, stating that, "Trotskyism has become more relevant than Stalinism to advance the cause of the proletariat".

Here is what the article says : "Today, the globalization of imperialist capitalism has increased manifold as compared to the period of the October Revolution. The development of information technology has converted the world into a global village. However, due to the unequal and extreme development inherent in capitalist imperialism this has created inequality between different nations. In this context, there is still (some) possibility of revolution in a single country similar to the October revolution; however, in order to sustain the revolution, we definitely need a global or at least a regional wave of revolution in a couple of countries. In this context, Marxist revolutionaries should recognize the fact that in the current context, Trotskyism has become more relevant than Stalinism to advance the cause of the proletariat". (The Red Spark, July 2009, Issue 1, Page-10).

Bhattarai, 55, is a politburo member of the United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and is considered to be its theoretician. He remained Minister of Finance, during the participation of Maoists in the coalition government in 2008, and from which they got a disgusting exit and since then remain in a situation of political lull.

Notwithstanding its limitations to understand the perspective of Trotsky and to dwell upon the essence of the actual political disputes which Trotsky raised against Stalin and Mao, the article of Bhattarai, demonstrates a definite turn, at least by a section of the Maoist Party, away from its hitherto legacy. Though Bhattarai has stopped short of saying that in words, but the fact is that Maoist caricature of revolutionary Marxism is solely responsible for debacle suffered by the revolutionary advance in Nepal.

The most trumpeted 'Prachanda Path' of 21st century socialism, has led directly to establishment of a bourgeois regime in Nepal.

The 'Prachanda Path' of Maoists in Nepal was through and through a bourgeois program, with very limited political perspective, which could have led only to establishment of the rule of capitalists and landlords and this is where it led to. However, the establishment of the rule of capitalists and landlords in Nepal and consequent decimation of workers and peasants, has shattered the bogus dreams of Prachanda & Co. for 'proliferation of bourgeois democracy' disguised under the deceptive slogans of 'new democracy' and 'peoples' democracy' and has opened the eyes of more young activists to the flawed program of Stalinists and Maoists. In the wake of this disillusionment of the rank and file, the workers and peasants, the Maoist leadership is forced to take a volte-face.

It is though not clear as to how and in what manner the hitherto Maoist leaders appreciate Trotsky's 'permanent revolution' which is an anti-thesis not only of Stalinism, but also of Maoism and the so-called 'Chinese path'. It is but sure that without a decisive break from Maoism and consequent abandonment of the bogus 'Prachanda Path', no route can be found to the road of 'permanent revolution'.

One cannot reconcile Stalinism-Maoism with Leninism-Trotskyism, as they are two starkly opposite and hostile tendencies; former nationalist-conservative, the latter revolutionary-internationalist. It would be illusionary to think that without a departure from the former, one may take to the latter. The two tendencies have come to head-on clash inside Soviet Union, the Russian Communist Party and Comintern. The two had stood face to face and clashed on all



Prachanda, leader of the UCPN(M), called off a powerful and growing general strike on 7 May 2010 having achieved nothing. Not much 'Trotskyism' on view there.

significant issues of world politics, again and again, over the last more than one century. There remained hardly anything in common between the two.

Trotsky had brought forward the disputes over the question of revolutionary re-orientation of Comintern and Soviet Union, towards the goal of a world socialist revolution. The significance of his theory of 'permanent revolution' lies in the fact that it leads directly against the theory of 'two stage revolution' and 'socialism in one country' propounded by Stalin and followed by Mao. Trotsky challenged this distortion of Marxist practice. He continued to forcefully argue, till his murder by Stalinist agent in 1940, against the proposition of stagism and national-socialism. Trotsky argued that there cannot be a capitalist road to socialism, i.e. there cannot be a democratic revolution preceding a socialist one, in backward countries, unlike Europe.

Concrete historical experience in Nepal, as elsewhere, has revealed the bankruptcy of Stalinism-Maoism and has vindicated the ideas of Leon Trotsky, particularly his theory of 'permanent revolution'.

Comment on the above

By Ret Marut

We are entitled to regard the endorsement of Trotskyism above by Bhattarai, the chief theoretician of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), UCPN(M) with extreme scepticism, given the past history of that group, its popular frontism, two-stage theory of revolution and defence of bourgeois democracy.

Their Maoist opponents point out that the International Marxist Tendency's journal IDOM is the main enthusiast for Bhattarai's comments and look at what they have to say about Chavez, who has also become a "Trotskyist". These are confused Trotskyists, looking for

substitutes for the hard task of fighting the bureaucratic misleadership of Maoism in Nepal. Moreover the apparent endorsement of Permanent Revolution is for the opposite reason to world revolution. His reasoning is: the only alternative to socialism in a single country is world revolution, that is clearly impossible, also, due to globalisation and the penetration of international capital socialism in a single country via economic autarchy is clearly impossible also so we may as well stick with capitalism and cosy up to world imperialism and get those loans we need to build those roads which will bring vast fortunes via the tourist industry.

And indeed for Nepal, hemmed in by two giants, China and India, there is little possibility that a socialist revolution could survive for long

without spreading to those countries. And moreover Stalinism/Maoism is a peasant ideology and the peasantry's interests appear to them immediately as a need for more land and cheap credit. Seizing control of factories and all the means of production are not issues that face them, as they do the working class.

It was this dilemma that faced the Soviet Union in 1924 because of the failure of the revolution to spread and Stalin rationalised that and the demoralisation of the workers and the growing hostility of the peasantry in the famous alteration he made to that key passage of *Problems of Leninism*. Early in 1924 he wrote,

"The overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a proletarian government in one country does not yet guarantee the

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

complete victory of socialism. The main task of socialism, the organisation of socialist production, still lies ahead. Can this task be accomplished, can the victory of socialism in one country be attained, without the joint efforts of the proletariat of several advanced countries? No, this is impossible. For the final victory of socialism, for the organisation of socialist production, the efforts of one country, particularly of such a peasant country as Russia are insufficient." (Stalin, *Lenin and Leninism*, p. 40.)

Here without doubt (says Trotsky) the general position of the Bolshevik Party is correctly expressed. However, in the second edition, published a few months later, these lines were withdrawn and the exact opposite put in their place:

"But the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the power of the proletariat in one country does not yet mean that the complete victory of socialism has been assured. **After consolidating its power and leading the peasantry in its wake the proletariat of the victorious country can and must build a socialist society**" (Stalin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 110, my emphasis.) Although he followed this with the **desirability** of extending the revolution it was now no longer a burning necessity.

"But does this mean that it will thereby achieve the complete and final victory of socialism, i.e., does it mean that with the forces of only one country it can finally consolidate socialism and fully guarantee that country against intervention and, consequently, also against restora-

tion? No, it does not. For this the victory of the revolution in at least several countries is needed. Therefore, the development and support of revolution in other countries is an essential task of the victorious revolution. Therefore, the revolution which has been victorious in one country must regard itself not as a self-sufficient entity, but **as an aid, as a means for hastening the victory of the proletariat in other countries**" (my emphasis, Stalin, *ibid*).

Note Stalin has left out that crucial sentence in the first quote: "The main task of socialism, the organisation of socialist production, still lies ahead." Stalin draws a line between the "victory of socialism or the victory of socialist construction in one country" and the "ultimate victory of socialism" stating that the latter problem cannot be solved only by internal efforts. Socialism is clearly possible in the midst of extreme poverty in this definition. That raises the question is this not 'socialism' for the elites?

Without socialist production, without the advanced technology needed to produce for human need at the most developed level possible, and that is what they expect, even in Nepal—the Ghurkhas want to live in Britain to get it—we cannot produce the superabundance of wealth Marx speaks of in *The German Ideology*. 'Socialism' or 'communism' did not exist in the vast peasant lands of the USSR or China or in their industrial centres where workers had less rights than in the west, although the law of value was suppressed and they had many welfare provisions now swept away by capitalist restoration in these two vast lands. And that



Stalin draws a line between the "victory of socialism or the victory of socialist construction in one country" and the "ultimate victory of socialism" stating that the latter problem cannot be solved only by internal efforts.

requires world revolution, so pertinent to the ideology of Trotsky's Permanent Revolution and Lenin's April Theses and a real and burning issue in Russia until 1924. Bhattarai may have recognised that for opportunist reasons, others from the seething peasant uprisings in the Indian subcontinent in particular may approach it from the standpoint of world proletarian revolution.

Women's Oppression: Two opposing views of the 'sex industry'

Women's Oppression

1. Collective for Sex Workers and Supporters in Taipei

Posted on August 12, 2010

The Taipei Association of Licensed Prostitutes (TALPs) was formed in 1998 when the then Taipei City Mayor and later President of Taiwan, CHEN Shui Bian of the Democratic Progressive Party, banned licensed prostitution within 48 hours. The licensed prostitutes in Taipei organized themselves and protested publicly for the first time in Taiwanese history against the ban. Their demand was to reinstate their livelihood and their right to work as sex workers. Their sudden public appearance as sex workers demanding for their right to work initially shocked the Taiwanese society but these women also quickly gained sympathy and support.

A group of young labour activists, predominantly women, helped to expand their campaign. They were successful in seeking wider support from various social movement organizations and indi-

viduals, including the LGBT communities, academics, lawyers, social workers, teachers and nurses etc. Through the joint actions of the licensed prostitutes and the activists; they were able to change the attitude of the mass media. The latter's initial disdain, prejudices, stereotypes and scepticism about the sex industry and the sex workers has given way to a more objective, balanced, sympathetic and even supportive attitude. One example is the use of the word 'sex worker' instead of 'prostitutes' by the media.

TALPs' campaigns were so successful despite opposition from certain feminist and women groups, as well as religious institutions, politicians and certain government officials that MAH Ying-jeoh of the Kuoming Tang (The Nationalist Party), who subsequently replaced CHEN as Taipei City Mayor, had to postpone the ban for two years.

The Collective for Sex Workers and Supporters (COSWAS) was formed in 1999 to continue the fight for the rights of all sex workers in Taiwan, making it the only sex workers' rights organization set up by sex workers and for sex workers on the island. In order to expand its influence, COSWAS welcomes supporters and volunteers to work hand-in-hand with ex-licensed prostitutes,

street sex workers, as well as women working in tea houses, massage parlours, karaoke bars, brothels and pole-dancing clubs etc.

COSWAS has been campaigning tirelessly against Article 80 of the Public Order Maintenance Act, which criminalizes sex workers. After more than twelve years of organizing, mobilizing and politicizing the issue, the Taiwanese judiciary has finally declared Article 80 to be unconstitutional because it contravenes the universal rights of all Taiwanese citizens. Therefore, this law that specifically criminalizes sex workers will be annulled by November 2011 at the latest...

In COSWAS' understanding of the sex industry and the nature of sex work, borne out of more than a decade of working closely with sex workers, the criminalization of clients and the so-called third parties whom sex workers in reality rely on for support, safety and security will only hurt the sex workers and their business. Based on COSWAS' policy research and analysis, as well as of our tireless effort in community education, public awareness-raising and lobbying and advocacy at governmental and institutional levels, we have shown that the only effective way in empowering the women and men involved in sex work lies in their decriminalization and the

proper management of their work environment by law and not through the abolition of the industry.

Therefore, COSWAS advocates the decriminalization of sex work and the sex industry, in order to empower the sex workers and thereby, protect them from violence and exploitation including trafficking and sexual slavery. What sex workers need is adequate and appropriate rights-based government policies and management strategies that oversee the sex industry and the welfare and rights of the people working in it. Abolitionist measures will only drive the sex industry underground and thus, making the sex workers more vulnerable to exploitation and violence.

COSWAS believes that a positive, rights-based approach to prostitution that recognises all forms of sex work as work is the only way to stem out exploitation, violence, slavery, trafficking and oppression within the industry. Moreover, COSWAS believes that the best people who know and can decide on the policies and measures to empower and protect sex workers against violence and exploitation is the sex workers themselves because ultimately, it is in their interests to work in a safe, fair and secure working environment.

For more information, please look up: <http://coswas.org/> (the website is in Chinese) Chang Jung Che email: jcchang13@gmail.com

Report by The Swedish Wire: Swedish 'sex purchase law' very effective

<http://www.swedishwire.com/politics/5261-swedish-sex-purchase-law-very-effective>

03 July 2010

A Swedish law punishing the purchase -- not sale -- of sex, has been so effective it has slashed street prostitution in half.

"The evaluation shows that the ban on the purchase of sexual services has had the intended effect and is an important instrument in preventing and combating prostitution and human

trafficking for sexual purposes," the report said.

The report, which was handed to Justice Minister Beatrice Ask Friday, maintained "that prostitution in Sweden, unlike in comparable countries, has not in any case increased since the introduction of the ban" on buying sexual services went into effect in 1999. While the law punishing the client rather than the prostitute may not have caused a dramatic drop in prostitution as a whole, its true triumph, according to the report, is that "street prostitution in Sweden has been halved." And "This reduction may be considered to be a direct result of the criminalisation of sex purchases," it said.



The drop in street prostitution has been a little less dramatic in Stockholm than in all of Sweden, but the capital nonetheless saw its number of streetwalkers drop from 280 in 1998 to 180 in 2008, according to official statistics quoted in the report. Before Sweden became the first country in the world to criminalise buying sex, the number of street prostitutes in its capital was on a par with the number in the capitals of neighbouring Norway and Denmark.

But while the number of streetwalkers was slashed in Stockholm during the decade ending 2008, they had multiplied in Copenhagen and Oslo in the same period, the report said. Norway introduced similar legislation to Sweden's on January 1, 2009. The Swedish law stipulates that

"purchasing a sexual service on one single occasion is sufficient for criminal liability," whether with money or other means such as alcohol or drugs.

But while cracking down on sex purchasers on the street has paid off, the report acknowledges that prostitution in other more hidden and obscure areas is hard to assess and limit. The Internet especially constitutes a new and dangerous arena, allowing sexual favours to be sold "in secret" and purchasers to remain "fairly invisible," it said.

"Prostitution where the initial contact is made over the Internet is an important and growing arena," according to the report. It stressed however that "the scale of this form of prostitution is more extensive in our neighbouring countries."

"There is nothing to indicate that a greater increase in prostitution over the Internet has occurred in Sweden than in these comparable countries," it said, insisting that "this indicates that the ban has not led to street prostitution in Sweden shifting arenas to the Internet."

Critics of the law claim it is driving prostitution into a dangerous shadowland where the mostly women selling sex are at a greater risk, but Friday's report insisted that was not the case. The ban "is an important instrument to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings and to protect those people who are, or who risk becoming, involved in prostitution," it said.

The report called on lawmakers to go even further and to double the sentence for sex purchasers from the maximum six months prison term today. "In our view, the current level of penalties for certain sexual purchase offences is not proportionate to the seriousness of the crime," it said. Swedish public radio reported Friday that out of the 650 people who so far had been sentenced under the anti-prostitution law, none had been sent to prison.

Clara Zetkin and Lenin on the Women's Question

The Emancipation of Women: V.I. Lenin.

Lenin: "I have heard some peculiar things on this matter from Russian and German comrades. I must tell you. I was told that a talented woman communist in Hamburg is publishing a paper for prostitutes and that she wants to organise them for the revolutionary fight. Rosa acted and felt as a communist when in an article she championed the cause of the prostitutes who were imprisoned for any transgression of police regulations in carrying on their dreary trade. They are, unfortunately, doubly sacrificed by bourgeois society. First, by its accursed prop-

erty system, and, secondly, by its accursed moral hypocrisy. That is obvious. Only he who is brutal or short-sighted can forget it. But still, that is not at all the same thing as considering prostitutes -- how shall I put it? -- to be a special revolutionary militant section, as organising them and publishing a factory paper for them. Aren't there really any other working women in Germany to organise, for whom a paper can be issued, who must be drawn into your struggles? The other is only a diseased excrescence. It reminds me of the literary fashion of painting every prostitute as a sweet Madonna. The origin of that was healthy, too: social sympathy, rebel-

lion against the virtuous hypocrisy of the respectable bourgeois. But the healthy part became corrupted and degenerate...

Of course, thirst must be satisfied. But will the normal person in normal circumstances lie down in the gutter and drink out of a puddle, or out of a glass with a rim greasy from many lips? But the social aspect is most important of all. Drinking water is, of course, an individual affair. But in love two lives are concerned, and a third, a new life, arises, it is that which gives it its social interest, which gives rise to a duty towards the community. As a communist I have

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

not the least sympathy for the glass of water theory, although it bears the fine title 'satisfaction of love'."

...Clara Zetkin: "I interrupted here, saying that the questions of sex and marriage, in a bourgeois society of private property, involve many problems, conflicts and much suffering for women of all social classes and ranks. The war and its consequences had greatly accentuated the conflicts and sufferings of women in sexual matters, had brought to light problems which were formerly hidden from them. To that were added the effects of the revolution. The old world of feeling and thought had begun to totter. Old social ties are entangling and breaking, there are the tendencies towards new ideological relationships between man and woman. The interest shown in these questions is an expression of the need for enlightenment and reorientation. It also indicates a reaction against the falseness and hypocrisy of bourgeois society.

Forms of marriage and of the family, in their historical development and dependence upon economic life, are calculated to destroy the superstition existing in the minds of working women concerning the eternal character of bourgeois society. A critical, historical attitude to those problems must lead to a ruthless examination of bourgeois society, to a disclosure of its real nature and effects, including condemnation of its sexual morality and falseness. All roads lead to Rome. And every real Marxist analysis of any important section of the ideological superstructure of society, of a predominating social phenomenon, must lead to an analysis of bourgeois society and of its property basis, must end in the realisation, "this must be destroyed".

Comments on this Question

From: Aggie McCallum (Australia)

A discussion on this subject i.e. sex work etc would be excellent and I look forward to hearing the outcome. In the late 70s at a feminist conference in Sydney Uni some speakers advocated young women entering prostitution to agitate for change from inside the industry... and claimed French feminists were doing it and change was happening. However that conference turned me off feminism for a number of years but I realise because everything was new in the 70s no one really knew how far we could go without hurting people and had no idea what the final result would be.

If large numbers of people protest for rights to work in the sex industry it doesn't translate to a human need (the American tea party want a lot of things too)...It is such a good idea for subjects on which people with similar ideals are divided to be debated, It's not productive to stand for something and put precious energy and time into something when half of idealists see it as inherently bad for a large number of people in society.... Making money out of sex work in a capitalists society would depend on how much money the people/consumers using it have....

poorer people wouldn't have a lot of money and the people giving the product would be getting very little to live on I would imagine....this is where the slavery could operate....



German communist leader, socialist and staunch feminist Clara Zetkin (1857 - 1933), friend of Lenin and not slow to interrupt and upbraid him when she felt he was wrong.

From: AJ Byrne

It is clear from Clara Zetkin's interruption here that she did not agree with the tack that Lenin was taking on this at all and she had to put the matter in the full social context to change the direction of the conversation. Nevertheless she does concede he is right on the question of prostitution. Lenin answers Zetkin with the following:

"There we have it! You are defending counsel for your women comrades and your Party. **Of course, what you say is right.** But it only excuses the mistakes made in Germany; it does not justify them. They are, and remain, mistakes. Can you really seriously assure me that the questions of sex and marriage were discussed from the standpoint of a mature, living, historical materialism? Deep and many-sided knowledge is necessary for that and the clearest Marxist mastery of a great amount of material. Where can you get the forces for that now?"

So he is saying that they have not the resources and knowledge to tackle this matter from a Marxist standpoint so it must be left alone. And so it was, substantially, until the 1960s. Needless to say Lenin goes on to outline a revolutionary way forward for the struggle for women's liberation, and castigates those who are not fighting for this, even though he had such conservative views on sexual liberation.

The report from Sweden does show that the legislation "has been so effective it has slashed street prostitution in half". But the question remains; it it merely driving it underground? We must acknowledge, with Lenin, that prostitution is a product of class society and the oppression of women under capitalism. It cannot be abolished by legislation, although its effects may be

mitigated. The appeal of the report from the Taipei Association of Licensed Prostitutes seems to be demanding the free market as the solution, and this is also strongly evident in the approach of some feminists. And, of course, those feminists who are opposed to prostitution as such are right as long as they realise that opposition can only turn into reality with the victory of the socialist revolution internationally.

From: Aggie McCallum (Australia)

With regard to Lenin's words in *'The Emancipation of Women'* I quote and make a couple of comments on an extract

"Of course, thirst must be satisfied. But will the normal person in normal circumstances lie down in the gutter and drink out of a puddle or out of a glass with a rim greasy from many lips?"

He continues that love concerns two people but a third concern arises that of duty to the community. He has little sympathy for the glass of water theory.....although it bears the fine title of 'satisfaction of love'. Lenin states of the man... what normal person (man) would in normal circumstances lie down in the gutter and drink out of a puddle...etc. From these words it is obvious that Lenin thinks the man is not in his right mind and even more obvious that the woman, who is represented by the puddle and the glass, is not even human.

Whether he recognised it or not he clearly saw the trade of prostitution as dehumanising society and it is clear to the reader that there would be no place for such a trade in his new world. He quickly draws attention to the 'third concern' that of duty to the community. Although Lenin was a visionary in many areas he was also a man of his time. The glass with many lips unfortunately screams of the sexist attitude held by men and supported by women in most societies throughout history.

But times have changed. If young Western men of today were asked to name the most important trait they looked for in a life partner none of them would say 'virgin'....Although this idea has dominated societies for centuries our young men of today recognise it as an insult to the women of their age group. One theory about the origin of keeping women pure and virginal could help explain.

This article claimed modern society no longer expected young women to be virgins because this practise evolved in ancient societies to ensure that the offspring, particularly the first son of the groom, was indeed his biological son thereby ensuring that the wealth and the estate was passed along the family blood line and that there was no doubt as to the child's ancestry and that the subsequent inheritance was passed to the rightful owner. The article went on to state that with the progress of science and the advent of DNA, virginity was no longer the only method of ensuring the offspring belonged to the male partner.... and this science would in time erode this burden from women.

Letters pages

Scottish Socialist Party members who gave evidence: 'worse than scabs'

6 October, 2010

Comrades,

It was an SSP member who first went to the News of the Screws with the "story". If SSP members were subpoenaed, many of them certainly didn't have to be dragged into court in chains. Some who thought Sheridan guilty were subpoenaed but refused to collaborate and one who was definitely subpoenaed was in the event dragged out of court in chains - he was jailed for 12 days for contempt after telling the judge he had no intention of producing any evidence of anything.

Once the jury found for Sheridan, the NoW appealed and the beak instructed the police (not unreasonably all things considered as somebody somewhere was clearly lying) to investigate allegations of perjury. An SSP member promptly went to the police claiming to have the evidence the earlier chap had refused to surrender. It turned out to be key - a minute purportedly of a meeting at which Sheridan confessed that the NoW story was true. Whether it is a genuine document is still unclear.

A short while back, a video recording revealing another "confession" by Sheridan (he isn't actually seen in it, it's not proven it's him speaking and he says it's forged) was apparently made by SSP members and given to the NoW who, as you'd expect, made full use of it. The same people who appeared for Murdoch are also now appearing for the prosecution.

The NoW editor at the time was that shit who's now Cameron's spin doctor. Delightfully, Sheridan's defence team are trying to subpoena him. (That's one reason why Osborne's programme alleging that he authorised the phone tapping for which one of his minions went down was such fun.)

I know rampant Tories who would never dream of ratting on friends to the rozzers though they'd probably, rightly IMHO, make an exception for crimes of violence. No, the "forgive them for they know not what they do . . ." argument doesn't hold water in this case. They damn well do. It's way worse than scabbing.

Ironically, three of them were MSPs who had acquired a reputation for being, well, less than competent in the job. OTOH, another, Rosemary Byrne, who left the SSP with Sheridan, was respected even by opponents: a Tory MSP who I met in the course of my work told me that she was "hard-working, principled and decent". And, on talking with her constituents, it seems she was. Sadly, she stood down at the last election and, according to press reports,

now has cancer.

The only defence you can mount of these people is that they and their cohorts never expected to get elected as MSPs, that they had no roots in the Labour movement and, as politically unprepared members of an immature party, were unfit for the responsibility (their conduct was childish at best and at times appalling) and that the considerable publicity they attracted turned their heads.

The result was that they turned on Sheridan as the NoW story threatened to stop a gravy train that had been chugging along very nicely thank you. But, like a mitigation plea at the end of a murder trial, it doesn't seem convincing. Gillian notes that, if you want to see a rehash of the saga, prepare to be entertained by an interneccine stabfest as re-election prospects for LibDim MPs vanish forever over the horizon.

Best, Dave Bruce.

The Transitional Programme 1

'You ignore the minimum program'

Hi Gerry,

The problem is that you make the same mistake as the left imperialist economists in 1916 and the left communists in 1918: you ignore the minimum program.

The demands and slogans that you think are transitional are in fact maximum because you ignore context. In periods of retreat, one is obliged to raise minimum demands and slogans. For example, after the defeat of the 2nd Chinese revolution, Trotsky gave up the slogan of soviets and raised the slogan of constituent assembly.

You fail to understand that the social content of the October revolution was bourgeois, i.e., the October revolution was a bourgeois revolution, not a socialist revolution (as Stalinism would have us believe). This is why the Bolsheviks didn't raise socialistic demands for the October revolution. Instead, the revolution grew over into a socialist revolution with the proletariat making the pace by demanding the nationalisation of their industries. So the socialist revolution took place with the wholesale expropriations of 1918, not October 1917.

You make the mistake of thinking that the future revolution (be it English, British or European) must inevitably raise socialistic slogans. You wrongly treat the Transitional Program as a timeless program, which it isn't. It clearly states that it envisaged a coming period of generalized pre-revolutionary situations.

There is also a general timelessness about the demands and slogans that you raise and to your general theoretical approach. Marxism is above all else a method of analysis, but you get this wrong by turning it into a timeless series of rules of thumb. The most important law of the dialectic (and therefore of the Marxist method of dialectical materialism) is that truth is always



Tommy Sheridan at the height of the Anti-Poll Tax campaign.

concrete. Instead, for you, the truth is always timeless. In this way you break with Marxism.

Wrongly, you see the tasks facing revolutionaries at present as making propaganda combined with routine trade-union work. Of course, we can't build a mass revolutionary party outside of a revolutionary situation and therefore our party at present is obliged to be a propaganda group. So, yes, we have to make propaganda (many ideas to the few) but not so isolated from the mass struggle.

I, for example, raise the slogan of a United bourgeois States of Europe. Trotsky also took the slogan of a United States of Europe seriously but you just ignore an important question where we can raise a mass, agitational slogan for a change. This is criminal sectarianism.

One has to admit that Trotsky was wrong to:

- 1) think that the soviet bureaucracy could not survive WW2
- 2) think that the coming generalized pre-revolutionary situation (that he refers to in the TP) would be the death agony of capitalism.

I don't think Trotsky was wrong to attempt to arm his comrades for the coming struggles, but it is wrong to fail to recognize the retreat that was necessary after the period of immediate post-WW2 revolutionary situations. You just act as if we are still in a revolutionary period that started with WW2.

Lenin said that program was a brief and concise statement of what we are fighting for. Instead, you don't raise a clear program but an interminable series of positions, of rules of thumb, that is far too involved. One can't talk about soviets now as if it was an agitational slogan. You can't attempt to get regroupment on the basis of a massive list of rules of thumb extracted from the totality of Trotsky's writings.

You wrongly see the latter as something you call Trotskyism. But Trotskyism was a term used by the Stalinists for something they considered to be a break from Marxism. In reality, it was Trotsky who remained the Marxist whereas the Stalinists et al broke with Marxism with their Socialism in One Country. So our public position has to be that we are the consistent Marxists and we should limit the use of the term Trotskyist because, strictly speaking, it is not scientific because Trotskyism isn't something distinct

from Marxism, it is a number of clarifications of Marxism.

For example, Trotsky considered that Marx and Engels were wrong to refer to the Paris Commune as being the dictatorship of the proletariat. If the Commune had lasted longer and had brought about decisive expropriations then it would have been the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it just didn't get that far. So Trotsky didn't consider that the October revolution constituted the dictatorship of the proletariat, yet. Trotsky therefore clarified Marxism on the question of the permanent revolution, i.e., that the initial political revolution (e.g. October 1917) would grow over into a socialist revolution.

Trotsky also extended the theory of permanent revolution onto the international plane. He also clarified matters on the question of program by the idea of transitional demands and slogans. There are doubtless other clarifications/additions to Marxism made by Trotsky but there really isn't something we can call Trotskyism in a scientific manner.

I can't disagree with your slogan "vote Labour" but we have to recognize that it doesn't say much in itself. Of course, what we mean by this is that there is a class-conscious section of the working class that still sees the need for a distinct party of the workers. All the bloody sectarians who have given up on Labour are wrong on this point. But I can't help feeling that the best outcome of the election would be a hung parliament where Labour and the LDs would form a coalition based on an agreement for serious electoral changes, i.e., an end to the two-party system which allows smaller parties more clout (especially us!).

Comradely Roy Wall.

The Transitional Programme 2:

Cannon and the "Spartacist family"

10 Jun, 2010

Comrades of SF

I am not connected to either ICL, IBT or Internationalist nor have I been a member of any of the above. I suppose I have some connection with the "Spart" family in that the tendency I am part of split from what became the IST in 1972 in New Zealand. It was led by Owen Gager. I concede you give a good case for showing the ICL et al represent a break from JP Cannon. But, frankly my conclusions are that Cannon was wrong and the ICL, closer to being right.

My experiences are Australian. As a young man I joined the Communist Party of Australia. This was led by Aaons and collapsed. The current organisation of that name was a pro-Moscow breakaway. Things were very euphoric then. You probably have read about Australia's redgreen pioneers in Workers Liberty. I was on their picket lines and I knew and still know them. This includes the leadership and rank and file. I was involved in the Workers control move-

ment when the CPA led AMWU were leading workers control tactics. I was on many picket lines, connected to the rank and file bulletin Link which aimed to instil revolutionary consciousness by linking rank and file struggles on the shop floor.

In Australia, the struggles of the mid seventies were impressive. So was the level of consciousness at any levels. So why did it collapse? Oh yes, it collapsed spectacularly. Virtually every union was party to the Prices and Incomes Accord. Thanks to this Accord, unionism, especially militant unionism diminished. Union membership declined. Of course to blame was the leadership, notably the Aarons CPA. But why was there no significant opposition?

All this was linked to the crisis and the collapse of manufacturing. Car industry, ship building, white goods, steel making and other sectors collapsed. Basically the union leadership had no answers apart from crawl to the Hawke government. But the point is: neither did the rank and file!

Basically the militancy of the seventies collapsed into chauvinism. This was encouraged by the Stalinists but militants either critically supported or had no answers. It then dissipated. Currently class struggle in Australia is in dire straits. Of course this concerns me and the point I have been posing is how could it have been prevented?

My conclusion is that the Left, to the extent it differentiated from reformism and Stalinism, failed to fight for independent politics. The union militants remained politically within the framework of capitalism and revolutionaries failed to confront this. Revolutionaries should have intervened on the basis of a party and revolutionary political consciousness and not a rank and file group.

Oh yes there were plenty of contradictions between rank and file and bureaucracy and many tried to take advantage of these. But no fundamental gain was made. The reformist and Stalinist politics of the rank and file has to challenged head on if the militant movement is not to be smashed under the impact of the bourgeois offensive.

To me this is what has to be answered and confronted not the rhetoric of Cannon. Yes if there were rank and file movements I would recommend communists joining to fight for politics. But I see rank and file as the problem. It is through this method that Trotskyists have failed to revolutionise the working class.

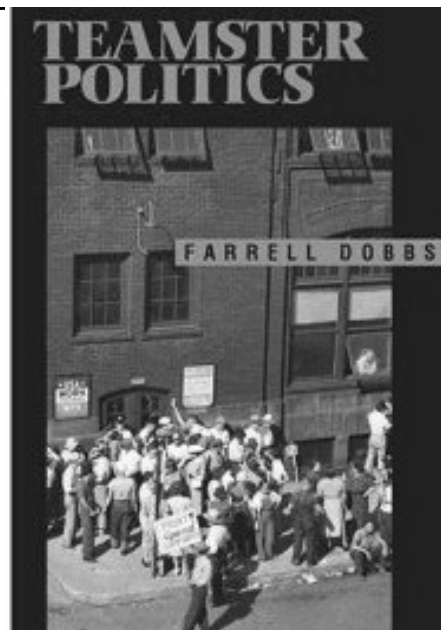
Bill Keats Communist Left Australia.

Gerry Downing replied briefly along the lines contained to the reply here and Bill came back:

20 August, 2010

Dear Comrade Gerry

The concept of "rank and file" has different meanings to different groupings. There are



many ways I support organising the rank and file. I highly approve of shop committees. There are other circumstances such as a campaign against Howard Government industrial policy called Workchoices and for a shorter working week or against fascists. These are principled rank and file groups which organise the rank and file.

What I am critical of is rank and file blocs or blocs which are called "rank and file" which challenge trade union leaders on a minimalist basis. How different are Socialist Fight rank and file groups to IS/SWP rank and file groups. Yes CLA counterposes a CLA branch to such a bloc. Why? Because we believe in politicising workers. We believe that the politics workers have is decisive and we want to break workers from reformism to Trotskyism.

You claim that Trotsky agreed with SWP/US practice on the teamsters. Have you read the discussions on this in Trotsky's writings 39/40? His fundamental criticism of North West Organizer was that it was "apolitical". He asked what these rank and file militants voted for and considered their vote for the Democrats every four years "decisive". He considered NW Organizer a "photograph of our adaption to the Rooseveltians". This sounds like damning criticism and not agreement.

I believe in work in the trade unions and strongly disagree with the SEP. As for the Spartacist family I feel there are many more problems concerning why they don't relate to working people. But it is not axiomatic that a small propaganda work has to do tu work. Political priorities may lie elsewhere. CL/A incidentally, has done tu work and recruited an industrial militant. One has to analyse Spartacist family failing in terms of their general degeneration. Their degeneration can in no way prove or disprove their orthodox rhetoric.

You finish your letter with a quote from the Transitional Programme. It is one which I fully agree with. But do you "link these demand to the maximum goal of revolution" in a rank and file group? As I understand rank and file groups transitional demands which link minimum demands to revolution are usually absent.

Most of my letter addressed the political degeneration of the workers movement in Australia. It posed a reason, namely the failure of the left, including the ostensibly Trotskyist left to challenge the politics which dominated class struggle in the seventies and early eighties. Am I right? How would SF have intervened? The point should be not to battle with Trotsky quotes but to establish a strategy on how to revolutionise the working class.

Comradely Bill Keats CL/A.

The Transitional Programme 3

To the comrades in the UK who critically support the LP in the general elections

The HWRS has made its case why we do not agree with the tactic of giving critical support to LP in elections, but we understand that this is a tactical question that may change as the temper and consciousness of the working class changes. We are not fortune tellers and do not know if the working class will execute its will though the LP or if they will flock to and build a revolutionary party. As we are located 8 thousand miles away from you we depend on your observations to either dissuade or confirm our understanding.

Please help us understand the consciousness of the working class in the UK so we can honestly assess the best tactics for revolutionaries.

1) What do you mean when you say the LP and the Trade Unions are one and the same?

Our view is that this is a static view of the relationship between the LP and TU's which ignores the dialectic. The LP is broader than the class (in elections the LP makes promises to the middle class and it gets many votes from the petty bourgeoisie as well as making commitments to the imperialist bourgeoisie to invade Iraq, the Malvinas, Afghanistan, maintain NATO and the nuclear arsenal etc.) and the TU's rank and file must have their own view of the role of the LP tops based on the decades of sell outs and imperialist adventurism. In other words isn't it true that many rank-and-file workers don't see the daily struggles of their unions connected to support from the LP, because these workers expect sellouts from the political leaders of the LP?

2) Does the base of the LP have a real life? Or is the life of the LP restricted to the leadership? In other words does the LP have local branches in each district where trade union rank and file members meet weekly/bi-weekly/monthly (acting as an activist party of labor militants) and strategize how to advance the interests of the working class? Or are the local LP meetings just "old boy" networks of the key players whose insider positions in the party are used as means for personal advancement (either for financial benefit or personal power accumulation)?

3) Are young militants of the LP the breathing expression of the working classes attempt

means of struggle or they are like more left reformists and they do some of the real organizing and mobilizing (albeit with programmatic, strategic and tactical shortcomings and capitulations mostly launched as pressure relief valve for the frustrated class).

7) As for participation in the mass mobilizations I expect it is quite the same in the UK as it is here...just as Oct 2nd here was mostly a Democrats mobilization, in the UK a similar "jobs, justice, peace" oriented rally would have similar de-classed demands and the mobilization would be populated by LP members. Do they just show up or are they part of an active base? Would that base fight for proletarian demands and methods of struggle in the public debate?

As the workers are abandoning the LP at the polls this appears to mean that the working class is pissed off at the LP for its roll imposing austerity and for its roll as a bloody imperialist butcher in Iraq and Afghanistan. So how does this disconnect effect the relations between the rank-and-file workers, the intermediate and top leaders?

Charles, For HWRS

Reply On the Transitional Programme

We have set ourselves the task of replying to the three comrades who have written on aspects of the Transitional Programme, Roy Wall who has charged that we ignore the minimum programme, Bill Keats from Australia who disagrees with the rank-and-file approach and Charles from the HWRS in San Francisco who does not agree with voting for the PSOE in Spain (and other bourgeois-workers parties internationally) and poses a series of questions to those who do. We contend that these three comrades cover most of the political objections to the practical application of the Transitional Method from three different angles. We contend there is a common thread running these three apparently diverse approaches, a failure to listen to the working class, a failure to understand that revolutionary theory must apply to ordinary workers in struggle and a failure to seek to meld the two together in a common and practical programme of action for the struggle today.

We will have to make some historical detours in order to show that the working class is not just what it imagines itself to be right now but a social historical product of its own history; its own history is burned into its DNA (so to speak) and it is the task of revolutionary leadership to develop this and so develop class consciousness to the point of revolution.

Comrade Roy says; "You fail to understand that the social content of the October revolution was bourgeois, i.e., the October revolution was a bourgeois revolution, not a socialist revolution (as Stalinism would have us believe). This is why



Who Is Against the Soviets? (1917-22), In this poster issued by the state press, it is obvious who would be against the soviets: the officer, the banker, the priest and the merchant. The bourgeois revolution could not live as a bourgeois revolution. It had to grow over into the socialist revolution or be defeated.

at political self organization? Do the militants and youth seek to mobilize the rest of the class and raise the economic struggles to an action oriented political level? In other words do they, as party members, get up in Trade Union meetings and fight in the name of the LP for strike actions and to turn economic strikes into political strikes?

4) If the class sees the LP as their expression of independent political action what explains their loss in the last election besides the fact that the workers are abandoning the Party?

5) Is the party totally civil libertarian oriented like the Democrats in the US? In other words do they direct all social struggles down the road of legislative and judicial action? Or is it an activist party that mobilizes action oriented youth giving life to the struggle and creates expectations of societal change?

6) To be concrete do the LP branches take up in the anti-fascist work, the immigrant defence work etc.? Such active mobilization of the class for extra parliamentary and extra judicial struggle would show ...either they are like the American Democrats and keep the struggle limited to position papers and petty bourgeois

the Bolsheviks didn't raise socialistic demands for the October revolution. Instead, the revolution grew over into a socialist revolution with the proletariat making the pace by demanding the nationalisation of their industries. So the socialist revolution took place with the wholesale expropriations of 1918, not October 1917."

This is wrong because in the first place, even back in 1917, the consciousness of the working class in Russia was a global consciousness. The February revolution produced neither a socialist revolution nor a bourgeois revolution but a dual power situation because of the global balance of class forces internationally. Indeed this was the essence of the conflict on this issue from 1905 to April 1917 between Lenin and Trotsky.

Lenin learned his Marxism primarily from the German Social Democratic party and Karl Kautsky in particular. His Marxism, and he thought the whole party, contained elements of both historical objectivism and mechanical materialism. However Lenin's revolutionary practice and the somewhat better Marxism of Plekhanov led him to break progressively from this history but his thinking still contained elements of it right up to April 1917—and some say he never really broke completely from it. This lay at the heart of his struggle with Trotsky over the Permanent Revolution; what was the objective content of the coming revolution, the historically inevitably bourgeois revolution or the opening shots of the world revolution?

In his autobiography *My Life* Trotsky recounts the source from where he initially learned his Marxism: It was in my cell that I read with delight two well-known essays by an old Italian Hegelian-Marxist, Antonio Labriola... Unlike most Latin writers, Labriola had mastered the materialist dialectics, if not in politics – in which he was helpless – at least in the philosophy of history. The brilliant dilettantism of his exposition actually concealed a very profound insight. He made short work, and in marvellous style, of the theory of multiple factors which were supposed to dwell on the Olympus of history and rule our fates from there." (*My Life*, Chapter VIII, My First Prisons).

So from then on he understood the dialectical thread of history, an Italian Marxist philosopher who could not in conscience promote the scenario of the inevitable progress of the historical process given that the counter-reformation had thrown Italy back from world leaders in the Renaissance to a backward divided feudalism for three hundred years

Lenin came to understand that a bourgeois revolution, even one led by the working class was impossible having studied world imperialism for his 1916 book, Imperialism, the *Highest Stage of Capitalism* and when the organs of working class power appeared again as in 1905, demonstrating the global nature of the revolution. The bourgeois revolution could not live as a bourgeois revolution. It had to grow over into

the socialist revolution or be defeated. There it was no 'gamble' as the CPGB propose but then had to spread internationally into the world revolution or it would also die. That it was not overthrown by the bourgeoisie but strangled by the bureaucracy was an unforeseen occurrence but revolutionaries do not plan for defeats. The German Revolution of 1918-23 would have triumphed had a Bolshevik-style party existed to lead it.

Of course Lenin and the Bolsheviks should have adopted the theory of Permanent Revolution in 1905, and Lenin did toy with the idea then but nonetheless Trotsky's struggles and the democratic centralist regime within the party enabled Lenin to turn the party in time for the revolution with the help of the ranks and some of the middle cadre, but only just. It was a close run thing, it is wrong to argue that it was right to have a democratic 'three whales of bolshevism' approach up to April 1917 and then in changed circumstances change tack. That is stageism.

The CPGB argue just this line but it might have proved impossible to change course in time and why would you project the wrong strategic approach, educate the party and the working

Exchange rates, US Dollar to Mark, 1918-1923

Source : Gerald D. Feldman, *The Great Disorder*, Oxford : UP 1997, p5

Jan. 1918	5.21	Mar. 1923	21,190.00
Jan. 1919	8.20	Apr. 1923	24,475.00
Jan. 1920	64.80	May 1923	47,670.00
Jan. 1921	64.91	June 1923	109,966.00
Jan. 1922	191.81	July 1923	353,412.00
April 1922	291.00	Aug. 1923	4,620,455.00
July 1922	493.22	Sept. 1923	98,860,000.00
Oct. 1922	3,180.96	Oct. 1923	25,260,000,000.00
Jan. 1923	17,972.00	Nov. 1923	2,193,600,000,000.00
Feb. 1923	27,918.00	Dec. 1923	4,200,000,000,000.00

The German Revolution of 1918-23 would have triumphed had a Bolshevik-style party existed to lead it.

class in that and then suddenly change tack 180 degrees and hope everything turns out ok? Of course for the CPGB and all those who have been educated by Stalinism, there is no change of course, they will make a half a revolution, as in Spain and the working class suffers the direst consequences of the counter-revolution although most leaders make good their escape.

In all other aspects Lenin practiced a transitional approach, he learned from the masses from 1905 and never again spoke of simply bringing class consciousness to the workers from outside in that rigidly counterposed way learned from Kautsky. Never simply the minimum programme, never simply the maximum programme but a dialectical combination that always sought to move the class forward to a higher level of consciousness, not just tail end it by silly slogans like 'pay the workers what they want'. Comrade Wall is treating the Transitional Programme as the Maximum programme and not seeking to supercede the Minimum programme at all, as if Trotskyists were merely super militant workers.

Comrade Bill Keats criticises the rank-and-file approach in the following:

"You claim that Trotsky agreed with SWP/US practice on the teamsters. Have you read the discussions on this in Trotsky's writings 39/40? His fundamental criticism of North West Organizer was that it was "apolitical". He asked what these rank and file militants voted for and considered their vote for the Democrats every four years "decisive". He considered NW Organizer a "photograph of our adaption to the Rooseveltians". This sounds like damning criticism and not agreement. "

Well Trotsky was not opposing the rank-and-file approach but the softness of that approach to the union bureaucracy in the Teamsters and urging them to change course in this matter and the closely related question of voting for the Democratic President Roosevelt. He was under the impression they had corrected this because on the day of his assassination he wrote the following:

20 August 1940

The Northwest Organizer becomes more precise – more aggressive – more political. We enjoyed it very much. With friendliest and warmest greetings from household to household, I am,

Fraternally yours, L. TROTSKY

You are right to raise the question of how that rank-and file should operate because, like soviets, it depends on the politics of the leaders of this group of workers. We must not adopt the rank-and-file perspective of the British IS/SWP of 1970s which consisted of an anarcho-syndicalist avoidance of conflict with the TU bureaucracy in an agreed division of labour.

They never stood for shop steward's positions, let alone higher offices. In contrast in the 1930s struggle on the London buses the CP-led rank-and-file movement fought the bureaucracy head on and mobilised the busworkers against them in what Ernest Bevin, the right-wing Gen Sec of the TGWU called an "internal breakaway" - demanding official backing, standing for all electable office with an egalitarian set of rules and calling frequent and effective industrial action over the heads of the bureaucracy when they were seen to sell out.

It collapsed after 1935 when Stalin imposed the Popular Front policy on the CP leaders of the movement. So we seek to build a 1930-style rank-and-file grouping on a programme of class struggle but not on the full programme of the revolutionary party. We would seek to win militants to the group by our propaganda for the more class conscious and develop them as workers leaders.

To Charles and the HRWS we feel that you have not understood the transitional nature of the demands placed on labour leaders and the call-

ing for a vote for bourgeois workers parties, and of course other centrist and left reformist parties that may have the ear of more radicalised sections of workers. It may be a tactic but it is a tactic that applies outside of a revolutionary situation and even in revolutionary situations we cannot assume that the mass of workers will not still retain democratic illusions.

For this reason Lenin and Trotsky held the elections for the Constituent Assembly and did not scatter it until the rule of the Soviets had settled itself in the consciousness of the masses, at which stage it was accepted easily that the rule of the soviets was counterposed to the rule of the bourgeoisie through the Assembly.

We feel you are equating critical, tactical support for bourgeois-workers parties as against the parties of the direct class enemy and you do not understand the transitional method of relating to the class consciousness of the mass of the working class. Here is how we explained the matter to your former comrades from Argentina, Carlos Munzer et al.

"So here is Trotsky in 1927 elaborating a policy not only of critical (but not political) support for left bourgeois nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek by participation in his army in the war against Japanese imperialism. Trotsky here and Lenin in *Left Wing Communism* would be the greatest of class traitors if it is true as you propose that "you have called publicly to vote critically—that is, you gave a political support, albeit "critically"- for a bourgeois imperialist government as that of the British Labour".

Such a "critical vote" is NOT political support for us just as it was not for Lenin; if you want to say

we politically support the imperialist programme of the British Labour party or the French Socialist party you must prove it by something other than illogical deductions and baseless assertions like this. You then correctly identify the critical vote with the united front method and then contemptuously reject that also except in the very limited circumstances of a fascist-type coup as Kornilov attempted in 1917 and, "even then, one should not give it the least political support".

But again the whole method of the united front is NEVER to give political support to the programme of the bourgeois-workers' party or government, or to the anti-imperialist bourgeoisie or petit bourgeoisie, to support, as Lenin says, "as the rope support the hanged man". You must think Lenin was very wrong in his famous book. We hope you have read it, if so you certainly have not understood it."

You are right that the Labour party in Britain does not have any real internal political life now. In fact for the first time ever to our knowledge in the vote for leader of the Labour party it was clear that the membership in the constitu-



The Miliband brothers: Ed Miliband defeated his more Blairite brother against the wishes of the Tory and Lib-Dem Coalition-supporting mass media because of the votes of the individual members of the trade unions.

encies were to the RIGHT of the MPs themselves, a situation that has never arisen before.

But we may intervene via the Labour Representation Committee, which is democratic and organises what is left of the left within the Labour party as well as outside of it. And Ed Miliband defeated his more Blairite brother against the wishes of the Tory and Lib-Dem Coalition-supporting mass media because of the votes of the individual members of the trade unions, albeit mobilised by the TU bureaucracy. Herein lies the secret of what a bourgeois workers party is. It is this relationship with the class that will again make it an arena for struggle when the class rises again.

Comradely Gerry Downing

Dubstep rebellion - the British banlieue comes to Millbank

By Paul Mason

They marched to parliament square, got stopped, surged through police lines and trampled onto the grass that had been so painstakingly regrown after the eviction of the peace camp. And then they danced.

The man in charge of the sound system was from an eco-farm, he told me, and had been trying to play "politically right on reggae"; however a crowd in which the oldest person was maybe seventeen took over the crucial jack plug, inserted it into a BlackBerry, (iPhones are out for this demographic) and pumped out the dubstep.

Young men, mainly black, grabbed each other around the head and formed a surging dance to the digital beat lit, as the light failed, by the distinctly analog light of a bench they had set on fire.

Any idea that you are dealing with Lacan-reading hipsters from Spitalfields on this demo is mistaken. While a good half of the march was undergraduates from the most militant college occupations - UCL, SOAS, Leeds, Sussex - the really stunning phenomenon, politically, was the presence of youth: *bainlieue*-style youth from Croydon, Peckham, the council estates of Islington.

Having been very close to the front line of the

fighting, on the protesters side, I would say that at its height - again - it broke the media stereotype of being organised by "political groups": there was an anarchist black bloc contingent, there were the socialist left groups - but above all, again, I would say the main offensive actions taken to break through police lines were done by small groups of young men who dressed a lot more like the older brothers of the dubsteppers.

The fighting itself is still going on - I am seeing people break the windows of HM Revenue and Customs live on TV. At one point after 2pm there were just two lines of riot cops between the students and parliament and it was at this point, with nowhere to go, that people began to push forward and attack the police.

Despite that, those involved were a minority and it was fairly "ritual" involving placard sticks and the remains of the metal fence around Parliament Square, until people realised there was nowhere to break through "to" and changed direction.

I saw them swarm up Victoria Street, at first pushing back a line of mounted police and breaking through various attempts by riot police to form a cordon. But then in successive charges, both the mounted and the foot police charged back.

I saw heavy objects land among the police, amid a much larger volume of paint, fireworks and flashbangs. At one point the horses were unable to contain this and a policeman fell off his horse, being carried away on a stretcher by colleagues.

Later the police - who were themselves trapped between two lines of protesters, lost control of their own rear and only contained the breakthrough by batoning people to the floor, including women. By the side of a pub in a nearby street there was a line if injured protesters being triaged by ambulance crews.

By this point many of the seasoned occupiers had moved out of Parliament Square and some were returning to their occupations to discuss where the campaign goes next.

I have seen a lot of public disorder in this part of London over the past 30 years. As a riot it was sporadic; one notable feature is that, while many protesters fight wearing masks, many do not: there is an air of "don't care" - especially among the school students.

Politically, there is an almost total disconnect with the established parties: they had not bothered to send their representatives there - there were a few NUS national officials but no kind of Labour student presence that I could see.

When there are speeches, the university students often defer to the working class young people from sixth forms, who they see as being the main victims of the reform. With the Coalition's majority reduced by 3/4, as I reflected earlier, it is unprecedented to see a government teeter before a movement in whom the iconic voices are sixteen and seventeen year old women, and whose anthems are mainly dubstep.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

The Recession and Theories of Imperialism: It has to be Lenin!

By Ret Marut

Marxist Theory

At the Alliance for Workers Liberty (AWL) Winter School on 29 November 2009 Leo Panitch, editor of the Socialist Register, an organiser of the Socialist Project group in Toronto, and professor at York University spoke on the economic crisis.

Panitch is a self-confessed neo-Kautskyian or ultra-imperialist theorist of imperialism as opposed to a Leninist one. These are the only two real contending theories to understand the world today in terms of inter-imperialist rivalries as the international economic crisis unfolds.

Briefly neo-Kautskyians believe that US hegemony over the world economy is unchallenged and basically unchallengeable because all the world's capitalists know what's good for them in the long run. Central to this construction was the idea that the giant multi-national corporations (US in the main) were eliminating contradictions between rival national capitals and rival imperialist nations and they were becoming global, rather than national capital. They have supposed created a stable alliance of all the major powers to exploit the Third World for their joint benefit. In 1914 Karl Kautsky published an article on imperialism, which subsequently was translated into English and published in the USA. He argued there could be a way out of wars among the imperialist powers, a solution now named "Ultra-imperialismus" or "super-imperialism", *Imperialism and the War*, International Socialist Review, 15 (1914). It was a precursor to the bombastic conclusion by the end-of-history man Francis Fukuyama, who again trumpeted this in 1992, following the 'fall of communism'. This outlook has been rubbished by sub-prime mortgage crises and banking/credit systemic failures and in its continuing unfolding, notably in Iceland, Greece and Ireland of late. And now we await the spotlight falling on Portugal, Spain, Belgium and Italy in Western Europe, besides the critical trade deficits shown in eastern European states after being cut adrift from the former Comecon alliance.

Lenin's theory basically states that rival imperialist powers can never solve their contradictions; their drive for profit and markets bring them inevitably into economic conflict with each other and these conflicts inevitably



The now-vulnerable Supercarrier USS George Washington. According to Forbes online magazine: "advancements in anti-ship missile technologies may be rendering the mighty ships obsolete, with China – North Korea's main military backer – possessing some of the world's most potent technology. Chinese and Russian anti-ship missiles are world-class. China may have the most advanced anti-ship missile program in the world." And China is building its own aircraft carriers now.

bring inter-imperialist wars. These in turn will ferment revolutionary situations worldwide where the working class will be faced with the question of the taking of state power and will do so leading to an unfolding world revolution provided they have an internationalist revolutionary leadership prepared to lead it to do that. We contend that the objective circumstances to fulfil this scenario are now unfolding rapidly before our eyes. Panitch shoots straight from the hip to his welcoming pro-imperialist audiences in the AWL and elsewhere: "I don't think that US hegemony has waned, and I don't think it's about to wane in the very near future, despite the current financial crisis...In our view, by contrast, we have been living through one of the most dynamic periods in the whole history of capitalism." www.workersliberty.org/category/marxist-theory/economics. Touching faith, indeed, not shared by many leading capitalists today.

Martin Thomas of Workers Liberty takes the line of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's pro-imperialist neo-Kautskyite book *Empire*. Thomas's *Marxism and imperialism* concludes with the following defence of US imperialism:

"Stalinist imperialism (Russia in Eastern Europe and Afghanistan, China in Tibet, etc.) was and is as much to be opposed as ordinary capitalist imperialism. And every capitalist class of any clout, 'advanced' or otherwise, has imperialistic impulses. Indonesia's domination of East Timor, or Serbia's drive to dominate Kosova, are as much to be opposed as the imperialist ventures of larger, richer states. Countries as India, South Africa, Nigeria, Mexico, and Brazil, where the

ruling class has gained sufficient economic and/or military strength to act as a big power in its region, have developed into 'sub-imperialist' centres"

<http://archive.workersliberty.org/publications/readings/2001/empire.html>

Robert Fisk had written a front page scoop in *The Independent* on the 6 October (2009) that year: The Demise of the Dollar, in which he claimed that, over the next nine years:

"Gulf Arabs are planning – along with China, Russia, Japan and France – to end dollar dealings for oil, moving instead to a basket of currencies including the Japanese yen and Chinese yuan, the euro, gold and a new, unified currency planned for nations in the Gulf Co-operation Council, including Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait and Qatar."

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/the-demise-of-the-dollar-1798175.html>

In response to a query from a Socialist Fight supporter on what he made of this, Panitch delivered a sharp and angry rebuke to Fisk:

"this story is part of the neo-con agenda in the US to undermine Obama's Healthcare Bill".

Suggesting Fisk as a spokesman/dupe for the neo-cons was hard to swallow, but what did it have to do with the Healthcare Bill (now Act)? We never got the answer and it took a moment to realise that he was making a straightforward identification of US labour and capital; if American imperialism did not continue to exploit the world as its hegemon it would not have enough money to pay for the health of its workers. His logic was as chauvinist and reactionary as that!

The plans of the imperialist rivals of the US may not pan out in the way Fisk outlined but the main thrust of the story is undoubtedly correct and already emerging. Iran denominates its oil in euros and Saddam Hussein was about to do the same in 2003 but the US invaded to forestall the collapse of the dollar as an international currency then. According to the *All Eyes on Obama* blog on November 4, 2010:

"In September, China supported a Russian proposal to start direct trading using the yuan and the ruble rather than pricing their trade or taking payment in U.S. dollars or other foreign currencies. China then negotiated a similar deal with Brazil. And on the eve of the IMF meetings

in Washington on Friday, Premier Wen stopped off in Istanbul to reach agreement with Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan to use their own currencies in a planned tripling Turkish-Chinese trade to \$50 billion over the next five years, effectively excluding the dollar."

Alleyesonobama.blogspot.com /2010/

But with the impending onset of the 'double-dip' recession/depression - this demonstrates Lenin's basic outline on the trajectory of Imperialism is the only viable underlying theory of modern world imperialism. International incidents are beginning to proliferate in the Pacific seas near Japan and China over the ownership of four archipelagos. Russian and Chinese claims are disputed by Japan, Vietnam with other ASEAN nations all provocatively backed by the US with their aircraft carriers and, in the Russia-Japan dispute over the South Kuril Islands, in direct repudiation of the post-WWII agreement signed by the USSR, Japan and the US. Taiwan is still a flashpoint, despite the election of a government with a softer line on relations with the mainland Chinese and Korea too is in the grips of the most serious confrontation since the cessation of hostilities in the peninsula in 1953. The wars in Sri Lanka, Iraq, Afghanistan and into Pakistan were/are ultimately US geopolitical manoeuvres against China. The situation is strongly reminiscent of the pre-WWI international incidents over Morocco, Bosnia, etc

And imperialist China is also preparing for war. According to a report from The U. S. Naval Institute, March 31, 2009: Chinese Develop Special "Kill Weapon" to Destroy U.S. Aircraft Carriers: "Advanced missile poses substantial new threat for U.S. Navy: The range of the modified Dong Feng 21 missile is significant in that it covers the areas that are likely hot zones for future confrontations between U.S. and Chinese surface forces. The size of the missile enables it to carry a warhead big enough to inflict significant damage on a large vessel, providing the Chinese (with) the capability of destroying a U.S. super-(aircraft) carrier (like 'George Washington') in one strike." <http://www.usni.org/news-and-features/chinese-kill-weapon>

Economic conflicts are endemic and always an antecedent which naturally follows and may morph into military conflict anywhere when capitalism is inexorably driven into a zero sum game and decline situation - as opposed to win win situations of economically necessary expansion on the rise. Then relative decline is masked by some universal advances in times of boom.

Essentially all the countries mentioned by Fisk above were 'burned' by the collapse of Lehman Brothers, the US bailout of the banks and the \$1.8 trillion quantitative easing in 2008. World trade is denominated in dollars, printing dollars diminishes the currency, makes US export cheaper and imports dearer. Moreover those holding vast reserves of US dollars because of a

"THE HOLOCAUST HAS PROVEN TO BE AN INDISPENSIBLE IDEOLOGICAL WEAPON. THROUGH ITS DEPLOYMENT, ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST FORMIDABLE MILITARY POWERS, WITH AN HORRENDOUS HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD, HAS CAST ITSELF AS A 'VICTIM' STATE, AND THE MOST SUCCESSFUL ETHNIC GROUP IN THE US HAS LIKEWISE ACQUIRED VICTIM STATUS. CONSIDERABLE DIVIDENDS ACCRUE FROM THIS SPECIOUS VICTIMHOOD - IN PARTICULAR, IMMUNITY TO CRITICISM, HOWEVER JUSTIFIED."



trade surplus (and buying US bonds to finance the deficit), principally China and Japan, but others also, now finds those reserves shrinking because of unilateral action by the US. They grumbled but put up with it in 2008 because they feared the collapse of the world financial market: "this baby could go" as George Bush so memorably said in real fear.

But in early November 2010 when Obama began printing \$600 billion in quantitative easing (after the \$1.8 trillion in 2008) China and Germany complained this was unfair practice and how did Obama have the cheek to demand that China raises the value of the renminbi (yuan) while he was lowering the value of the dollar himself by different instruments? The Seoul G20 economic summit produced nothing but ill will. How can we take seriously the following from Jose Barroso, President of the European Commission, on 24 November 2010?

"The G20's financial reform efforts will continue in areas like macro-prudential policy frameworks, shadow banking, commodity derivative markets, and market integrity and efficiency... It is now important to ensure strict and consistent implementation of all these commitments, according to the agreed timetable, to ensure a global level playing field. We have received strong assurances from the US that they share our determination on this." <http://www.egovmonitor.com/node/39567>

And Europe, the cockpit of both 20th century World Wars, is now in the midst of another huge wave of crises with Ireland and Greece at its west and eastern borders, revealing chronic illness that goes to its very centre - its heart. Already Germany is flexing its political and eco-

nomic muscles, considering an exit strategy from the euro currency, looking for excuses to build up its armed forces and increasing looking eastward. And they have the technology to do so rapidly if needed; if Siemens AG can build advanced high speed trains for Russia they can build advanced war machines.

Britain, smarting from the US hounding of BP over the Gulf oil spill and fearing an end to the "special relationship" have entered another *Entente Cordiale* with France as in 1904; and a military alliance is a political alliance. The Greek crisis is essentially unresolved and Ireland is now the basket case. And it is turning nasty because there is no win win now, only lose lose and who will lose the most?

Of course the main flashpoints for war up to now have been the Middle East and we have debunked theories of Ultra Imperialism in the past concentrating on that arena:

"So we can regard the US as pursuing a dual policy here (in the Middle East); a prime policy of ensuring that its position as the world's hegemon is unchallenged and a secondary policy of hedging its

bets, if any of its imperialist rivals does challenge them or begin to look like they are forming an alliance against them then the US can use its navy and air force to choke off their oil."

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/19117853/Minority-Imperialism-New>

And this brings us neatly back to Leo Panitch. Whatever an oppressed nation like Ireland may plead about the loss of its sovereignty against EU imperialists we have to reject any common cause between workers and capitalists everywhere, whilst siding with the oppressed nation against imperialism. In this concrete case we call for the renoucement of all indebtedness to corporate or supra-national banks whether they be RBS or the European Central Bank, and seek trade with those countries that are outside the Imperialist 'stranglehold' remit, whilst calling for unilateral support from workers and oppressed in their independently acting states everywhere. There is no middle way.

But, in contrast, Panitch is essentially a red necked US imperialist chauvinist, albeit dressed up in leftist phraseology for the English chauvinist boys and girls of the radical AWL and others. Clearly now the only viable theory of world imperialism, and the only reliable guide to the future of the class struggle, begins with Lenin's theory of imperialism; the irreconcilable emergence of conflicts between world imperialist powers not with the class-collaborationist theory of Kautsky which Lenin panned so famously in his pamphlet: *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*. That argument is now over for all serious revolutionists: it has to be Lenin!

Debating the Thermidor: "Me No Dirty Commie" by Gerry Downing

In issue No 17 of Permanent Revolution Mark Hoskisson repudiated Trotskyism and Leninism and indicated his preference for the politics found around that loose anti-Leninist grouping *The Commune*. In PR 18 Stuart King replied and Bill Jefferies weighed in with a defence of the Kronstadt uprising, basically charging Lenin and Trotsky with destroying the revolution then and there. Between the two issues of the magazine there appeared on Liam Mac Uaid's Blog, *It's all Lenin's fault* a summary by Liam which provoked 590 comments. It all adds up to a capitulation to the neo-liberal offensive against the world working class and Trotskyism.

This piece will seek to prove that:

1. Lenin did not lead to Stalin; Leninism (Bolshevism) and Stalinism are antipodes, direct irreconcilable opposites. As a corollary the taking of the Kronstadt fortress in 1921 was a necessary and unavoidable defence of the revolution.
2. That the Leninist model of party building, properly understood, is the only possible one that can lead successful proletarian revolutions anywhere.
3. That the three articles, by comrades Hoskisson, Jefferies and King betray the origins of these comrades in the state capitalist group, the Socialist Workers Party, from whose methodology they have never properly broken.

Lenin did not lead to Stalin

A revolutionary victory in the West was the only thing that could have regenerated the 1917 revolution, no mistake-free political regime could have saved it from degeneration in an isolated Russia; given the circumstances that the revolution found itself in, the victory of a Stalinist-type bureaucracy was inevitable. We may disagree about which mistakes may have speeded up and which far-sighted correct policies may have slowed down this inevitable outcome, more or less 'workers' democracy' for instance, but these did not cause the degeneration, very visible it is true even by 1921.

Nor could they have avoided it; that they could have and did not is the lie that is at the heart of Comrade Hoskisson's article. Those objective circumstances, subjectively produced, did not finally impose their logic until Stalin's victory of socialism in a single country in 1924 against the heroic, yes, heroic opposition of Lenin and Trotsky, who understood it best. The progress of the Russian Revolution was absolutely dependent on the progress of the world revolution.

The banning of factions in 1921 did not signal the counter-revolutionary Thermidor nor did the suppression of the Kronstadt revolt. In Trot-

sky's, *Hue and Cry Over Kronstadt*, he says:

"How can the Kronstadt uprising cause such heartburn to Anarchists, Mensheviks, and 'liberal' counter-revolutionists, all at the same time? The answer is simple: all these groupings are interested in compromising the only genuinely revolutionary current, which has never repudiated its banner, has not compromised with its enemies, and alone represents the future..."

Most puerile of all is the argument that there was no uprising, that the sailors had made no threats, that they 'only' seized the fortress and the battleships... The logic of the struggle would have given predominance in the fortress to the extremists, that is, to the most counterrevolutionary elements. The need for supplies would have made the fortress directly dependent upon the foreign bourgeoisie and their agents, the White émigrés."

The above quote from Trotsky has been completely substantiated by the opening of the Soviet archives. These refute comrades Jefferies' assertions that the Whites (and anti-Semites) were not involved in the uprising, and prove that the 'third revolution' was a counterrevolution. In an article *Kronstadt 1921: Bolshevism vs. Counterrevolution*, the International Communist League (ICL) sets out the case very well..

"Another PRC member, an anarchist named Perepelkin, told his Cheka interrogator that he had been upset by Vilken's prominence in the mutiny. According to Cheka Petrograd regional chairman N.P. Komarov, Perepelkin said:

"And here I saw the former commander of the Sevastopol, Baron Vilken, with whom I had earlier sailed. And it is he who is now acknowledged by the PRC to be the representative of the delegation that is offering us aid. I was outraged by this. I called together all the members of the PRC and said, so that's the situation we're in, that's who we're forced to talk to. Peichenko and the others jumped on me, saying, 'When we



Red Army soldiers and delegates to the 10th Congress of the Bolsheviks in 1921 charge over the ice unprotected from the machine guns and heavy artillery with terrible loss of life, between 10,000 to 20,000 may have died in this act of outrageous courage in defence of the revolution. Some 5,000 rebels were killed or executed afterwards: "How can the Kronstadt uprising cause such heartburn to Anarchists, Mensheviks, and 'liberal' counter-revolutionists, all at the same time? The answer is simple: all these groupings are interested in compromising the only genuinely revolutionary current, which has never repudiated its banner, has not compromised with its enemies, and alone represents the future."

don't have food or medicine—it's all going to run out on March 21—are we really supposed to surrender to the conquerors? There was no other way out,' they said. I stopped arguing and said I would accept the proposal. And on the second day we received 400 poods of food and cigarettes. Those who agreed to mutual friendship with the White Guard baron yesterday shouted that they were for Soviet power."

Lastly on Kronstadt comrade Jefferies relies heavily on the anti-communist Professor Israel Getzler. In his book *Kronstadt 1917 - 1921: The Fate of a Soviet Democracy* he claims that the sailors manning the two battle ships in 1921 were largely the same as in 1917. The internet is just full of anarchists using the exact quote from Wikipedia as pasted by comrade Jefferies. The ICL article gives this the lie also:

"Getzler's only proof for this is February 1921 crew lists cited in S. N. Semanov's *The Suppression of the 1921 Anti-Soviet Kronstadt Mutiny*; originally published in *Voprosy istorii*, 1971, No. 3). We examined Semanov's lists as well; they indicated when the sailors enlisted, but not **where** they had served in 1917. The evidence indicates that the 1921 crews were overwhelmingly not veterans of Kronstadt 1917. For example, in his unpublished *Kronstadt, March 1921*, Yuri Shchetinov shows that the crew of the *Petropavlovsk* was reduced from nearly 1,400 to just 200 by late 1918; the majority of the replacements were not veteran Kronstadters but

conscripts—former crewmen of navy, merchant marine and river vessels—who had quit after the revolution rather than serve voluntarily in the newly constituted Red Navy”.

The Leninist model of party building

The nature of the internal political regime of the Bolsheviks sprang neither from the illegal conditions of Russia in the early twentieth century nor from supposed dictatorial tendencies in the character of Lenin later developed by Stalin, but from the oppressed character of the working class itself which makes revolution necessary to achieve socialism.

The working class must engage in the class struggle or the capitalists will drive them down to perpetual poverty. They cannot wait for ‘democracy’ and parliament, they must go on strike, deny ‘democracy’ to the capitalists to oppress them, and to scabs who want to go to work when the strike is on, or they will lose all around. The miners of Cortonwood were absolutely right to post their pickets everywhere in 1984 without a ballot, because that was what the class struggle demanded. Similarly they must develop from pickets to workers’ defence guards if they are faced with serious police and fascist attacks. Again ‘democracy’ is sidelined.

Marx made the first socialist criticism of the bourgeois secular regime of rights in 1843 in *On the Jewish Question*, the ideological foundation for his later critique of capitalism as a whole. The basic argument is that the secular regime of rights as developed by the American and French Revolutions at the end of eighteenth century represented civil but not human emancipation. Marx says:

“Where the political state has attained its true development, man – not only in thought, in consciousness, but in reality, in life – leads a twofold life, a heavenly and an earthly life: life in the political community, in which he considers himself a communal being, and life in civil society, in which he acts as a private individual, regards other men as a means, degrades himself into a means, and becomes the plaything of alien powers.”

The internal regime of the Bolsheviks and of all those that seriously want to build a revolutionary party to overthrow capitalism must be based on the democratic centralism of Lenin, not on the bureaucratic centralism of Stalin nor on the ‘pluralist’ model of a ‘party of the whole class’ of Karl Kautsky. Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary party. All serious revolutionaries must fight for this within their party.

This party must be based on the principle of democratic centralism contained in Lenin’s 1906 article *Freedom to Criticise and Unity of Action*: autonomy for local Party organisations and of the universal and full rights to criticise by all members, so long as this does not disturb the unity to achieve defined and imperative actions once decided.

In PR 18 Comrade King signals his preference for the K a u t s k y i t e , ‘pluralist’ model in the following:

“This approach, along with Trotsky’s overwhelming political dominance in terms of experience and theoretical ability, undoubtedly accentuated many of the problematic trends that flow from such a ‘narrow’ party perspective – sharp divisions with opponents, hostile polemics, political intolerance and not a little arrogance – all qualities that in small groupings isolated from the working class tend in the direction of Bureaucratism, cult-like leadership and undemocratic practices.”

One would recognise the old Workers Power in that description and also the current one but not a genuine Trotskyist party. But the old regime of Workers Power was preferable to the new one in PR, at least theory was fought for. The fight to develop revolutionary theory in PR has been replaced with an agreement to disagree.

The origins of these comrades in the SWP

We base this charge on the failure sufficiently to distinguish, or distinguish at all in the case of comrade Hoskisson and Jefferies, between capitalist counter-revolution as posed at Kronstadt and the Thermidor counter-revolution as imposed by the bureaucracy with Stalin at its head. Comrade Hoskisson champions a non-class, unqualified ‘democracy’ – in fact bourgeois parliamentary norms – as a remedy to Stalinist tyranny. In perhaps the most cynical passage of his article he writes,

“In one article in 1928 Trotsky refers to his erstwhile allies against Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenov, as a ‘pair of Sancho Panzas’, sadly the Don Quixote of the time, tilting at the windmill of the Right, was Trotsky himself”.

The ‘Right’ here is capitalist restorationism. This is a reference to Trotsky’s refusal to ally with Bukharin (‘the Right’) against Stalin in 1928 when ‘a political counter-revolution’ was taking place. Capitalism is clearly better than Stalinism as every ‘democrat’ must admit is the message here! Had Trotsky ceased ‘tilting at the windmill’ of capitalism in 1928 and joined it against Stalin as here advocated how would he have politically fought capitalism in general, e.g. Hitler or Franco. How could he have founded the Fourth

“We stand on the shoulders of giants”
Tony Cliff (1917-2000)



Mark Hoskisson, standing on Cliff’s shoulders: “In one article in 1928 Trotsky refers to his erstwhile allies against Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenov, as a “pair of Sancho Panzas”, sadly the Don Quixote of the time, tilting at the windmill of the Right, was Trotsky himself”.

International in 1938?

Comrade King also makes SWP-state capitalist concession to this in his PR 18 article, equating the two threats:

“Belatedly he (Trotsky) recognised that the threat came from the party centre, with its roots in the bureaucracy, as well as from the right...”

And he makes a false historical analogy:

“if we want a more accurate analogy with the French Revolution, the crisis of 1921 was more like the autumn of 1793 when the Jacobins struck against the left and the popular movement, weakening themselves and paving the way for a later Thermidorian triumph.”

This places a question mark on his position on Kronstadt. Robespierre saw off the feudal counter-revolution by arming the citizens of Paris and initiating the Reign of Terror, which electrified the faltering revolution and quickly drove out the five invading armies of the counter-revolution and crushed the internal monarchist revolts.

Kronstadt was the final act in the defeat of the capitalist counter-revolution, from the external, invasive aspect, and that is the correct historical analogy. However that marked the end of the heroic phase of the revolution in Russia, whence began the completion of its revolutionary and national consolidation against threats ‘from without’ only for the bureaucratic tendencies to rise further and spread ‘from within’. This historic repeat with a socialistic/proletarian twist was in contrast to the beginning of the consolidation of bourgeois rule in France and beginning of the Napoleonic expansionism i.e. (war on feudally disjointed Prussia/Germany and Czarist Russia) as part of the high point of the extension of the bourgeois revolution by France.

The point is that once we begin talking of Thermidor we are accepting that certain of the central gains of the revolution had become consoli-

dated in the consciousness of the masses and cannot then be overthrown except by another civil war, at that stage. And France in 1793 was still a very rich capitalist country although Britain had passed it out by then – the restoration of a feudal regime was impossible after 1794, Russia by contrast was poor, 90% illiterate and fifth or sixth as a world power. Capitalist restoration was always possible and eventually happened in 1992.

It is clear that our ex-Trotskyists have repudi-

ated the struggle against capitalism at its highest point of theory and practice, Trotskyism. There is altogether too much 'democracy' of the bourgeois variety contained in these articles and not enough of the global class struggle against global capitalism. To this same 'democratic' public opinion Tony Cliff and his followers capitulated in 1952 when they refused to support North Korea against US imperialism within the British labour movement. "Me no dirty commie" was and is the apologetic backsliding message.

Endnotes

- [1] Trotsky, Hue and Cry Over Kronstadt, January 1938
- [2] Komarov Report, Stenographic Report of Petrograd Soviet, 25 March in 1921,
- [3] Kronstadt 1921: Bolshevism vs. Counterrevolution, at: www.icl-fi.org/english/esp/59/kronstadt.html
- [4] [Shchetinov, Kronstadt, March 1921, ibid,

Ark Tribe...Battle for Workers Rights

By Aggie McCallum in Australia

Wikipedia: Australian Labour Movement:

In May 2005 the Howard Government announced its Industrial Relations changes known as WorkChoices. This legislation received widespread criticism from the Australian union movement and... the International Labour Organization, of which Australia is a member.

Following the defeat of the Howard Liberal government at the 2007 federal election, the Rudd Labor government moved quickly to outlaw Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) amongst other changes.

WorkChoices legislation was superseded by the Fair Work Act 2009 on 1 July 2009... In 2009 the findings of a secret report on the new legislation, commissioned by the executive of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, were revealed. The report found that "the act does not bring our laws into compliance with ILO standards".[3] Geoff Borenstein, an in-house solicitor of the ETU stated that the Fair Work legislation breaches ILO conventions regarding the right to strike, industrial action generally and restrictions on the content of industrial instruments (awards, collective agreements &c).



Ark Tribe (centre), celebrating acquittal on 24 November for the 'crime' of attending an unauthorised safety-meeting in 2008 under reactionary anti-labour regulations of the Australian ABCC, set up by the Howard government in 2005.

In 2005 under the John Howard Liberal Party Government of Australia, the Building and Construction Industry Improvement Act was rushed through parliament – and the Office of the Australian Building and Construction Commissioner (abbreviated to ABCC) came into being.

The ABCC doesn't investigate or prosecute employers nor do they investigate any Safety regulations or situations of underpaid workers. The aim is to criminalise, as much as possible, any Union activities. The targeted workers are ordinary people, labourers, tradesmen, mothers, safety officers. What do they have in common? They are members of a union.

Powers of the ABCC:

The ABCC is able to interrogate people passing by a site to find out if they have witnessed any activities on a building site. If a worker is killed on site other workers must be able to prove reasonable concern about any risk to themselves before they can legally stop work and assess the safety situation.

The ABCC can fine individual workers up to \$22,000.00. (Although it has been said – see below - the fine can be up to \$28,600.00). They can gag interviews. Anyone refusing to cooperate can face a six month jail term. It is alleged that 92 construction workers have been secretly interrogated by the ABCC.

When the Labor Party, under Kevin Rudd, ran for election (2007) Rudd promised to dismantle the ABCC. However, instead of dismantling the

ABCC the Australian Rudd Government used the old industrial laws formed under the Howard Government to bring charges against an ordinary Australian worker. Why? Well...Arc Tribe attended an unauthorized meeting to discuss safety concerns on a South Australian construction site.

Subsequently he was called by the Commission to a secret meeting to be interrogated about the workplace safety dispute. Arc refused to attend their secret meeting, and as a result now faces a possible six months jail or heavy fine.

Arc Tribe's case has been in the courts for a couple of years. The outcome was expected on the 3rd of November. This date has been postponed and the decision will be issued on the 24th November. The magistrate cited that he needed more time to reach a verdict as this will be regarded as a landmark decision.

A documentary called 'Constructing Fear' was produced by film director Joe Loh:

"People in a democracy should feel free to stand up for themselves, to speak out, and if necessary to act to improve their society. These rights have been taken away from building workers in Australia." (Joe Loh).

You can view this video on the following website: <http://www.constructingfear.com.au/>

"It is a 40 minute documentary explaining the evolution and implementation of the cruel Howard government initiative called the Building Construction Industry Improvement Act.

This Act was rushed through parliament in mid 2005, slipping by unnoticed by the media due to the sale of Telstra (national telecom company). It has now ensnared hundreds of working Australians, dragged them into secret tribunals and threatened them with jail terms and individual fines of up to \$28,600 each. "

Although workers and Unions have marched and called for the abolition of the ABCC it has been without success. The ETU stated they feel betrayed by this current government and the CFMEU Secretary stated that any future support in Federal elections for this government is 'on the line'. The ACTU said industrial laws are supposed to protect workers not persecute them. They stated they remained absolutely opposed to the continuation of coercive powers that impinge on civil liberties and the rights to be members of a union.

Although the ABCC shows no respect for workers or individuals, and displays no trust in the employee and even diminishes a right to participate in changes to improve the work environment via union activities, there is a hopeful note. A report released in March by the ILO Committee of Experts (set up in 1926 to examine government reports – a body of 20 'experts' coming from different geographic regions, legal systems and culture) said the ABCC may well be in breach of a number of international labor standards, including freedom of association, the right to organize and collective bargaining. Arc Tribe was acquitted of the charges on 24th November, 2010.

Karl Marx, Capital Volume 1, Chapter 1

Joe McAvoy analyses the essence of Marx's opening chapter

We put together an analogy for simplicity sake to refer to in our study of Capital to examine the determining factor of value.

Imagine we lived in a society where the doctor was valued at five pound a day. The reason why the doctor was valued at five pound a day was because our doctor was seen as more skilled than the joiner who was valued at four pound. The joiner was valued more than the decorator who was valued at three pound a day. The decorator was valued more than the cleaner who was valued at two pound a day. The cleaner was valued more than the fruit picker who was not valued at all and was paid one pound a day.

Marx established that because a commodity is exchanged in the most diverse proportions it must represent something of identical magnitudes, something equal to a third thing which is in neither commodity. Each must be reducible to a third thing as far as exchange value is concerned.

If we disregard the use-value of commodities we only have the products of labour. With the disappearance of the useful types of labour, they can no longer be distinguished, but are all together reduced to the same kind of labour, human labour in the abstract.

Socially necessary labour time

Socially necessary labour time is the labour time required to produce any use-value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labour prevalent in that society.

If we say that the average joiner can produce four doors in an eight hour day, then we say that this is the socially necessary labour time that is required to produce four doors. Some may only be fit to produce three and some may be fit to produce five however on average in our example eight hours are socially necessary to produce four doors.

As the coat and the linen are qualitatively different use-values, so also are the forms of labour, tailoring and weaving. If the use-values were not qualitatively different, hence not the products of qualitatively different forms of useful labour, they would be absolutely incapable of confronting each other as commodities.

The totality of heterogeneous use-values or physical commodities reflects a totality of similarly heterogeneous forms of useful labour. This division of labour is a necessary condition for commodity production.

If the different forms of labour in our example were not qualitatively different and did not

produce different services or products we would not produce commodities.

Only the products of independent acts of labour can confront each other as commodities. No one in our society works independently however they do work as independent people.

If we leave aside the determinate quality of productive activity, and therefore the useful character of labour, what remains is its quality of being the expenditure of human labour-power. They are merely two different forms of the expenditure of human labour-power.

Simple labour-power

"But the value of a commodity represents human labour pure and simple,"...

"It expenditure of simple labour-power, i.e. of labour power possessed in his bodily organism by every ordinary man, on average, without being developed in any special way."

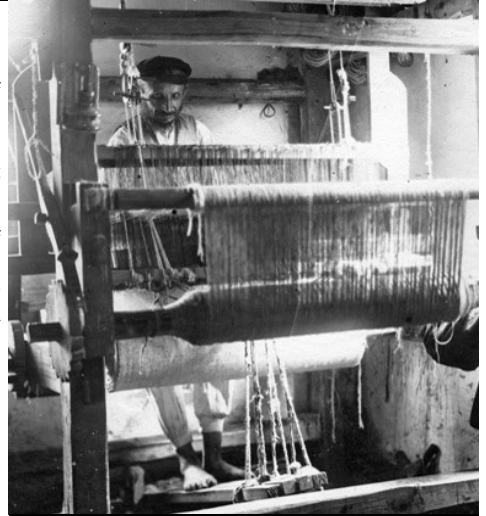
"Simple average labour, it is true, varies in character in different countries and at different cultural epochs, but in a particular society it is given. More complex labour counts only as intensified, or rather multiplied simple labour, so that a smaller quantity of complex labour is considered equal to a larger quantity of simple labour experience shows that this reduction is constantly being made."

In our example the fruit picker is simple labour. It is not seen as developed in any special way. There are many different types of simple labour power, i.e. someone who stacks shelves in a supermarket. The value of a commodity may be the outcome of the most complicated labour, but through its value it is posited as equal to the product of simple labour, hence it represents only a specific quantity of simple labour.

We have said in our example that the average joiner could produce four doors in an eight hour day, and that they were valued at four times that of simple labour, if we say that the average fruit picker procures two boxes of fruit in an eight hour day, we can say that if we reduce the joiners doors to what they are valued off, four doors are worth eight boxes of fruit.

We could also say that the services of one day of the doctor are equal to ten boxes of fruit. All commodities are equal when reduced to simple labour.

The reason why the joiner is valued at four times that of the fruit picker is because they are not seen as skilled as the doctor who is valued at five times that of the fruit picker yet worth more than the decorator who was valued at three times that of the fruit picker. No one knows that they are valued off the fruit picker



Just as in viewing the coat and the linen as values, we abstract from their different use-values, so in the case of the labour represented by those use-value do we disregard the difference between its useful forms, tailoring and weaving.

nor do they care, they do know that they are worth more than one type of labour yet not worth as much as another.

Marx says that in the interest of simplification we shall view all labour-power as simple labour, by this we shall be simply saving ourselves the trouble of making the reduction. We shall always make the reduction.

Just as in viewing the coat and the linen as values, we abstract from their different use-values, so in the case of the labour represented by those use-value do we disregard the difference between its useful forms, tailoring and weaving.

In our example we must reduce all the different types of labour to what they are valued off. We have established that if different commodities exchange in the most diverse proportions it must represent something of identical magnitudes, something equal to a third thing which is in neither commodity. Each must be reducible to a third thing as far as exchange value is concerned.

As labour-power is seen as a commodity and exchanges in the most diverse proportions it must represent something equal, i.e. of identical magnitude, something which is reducible to a third thing which is common to all commodities, simple labour.

While, therefore, with reference to use-value, the labour contained in a commodity counts only qualitatively, with reference to its value it counts only quantitatively, once it has been reduced to human labour pure and simple.

On the other hand, all labour is the expenditure of human labour-power, in the physiological sense, and it is in this quality of being equal, or abstract, human labour that it forms the value of commodities.

In our example all the different types of labour are valued off simple labour, once we reduce the different types of labour to simple labour we have what they exchange for. Value.

The simple, isolated, or accidental form of value

The two poles of the expression of value the relative form and the equivalent form.

20 yards of linen cannot express its own value. 20 yards is not worth 20 yards of linen, as it is 20 yards of linen.

It is only the value of the linen that is expressed by being related to the coat as its equivalent. The coat is the embodiment of value, it is the equivalent of a certain amount of linen.

"By equating, for example, the coat as a thing of value to the linen, we equate the labour embedded in the coat with the labour embedded in the linen."

..."by actually reducing the different kinds of labour embedded in the different kinds of commodity to their common quality of being human labour in general."

"Human labour creates value but is not itself value." it becomes value in its coagulated state. It becomes value when it comes together.

"A coat as such no more express value than does the first pieces of linen we come across." commodities do not express value, it is the labour that produce them, that finds the commodities the only way in which to express their value.

The coat is the equivalent of the linen. The labour that makes the coat is equal to the labour that produces the linen after it has been reduced to simple labour.

If we say that we have a gold miner who is valued at six times that of simple labour for simplicity sake. Our doctor is valued at five times, the joiner valued at four times, the decorator three times, the cleaner two times that of simple labour who is the fruit picker.

If we now say that the miner on average produces twelve ounces of gold in an eight hour day. We can see that two ounces of gold is worth eight hours of the fruit pickers labour power. As our fruit picker produces two boxes of fruit in an eight hour day, then two ounces of gold is the equivalent of two boxes of fruit. Our joiner produces four doors in an eight hour day and is valued at four times that of the fruit picker, so the value of each door is two ounces of gold

"In order to tell us that labour creates its own value, it says that the coat, in so far as it counts as its equal, i.e. is value, consists of the same

labour as it does itself." Marx is referring to the linen.

"By means of value relation, therefore, the natural form of the commodity B becomes the value form of commodity A" ..

The commodity coat is what the weaver expresses the value of his labour power in, the same way that all labour power express their value in the money commodity.

"But as soon as the coat takes up the position of the equivalent in the value expression, the magnitude of its value ceases to be expressed quantitatively."

As soon as a commodity represents simple labour, or equal labour, the labour that we are all valued off, it no longer has a quantitative expression of value. This money commodity has only a qualitative expression of value.

The money commodity represents simple labour, those who we are valued off. Every type of skilled labour in exchange counts as a certain amount of simple labour, and express themselves in the money commodity quantitatively. The money commodity counts only qualitatively in a certain amount of labour that is skilled. Labour that is qualitative better than it regarding the production of the commodity or providing the service in question is thus worth more than it.

"The whole of society express the amount of simple labour that they are valued at, in this money commodity. ... "their value, which is something purely social."

In our example the miner's gold is the money commodity and has no quantitative expression of value, i.e. two ounces of gold is not worth two ounces of gold as it is two ounces of gold. The gold represents simple labour, two ounces of gold could express the value of the door which is equal to eight hours of the fruit pickers labour power. The door did not take eight hours to produce it only took two hours.

"Concrete labour becomes the form of manifestation of its opposite, abstract human labour." It is always skilled labour's commodity that represents simple labour.

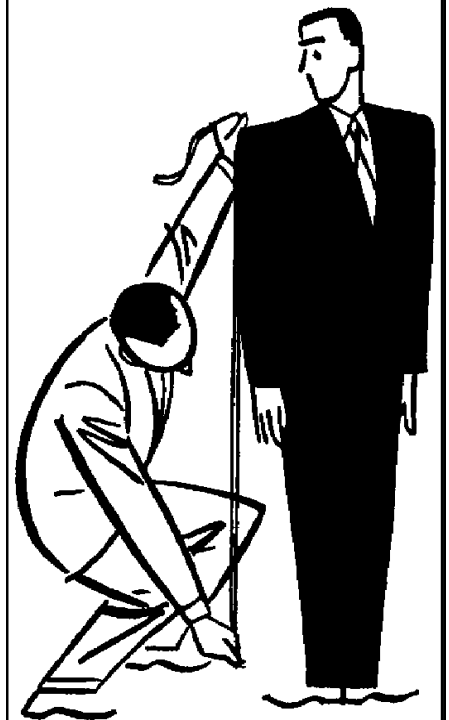
Forms of value

The total or expanded form of value

One coat now represents many different commodities.

The expanded relative form of value.

The linen and the products of all skilled labour now becomes a congealed quantity of undifferentiated human labour. The linen is worth say eight hours of simple labour, it did not take eight hours to produce only four. It is in the qualitative form of value and thus can only express itself quantitatively. In a certain amount of simple labour/ equal labour. In our example the door is worth eight hours of simple labour, it did not take eight hours to produce, it



The coat is the equivalent of the linen. The labour that makes the coat is equal to the labour that produces the linen after it has been reduced to simple labour.

only took two hours. All labour valued of simple labour is in the relative form of value.

The particular equivalent form.

As society develops one commodity becomes the equivalent form along side many others.

The general form of value.

Now commodities express their value in one commodity.

The money form

Now one commodity becomes fixed as the money commodity.

The gold miner is valued at six times that of unskilled labour, and on average they can produce twelve ounces in an eight hour day. If we now say that the money name for one ounce of gold is one pound, then eight hours of simple labour is worth two pound.

Gold best expresses the value relationship that we have described as it can be melted down and put back together again to express any amount of labour-power. Gold takes up the position of the equivalent form of value, it takes the position of expression of a certain amount of simple labour-power.

This takes us up to the fetishism of the commodity and its secret.

Quotes from: Capital: Volume 1: A Critique of Political Economy (Penguin Classics) [Paperback]



Clockwise: 1. London picket for Australian construction worker Ark Tribe 2. London Student demo 3. IRPSG picket for Michael Campbell 4. Celtic, no bloodstained poppy 5. IRPSG picket of Ministry of Justice 6. Four killed, 225 injured, women apparel workers' demo, Chittagong, Bangladesh 7. Monica Gort, Ken Loach and Jerry Hicks at London JH4GS Unite Gen Sec campaign Rally 8. Students trash Tory HQ 9. Freedom and Justice for Gaza.

