



Socialist Fight

Liaison Committee for the Fourth International

No. 26 February/March 2018 Price: Cons: £1, Waged: £2 (€2)



Ahed Tamimi, a 16-year-old Palestinian girl, **was recently arrested** in a night-time raid on her home. The Israeli authorities accuse her of "assaulting" an Israeli soldier and an officer. A day earlier she **had confronted** Israeli soldiers who had entered her family's backyard. The incident happened shortly after a soldier shot her **14-year-old cousin in the head** with a rubber bullet, and fired **tear-gas** canisters directly at their home, breaking windows.

Her mother and cousin were arrested later as well. All three remain in detention.

Unity is strength, L'union fait la force, Es la unidad fuerza, Η ενότητα είναι δύναμη, اتحاد قوت است, đoàn Jedność jest siła, ykseys on kesto, Η ενότητα είναι δύναμη, Midnimo iyo waa awood, hundeb ydy chryfder, Einheit ist Stärke, Всеединство прочность, единстве наша сила, vienybės jėga, bashkimi ben fuqine, אחדות היא כוח, unità è la resistenza, 団結は力だ, A união faz 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, Workers of the World Unite!

Socialist Fight Where We Stand (extracts)

Socialist Fight is a member of the Liaison Committee for the Fourth International with The Communist Workers Front, Brazil The Socialist Workers League, USA and Tendencia Militante Bolchevique, Argentina

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Subscribe to Socialist Fight

Four Issues: UK: £15.00, EU: £18.00

Rest of the World: £20.00

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Socialist Fight Account No. 1

Unity Trust Bank, Sort Code

08-60-01, Account. No. 20227368.

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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). The working class 'cannot emancipate itself without emancipating itself from all other sphere of society and thereby emancipating all other spheres of society' (Marx, A Contribution to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, 1843).

9. We are completely opposed to man-made climate change and the degradation of the biosphere which is caused by the anarchy of capitalist production for profits of transnational corporations. Ecological catastrophe is not 'as crucial as imperialism' but caused by imperialism so to combat this threat we must redouble our efforts to forward the world revolution.

11. We also support the fight of all other specially oppressed including lesbians and gay men, bisexuals and transgender people and the disabled against discrimination in all its forms and their right to organise separately in that fight in society as a whole. In particular we defend their right to caucus inside trade unions and in working class political parties. While supporting the latter right, we do not always advocate its exercise as in some forms it can reinforce illusions in identity politics and obscure the need for class unity.

13. 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. It is a legitimate act of self-defence for the working class to 'No Platform' fascists but we 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.

14. 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.

19. As socialists living in Britain we take our responsibilities to support the struggle against British imperialism's occupation of the six north-eastern counties of Ireland very seriously. For this reason we have assisted in founding the Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group and we will campaign for political status these Irish prisoners of war and for a 32-county united Socialist Ireland. We reject 'two nations in Ireland' theories.

21. We are for the re-creation of a World Party of Socialist Revolution, a revolutionary international, based on the best traditions of the previous revolutionary internationals, critically understood, particularly the early Third and Fourth Internationals, with their determination to combat and overcome both reformism and centrism. It is by orienting to the ranks of workers in struggle, struggles against imperialism, struggles of oppressed minorities against varied all forms of social oppression, as well as political ferment among intellectual layers radicalised through these struggles, that we will lay the basis for regroupments with forces internationally breaking with reformism, centrism and various forms of radical populism/nationalism, and seeking to build a new revolutionary Marxist international party. ▲

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Editorial, Carillion: Welfare state for capitalism: nationalise without compensation!

The UK's second-largest construction company has collapsed with £2.2bn debt. It runs prisons, schools and hospitals (some 12,000 beds) and employs about 20,000 people in the UK alone. Since the 2008 bail outs of the banks ever greater slice of taxpayers' money has gone to propping up a collapsing capitalist system, while the safety net for the working class and poor is being cut to the bone. The NHS is deliberately starved of cash to force the relatively well-off middle classes and skilled workers to buy increasingly unattainable health care.

John McDonnell has pledged a Labour government under Corbyn would sign no new Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts:

"The Carillion scandal must bury the rip-off PFI dogma for good and will move to bring existing [PFI] deals in-house by taking ownership of the special purpose vehicles [SPVs] to deliver savings for the taxpayer."

Carillion held about 450 contracts with the government in education, defence, transport and the justice system, representing 38% of its 2016 reported income.

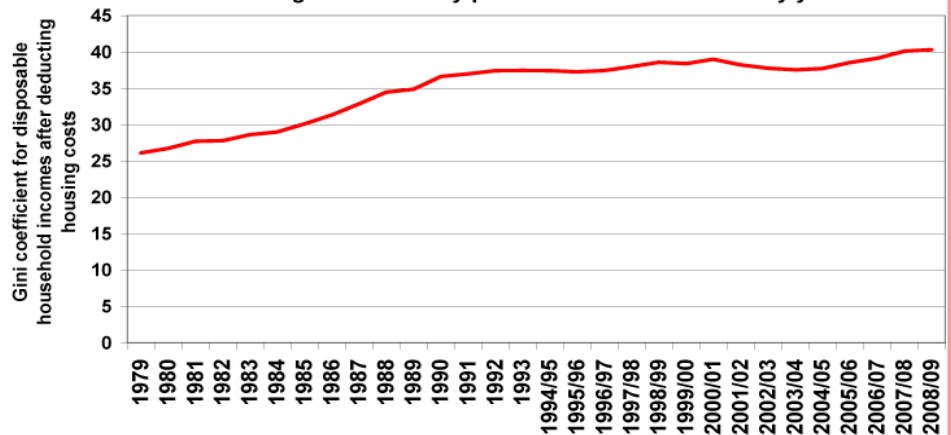
Government support for Britain's banks after the 2008 crash had reached a staggering £850bn and the eventual cost to taxpayers will not be known for years, the National Audit Office (NAO) revealed in 2009.

PFI's were initiated by John Major's Tory government in 1992 but it was Tony Blair that began the major roll out of the free-money-for-capitalists-by-robbing-the-public scams. Over 800 such schemes were signed off by him and the succeeding Tory and Coalition governments. The claim was that they "transferred risk" to the private sector; in fact, they transferred risk from the capitalists to the working class and poor. It was no accident that since 1977 Britain's Gini Coefficient shows a major transfer of resources and money from the poor to the rich and it was only during the Major Government that it halted its upward curve briefly as a consequence of the major class battles over the Poll Tax.

Blair resumed business as usual for the ruling class and that trend has enormously expanded since the 2008 crash because the Labour leaders and the TU bureaucracy accepted their traditional role of forming the second line of defence for capitalism in its hour of need instead of striking out for socialism when the opportunity arose, and they were in crisis and at their weakest. The Corbyn surge promises us the opportunity to breach that defence if we can mobilise the ranks of the TUs and the new Labour membership industrially in strike struggle and not rely solely on electoralism. WSWs tells us that

"In some cases, public authorities have sought to buy out the contract to avoid the excessive payments to the PFI providers. This has proved to be horrendously expensive. In the case of Hexham hospital, the termination costs included: the repayment of senior debt (£50 million); the market value of the shares based on estimates of future profits (£14.5 million); transactions and sub-contract breakage costs; corporation tax liability (£18 million); the cost of break-

The gini coefficient measure of overall income inequality in the UK is now higher than at any previous time in the last thirty years



Source: Households Below Average Income, DWP (1994/95 onwards) and the Family Expenditure Survey (earlier years) obtained via data published by the IFS; UK; updated Aug 2010

age of interest rate and inflation swaps (£27 million) and other costs, less any cash balances held by the SPV, the shell company holding the PFI contract. This amounted to £107 million for a £50 million hospital."

There is no doubt that an incoming Labour government would not have the money available to it to buy out the PFI contracts. But that does not mean there is nothing Corbyn could do in the face of the massed opposition of the money markets. They could negotiate directly with the PFI providers, holding over them the threat of a punitive windfall tax on all Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs), the shell companies set up to administer these scams.

Last September Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell told us that that Labour has prepared for a run on the pound and capital flight if it enters Government and has consulted experts about how the party should respond, they would be prepared for an "assault" by opponents in the City, the media and in Parliament that could have economic consequences, he assured us. But what these plans consisted of he did not say. But they would nationalise railways, water, energy and Royal Mail. "People want to know we are ready and they want to know we have got a response to everything that could happen. Because if we can demonstrate that, that will calm things down."

But the very opposite is the case. If Labour were to advance such a radical programme it just would not work to say to the ruling class: "we know what they are doing". Because they would be ribbing the rich to pay the poor and that has not happened in Britain since 1977 and it will take a mass mobilisation of the working class and the battle for socialism to achieve that.

And those who have studied the lessons of the Russian Revolution know that such a battle cannot proceed through parliament, however much of a catalyst the struggles there might be they can only be just that, a catalyst for the struggle for state power outside. The real class battles must be on the streets and in the workplaces, these must advance to workers' councils and the power of the working class can only be manifest there and socialism can only about that that power defeats the state power of the running class in its bourgeois parliament. ▲

Austerity Mass Murder Demands Revolutionary Retribution

By Ian Donovan — Who are “killing their own people”?

One of the classic justifications for the Iraq War, as well as other recent imperialist interventions such as in Libya and Syria, is the allegation that the target regime of imperialism was ‘killing their own people’. The hanging of Saddam Hussein, the death by sodomy/impalement of Gaddafi, and what the imperialists had planned in Syria until they were thwarted by Russian and Iranian help and the instinct for self-preservation of the multi-confessional Syrian population that evidently decided that Assad was a ‘lesser evil’, was justified by the supposed killing of civilians by the regimes targeted.

Of course there was always some truth in the allegations. In the case of Saddam Hussein’s regime, its worst crimes were committed while it was an ally of the USA and the West against Iran in the late 1980s. Gaddafi’s regime was likewise the target of Western largesse during the Bush/Blair years as they struggled to cope with the failure to pacify Iraq. And likewise, the Syrian regime had its uses, including fighting alongside the US/UK in the Iraq/Kuwait war of 1991. Such allegations are always self-serving; the imperialists have no problem even with actual genocide provided its perpetrator does their bidding, as shown by their backing of the degraded Cambodian pseudo-communist butcher Pol Pot in the US for most of the 1980s.

“Killing their own people” is a very sonorous phrase to justify foreign wars. But the imperialists have no problem killing their “own” people at home. They never have had. And now the British Tories have found a way to excel at it. Since 2010, they have been running a cull of the sick and the disabled at home by ‘adjustments’ to the benefits system design to kill off part of the sick and disabled working class population, in order to reduce that part of the social wage of the working class that has previously been won by struggles for social reform: sickness benefits, disability benefits, spending on social care, and the like.

The Tory run Department for Work and Pensions under Iain Duncan Smith, various other killers, and now Duncan Smith original understudy Esther McVey, have slashed a wide range of benefits to the sick and the disabled. Private companies such as Atos (later Maximus) were originally commissioned by New Labour, under Gordon Brown and his minions after the 2007-9 Financial Crash through the so-called Work

Thousands have died after being found fit for work, DWP figures show

Campaigners demand welfare overhaul after statistics reveal 2,380 people died between 2011 and 2014 shortly after being declared able to work



Protesters demonstrate against benefit cuts in London in 2014. Photograph: Guy Corbishley/Demotix/Corbis

Capability Assessment, a crude Kangaroo Court ‘test’ for the disabled in which numerous clearly sick people had their benefits drastically cut and often stopped completely.

A huge pile of corpses

The Tories, coming into power in coalition with the Lib Dems in 2010, as with so many things, ran with New Labour’s reactionary ‘innovations’ and created a huge pile of corpses.

Numerous suicides and other premature deaths have resulted from this, as such appalling crimes have occurred such as cancer sufferers having benefits stopped and told to get a job, mobility scooters and specially adapted cars for the disabled being confiscated back from the disabled by the state.

Then there are cuts in the NHS, and the deliberate engineering of a ‘winter crisis’. Despite the government’s lies and spin, it is clear that cuts have happened, are happening, and the NHS is being deliberately set up for major problems. Patients are dying in hospital corridors, or in ambulances stuck in hospital car parks in unprecedented numbers; a government minister had to resign recently when in response to criticism of the shortage of beds, he callously suggested that patients could use the seats in waiting areas! The ‘big picture of what is going on now was generalised in a study by the Kings Fund in 2015, of the decline of NHS spending under Tory/Coalition governments from 2010 projected to 2020, as the largest ever decline of NHS spending as a percentage of GDP.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-34586871>

Then there are cuts in the budgets for adult social care, and throwing back the cost of such care from the state and taxation,

onto individual families. A document from the National Audit Office from 2014 characterised what was happening pretty succinctly:

“Rising needs, reducing local authority spending, and reductions in benefits may be putting unsustainable pressure on informal carers and acute health services. Between 2001 and 2011, the number of informal carers (unpaid family, friends and neighbours) rose faster than population growth across all regions except London. Informal carers are doing more hours of care per week and are, on average, getting older. Delayed discharges into, and avoidable admissions from, social care settings place increased demand on acute services.

Over the last three years delayed discharges due to social care have decreased but remain a significant problem for some hospital trusts. National and local government do not know whether the care and health systems can continue to absorb these cumulative pressures, and how long they can carry on doing so.” (<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Adult-social-care-in-England-overview.pdf>)

All these things go hand in hand with attacks on the poor more generally, from the Bedroom Tax to Universal Credit, both of which are self-evidently designed to humiliate and crush poor working class people and drive them to penury, the food banks, homelessness you name it. The government has lost a number of court battles over this, over the bedroom tax and discrimination against the disabled and a United Nations report in 2016 found that the Tories were responsible for ‘grave violations’ of the rights of the disabled.

Tools of murder

Ultimately these things are tools of murder; they are designed to kill and maim some parts of the working class population in order to cow the mass of the population. What is the predictable result of all this? Deaths, deaths and more deaths.

In 2015, the DWP itself reported that thousands had died shortly after being declared ‘fit for work’ by the DWP’s own assessors :

“Nearly 90 people a month are dying after being declared fit for work, according to new data that has prompted campaigners and Labour leadership contenders to call for an overhaul of the government’s welfare regime.

“Statistics released by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) revealed that during

the period December 2011 and February 2014 2,380 people died after their claim for employment and support allowance (ESA) ended because a work capability assessment (WCA) found they were found fit for work.” (<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/aug/27/thousands-died-after-fit-for-work-assessment-dwp-figures>)

Then in February 2017, two articles in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* suggested that 30,000 deaths had resulted from government cuts in health and social care. As the Independent reported:

“Professor Martin McKee, from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said “the impact of cuts resulting from the imposition of austerity on the NHS has been profound”.

“Expenditure has failed to keep pace with demand and the situation has been exacerbated by dramatic reductions in the welfare budget of £16.7bn and in social care spending,” he said.

“The possibility that the cuts to health and social care are implicated in almost 30,000 excess deaths is one that needs further exploration.

“Given the relentless nature of the cuts, and potential link to rising mortality, we ask why is the search for a cause not being pursued with more urgency?” (<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/nhs-cuts-excess-deaths-30000-study-research-royal-society-medicine-london-school-hygiene-martin-a7585001.html>)

Most damningly of all, research was published last November which dwarfed these figures:

“researchers from King’s College London; University College London; Oxford and Cambridge Universities; the PILAR Research Network; the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; and the University of the Philippines, point out the real term cuts of 1.19 per cent a year in social care spending between 2010 and 2014.

“Their findings show that deaths in England fell by an average of 0.77 per cent a year between 2001 and 2010, but increased by an average of 0.87 per cent a year between 2011 and 2014.

“They say that government spending cuts were linked to 45,368 excess deaths between 2010 and 2014, and are set to be linked to an estimated 150,000 further deaths between 2015 and 2020, equivalent to nearly 100 extra deaths every day.

“Combining the projected excess deaths and the deaths observed between 2010 and 2014 translates to around 120,000 excess deaths from 2010 to 2017, they say.

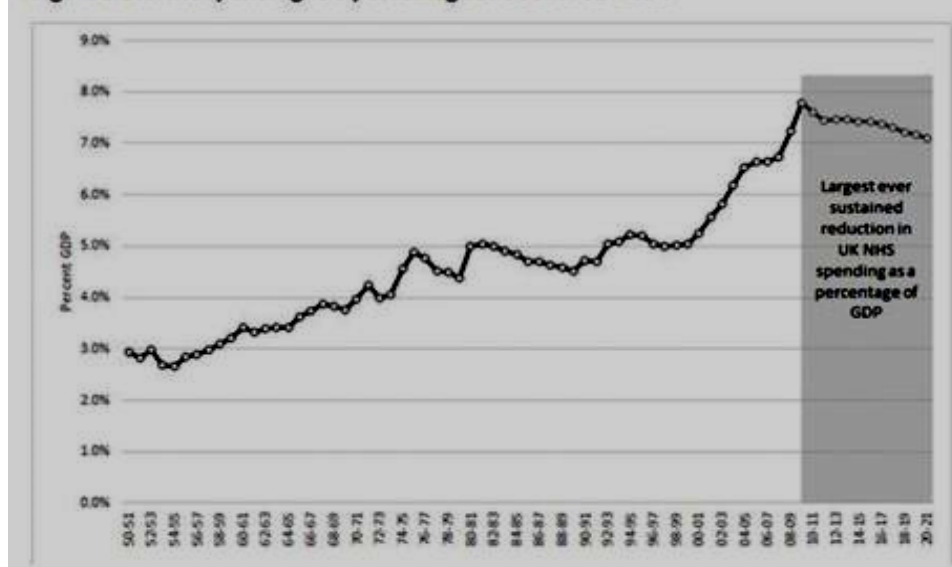
“Most of the deaths were among the over-60s and care home residents.” (<http://blacktrianglecampaign.org/2017/11/17/research-linking-care-cuts-to-120000-deaths-is-fresh-evidence-austerity-kills/>)

The government and its tame media have bitterly denounced all these indictments of its record of mass death. This was echoed by the BBC. The supposedly ‘unbiased’ state media outlet refused to cover the recent report of 120,000 deaths, using as cover a media think tank headed by a supporter of the right-wing libertarian *Spiked* magazine that had cast doubt upon the methodology used.

“Lower than Vermin”

The ruling class has no scruples about killing its own people in the thousands, tens of

Figure 3 UK NHS spending as a percentage of GDP: 1951–2021



thousands, and hundreds of thousands. In fact it is quite prepared to kill millions to preserve its system and the profitability of big capital and finance. That is what austerity is about; using a major capitalist crisis, the 2007-9 financial crash, as a battering ram to immiserate the working class and exterminate parts of its most vulnerable, and from the standpoint of capital, expendable, members.

The working class need to reply in kind, by declaring war on the mass murderers. We desperately need to defeat this government on the electoral plane, that is to be sure, and we need to push the now revived Labour Party led by Corbyn to its stiffest test: the test of office.

But we also need to realise that the working class cannot afford to allow the alternation of Labour with the vicious, criminal political formations that take power regularly as rivals for office to the Labour Party. Above all, we cannot afford to vote the bastards out for a few years only for them to return to power and inflict a new disaster of mass death and suffering on our class.

A Labour reformist government is a stop-gap, nothing more. The ruling class will not allow such a government, even if it is so inclined – and Jeremy Corbyn may be so inclined – to make serious inroads into ruling class power. A Labour government will be met with economic sabotage from finance capital, artificially created currency panics, and insubordination likely from police chiefs, the judiciary and the military.

The limitations of Labourite parliamentarism become obvious when you think of this. At a result of the experience of the 1930s, of hunger and semi-starvation of the working class, Nye Bevan characterised the Tories as ‘lower than vermin’. This was obviously accurate. But what is the correct way to deal with vermin, such as cockroaches or rats? You call in an exterminator. That was always

the logic of Bevan’s famous remark.

Proletarian dictatorship

Despite such rhetoric, the Labour Party, including the left, blithely allowed the Tories to make a comeback after the Second World War, allowed them to adapt chameleon-like to a new post-war boom and the politics of the 1930s, of the starvation and mass murder of working class people, eventually made a comeback here and around the world under the banner of neoliberalism.

The labour movement must not make the same mistake again. The British labour movement must reject parliamentarism and use stronger measures to defeat the mass murderers. We need to answer these killings of our class with equally severe measures of our own. Those who have killed and abused the sick, the disabled, migrants, and other vulnerable people need to be similarly crucified and punished. We need to embrace the need to suppress the bourgeois parties, which starve the workers, to prevent them from ever returning to power. The means that parties of the ruling class should be deprived of political rights; only parties that represent workers and the oppressed will be able to organise politically.

This concept, of replacing capitalist democracy, which is a paradise for the rich and hell on earth for the poor, with workers democracy, is known as the dictatorship of the proletariat. The demand for a workers government is the crowning demand of the transitional programme of the Trotskyists, which points in the direction of such a regime. It must be based on independent working class democratic organs such as workers councils, which can only arise in mass struggle and which must be part of an international, not a narrowly national, movement. This is the only real solution to the recurring cycle of hunger and death that capitalism is bringing to millions. ▲

Motions to Labour Representation Committee Special Meeting on 10 February 2018

Grass Roots Left: Fight Victimisations in Fujitsu

This LRC pledges to campaign for industrial and financial support for Ian Allinson and other victimised and striking workers. Ian, chair of Unite Fujitsu, was dismissed under the pretext of redundancy on 12 January. 5 other members are also fighting redundancy, the majority are ethnic minority and/or disabled; two are union reps. Jobs were available for two which other members had refused.

One, Saj Patel, was dismissed before the company investigated her grievance (in breach of agreements) – she complained of sexual harassment and claimed this was linked to her selection for redundancy.



Lynne Hodge and Ian Allinson; two reps targeted by Fujitsu

Ian discovered he was being dismissed while on compassionate leave for a family funeral.

Ian argues that the attack on the union is intended to make it easier for Fujitsu to push through cuts in job and conditions later, and to make it harder for staff to get their share of any of the settlement of the

NHS contract dispute, which could be hundreds of millions of pounds. In early December workers staged protests in Manchester against Mrs Patel's dismissal and in London against Ian's victimisation. 250 Unite Manchester members have voted to take 11 days strike action; a three-day strike on 24 January, a 24-hour strike on 30 January, a week-long strike starting 8 February coupled with a work to rule. This follows 27 days of strike action over

the last year.

Fujitsu (profits 2016, ¥88.4 billion = £583.2 million) employs nearly 8,000 people in the UK.

For more information see www.ouruniontest.wordpress.com

Gerry Downing

Secretary Grass Roots Left ▲

You Cut me, You Die

By Byamukama Richard Bard In Uganda

The environment here is a business issue. Haha, except if I'm mad, but only what I see is more charcoal burning, more timber cutting and more giving away of forest land for agriculture. This is done by the Generals and rich pioneers in government. This is how dictatorship behaves.

I'm a young boy aged 20 years old now but I have seen the importance of saving the environment and the entire planet from frying which the government and majority powers and humans are blind. I've just joined university. I run a global environmental group called PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT, COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND GLOBAL WARMING.

My friends help me find a sponsor in my education there. I still have much to do for the earth. I always dream of a safe environment. I feel bad when looking at the blue skies being polluted by the rich. Many species have been forced into extinction, your sons and mine will not be able to see them. Disasters of floods, drought, famine, earthquakes, hurricanes, landslides, drying oceans the order of the day. Then what is likely to be interesting on the earth. We need to wake up and act now.

Most of the African forests are down. Not only Africa but the earth remains

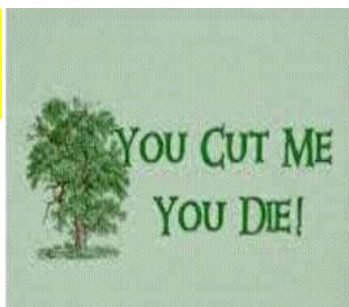
with a quarter of its green cover.

The air we breathe can be contaminated by emissions from motor vehicles, industry, heating and commercial sources (outdoor), as well as tobacco smoke and household fuels (indoor). In the WHO European Region alone, exposure to particulate matter (PM) decreases the life expectancy of every person by an average of almost 1 year, mostly due to increased risk of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, and lung cancer.

Furthermore, a recent study using data from 25 cities in the European Union has estimated that life expectancy could be increased by up to approximately 22 months in the most polluted cities if the long-term PM2.5 concentration was reduced to the World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline annual level.

Some 40 million people in the 115 largest cities in the European Union (EU) are exposed to air exceeding WHO air quality guideline values for at least one pollutant. Children living near roads with heavy-duty vehicle traffic have twice the risk of respiratory problems as those living near less congested streets.

Indoor air pollution from biological



agents in indoor air related to damp and mould increases the risk of respiratory disease in children and adults by 50%. Second-hand smoke causes severe respiratory health problems in children such as asthma and reduced lung function. It also causes lung disease, cardiovascular diseases, cancer and premature death in adults. Cam-

campaign For Climate Change Awareness and Renewable Energy was supporting the adoption and sustainable usage of renewable energy.

The Wikipedia article Air quality in Delhi begins:

"The air quality in Delhi, the capital of India, according to a WHO survey of 1600 world cities, is the worst of any major city in the world. Two other cities in India have worse air quality than Delhi: Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, and Raipur in Chhattisgarh. Air pollution in India is estimated to kill 1.5 million people every year; it is the fifth largest killer in India. India has the world's highest death rate from chronic respiratory diseases and asthma, according to the WHO. In Delhi, poor quality air damages irreversibly the lungs of 2.2 million or 50 percent of all children. In November 2017, in an event known as the Great Smog of Delhi, the air pollution spiked far beyond acceptable levels. Levels of PM2.5 and PM 10 particulate matter hit 999 micrograms per cubic meter, while the safe limits for those pollutants are 60 and 100 respectively." ▲

Haringey struggle shows the way

Deselected right-wing Labour traitors voted to continue with the £2bn HDV regeneration plan By Tony Fox

HARINGEY COUNCILLORS VOTED for the scheme by 24 to 22 on 11 January; 19 of those 24 have either been deselected or have stepped down because of furious local opposition to the mass privatisation plans. A new council will be elected in May and, despite pleas from the nominated council candidates not to tie the hands of a new administration which is certain to be totally opposed to the plan, these renegades nevertheless voted for it.

This vote could cost the Council up to £10 million to extricate themselves from the plan. One would have thought that the 24 councillors might be sued for this reckless act, but they surely have got legal advice to the contrary.

The mobilisations in Haringey on this reactionary Blairite scheme to hand public money to corrupt multinational corporations is very heartening; other councils must follow their lead. Labour's NEC has correctly called to halt the HDV

The Stop HDV! Campaign explain why they are fighting:

Haringey Development Vehicle is a joint venture between Haringey Council and a private developer to create a private company to 'regenerate the area'. The council will put in public assets worth many millions which include housing estates, schools, public facilities and private housing acquired through compulsory purchase orders.

In October last year anti-HDV campaigners urged judge Mr Justice Duncan Ousely to quash the deal after a judicial

review at the Royal Courts of Justice. The outcome has yet to be announced.

35 Labour Party candidates standing in May's elections have signed a letter to the current leader, Cllr Kober, telling her they will oppose the HDV in the next administration.

Both Tottenham and Hornsey and Wood Green CLPs have opposed the establishment of an HDV. Both constituency MPs have opposed the HDV, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the

Council has approved two highly critical reports from the Housing Scrutiny Committee about the proposed HDV. Despite this the Cabinet is intent on handing over £2b worth (2015 estimate) of Council property to a development vehicle in which the Council will have only a 50 per cent stake.

The HDV includes an exclusivity clause that guarantees some 60% of all work to Lend Lease and its subsidiaries. In effect this means there will be no competitive tendering for this work and guaranteed profits for Lend Lease.

The request for residents' ballots before going ahead with any regeneration plans has been rejected, as has the recommendation that the Council respond to the Northumberland Park Support Group submission to the Housing Scrutiny Committee.

There will be a significant loss of council housing. The pattern is stark –



Highgate Cllrs Clive Carter and Bob Hare after Haringey Council chiefs met at the Civic Centre in July to decide on the HDV plans.

the redevelopment of Elephant and Castle by Lend Lease has resulted in a large loss of council and social housing, while housing density has gone up. See also the Balfron Tower regeneration scheme in Tower Hamlets which bears some similarity in its business model to the HDV.

Instead, we argue that Council assets should remain in Council ownership and that smaller scale housing projects and estate regeneration that puts the local community and residents at their heart are the way to provide a more prosperous and secure future for all Haringey's residents.

Other councils have successfully established wholly-owned development vehicles to build new homes, why doesn't Haringey?

There is a housing crisis in Haringey but the HDV is not going to solve this crisis; if anything, it will make it worse. Stop HDV! website is <http://stophdv.com/> ▲

Motion to LRC AGM—WIDEN THE CLASS STRUGGLE: RESIST THE TORIES AND FORCE THEM OUT From Unite LE/002 Branch

Despite the great gains made in the election and the mass party membership the political situation is unpredictable; the Tory/DUP alliance remains unpopular. However, the assumption in the LRC Political Statement and by much of the Party membership that somehow the Tory government can be brought down and forced out through Parliamentary opposition alone is both optimistic and wrongly places the emphasis on the mass Party membership playing a supportive but essentially passive role to the Parliamentary campaign.

The LRC must campaign to extend the struggle both in Parliament and in the wider movement to force the Tories from power and end austerity.

Two areas require urgent action

1) The LRC needs to campaign in the rank-and-file of the trade union movement behind the call of John McDonnell for unified action against the seven years of pay reductions imposed by the government and the cuts to public services. This will require determined and organised campaigning across the major trade unions as well as firm leadership.

2) The LRC must lead a campaign to end Labour councillors' implementing Tory cuts - 70% local government funding will be cut by 2020.

Labour councillors must unite to build and lead local campaigns, including direct action, to defend services by building alliances with Labour party branches, GCs, trade union branches, Trades Councils and communities opposing cuts to pay, service and jobs.

Open the second and third fronts against the Tories. ▲

Grass Roots Left AGM

Success By Tony Fox

The Grass Roots AGM took place in Birmingham on Saturday 27 January. The attendance was less than a dozen, but important discussions took place and important decisions were taken. Ian Alinson spoke of the situation in Unite and the possibility of a rerun of the general secretary election if the Certification Officer decided it was unfair.

Ian thought the EC was likely to institute a transferrable vote system because of the possibility of allowing the defeated right winger Kevin Coyle to be elected if the vote was split. A rank and file candidate should stand then. It was pointed out that the declaration of a R+F candidate in advance would influence that left-dominated EC's decision.

Ian discussed his own case and his struggle for reinstatement in Fujitsu. We endorsed a GRL motion in his defence and two delegates to the Labour Representation Committee on 10 Feb.

A discussion took place on whether the GRL should wind up and enter Ian's Unite R+F group but the delegates decided against because we felt that his group did not act as an alternative to the United Left (UL), a vehicle for careerists, one delegate observed.

That delegate objected to the phrase in Ian's launch statement, "we are not seeking to create yet another electoral faction within Unite". He pointed out that UL was the only other left group in Unite, its national meeting had only 16 in attendance, little better than our own, with all the resource of the union bureaucracy at their disposal.



Gerry Downing was re-elected Secretary, Keith Henderson Chair, Ian Scott Treasurer and Steve McKenzie Press Officer. The next meeting was set for London on 29 April, at which a firm decision on the future of the GRL would be decided and programme for and of work adopted ▲

US preparing big new war in Ukraine – End British military aid to Kiev

Protest opposite Downing Street, Whitehall, London

Saturday 17 February 4.00-5.30pm

A big new US-backed war in Eastern Ukraine is looming

The law on the "Reintegration" of the Donbass rebel republics passed by the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian parliament) on January 18 has finally closed the door on the Minsk peace process, and signalled that a big new US-backed war in Eastern Ukraine could break out at any moment.

Washington has allocated \$350 million and started delivering lethal weapons free of charge to Kiev, including Javelin anti-tank missiles and complete with trainers, and a war frenzy has been whipped up in Kiev. People's Deputy Oleg Musiy in the Rada debate called for a "war till the victorious end", and the "cleansing" and even shooting of "collaborators".

The new law also declares Russia an aggressor which has "occupied" parts of Ukraine, and says the self-declared republics of Donetsk and Lugansk are "occupation administrations" of the Russian Federation.

For two years the world has waited for Kiev to implement the Minsk peace process and recognise the Donbass republics as semi-autonomous regions. The 2015 Minsk II agreement was negotiated by the "Normandy Four", Germany, Russia, Ukraine and France, and the Donbass



republics were recognised participants in the negotiations.

Now Kiev, egged on by Washington, has slammed the door on any peaceful end to the almost four year long war in Ukraine.

In reality that Kiev is merely doing the bidding of its real masters in Washington. This new war drive is a US provocation against Russia, probably in revenge for its humiliation in Syria by the almost complete military victory of the legitimate Assad government.

If a new stage in the war flares up it will have major impacts on Russia. Russia has consistently backed the implementation of Minsk II, while at the same time Kiev continues to buy cheap Russian gas. Now Kiev has named Russia directly as an enemy power.

While we do not by any means support the policies of the Putin-led nationalist-Orthodox Christian oligarchy in Moscow, we must still defend Russia against blame for a new stage in the Ukraine war.

We must remember that the war started with Kiev's massive "Anti-Terrorist Operation" to crush the anti-fascist resistance in the Donbass against the US-backed February 22 2014 "Maidan" coup. That operation was announced by Ukraine's 'acting president' Aleksandr Turchinov one week after a visit to Kiev by CIA boss John Brennan.

We must continue to build solidarity with the Lugansk and Donetsk People's Republics and all anti-fascists in Ukraine, and to defend whatever measures Russia takes to support and defend the Donbass.

Meanwhile, the British government continues to support the illegal fascist-backed Poroshenko regime in Kiev, including sending military personnel to train Ukrainian armed forces troops.

We do not agree with the then foreign secretary William Hague who told parliament in 2014 that the regime change on Ukraine was legal. We call on the British government to end all support for the current government in Kiev, and to back a peaceful negotiated end the war in Ukraine.

Join us on Saturday 17 February, 4.00-5.30pm

Organised by the New Communist Party, Socialist Fight, Posadists in Britain, and members of Solidarity with the Anti-Fascist Resistance in Ukraine. ▲

Decriminalise Sex Work: The Fourth and Best Option

By Ella Downing

One report cited by the BBC suggests there could be between 60 and 80 thousand sex workers currently in the UK. Most of these women, and it is mostly women, earn below the national average wage, and many, if not most, work to support their children. If we stop viewing prostitution morally and see that the coal miner and sex worker both sell their bodies for a living, it is incumbent that we listen to these women and try and put forward pragmatic ways of assisting them.

There are various legal ways to approach the issue of sex work. The first, most widely practiced and inherited from an archaic religious way of life, is an outright ban. This leaves sex workers in a precarious position, having to work in secret, often under the cover of night, and perhaps resorting to managers or pimps to keep them safe. A further problem is that when reporting violence and harassment to police the victim is often caramelised.

The English Collective of Prostitutes reports that police will often threaten to arrest the sex workers for prostitution when she (and it is predominantly, though by no means exclusively, women in this work) reports violent crime. Police have said a woman must be threatened three times before anything is investigated and saying violent crime is not investigated when the victim is said to have put herself in danger. This among other outrageous statements from the police. This takes on an extra dimension when we consider the sex crimes committed against prostitutes by



the police themselves. Sex workers find themselves particularly vulnerable to coercion and violent assault by police when they are not offered equal protection under the law.

The second model we can look at, rather than an outright ban, is the Nordic or Swedish model. This makes the sale of sex legal but its purchase illegal.

This effectively criminalises the client while offering the sex worker protection under the law. The problem with this is that sex workers must cater to their clients wants/needs not to get caught. This means working in secret again and means danger for sex workers. They will often have to work under the cover of night and in shady areas.

The third approach is what we see in Amsterdam and the American state of Nevada, that is Legalisation. This means that sex work is legal but heavily regulated by the government, where sex workers pay taxes and work together. This is also problematic and can be seen as back door criminalisation. Setting yourself up in legal sex work is often expensive, as the proprietor (legal pimp) demands a certain amount of your income, sex workers not in a position to do this are criminals.

Then there is the fourth and by far the best option; Decriminalisation. That is the removal of all punitive sanctions for engaging in sex work. It's OK. In his article *Decriminalising sex work in New Zealand: its history and impact*, Fraser Crichton reported in August 2015: "The New Zealand Prostitution Reform Act (PRA) fully decriminalised sex work in 2003. In New Zealand it is legal for any citizen over 18 years old to sell sexual services. Street-based sex work is legal, as is running a brothel. Sex workers' rights are guaranteed through employment and human rights legislation."

There was concerted discussion with actual sex workers about what kind of laws they would like, and more vitally, what would keep them safe. Now in New Zealand, a sex worker has equal protection under the law as any other woman. And doesn't this seem natural justice? A prostitute is just as violated by rape as a prime minister, be she New Zealand's Jacinda Ardern, Britain's Theresa May or Germany's Angela Merkel.

Mover, decriminalising sex work removes the stigma from sex work, and sex work puts food on the table for kids who need to education. And sex workers with a more secure work environment lowers the levels of STIs, including HIV. When sex workers have a safe place and protection to work reported rapes go down. Decriminalisation is most simply the safest and most pragmatic way forward for sex workers, our natural comrades.

Workers of the world unite! ▲

Polish Embassy Picket

The New Communist Party of Britain supported by Socialist Fight and the British Posadists mounted a protest picket outside the Polish embassy in London on 25 January to protest the arrests of communist party members and socialists and the banning of communist symbols and banners and the destruction of WWII memorials, a common practice now begun in Ukraine after the Maidan coup of February 2014, through Hungary and seen in the desecration of the Holocaust memorial in Thessaloniki, Greece, on 21 January by the fascist Golden Dawn.

A Polish couple approached who said they were "Polish patriots" and had the banner picture here. It read, "Nuremburg for Communism, Communism = Nazism with the claim that communism had killed 100 million in 100 years. The man was clearly a reactionary but he had a few points about the August 1944 Warsaw Uprising and other things.

Stalin's bureaucracy fought WWII against the Nazis as a 'great patriotic war' and this war was specifically against the rights of oppressed nations, it was racially anti-German, and anti-working class; all the Germans were Nazis said Stalin and he made no call to encourage



the German working class to rise up against Hitler because their liberation was at hand. Berlin was defended by boys and girls and old men and women because they knew that the "Red Army" was coming to kill and rape them. The 'Red Army' either allowed the Nazis to crush workers' uprisings or crushed them themselves to defeat attempts at socialist revolution in Eastern Europe. By far the worst example was the Warsaw uprising when the "Red Army" halted for sixty long days and its air force gave no assistance although only five minutes flying time away whilst they watched the destruction of the city and the massacre of its inhabitants without lifting a finger to assist them.

About 16,000 Polish resistance fighters were killed and between 150,000 and 200,000 Polish civilians perished, mainly mass executed. During the urban combat approximately 25% of Warsaw's buildings were destroyed.

Following the surrender of Polish forces, German troops systematically levelled another 35% of the city block by block. Together with earlier damage suffered in the 1939 invasion of Poland and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943, over 85% of the city was destroyed by January 1945, when events in the Eastern Front forced the Nazis to abandon the city.

Out of 350,000–550,000 civilians who passed through the camp, 90,000 were sent to labour camps in the Third Reich. Many Jews hidden by Poles in Warsaw were discovered in searches and shipped to death in Nazi concentration camps, including Ravensbrück, Auschwitz, and Mauthausen.

The Eastern Front remained static in the Vistula sector, with the Soviets making no attempt to push forward, until the Vistula–Oder Offensive began on 12 January 1945. Warsaw was liberated on 17 January 1945 by the Red Army and the First Polish Army.

This was a great crime by Stalin and the reactionary man with the anti-communist banner could point to these crimes to justify his reaction. Trotskyists, whilst supporting the Red Army against Nazism, were never uncritical of the appalling counter-revolutionary methods used by Stalin to fight that war. ▲

Women's oppression, national oppression and Harvey Weinstein

By Angela Jane Burns

The post Harvey Weinstein #MeToo Movement has an essentially progressive character. We reject the disgraceful attacks on it by the likes of the WorldWide SocialistWebsite who dismiss it as a diversion from the 'real' class struggle and demand 'due process' for him and other 'victims'. Weinstein carried on his sex abuse and rapes for decades because he was a very rich and powerful predator who even hired former Mossad agents to spy on and blacken the names of his victims. No due process for them and the WWSW did not think Roman Polanski either should be forced to endure 'due process' he pleaded guilty to statutory rape of a 13 year old girl.

In fact he drugged her and forcibly raped her and managed to plea bargain it down to statutory rape because he was very rich and famous. Her Grand Jury testimony of what he did to her is online, it is obviously true and it is truly heart breaking to read.

And then he fled abroad and the WWSW said his victim was 'a teenage model' and even worse the British Spartacist in their paper quoted him saying she was 'a little whore' and he was not going to jail because his family had perished in the Holocaust.

And the movement sparked by the exposure of the serial abuser and rapist Harvey Weinstein may be side-tracked from its initial progressive character into a single issue campaign which proposes no long term solution to the appalling treatment of women in patriarchal capitalism, now being exposed in an ever increasing number of capitalist intuitions; the Guardian's revelations about the culture in the United Nations is the latest scandal to emerge.

Of course, poor Black working class women are oppressed by poor Black working-class men. And undoubtedly white workers discriminate against Black workers, racism is an enduring feature of modern capitalism, constantly promoted by the mass media in a subtle way and by far-right groups openly. But that was not the primary source of their oppression, rather it is the symptom within the ranks of the oppressed of the prime source, the humiliating social relations into which all workers must enter to live. They must sell their labour power to a capitalist employer in order to earn a living. Weakening and corrupt trade unions make matters worse here.

Nevertheless, the articulation and defence of a cultural, national and even ethnic identity by the oppressed is a defensive and progressive stance which is their right. Black

Lives Matter is an assertion that they do not matter as they should, and equality will be established in struggle. That the agents of the deep state are intervening there to subvert that struggle and turn it always towards separatism and against 'white workers' and their trade union organisations is obviously true but that does not take away from the intrinsic justice of the cause fought for.

Christian Rakovsky says that National culture is "the only way" through which the working and peasant masses will gain access to political and cultural life. "And hand in hand with national consciousness comes that feeling of equality which Lenin speaks of in his memorandum."

But this addresses the national feelings and cultural expression of oppressed nations and oppressed sections of the working class and of women in the patriarchy of capitalism.

How do we address the prejudices of the majority of white workers, many of whom belong to the 'aristocracy of labour' and identify in general with their own ruling class in war and tend to despise the poorer and more oppressed sections of their own class?

Trotsky addressed this in *Where is Britain Going?* They must look to the revolutionary traditions of the working class and oppressed in Britain for inspiration and to forge a new cultural and group identity separate from and hostile to that of the British Empire.

The 1381 Peasants Revolt, the Diggers and Levellers in the English Civil War and the bourgeois leaders in the great revolutions that overthrew feudalism, in particular to Oliver Cromwell when he cut off the head of King Charles outside his own banquet hall and in the French Revolution to Maximillien Robespierre when he initiated the Reign of Terror against the old feudal order and consummated the revolution by the great victory at Valmy

to the sounds of the new national anthem, the Marseilles.

Of course, these bourgeois revolutions, whilst progressive against feudalism and the absolutist monarchy, replaced one tyrannical ruling class with a new one as the people of Ireland, Waterford and Drogheda in 1649 and the people of Haiti in 1894, discover to their extreme cost; no liberation for them but slavery and oppression to serve the new master of life.

Of course, the most inspiring event in human history is the Russian Revolution which put as its goal world revolution and so universal human liberation and as international Trotskyists we are the only political current who carry forward that tradition and goal.

Clara Zetkin spoke powerfully in 1886 at

the Gotha Conference, published later as a pamphlet, *Only in Conjunction With the Proletarian Woman Will Socialism Be Victorious*. Of course, she did not dream of putting women's oppression in a list that included "class" as merely another form of oppression and not the source of ALL oppression.

Zetkin showed the breath of her understanding of women's oppression; it applies to ALL women in ALL classes – and she differentiates brilliantly between the oppression of proletarian women, middle class women and even the oppression of the women of the ruling class itself.

Of the proletarian woman she wrote that their paid employment had given them a measure of economic equality, even though the capitalist factory sought women workers in order to drive down wages by competition but in Germany their struggles had won the right to organise. But:

"As a result of all this, the proletarian woman has achieved her independence. But verily, the price was very high and for the moment, they have gained very little. If during the Age of the Family, a man had the right (just think of the law of Electoral Bavaria!) to tame his wife occasionally with a whip, capitalism is now taming her with scorpions."

Of the middle class and professional intellectual woman, she wrote:

"In these circles women are not equal to men in the form of possessors of private property as they are in the upper circles. The women of these circles have yet to achieve their economic equality with men and they can only do so by making two demands: The demand for equal professional training and the demand for equal job opportunities for both sexes. In economic terms, this means nothing less than the realization of free access to all jobs and the untrammelled competition between men and women... All other reasons which are listed against the mental work of women, such as the smaller brain of women or their allegedly natural avocation to be a mother are only pretexts."

Of the bourgeois woman she wrote:

"We would, however, perform an injustice to the bourgeois women's rights movement if we would regard it as solely motivated by economics. No, this movement also contains a more profound spiritual and moral aspect. The bourgeois woman not only demands her own bread, but she also requests spiritual nourishment and wants to develop her individuality."

Zetkin finishes with a revolutionary flourish:

"Only a Socialist society will solve the conflict that is nowadays produced by the professional activity of women. Once the family as an economic unit will vanish and its place will be taken by the family as a moral unit, the woman will become an equally entitled, equally creative, equally goal-oriented, forward-stepping companion of her husband; her individuality will flourish while at the same time, she will fulfil her task as wife and mother to the highest degree possible." ▲

We would, however, perform an injustice to the bourgeois women's rights movement if we would regard it as solely motivated by economics. No, this movement also contains a more profound spiritual and moral aspect.

QUOTEHD.COM

Clara Zetkin
German Politician

Free Ben Stimson; a political prisoner, jailed for fighting fascism in Ukraine By Gerry Downing (Christopher Black abstract)

Christopher Black, an international criminal lawyer based in Toronto, is known for a number of high-profile war crimes cases and has recently published his novel "Beneath the Clouds." He writes essays on international law, politics and world events, especially for the online magazine "New Eastern Outlook." This article is abstracted from a piece he wrote on Ben.

"Mr. Jamieson (the prosecutor) said: "The defendant suggested that after watching reports in the media about far-right groups in Ukraine, he was inspired to join the rebels. He also complained of his lack of employment prospects back home.

"He went on to say 'well I just see this as a more Western imperialist aggression towards Russia, to people who are not necessarily playing the Western game. I have come here as a working class man with no work. Last job I had was in December last year, zero hour contracts. You can't live in Britain anymore now. No housing, so I voted with me feet'."

Instead of being feted by the public for volunteering to be an ambulance driver in relief of the besieged peoples of the Donbass under constant attack by the pro-fascist forces in Kiev he is being punished with imprisonment. He acted against the interests of the British NATO government and so was charged with a political crime, given a political trial, that is, no trial at all, and thrown into prison solely for political reasons. It appears that a guilty plea was extracted from him under duress by the

Prosecution that threatened him with the more serious charge of engaging in preparation of terrorism that carries a life sentence upon conviction. His lawyer must have worked on him as well to plead guilty to a terrorism charge when he was guilty of nothing at all since he was never engaged in terrorism or with terrorists. He could have won a trial.

The trial was a political one arranged to give legitimacy to the Kiev regime, to condemn Russia as the "aggressor," and to cover the British support for fascism and a fascist regime in control of Kiev and the close cooperation between the British mercenaries working for Kiev and the British regular forces and government. His case was used by the British government as a device to prove that its anti-terror laws were not targeted at Muslims but can also be used against anyone fighting for a secular cause, so long as it is a cause that falls foul of the British elites.

The conviction also makes clear the NATO and Kiev regime policy towards the defenders of the Donbass. They are considered criminals not lawful combatants. Instead of the Geneva Conventions applying on capture, they will face criminal charges or perhaps be thrown into the black holes of the CIA and other western intelligence agencies.

The NATO backed war in Ukraine against the peoples of the Donbass has thousands of victims. Now it has a victim in Britain, another political prisoner in a



Ben Stimson

British jail. Ben Stimson is a man who should never have been charged, who was denied a fair trial, whose liberty must be restored. So long as liberty is denied him we can have none. So free Ben Stimson, to free us all.

ENDS

Ben has now been moved to a Cat C prison and is settling in well! Ben has suffered harassment also in this new prison, although not as bad as Belmarsh or Strangeways. The prison authorities insist he must serve his full term, although the judge said he was not a danger to the public.

They are also stopping his political mail, like *Fight Racism*, *Fight Imperialism* and *Socialist Fight*. The FRFI will take legal action on this as they have done in the past for Ben. He is also still subjected to antisemitic abuse and denied visits on spurious grounds, citing staff shortages and not accepting out of date passports for ID.

Please write to him at the new address. Ben Stimson, Prison number AO998DW, HMP Wymott, Ulmes Walton Lane, Leyland, Preston, Lancashire, PR26 8LW ▲

Palestine Solidarity Campaign AGM Report by Ian Donovan

Due to other political commitments on the same day, Socialist Fight only managed a modest intervention at this year's Annual General Meeting of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC). One of our comrades distributed a substantial statement on our position on Palestine and Zionism as an international phenomenon, putting in positive form some of the arguments that we used in our recent intervention in Labour Against the Witchhunt (LAW), where part of the left influenced by third campism farcically fomented an anti-Trotskyist witchhunt within LAW, and excluded our people, echoing the same fake allegations of 'left-wing anti-Semitism' that the bureaucracy is using about themselves.

The highlight, for the leadership at least, was a Skype address by Omar Barghouti, on BDS, which received a standing ovation but which our comrade considered was weak

and liberal in its content, excessively concerned with the notion of 'human rights' instead of taking a firm stance for the rights of the oppressed as distinct from the rights of the oppressor, even though it formally called for the Palestinian right to return. It was also emphatic in emphasising its opposition to 'anti-semitism', also is a sign of liberalism since the Palestinian struggle is driven by the struggle against oppression, not hostility to Jewish people.

The PSC conference was low key and the leadership, with considerable input from the deep entrust left sect Socialist Action, appeared mired in complacency and routine, and as a result was correctly criticised by LAW's Tony Greenstein and also Socialist Labour's Graham Durham for ignoring the struggle in the Labour Party, and thus giving no support to its own people who are under fire and playing a polarising role in events.

Notable by their absence as usual, were Tony Greenstein's allies in LAW the

CPGB/Weekly Worker, whose interest in Palestine only manifests itself when it can be used as a stick to beat elements to its left, such as Socialist Fight.

The seemingly most contentious issue of the day was an aborted confrontation between the movers of two motions from left-wing pro-Palestinian football groups, arguing for positions that either involved suspending Israel from international football bodies, or expelling it outright. This discussion was a repeat of one the previous year, when the AGM effectively adopted both policies and treated it as a tactical matter.

This year, the motions, particularly the second one which demanded Israel's expulsion, effectively embodied complaints that the policies passed previously had not been implemented, and therefore involved a list of practical proposals. The PSC leadership successfully moved to remit the second, better, motion, from John Tymon's Football Against Apartheid to the Executive to be kicked into the long grass. ▲

Tony Greenstein's and Jack Conrad's Moral Effluvia

By Gerry Downing

Trotsky begins his famous work *Their Morals and Ours* thus:

“DURING AN EPOCH OF triumphant reaction, Messrs. democrats, social-democrats, anarchists, and other representatives of the “left” camp begin to exude double their usual amount of moral effluvia, similar to persons who perspire doubly in fear. Paraphrasing the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount, these moralists address themselves not so much to triumphant reaction as to those revolutionists suffering under its persecution, who with their “excesses” and “amoral” principles “provoke” reaction and give it moral justification. Moreover, they prescribe a simple but certain means of avoiding reaction: it is necessary only to strive and morally to regenerate oneself. Free samples of moral perfection for those desirous are furnished by all the interested editorial offices.”

When I became a Trotskyist over 40 years ago I was morally and ethically a Catholic, although I had advanced from agnosticism to atheism by the age of 24. But atheism is an empty belief system if it does not replace the Judeo/Christian ethics; right vs wrong, moral vs immoral, heaven vs hell holding out the cherished hope of ultimate justice after you are dead.

I found my new ethics and morality in Trotsky's *Their Morals and Ours*. The greatest morality is in the ultimate goal of abolishing capitalism and its humiliating mode of production and the alienation and mental illness it produces in human beings everywhere.

Everything that advanced that cause; the cause of world revolution is ethical and moral. Everything that strengthens and legitimises the status quo to maintain that mode of production is reactionary and wrong.

Ethics and morality is therefore not an individual duty as many seem to believe but a social responsibility to advance the struggle to overthrow capitalism worldwide.

I really cannot identify with the introspective struggle between Tony Greenstein and Gilad Atzmon on the essence of Jewishness. I do not think the struggle for personal national, and intersectional identity is ultimately progressive whilst acknowledging always the progressive nature of the struggles of all the oppressed in those categories. The struggle for the national rights of oppressor nations and peoples is always reactionary.

It is true that since the great miners' strike and the fall of the USSR neoliberalism has advanced its ideology against the organised working class enormously to the extent that

Gilad denies the existence of the class entirely.

There are now more working-class members in South Korea than there were in the whole planet when Marx wrote the Communist Manifesto. Almost nothing in the whole world could move or almost no wealth would be produced without this class. Since 2006 there are more urban dwellers than rural ones; the majority of the world's toilers are now working class and not peasants.

The working class is primarily oppressed ideologically and very little state oppression needed in metropolitan countries now. They are protected by the trade union bureaucracy and Labour leaders. In Britain, the Corbyn surge threatens that arrangement. And a whole edifice of second and third lines of defence now comes forward, not least Lansman but also bolstered by Tony Greenstein Jackie Walker and Jack Conrad.

A small meeting in a pub is of little significance maybe if the bureaucratic methods of Iain McNichol and John Lansman prevail throughout the whole movement. but it did advance further into the organised labour movement as a consequence of the reactionary offensive of Greenstein and Conrad on 6 January.

Since then I have been far more concerned to fight the further advance of this reactionary offensive in other areas.

But the cause has lost the adherence of middle-class intellectuals, and historically Jewish intellectuals were very important here to the cause of the world revolution because of their historical emphasis on education as explained by Abram Leon in 'On The Jewish Question'.

But surely Jack Conrad and the *Weekly Worker* are not seeking to prove any Jewish identity like Tony? No, but they are Third Campists and so have a similar revulsion for genuine Trotskyism. Two recent examples show this vividly.

Owen Jones is now the most principled anti-imperialist revolutionary on Iran, according to Andrew Bowker (WW 1185, 11-1-18):

“Somebody who seems to have grasped this fundamental point is the commentator and Labour activist Owen Jones ... Jones tweeted: “I support a democratic Iran and anyone who fights for it. I also oppose the calamitous western interventions you (Zac Goldsmith) supported. Also, your racist failed mayoral campaign means you should be treated as a pariah in public life.” Further: Solidarity with any Iranian protestors who are fighting for democracy and freedom, both from a vicious regime and from US domination.”

Really? Owen Jones? For “democracy and freedom”. What could be wrong with these nobles of aspirations which are neoliberal ideological precursors of every imperialist bombing and invasion? As Ian Do-



**Leon Trotsky
Their Morals and Ours
IN MEMORY OF LEON SEDOFF**

novan commented: “Wow this is an awful article from the CPGB. On this showing, Counterfire sound more to the left but still perhaps slightly shaky. CPGB in appropriate company with pro-Zionist witchhunter Jones, who called for Jackie Walker's head and was pictured with his arms around Jeremy Newmark”.

Peter Manson, the WW editor, gives us his Third Campism in reporting Zuma's comment on the struggle within the ANC:

“In an unprecedented move, in the past few months we saw our alliance partners marching side by side with right-wing forces who are historical opponents of our democratic revolution, calling on the president of the ANC to step down.”

Peter tells us: “SACP deputy general secretary Solly Mapaila called these remarks “pathetic and dishonest”. But he “forgot” to tell us who these “right wing forces” were, apart from repeating the SACP denials. Of course the main right wing force they are all collaborating with is the Democratic Alliance whose leader, Mmusi Maimane, is a right wing pro Zionist Christian fundamentalist and favourite of the old apartheid former white ruling class and “white monopoly capitalism” who are also enthusiastically behind Ramaphosa, whose election every political representative of “white monopoly capitalism” - Anglo American imperialism - and all their mass media supported. And he “forgot” also to tell us that EFF's Malema, Maimane's great friend, was also central to this unprincipled alliance, that he has a whole string of corruption charges against him that no one is bothered about.

But they all told us what a bastard Zuma was. But for Peter what's wrong with a bit of third campist, “neither Zuma nor Ramaphosa but freedom and democracy” even if that line objectively sides with “white monopoly capitalism”, i.e. Anglo-American imperialism. ▲

Reject the anti-Trotskyist witchhunts of Socialist Fight

Socialist Fight Editorial Board

Socialist Fight was subjected to a vicious anti-Trotskyist witchhunt on 6 January and expelled from the organisation Labour Against the Witch hunt on bogus charges of anti-semitism by a vote of 17 to 34. Reactionaries were phoning around urging people to come to the meeting to “get rid of the Trots”. And some at the meeting repeated the aspiration.

There are two very distinct but closely related agendas in this LAW witch hunt. The first and the force that mobilised nationally by far the most was *Weekly Worker* and that was the specifically anti Trotskyist offensive, by third camp centrists, taking advantage of the confusion over the question of Zionism.

That was driven by our drubbing of Jack Conrad at the Communist University 2017 on the character of the Russian Revolution. He dismissed the central role of Lenin’s April Theses, defended Kamenev’s and Zinoviev’s capitulation to the Provisional Government and Menshevism and thereby to imperialism itself. This early version of nationalist socialism in one country is still the CPGB politics today.

Stalin had nothing further to say after Lenin’s return in April and played very little part in the actual revolution, which was led ideologically, politically and militarily by Lenin and Trotsky. And that with the internationalist perspective of world revolution, an anathema to the CPGB leaders, whose origins in the old Stalinist CPGB was so obvious in that struggle.

Of course the issue was 2017 and not just 1917 and the CPGB’s socialism in a single country of today vs the internationalist socialism of Trotskyism and Socialist Fight.

The struggle over the role of international Jewry who are Zionist anti-Semitic and play a significant role in US foreign policy, particularly today, is a diversion also consciously used by the very anti-Trotskyist Tony Greenstein (Tomás de Torquemada) and Jackie Walker which oppose telling the actual truth about this role.

Gilad Atzmon, who supported us on this, is also anti Trotskyist and tends towards Stalinism also when forced to make a choice, as he has admitted. He also agrees with the propaganda lie that Lenin’s politics inevitably led to Stalin’s Great Purges and Trotsky’s opposition was unprincipled and irrelevant, as are Trotskyists today.



The Sunday Times laughs at the left on 6 January, delighted at the infighting.

He locates the victory of Hitler in the psychology of the German people and particularly the German working class, thereby excusing the criminal Third Period lunatic ultra leftism of the KPD, which allied with the Nazis against the Social Democrats, whom they designated the main enemy. In that political conflict is located the reason for the destruction of the world’s most powerful working class and not their own psychology or backwardness.

But again, Gilad Atzmon is no fascist but certainly a political opponent of Trotskyism. It is McCarthyite guilt by association to suggest we have done any more than defend his democratic rights to advocate his political opinions and not be subjected to a witch hunt by Tony Greenstein and “the Board of Deputies and other Zionists” for his unorthodox political opinions.

He speaks the truth when he points to the importance of the “Jewish lobby”; the power of Jewish billionaires on Israel as many others have highlighted. Just because antisemitic bigots highlight and use it to make far right arguments along the lines of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion does not make the truth false or a truth that can’t be spoken or analysed. That taboo is an explicit capitulation to Zionism itself.

We must record with sadness that some of our former comrades, four former fellow members of self-declared Trotskyist groups, voted for our expulsion. One of those still calls himself a Trotskyist as does one other who voted for our expulsion.

Also, a self-declared Irish Republican rendered this service to reaction. They all, consciously or not, signalled to the masters of life, and the Irish man at least to Gerry Adams, that they had now made their peace with capitalism and imperialism itself. Others who had promised support unfortunately did not make it on the day,

some surely for genuine reasons. But at least they did not cross the Rubicon. *Weekly Worker* mobilised nationally for this, members came from as far away as Wales and Newcastle. They certainly supplied more than half the witch hunters.

In these circumstances we must express our gratitude to all those who courageously came along and spoke in our defence, to our own members in the first place, one of whom is gravely ill and rose from her sickbed to defend revolutionary socialism. And those others who, whilst not agreeing with the details of our position on Zionism internationally, were class conscious enough to recognise the great damage this type of opportunist witchhunting does to the labour movement and fought against it.

Here we must thank also comrades from four currents who showed solidarity with our anti-imperialism at the meeting and in discussions after, the CPB, the New Communist Party, the CPGB (ML) and the Sri Lankan Frontline Socialist Party.

We must also record that we were initially expelled from LAW on the diktat of three Steering Committee members, Tony Greenstein, Jackie Walker and Stan Keable, we were blocked from the Facebook group and instructed not to attend the 2 December meeting. When we nevertheless turned up with five supporters Jack Conrad asked us in outrage, “what are you doing here?”.

We then won the vote against our exclusion in a meeting of 24 and then Tony Greenstein resumed the witch hunt against us in the pages of the *Weekly Worker*, vowing to expel us at the 6 January meeting. When we organised for this in the social media Tony Greenstein told us the meeting was cancelled but a supporter grassed him up and informed us that an alternative meeting place had been arranged. An hour and a half later we got the same message, as we had immediately posted the story of the deception on the social media.

These are only the latest in a long line of witch hunters against Socialist Fight since 9 March 2016, Guido Fawkes, David Cameron, Iain McNichol, John Lansman, Stalinists in the Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group and now Greenstein and Conrad lead the reactionary offensive. We have no doubt that we will survive this latest onslaught too and emerge stronger and recruit new and better forces in the coming months and years. ▲



List of Republican prisoners looked after by Irish Republican Prisoners Welfare Association (IRPWA, 17-3 -2017):

Portlaoise Prison
Dublin Road
Portlaoise, Co Laois
E3 & E4,
Dublin: Tallaght
Michael Finlay
Dean Byrne
Edward McGrath
Clondalkin
Patrick Brennan
Donard
John Troy
Bluebell
Sean Connolly

Ballymun
Stephen Hendrick
East Wall
Pierce Moran
Rush Co Dublin
John McGrail
Killester
Donal O'Coisdealbha
Goatstown
Connor Hughes
Ballybrack
Darren Fox
Louth:
Owen McCann
Conan Murphy
Carlow:
James Smithers
Cork:
Tony Carroll

Brian Walsh
Joe Walsh
Sean Walsh
Mick Gilmartin
Martin McHale
Derry:
Kevin Devlan
Tyrone:
Damien (DD)
McLaughlin
Maghaberry
Roe 4, Maghaberry
Prison, Old Road Ball-
inderry Upper, Lisburn
BT28 2PT
Armagh:
Dee Duffy
Shea Reynolds
Ciaran Magee
Brendan McConville
Sean McVeigh
Luke O' Neill
John Paul Wotton
Belfast:
Anto Davidson
Christie Robinson
Derry:

Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group

List of POWs. Please correct and update prisoners' list.

Barry Concannon
Jason Ceulmans
Damien Harkin
Neil Hegarty
Nathan Hastings
Seamus McLaugh-
lin
Fermanagh:
Barry Petticrew
(Held on a non –
political wing in
isolation)
Meath:
Darren Poleon
Brian Walsh
Tyrone:
Gavin Coyle
Martin McGilloway
(CSU)
Magilligan, Point
Rd, Limavady BT49
0LR
Belfast:

Brian Millar
List of Republican
prisoners that are
looked after by
Cogús prisoner
support group
Maghaberry
Conor Hughes
Gerard Flanagan
Carl Reilly
Tony Taylorq
Ta Mc Williams
Ciaran Mc Laughlin
Paddy O' Neill
Cogús Prisoners
E2, Portlaoise Co
Laois:
Charles Anthony
Deery
Garret Mulley
Seamus McGrane
Ryan Glennon

With many thanks
to: Stephen Codd @
Revolution Ireland.
Limerick Prison
Mulgrave Street,
Limerick
Rose Lynch
Dóchas Centre,
North Circular
Road,
Dublin 7
Éirigi
Ursula Ní Sheanáin
(Ursula Shannon)
IRSP/Teach na
faillte POWs (10-8-
17)
Castlereagh prison
Eugene Kelly
David Murphy
Maghaberry prison
Paddy O'Neill

Obituary: Rosaleen Sands

Rosaleen Sands, mother of Bobby died on January 12 aged 95. The IRPSG sends our condolences to daughters Marcella and Bernadette, and son John, and their families; to her grandson Gerard Sands and family; and all her family and friends.

Hers was a life of struggle and heartache; the pride in the heroic sacrifice of her son Bobby and devastation at his death on hunger strike at the age of 27 after 66 days.

She endured and fought the oppression of the British state and the Loyalist bigots whose purpose in life was the preservation of their marginal privileges via the supremacist ideology which grovelled perpetually before the masters of life, the British Empire.

Tribute by Daughter Bernadette

Her daughter, Bernadette Sands-McKevitt, spoke movingly at the funeral. She was supported by her husband Michael McKevitt, who was released from prison in 2016 after his frame-up for directing terrorism. Both were founding members of the 32 County Sovereignty Movement. She denounced her brother's former comrades at the end of her speech, some of whom made scurrilous attacks on her in her hour of sorrow.

"Many claimed to know Rosaleen Sands and she figured in many books, films and documentaries that were written and produced by people who never met her. She was a working-class girl from a working-

class area and my mother never forgot her roots. She was a principled person who had times of trouble.

When Bobby was jailed, my parents never missed a visit and when the hunger strikes began set about doing all in their power to highlight the protest. They suddenly found themselves

thrown onto the world stage as they desperately tried to save their son. Heartbroken she pleaded with Bobby.

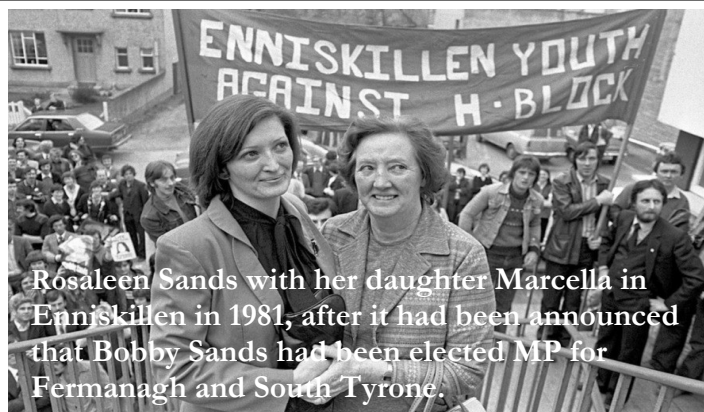
He made one simple request to her – to stand with him and not against him. It was a choice that no mother could contemplate, but it was one that she had to make. She left his life in God's hands and placed her trust in others to bury her son.

It was a trust that was breached. We found out years later (through documents) that Bobby's final burial wishes, which were not known to us at the time, were not followed.

In the years that followed she continued to support prisoners and their families and was always there when each of her children suffered. She was an inspiration to us all and set a fine example to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren."

Poem written for Rosaleen Sands by her son, Bobby.

Dear Mum, I know you're always there
To help and guide me with all your care,



Rosaleen Sands with her daughter Marcella in Enniskillen in 1981, after it had been announced that Bobby Sands had been elected MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone.

You nursed and fed me and made me strong
To face the world and all its wrong.
What can I write to you this day
For a line or two would never pay
For care and time you gave to me
Through long hard years unceasingly.
How you found strength I do not know
How you managed I'll never know,
Struggling and striving without a break
Always there and never late.
You prayed for me and loved me more
How could I ask for anymore
And reared me up to be like you
But I haven't a heart as kind as you.
A guide to me in times of plight
A princess like a star so bright
For life would never have been the same
If I hadn't of learned what small things
came.
So forgive me Mum just a little more
For not loving you so much before,
For life and love you gave to me
I give my thanks for eternity. ▲

Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group Statement on the Bloody Sunday Boycott

The IRPSG is opposed to the boycott of the Bloody Sunday march, despite recognising legitimate criticisms of the official poster produced for the march on Sunday 28 January. After all no one boycotted the march when it was led by Sinn Fein despite many serious and legitimate criticisms of their political direction by consistent Republicans.

A Facebook thread begun by **Pól Ó Scanail** on 13 January debated out the issues. He and **Micheál Mac Lochlainn** spoke for one opinion, with which the IRPSG would substantially agree:

“Walking away from the Bloody Sunday event is a mistake that will further marginalise republicans. The Bloody Sunday committee has been slowly taken over by anti-republicans Eamon McCann. The Bloody Sunday March for Justice has always been about exposing State sponsored oppression in Ireland and around the world.

The Trotskyites have manipulated the committee and have influenced it to put events (like) Enniskillen on the same level as Bloody Sunday. Enniskillen, King’smill and the other non-state atrocities are not supported by republicans, the issue here is the change in focus of the event away from a platform for oppressed people. The biggest mistake we can collectively make is boycotting this year’s Bloody Sunday march. It’ll be a disaster if republicans don’t attend, we will just have handed it over to a bunch of anti-republicans.”

Michael Donnelly further emphasised the position:

“Who exactly is marginalizing you? William Best (the Catholic Irish man from Derry in the British army shot in Derry in May 1972) was in Derry with the full approval of the IRA and no one knows this better than Tony Taylor’s father.

He was rioting in the Bog all afternoon and was abducted by a pair of stickies who didn’t come well out of the Bloody Sunday enquiry. Get your facts right. The shiners and the Brits couldn’t stop the March and it won’t be stopped by sinister individuals putting out false information.”

Liam Mellows put the opposing case:

“The march started out as a civil rights march and it quickly turned into a justice

march to bring British soldiers to account for the slaughter of innocent people in Derry in 1972. I understand some of the arguments that people don’t want to walk away as the shiners will have won as they want to put an end to this march and have done for years, nobody is bashing Kate and Linda Nash they took a courageous step and stood on and continued with the march and republicans stood on with them but this years march has CHANGED, it is a justice march and it is no longer about the victims of Bloody Sunday, the poster clearly has a multitude of IRA actions on it, asking people to support this march is asking people to abandon their principles, to support this march you are effectively supporting the IRA volunteers who carried out these actions to be brought to justice and no republican can support this,, it’s black and white. This is Eamon McCann’s march and sadly the Nash sisters have been used as pawns in his anti republican agenda, to those who say they are still attending open your eyes, you too are being used as pawns. Republicans haven’t walked away from the march republicans have been pushed away...”

James Murphy further elaborated:

“The objection to the poster is that it’s asking for justice for IRA actions, it’s has the name of an MI5 agent Mozzam Begg and several other issues including a call to repeal the 8th (Amendment, which criminalises a woman having an abortion) as well as the calling for justice for a dead British soldier (William Best).

Whoever is behind the poster is taking it upon themselves to attempt to speak on behalf of people without consent. The family of Tony Taylor and John Brady have also voiced concerns about both names being on the poster without anything being done to remove either name. A number of these issues are deal breakers for republicans. I certainly wouldn’t be comfortable marching on a parade advertising that it was seeking justice for Omagh, Enniskillen and Shankill.

The IRPSG agrees with Padraig De Brun’s position:

“I don’t think this (boycott) is the solu-

FOUNDERS: FRED GREEN, BILL TOWER, BLOODY SUNDAY BALLYMURPHY SABRA AND SHARPA ROSS, STREPTON MCCANN, MY HIROSHIMA NAGAZAKI, HILLSBOROUGH, KILPATRICK, NIGRO, 55 EUROPE ASYLUM SEEKER RIGHT TO WORK, GENOCIDE OF TAMILS, SRI LANKA, JOHN BRADY, BLOCKADE OF CUBA, SHANKILL BOMB, EXSAR, BARR, BREN, DITION, OPERATION CONDO, EULIA LOVE, DRESDEN, JOE, ELCHING OF SCAPATICCI, GREYSTEELE, CIZRE CITY, KATYR, TUP, JIM MOYNE, LONGREAVE, BIRMINGHAM, FALLUJAH, ALAN KURDI, MANUS DEERY, GERRARD DONAGHY, KIM PHUC, OSCAR ROMERO, PAUL QUINN, FERGUSON, LEILA KHALED, LONARD, BETTIE, TIARATIN, SQUARE ANNA POLITKOVSKAYA, ENNISKILL, MCCUBB, BAK, DE SUL, WILLIAM KING, TONY TAYLOR, GROZNY, WILLIAM BEST, MOAZZAM BEGG, SHELL TO SEA, INTERNMENT, BLACK LIVES MATTER, KENT STATE, CLAYTON, OMAGH, GABRIEL MARTEL, THE DISAPPEARED, GUANTANAMO, THE HOODED MARCH, NASH, SIBBAND, KINGSMILL, HEDDART, THE BIRMINGHAM SIX, THE GUILD, ORD, TOUR, THE STRAIGVON, 2 9/16, MAGDALENE, LANDRIES, SHANKILL, STRIP, SEARCHING, DUBLIN, MONAGHAN, KINCORA, MUJIB, ABUJAMAL, RED FAWN, FALLIS, ABUJAMAL, KERR, RASOR, ALAMAND, FITZGERALD, GUANTANAMO, MAGHERBERRY, DAPHNE, CARUNA, SALUZA, BE MARSH, BERTA, CACERES, DUBLIN, MONAGHAN, BIRMINGHAM, & GUILD, ORD, TONGHALL, DAPHNE, CARUNA, GALLER, KINGSMILL, PAT FINUCANE, RABON, DAGAS, ESADILLA, ALICIA LOPEZ, GARCIA, MICHAEL, OREBE, QUILLER, RALPH, AND, VITTORIO, MEL, ARREST, EVERWHERE, STANDING ROCK, HUBSING, EDWARD, BLOWDEN, CUBA SEA, MANNING, CHICO MENDES, GARY ENGLISH, JIM BROWN, FRANK STAGG, PAUL WITHERS, CHARLES LOVE, GERRARD, THE WIT, ASEL, SEE, HARRIS, DUFF, KEVIN, BONO, WIIWA, WANGARI, MARTHA, KATHLEEN, THOMPSON, PAUL, JEFF, BROWDER, STEPHEN, MCCANN, MUMIA, ABUJAMAL, MARTIN, BUTHER, KING, SAMMY, DEVENNE, GAZA, JACKIE, DUDDY, MICHAEL, KELLY, JOHN, YOUNG, WILLIAM, NASH, MICHAEL, MODAD, JIM, WRAY, WILLIAM, MCKINNEY, GERRARD, DONAGHY, GAZA, DICKINSON, HUGH, GILBERT, GILHINNEY, PATRICK, DOHERTY, BARNIE, MCCUIGHER, JOHN, JOHNSTON, MCGURKS, BAR, MICHAEL, GAUGHAN, PUNISHMENT, BEATINGS, BALLYMURPHY, MASSACRE, REVEY, TO DOWD, BROTHERS, KANGAROO, JAMES, STANLEY, JUNE, STANLEY, ENNISKILL, THE DISAPPEARED, EDUCATION, GREYSTEELE, LOUGHINISLAND, CARRICK, JIMMIE, TRAVELLERS, JIMMY, LYNCH, WILLIAM, LYNCH, TARA, GILBERT, KELSEY, JODIE, LYNCH, THOMAS, CONNORS, SYLVIA, CONNOR, CHRISTY, CONNOR, DUBLIN, MONAGHAN, BOMBING, STARDUST, FIRE, JOHANN, AN, COLE, SHARRK, BUCKEN, ROSEMARY, NELSON, EMPLOYMENT, NAKBA, ASEL, ASLEH, SHARPEVILLE, MASSACRE, STEVE, BIKO, AMRITSAR, KIR, SAM, ALPO, BALLYMURPHY, YEMER, ROTTEN, ISLAND, THE HUNTING, PEOPLE, PEARN, GEAR, FALDO, LOP, JICK, JORGENSEN, TRUTH, AND JUSTICE, CAMPAIGN, PIOTRI, RABOV, FERNANDO, BARECEAS, MOVE, 9 HERMAN, BELL, PATRICK, CICHON, MIKEY, POWELL, NEERINA, PAPARTIS, GIL, LINDA, BELL, JOCK, PAT, EMMAN, JANE, KIMBER, BROTHERS, JUSTICE, PAPAS, CAMPAIGN, JIM, TAYLOR, MONICA, CABALLERO, & FRANCISCO, SOLAR, ALEXANDER, KOCHENKO, SAVITA, HALAPPANAVAS, GADOL, ANN, KELLY, SAVE OUR SPERRINS, BERTIE, ADRIAS, FISCAL, WAIT, BOARDING.

The controversial Poster

BLOODY SUNDAY MARCH FOR JUSTICE

28TH JANUARY 2018 ASSEMBLE CREGGAN SHOPS 2.30PM

www.bloodySundaymarch.org

tion. Taking control of the march by one political grouping to another. The march should have gone ahead as planned and a protest could break away from the main platform. There was no consultation with other Republicans, which only serves to further divide attendance. There should have been an agreed collective response, so that the main body of support being Republicans, could have remained intact.”

The IRPSG believes that the objections to the poster are absolutely legitimate, that equating the violence of the oppressed Republican forces with British state violence against the whole nationalist community is fundamentally reactionary and wrong, despite criticisms we have of the methods employed.

They have a right to fight with the methods of their own choosing. In fact there is a great deal of evidence that British intelligence encouraged, facilitated and refused to warn civilians of the bombs in Enniskillen, Omagh and elsewhere, knowing the adverse effect these tragedies would have on the republican cause.

Keep the unity of the movement, fight the pro-imperialism of McCann and others; if you could march under Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness until 2012 you can certainly march under Kate and Linda Nash, who have heroically maintained the march when Sinn Fein capitulated to the Saville Inquiry, which is yet to produce a single conviction or an ounce of justice for the 14 murdered.

Signed Gerry Downing Secretary

John Carty Chair IRPSG

PS Eamonn McCann is not a Trotskyist ▲

The State of the Working Class in France By Viriato Lusitania in Lyon

The situation in France is characterised first of all by the consequences of the crisis of capitalism, despite an official “recovery” of 3%, itself threatened by the dangers of a new explosion of the crisis.

The trade union struggle has been on a downward trend for years now and continues, even if, here and there, strikes for wages frozen for years or even decades, occur outside the national or regional dictates of trade union bureaucrats.

Unemployment, which has risen to more than 11,000,000 young people and workers, is hidden by a policy of systematic write-offs or bogus trainings, which allows the government to trumpet a supposed drop in the percentage of unemployed.

Macron, whose opinion poll ratings were just under 50% has dropped to less than 25%, but can still govern quite comfortably because of the crisis that has hit all the other political parties, both left and right. This quick summary will demonstrate:

The National Front (Front National), despite having elected deputies, has gone quite; one of its main leaders, Florian Philippot, Vice President of the FN and a key aide, described as “a the young, media-savvy civil servant” deserted them last September and launched the Patriotes party. Likewise, Marine Le Pen’s niece, Marion Maréchal-Le Pen, has stepped down from politics, disagreeing with her aunt from the right; she opposed the expulsion of her grandfather Jean-Marie Le Pen. Even the ultra or “identity” sectors undermine an FN, which cannot find any momentum.

Laurent Waquiez, who was elected president of Sarkozy’s right wing Republicans last December, is a man who has travelled the entire spectrum of the right, but who is now seeking unity with the FN; he has the same FN programme in many issues.

La France Insoumise (FI, the Indomitable France or better, Mélenchon in short) is going through a phase of demobilizing its electorate. In fact, the transformation of a fundamentally electoral mass which had mobilized big numbers during the presidential and legislative elections, into a detachment that could fight for “the 6th republic (bourgeois but ‘renewed’) and the socialist-ecologist in the Mélenchon way” did not work and the FI is

rapidly breaking down while preserving an electoral capital by default (there is nothing else credible in the left).

For the moment, in the FI, there is still the possibility for Marxists to make leftist propaganda while waiting for better or... worse because if Macron continues his “reforms” and if the FI cannot prevent them and [Mélenchon](#) continues to confess his impotence, it can signal the end of this adventure.

The French Communist Party will soon convene a congress to end its communist heritage and even the name of the party... The remaining internal opponents, who can do nothing in the face of such a capitulation, they do not know how to deal with it. Still, they are the most militant grassroots sectors on the worker’s side of the CP.

The Socialist Party, is in fact a right-wing Social Democratic Party, which was once a reformist party but today finds itself without any possibility of winning any reforms, and it has a heavy history of right-wing, anti-worker, pro-imperialist positions. It has just lost its left wing (if that means anything) with the resignation of its former presidential candidate Hamon and with the expulsion of its emblematic figure from the “left” Gérard Filoche on a charge of... “antisemitism”, which, of course, is a slander.

The New Anticapitalist Party (Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste NPA) is inaudible and in the throes of a crisis. From the very beginning, when the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) dissolved itself, this signaled the liquidation of a far-left right-wing current. Three organised groups have left the party in order to join Mélenchon’s Left Front: Gauche Unitaire in 2009, Convergences et Alternative in 2011 and the largest of the three, Anticapitalist left (Gauche Anticapitaliste) in July 2012.

The Independent Workers’ Party (Parti ouvrier indépendant, POI, Pierre Lambert and Daniel Gluckstein), proposes a United Front to fight Macron, but no one may respond because the tactic is to infiltrate the United



Trump’s poll ratings are only a few percentage points better than Macron’s, whose opinion poll ratings were just under 50% when elected and have dropped to less than 25%.

Front partners and pick off militants from other groups or simply because no one believes in such a policy.

A United Front is not just a proposal for joint action to “unmask and pluck” competing groups, and it must just possible be better employed in seeking to find the right slogans for the reality of class struggle. Since there’s nothing like that... ex nihilo, nihil.

Even the LREM, Macron’s party, pass through some turmoil because some naïve MPs are not satisfied with the right trajectory of Macron’s policy. This will have some developments in the future if the worker’s movement renews itself or if public opinion turns its back to Macron excessively.

The big Unions who fight... sometimes (FO, CGT) are divided. The outright collaborationist the French Democratic Confederation of Labour (French: Confédération française démocratique du travail, CFDT), say nothing. The others follow when there is something to follow and today no one is leading anything. The CGT just occasionally makes, call some demo (once every six months or more) and then they go backwards because, as they say there is a lack of fighting spirit of the workers or a lack of “Unity” amongst the Unions.

Macron, even if he is quite unpopular, has in front of him “les Champs Elysées” as way to go further against the workers and poor of France.

This is a summary of the situation in which two fundamental things are missing: The first is an organisation that truly understands the communist method and the second is an important movement of workers. One does not go without the other and the first task is the formation of a consequent Marxist party. ▲

Viriato Lusitania says:

“All too often the prohibition of the free expression of socialist thought has been made under numerous and almost always abusive pretexts.

Today, we are still facing the same phenomenon. The support for the struggle of the Palestinian people and the denunciation of the oppressive and racist nature of Zionism both in Israel and internationally is the pretext for gagging comrades under the false accusation of “anti-Semitism”.

I’ve known Comrade Downing for years since I read his blog and he never wrote or supported racist or anti-Semitic ideas.

On the contrary, it is at the forefront of the fight against Zionist racism and in defence of the Palestinians massacred in their legitimate country, Palestine, like other struggles for the cause and interests of the proletarians of the whole world that we are.

As for Comrade Donovan, I know him less, but having read all his articles on these issues and having analysed them carefully, given the

nature of the accusations made against him, I could not find any trace of anti-Semitism in it, but rather a necessary work of analysis and clarification in the fight against Zionism and world capitalism.

So stop the slander of these comrades and revoke the shameful and slanderous resolution that puts them out of an important fight for the British working class and of all countries.

Wherever freedom of expression is violated, the bigot reaction, imperialism and Zionism rejoice.” ▲

Defend Afrin, defend the Kurdish nation's right to self-determination, US and Turkish troops out of Syria!

Socialist Fight Editorial Board 28-1-18

The offensive by Turkey against Afrin began on January 21, two days after Russia withdrew its “military advisors” from the enclave. The offensive is against the Kurdish-led Democratic Union Party in Syria (PYD), its armed wing People’s Protection Units (YPG), and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). It was entirely predictable that the US would throw the YPG to the wolves as soon as they had served their purpose. Turkey is a far more valuable NATO ally ultimately and it must repair differences lest Russia profit too much from them. Russia’s backstabbing of Assad over the Afrin attack has produced unexpected results. Now Egypt has backed Syria over this as they had allied with Assad over opposition to the Muslim Brotherhood in both Egypt and Syria.

And there are yet more imponderable scenarios in the region, but the US is the hegemonic global imperialism pulling the strings as best they can. There is now a rapidly changing situation in northern Syria. The US announced on 14 January that it was forming a 30,000-strong border security force led by the YPG militia, effectively annexing part of Syria and consolidation their alliance with the YPG as their main allies in Syria. This provoked Turkey to invade Afrin to attack “the nests of terror” in Syria. Turkey invaded Syria first in August 2016 in Operation Euphrates Shield, primarily to prevent the YPG/SDF linking Rojava with the Afrin enclave, separated by about 40 Kilometres. It declared its operation over in March 2017 but did not withdraw its forces.

From Afrin they have threatened to proceed to Manbij, which is west of the Euphrates and to cross the river itself to advance against Kurdish Rojava proper, making a confrontation with US forces practically inevitable. Alarmed at the effective annexation of Syrian territory by the US and the treachery of the Kurdish leadership Russia has withdrawn its air support and its troops from Afrin, thereby leaving it wide open to Turkish attack. The YPG has rejected the offer of assistance from Assad, on the basis that they would have to accept being an autonomous region of Syria once more. The support of Iran and Egypt might have forced Putin to deny Turkey access, but

the YPG will not break its alliance with the USA and Israel. And it is now mooted that the USA may abandon Rojava and ally with the “more numerous Arab forces”; the 4,000 ISIS fighters whom they shepherded out of Raqqa perhaps for this purpose, who would be rebranded with other jihadists as champions of liberty and freedom.

The RCG taken to task

The Revolutionary Communist Party’s paper *Fight Racism, Fight Imperialism* posting their statement on Facebook defending the right of the Kurds to self-determination drew many critical responses. [1]

Gerry Downing commented: A very inadequate and one sided RCG statement. It just does not look at the whole picture in the region and globally.

John Wight commented: Syria is a sovereign state. The US-supported Kurds there are agents of imperialism. Their cause is not one worthy of support. [2]

Martin White commented: Anti imperialists/communists should be standing with the country being invaded for regime change purposes. rather than the ‘tools’ of imperialist regime changers YPG. I think the fact that there are 2 separate entities, both NATO members fighting with different objectives has thrown the RCG into confusion sadly resulting in them neglecting the nation being invaded. [3]

Gerry Downing Commented: You can surely continue to support the right of Kurds to self-determination (in these circumstances) and their own state without endorsing the unprincipled and opportunist manoeuvring of the whole Kurdish leadership with their ridiculous Anarcho-Stalinist leadership.

They think you can achieve local and



Kurds in northern Syria protesting against the Turkish invasion of Afrin displaying the portrait of their leader, Abdullah Öcalan, jailed by Turkey for 19 years. He developed Murray Bookchin’s theory of Anarcho-Stalinism; his role models are Nelson Mandela and Gerry Adams.

regional liberalisation as the agents of the US, the global hegemonic imperialist power. They pretend not to see the role it is playing in the middle East and North Africa. So, the Kurds are paying the price of the backward politics of its leadership. You really cannot achieve socialism in a single country.

That was what was wrong with the RCG statement. But they are right in asserting the rights of the whole Kurdish nation to self-determination. They are a genuinely oppressed nation and do have such a right, the largest nation in the world without their own state. And they have fought long and hard with many heroic martyrs against the murderous Turkish state.

Although Anarcho-Stalinism is apparently very radical with its women’s liberation and local autonomy etc. the urban Maoism of its leadership with its refusal to see the big picture - their heroes are Nelson Mandela and Gerry Adams who brokered such unprincipled compromises with imperialism.

Of course, you do not make your main demand now the rights of Kurdistan to self-determination, as a client of the USA that is now a capitulation to US imperialism and a counterrevolutionary blow against Syria’s right to self-determination. Demand they change the leadership to one of opposition to US imperialism and supporting Syria’s fight, even if it means now reverting to be an autonomous region of Syria.

Consistent anti-imperialism is the Anti Imperialist United Front and world revolution, not any version of socialism in a

single country, the false anti-Marxist doctrine imposed by Stalin and Bukharin on the communist movement in 1924 and after to justify accommodation with imperialism and bureaucratic counterrevolution in the USSR.

[4]

Martin White commented: The Kurdish liberation struggle is one thing Nicki,

the PKK/YPG something entirely different. The YPG do not represent the definitive struggle of Kurdistan, they currently find themselves in a similar situation to the Azov battalion in Ukraine in that they've become 'regime-change' tools of US imperialism (fact) and anybody that cannot bring themselves to criticise their current situation really needs to get their head around this.... Both Washington and Tel Aviv are funding and arming their struggle in Syria... how does that little "FACT" sit with your anti-imperialism???

The point is... Unless you believe that the US/UK and their NATO kill club have the right to go round the world changing regimes at will? then you must concede that only the Russian military, the Iranians and Hezbollah have any right being in Syria right now...because they're there with the express blessing of the Damascus government, duly elected by the Syrian people to thwart any attempt by 'outsiders' to bring about regime change. Turkey - the second biggest NATO army - is bombing Syria whilst you make wild comments about "Tel Aviv and Washington" supporting the YPG, meanwhile the Syrian government warned Turkey that their planes would be shot down, but are so reliant on Russia, that Russia's gas pipeline deal with Turkey now takes precedence.

Rosa Gilbert Commented: So, the right to self-determination is fine in *theory* but god forbid if they ever try to implement it, whilst fighting an anti-fascist resistance against ISIS, because in that circumstance we must demand a change of leadership! Meanwhile on planet earth Gerry you'll notice that the YPG do indeed have a pact with the regime (did you miss what happened in Aleppo?) and the govt did warn Turkey



not to intervene else their planes will be shot down - but the Syrians are completely reliant on the Russian military force who are more interested in securing their gas pipeline deal with Turkey. Gerry, you can't secure socialism in a single country if there is no fucking country in the first place!!!! [5]

Gerry Downing Commented: You have deliberately ignored my central point here, Rosa Gilbert, the nationalistic agenda of socialism in a single country is completely bankrupt in a situation where one nation's rights contradict another nation's rights when they invite the assistance of the prime enemy of socialism in the planet (the USA) to assist them. You cannot advocate Kurdish self-determination with the assistance of the USA. It could not happen anyway as we are now seeing. This Kurdish Anarcho-Stalinist leadership are reaping the rewards of their unprincipled and opportunist alliance with Uncle Sam. As for changing horses in mid-stream we can never cross the stream of revolution on the horse of reformism or Stalinism, as someone once said (almost).

Rosa Gilbert Commented: How dare you say they are "reaping the rewards" whilst civilians in Afrin and brave YPG fighters are being slaughtered by the fascist Turkish state. And to address your point about the US, the alliance between the SDF and the US was not to establish a Kurdish state but to assist in the fight against ISIS. Just as they did a similar deal with Russia in Afrin. But sure it's easier to blame the Kurds who for 100 years have been forced to live within the confines of the imperialist-drawn borders of Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran which split their towns and villages in two in many cases, than to actually bother to criticise the role of the imperialist pow-

ers and NATO, the duplicity of both the US and Russia, which is much more complex and nuanced than your pathetic purity politics.

Gerry Downing Commented: Ok. The Kurdish fighters are reaping the rewards of the treachery of their leadership.

PS – Anyone who speaks of the duplicity of the US really has not learned the ABC of

Marxism.

Whilst disagreeing with the pro imperialism of the Kurdish leadership it is nonetheless incumbent on us to defend the Kurdish masses, and in these circumstances, that does mean defending the Kurdish leadership militarily but not politically (their ethnic cleansing of Arab villages is reprehensible) against the Turkish onslaught.

Ultimately a defeat for the YPG here would be seen as a defeat for revolutionary struggle in the region in general. Which is why the USA and Russia have withdrawn support.

Notes

[1] Statement in solidarity with the resistance in Afrin, <http://www.revolutionarycommunist.org/middle-east/5070-statement-in-solidarity-with-the-resistance-in-afin>

[2] Martin White is an anti-imperialist activist from Bristol and a supporter of the Solidarity with Antifascist Resistance in Ukraine.

[3] John Wight is a leftist journalist and a regular contributor to the *Morning Star*.

[4] Gerry Downing is the Editor of Socialist Fight. See Socialist Fight, Statement on Rojava—US imperialism is the main enemy; critical support for the Kurdish anarchostalinists, 26-7-16, <https://socialistfight.com/?s=Anarcho+Stalinism+%C3%96calan>

[5] Rosa Gilbert is a leader of The Kurdistan Solidarity Campaign and also contributes regular article to the *Morning Star*. An article in the paper by reporter Steve Sweeney on 7 January revealed that: "The Kurdistan Solidarity Campaign (KSC) Facebook page was taken down on Friday evening after it had posted reports of the arrests and jailing of MPs from Turkey's People's Democratic Party (HDP). Group administrators Rosa Gilbert and Mark Campbell also found their personal Facebook profiles had been blocked although they were reinstated after appeal." ▲

A short review by Turan Basri: Hindsight is a great thing 1917, The Grassroots Working-class Revolution that Lenin Crushed, Milan Rai, Peace News Press.

This book/pamphlet consists of two parts, each one 25 pages long, this review concentrating in the first part. The second part of the book is titled 1917, The Nonviolent Russian Revolution. For such a small book it attempts to prove that Lenin eradicated the stirrings of what could have been a revolution built on democracy from the bottom up, instead ending up with a dictatorship with Stalin at the helm. While there is undoubtedly evidence, which the book supplies, that the Soviets were on the path to installing fully functioning democratic processes within the workplace, more critical analysis is required as to why Lenin and the Bolsheviks favoured centralisation of power. This argument is not new, with Noam Chomsky making the same argument (The Soviet Union Versus Socialism).

However, Engels writing against the anti-authoritarianism of Bakunin's followers makes the case rather nicely:

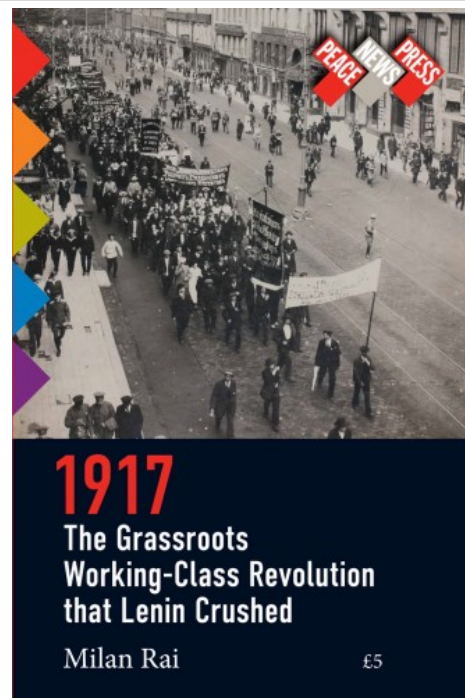
"...no communal action is possible without submission on the part of some to an external will, that is to say authority.

Whether it be the will of a majority of voters, of a managing committee or of one man alone, it is invariably a will imposed on dissidents; but without that single controlling will, no cooperation is possible. Just try and get one of Barcelona's big factories to function without control that is to say without an authority! Or to run a railway without knowing for certain that every engineer, stoker etc. is at his post exactly when he ought to be! I should very much like to know whether the good Bakunin would entrust his portly frame to a railway carriage if the railway were administered on the principle that no one need be at his post unless he chose to submit to the authority of the regulations, regulations far more authoritarian in any conceivable state of society than those of the Congress of Basle! All these grandiloquent ultra-radical and revolutionary catchphrases serve only to conceal an abysmal ignorance of the conditions under which the daily life of society takes place. Just try abolishing 'all authority, even by consent', among the sailors on board a ship! (Engels to Lafargue, 30 December 1871 Collected works, Vol 44 p.286)

Russia was predominately a serfdom, with 80% of the population being peas-

ants, its backward economy an agrarian one which could hardly feed itself. The majority of the population were tied to the land in some form, 40% of factory workers who were originally from the countryside, came to the cities to work. Russia was centuries behind other European countries both economically and technologically. Inevitably this would have led to high rates of illiteracy and poor education, but nevertheless it is said that there is no better school than a revolution. While the Soviets were organising their workplace, there were still huge challenges to the newly formed government being born out of the fire of revolutionary struggle. To dismiss these challenges is disingenuous and does not do justice to the precarious position that Russia found itself in. The book makes the point that Lenin favoured armed struggle against the Provisional Government, however it fails to set out the reasons why. The government was totally ineffective at carrying out any major reforms, managing to just abolish the Okhrana and press censorship, and allow political freedom. It continued with the war, resulting in increased desertions with death squads hunting them down, food shortages with people living increasingly in poverty and unable to solve the land problem. Over 7 million died in the offensives during 1915-16, with 15 million peasants being conscripted by 1917.

The newly formed government had the difficult task of redirecting the economy away from the reliance on agriculture towards an industrial one, with Capitalist imperialist powers waiting in the wings to land on its carcass like vultures. Lenin understood this clearly, which was the only way it could go forward, in the hope that it would become a catalyst for a European wide revolution. The book makes the point clearly (which some historians point out as a counter argument), that the Bolsheviks were centralising power away from the Soviets before the civil war started (starting in May 1918), despite Lenin claiming "All power to the Soviets!" and writing in his April Thesis "The masses must be made to see that the Soviets of Workers' Deputies are the only possible



form of revolutionary government". Lenin was no fool, he would have clearly understood the need for reform and the perils that lay ahead, and the need to keep everyone on board through various points of the revolution. Politics is not a hobby, it is a serious business with outcomes of that affect people's way of life and freedoms, and it is certainly not a static process requiring the need to adapt to what is put before you. The Bolsheviks played a key role in defeating the coup by General Kornilov, which the book actually comments on, highlighting the fragility of the state at that time and the way public opinion swayed towards the Bolsheviks.

The book implies that through Lenin's actions, the way was clear for dictatorship and Stalin, with the terror that was to ultimately come. Lenin may have had an insight into the future, as his testament written in the last weeks of his life suggests. Lenin wanted this to be read out at the 12th Party Congress in April 1923, in which he was very critical of the ruling triumvirate and suggested that Stalin should be removed from his position of General Secretary. The revolution is just over a 100 years old and while it was earth shattering leaving an indelible mark on human history, facts are still emerging which enables events to be understood more clearly. ▲

ZIMBABWE CRISIS

By Cde Zim in Harare

It is well understood that under the system of capitalism the current social, economic and political situation in Zimbabwe which is degenerating into an unending fleapit is a result of historical material contradictions. Events, including the economic performance prior to the coup, in the absence of extra-ordinary interventions, were pointing to one direction – social uprising. The military intervention was therefore such, though evil, a necessity and in the interest of capital, to avoid the inevitability of economic, social and political explosion.

Following the military takeover (coup) which many a people celebrated in the hope for a better Zimbabwe, things have however proved to be going the exact opposite direction and worsened.

Prices of basic commodities are spiralling out of control, it is clear that inflation is rising, inequalities among social classes is increasing, the polarisation that existed between these social class is continuing unabated, bank queues are still the order of the day, yet the government seemed clueless. The decay and incompetence of the system has been comprehensively exposed by the cholera outbreak that is threatening to spill out of control.

With running battles being witnessed on a daily basis between law enforcement agents on one hand and pirate taxis, vendors and illegal money changers, it is only a matter of time before the delayed explosion explodes.

At his inauguration, the interim President, ED Mnangwagwa, emphasised job creation, but there are no sign of any jobs to date. On the other hand the government has intensified its clean-up campaign. Despite spirited resistance, the government have given informal traders a 48-hour ultimatum to vacate the streets or face the wrath of soldiers. The very soldiers who were marching side by side with the masses demonstrating against Mugabe are today commandeered to turn their guns against their yesterday fellow comrades. The first 100-day plan is fast approaching with nothing tangible to show.

All pointers are showing that the government is clueless on how to turn things around yet there is crisis of expectation from the people. The President made concrete promises for a quick fix, yet we get nothing but statements.

Following the coup which was dubbed operation restore legacy by targeting “criminals” around the former President

and as a tool to cool the anger of increasingly impatient citizens, the government has resorted to selective arrests of a few alleged corrupt ministers. They have also retired or dismissed some senior officials in the security system who were seen as allies of the former President.

These arrests and changes have only been regarded as witch-hunts by the military government; the most affected being the police force where a large number of their top leadership were affected and also in the Presidents’ Office. In government also, there are unprecedented summary dismissals of perceived opponents of the current system who are being relieved of their duties and being replaced by allies.

As all these changes happen potential conflict is brewing as there is apparent friction and thereby disturbing the smooth running of government business.

In the party (military-ZANU(PF)), there is an emergence of factionalism, this is between the military referred to as COSLEG and the civilians (LACOSTE) within. Cosleg and Lacoste are led by Chiwengwa and Mnangagwa respectively. Cosleg is the name of the fusion of two military investments when Zimbabwe deployed its army in the 1990s to defend of Congolese leader L Kabila against Uganda and Rwanda backed rebels. As ‘spoils of war’ the military is taking up most of the positions in ZANU(PF) and government.

Retired and serving military personnel are holding influential positions in both the party and government replacing civilians and War Veterans who were the most vocal group and in the forefront fighting Mugabe’s continuing in power. The War Vets, for instance, wanted the Commissariat Post, a powerful position, and a fair share of the government positions. They did not get it, they lost it to retired Lieutenant General Engelbert Rugelje.

It is, however, the issue of parliamentary, council and municipality seats that has fast tracked this rift, although it was inevitable due to the nature of how the current government came to being. Although the civilian part (in ZANU(PF)) cannot openly show their disquiet, stories are emerging to



MDC-T leader, Morgan Tsvangirai and NPP leader Joice Mujuru signing the memorandum of understanding in April 2017.

that effect, anonymously, very reminiscent of what happened yesteryear.

The so-called G40 cabal (defeated faction of ZANU(PF)) which was pushed out of the party is regrouping and coalescing now around the opposition parties mainly the former Vice President Joice Mujuru who was herself a victim of ZANU(PF) factionalism. Mujuru’s National Peoples Party (NPP) and Morgan Tsvangirai’s Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai (MDC-T) formed an alliance to fight the 2018 elections in April 2017.

Back in 2004 Mugabe had bowed to pressure from a ZANU-PF faction led by Mujuru’s husband, General Solomon Mujuru, to give a woman the second vice-presidency post—effectively sidelining Speaker of Parliament ED Mnangagwa. This ZANU-PF reshuffle was dubbed “the night of the long knives”. Key leaders of the G-40 cabal are in self-exile and daily basis they issue threatening statements; the new administration is no longer settled.

In defence of its legitimacy President Mnangagwa is globetrotting trying to give a picture that all is well in Zimbabwe, promising free, fair and credible elections. He is inviting the UN, EU and interested countries to monitor the elections. He is desperately looking for customers who will buy Zimbabwe, another Berlin. His daily sermon is Zimbabwe is ready for investment and as proof he is promising compensation to former white farmers who were dispossessed of “their” land during the land reform program. Some have already returned to “their” land.

In the interior, he is reaching out to as many stakeholders, business, private media, youth chiefs etc but so far has avoided labour (the workers). The telling point in his public relations mission is when he visited the ailing leader of the opposition, Morgan Tsvangirai, where he made a handful of offers, including returning

Tsvangirai's diplomatic passport which was repossessed by Mugabe regime, assuring him that the government house, worth millions of US dollars, where he is staying will not be repossessed, he will be given his pension ostensibly in recognition for the role he played during the Government of National Unity.

Please note; (benefits on retirement or when one leaves office) our constitution is silent on benefits to the Prime Minister, it only talks of the President and his deputies. One wonders why this gesture to Tsvangirai, is it a bribe or a buy-out of active politics. It is also during this visit where the new administration proposed a three year's delay in the elections which are due by July.

The condition of Opposition Political Parties, Labour and the Social Movements

There are simmering contradictions in the main MDC, three distinct factions are jostling for the top post due to the failing health of their veteran leader. The factions are coalesced around Tsvangirai's three deputies all of whom have shown interest in replacing him.

The jostling is fast affecting the possibilities of a formidable Alliance of opposition parties to defeat the military-ZANU(PF) alliance. The in-fighting is worsened by growing suspicions that the other faction of the MDC-T, fronted by Nelson Chamisa, the youthful Vice President of MDC-T, is allegedly winning the military.

Meanwhile the unstable Alliance has chosen Tsvangirai as its Presidential candidate; however, his health is betraying him. It is rumoured that ZANU(PF) and MDC-T (Chamisa faction) are warming to the idea of postponing the elections which are due by the latest July. It is said is in the interest of both parties. ZANU(PF) need a delay to be able to sell its "unelectable" candidate, on the other hand the MDC-T hopes Tsvangirai will recover from his illness or alternately allowing time for Chamisa become Presidential material, which might only take six months. In terms of Zimbabwe laws, a Presidential candidate must be at least forty years old.

They feel the need to postpone the election because no party have so far produced its manifesto. Thus, their urgings for citizens to register to vote is in one sense mere politicking but it is also strategically preparing in case elections go ahead as scheduled.

The State of the Labour Movement

The Labour Movement has degenerated and is heavily compromised since the for-

Coup President President ED Mnangwagwa



mation of Government of National Unity in 2008 - 2009. Its reaction, as usual, is informed by the conditions of the main political parties. Currently there are four federations, two are appendages of main political party formations. They no longer command an independent agenda of the workers, an agenda which is for, by and in the interest of the workers.

The other two have no permanent political home yet but vacillate, with no informed ideological fundamental principles, and change with the direction of the political wind. This is the reason workers blindly supported and had illusions in the capitalist factional fights of November 2017.

How workers unconsciously supported an agenda of representatives of their bloodthirsty class enemies, thanks to the conspiracies of the middle-class section which took advantage of the absence of a militant, disciplined and class-conscious workers' leadership to lead an independent worker movement. Their deception drives workers to support one or another represented faction of capital in Zimbabwe.

The November 2017 events, although on another note, awakened, motivated and build confidence of an otherwise disgruntled population which has been for decades subjected to poverty and grinding hunger. This can best sum up as the greatest counter-revolutionary act by capitalist in Zimbabwe to date, the system of minority represented by ZANU(PF) was exploding prior to the coup and the country was pregnant with great social revolutionary possibilities.

Towards 2018 Election:, The Three Anti-Working Class Possible Scenarios

A military staffed rejuvenated ZANU(PF) romping to a victory, leading to liquidation of the opposition parties in Zimbabwe, the Ethiopia case, followed with massive austerity measures, retrenchments (redundancies), privatisation of state owned enterprises, and an anti-worker labour law reform process to promote labour flexibility.

Militarisation of the already Zanuficated key state departments is a clear sign of the

intention of the military-ZANU(PF), that, it is not prepared to leave party and government power anytime soon. In fact, by allowing active involvement of serving members of the military into civilian affairs. Serving soldiers, in terms of the constitution, are not allowed to contest for positions in parliament, council or municipality, there are supposed to be partisan, demonstrate the extent and direction the junta is prepared to take in consolidating its stay in power.

Victory by a militarised ZANU(PF) is a recipe for undermining democracy and death of constitutionalism in our country, potentially giving a bad precedence to the entire region. The army can be used as a tool by despots, on behalf of capital, to thwart any democratic demands of the tooling masses.

It is unlikely that elections will be held under free, fair and credible conditions. In these conditions a united opposition could defeat a militarised ZANU(PF). Under these conditions the least expected result will be a hung parliament which may cause the formation of a unity government. However, if MDC-T, the biggest opposition, opts to go it alone, it will not defeat the junta supported ZANU(PF).

With elections now earmarked on or before July 2017, the opposition's maximum program (unless they unite) seemed to maintain its current relevance by winning few representative positions in councils, municipalities and parliament especially in urban areas.

Afraid of facing a united opposition and losing their borrowed power, the military-ZANU(PF) may resort to what it knows best, violence. However, political turmoil is exceptionally needed by both sides (ZANU(PF) & MDC-T (Alliance)) to justify creation of another looting Government of National Unity the only difference this time it will include other parties like NPP (Mujuru's) or at the very least cause election postponement. Like the previous GNU other parties will play junior partners because the military-ZANU(PF) is already controlling key civilian positions in government.

Proposed tasks for the workers and social movements

- Identification of all progressive organisations which are still seriously willing to fight capitalist hegemony and (despite their diversity) build a class movement founded on socialist principles to give a real alternative to both ZANU(PF), different factions of MDC and other neo-liberal political parties.

- Call for an immediate assembly of these

Continued overleaf

Major Figure in World Music—Hugh Masekela—Dies at 78

By Ailesh Dese

On the 23rd of January 2018, Hugh Masekela, South African Composer, Trumpeter and Anti-racist died aged 78, after a long battle with prostate cancer. One of the most gifted Musicians of the 50s and 60s, he started playing the Horn at age 14 and quickly became part of the music scene in Johannesburg. At an early age he recognised that there was something seriously wrong with the way the society was organised.

A sensitive man, unable to adapt to the culture of cruelty in a Settler Colonial society- A culture based on Greed, Violence and theft of Land. He found it more and more difficult to witness the unspeakable misery, dispossession and displacement of his fellow South Africans at the hands of the Apartheid Regime. So for 30 years he chose the inestimable pain and loneliness of exile, first in England and then in the US. Perhaps more than any other musician he used his music to raise awareness around the world about the racist Tyranny of the Apartheid system which disenfranchised South Africans, politically, economically and socially, in their own Land.

Many of his compositions related to the struggle for Democratic rights in South Africa. He gave Voice and Value to the South African people and celebrated them in his music. His attitude and energy was very inspiring. His message to his people was to Resist and insist on a life of Justice and Dignity.

He acquired new audiences around the world, his Talent, Grace and Grit was generally admired. He continually experimented with his Music and his appeal to younger generations and other language groups never abated.

He always spoke his mind: - at one of his last concerts in South Africa, fans went to get his autograph. One of them was a young woman wearing a European



wig. Masekela chided her, he told her that wearing other people's hair is a sign of self-hate, a result of systematic oppression, Media bias and a dominant narrative that says Africans must conform to other people's standards of 'beauty'. "This is a display of what mental slavery has done to Africans everywhere".

He also spoke to the economics of the false hair industry. People who were present were humbled by his honesty. He gave an interview to *The Guardian* in 2012 which included the following:

Have you forgiven white people in South Africa?

I don't think I have the power to forgive. I think the most difficult thing that has had to happen in South Africa for the previously disadvantaged communities is they had to reconcile that the oppressor has been enriched and the establishment is now making five or 10 times more profit than they were during the time the economic embargo was on them.

There's never in history been a people who have ever said to another people: "Hey, sorry we made so much fucking money off your backs. Here's 500 trillion

to show you how sorry we are for enslaving you."

The inequalities are still there. We're not being harassed by police at night or being arrested for stupid things, but there are inequalities. And life is not an act, we're not in a movie.

Do you think the African National Congress has lived up to its promise after 18 years in government?

I don't think anybody has ever been able to live up to what they promised. I don't know a government that has ever been successful at that because once they get into power, things change and the world is controlled also by business now. I'm not expecting any miracles.

Corruption is everywhere, man. It's in England; all those MPs who stole money and lied about their houses. It's an international malady and there's no reason why South Africans wouldn't have done it

Hugh Masekela spent his life fighting racism and injustice through his music.

RIP Hugh Masekela, gone but not forgotten. ▲

Zimbabwe—from page 21

like-minded organisation to draw a road map towards formation of the above movement.

- Capacitating progressive (leftist) trade unions in the country and encourage them to work together, not merging, on united front basis.

- Immediately call for a two-day Anti-Neoliberalism – Anti-Capitalist Conference with delegates drawn from members of the identified progressive organisa-

tions. Regional and international comparison lessons and analysis to be shared by inviting international delegates.

- Actively participating in the elections by denouncing the anti-poor policies of participating parties

Conclusion

The situation in Zimbabwe can best be described as a storm brewing in a teapot. There nothing for the people but for a few elite, people are now starting to realise that they were celebrating with a wolf

in sheep' clothing.

When people marched alongside soldiers demanding the immediate removal of Mugabe little did they know over two months later things will improve but would rather be worse than before.

Even in parliament there is discontent on why the so called new dispensation retained the same old faces in cabinet, most of whom are not trusted by the public because of some allegations of corruption. ▲

The Butcher of Marikana - The next President of South Africa?

By Ailesh Dese

On the 18th December 2017, amid allegations of vote rigging and bribery, Cyril Ramaphosa (CR) a lawyer and former leader of the National Mineworkers Union (NUM) was elected President of the ANC. It was a close vote and there was a recount. Ramaphosa sits on the boards of various corporations, (positions of corporate power attracts the worst kinds of human beings).

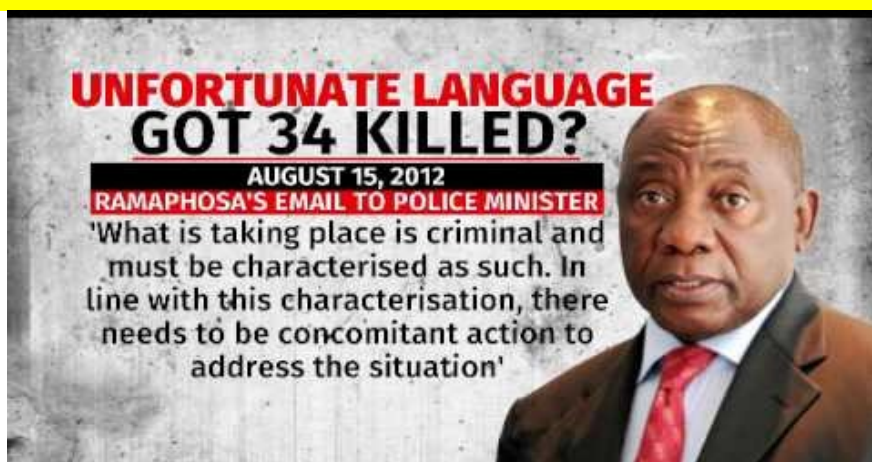
He is one of the 14 wealthiest people in South Africa, a country with obscene levels of inequality, in fact one of the most unequal countries in the world. Not surprisingly, CR was the preferred candidate of business, and the money markets responded positively to his election success.

His election is more than a little disturbing, given that CR was deeply implicated in the Marikana Massacre 2012, where 34 mineworkers were murdered in cold blood by the South African police while they were trying to disperse.

It is widely believed, and there is email evidence, that Ramaphosa gave the green light for that Massacre. Nevertheless, the TRUTH, was suppressed and CR violated the victims' dignity by repeated denial of the facts and against all the evidence, claimed that the victims were in reality, the real culprits!! His refusal to accept any blame and the self-serving drivel he presented, shredded any credibility he had left.

The so-called Commission of Inquiry spat on the graves of those murdered by exculpating the perpetrators from guilt.

Although the elections are not until 2019, CR has effectively already started campaigning for the position of President of S. Africa. With his unique ability to fake sincerity, he claims that he will 'root out corruption' etc. A problematic line of thought has arisen in political discourse in South Africa, which wants to blame Zuma and only Zuma for the ANC's descent into a kleptocracy. Historical truth has to be defended, the ANC became corrupted very early on when they first



took power and made their deal with imperialism.

They sold out long ago, they got away with it, by reframing the narrative, from socio-economic justice for ALL, to having a few Black multi-millionaires and billionaires like Cyril. That was what Black Economic Empowerment was all about. Capitalism cannot be reformed, it must be removed, and be replaced by a system in which hierarchy and inequality (economic, political, social, racial) is abolished. What was needed is a policy of taking the enormous privilege and wealth from the tiny minority that has it. Without doing this no country can pursue a programme of social/economic equality. The State is a criminal entity and the current political system will only produce more criminal behaviour.

After the oppression and mismanagement of the settler regime, the indigenous autocrats were more than willing to allow the West to continue plundering the resources in the name of 'industrialisation' and 'development'.

Politics should not be a means of acquiring personal wealth, no Rep./MP should be paid more than an average skilled worker's wage. They should be subject to immediate recall, and should serve no more than 3 years.

Corruption is both widespread and endemic in South Africa, (as in most capitalist countries) and Cyril's so-called criticism of 'corruption' is a mixture of hypocrisy and deceit. Never has CR chosen principle over financial advantage. The state survives on the blood of the poor.

A British PR firm Bell Pottinger was expelled from the National PR regulatory

body after an investigation into its work on behalf of the 'Too rich to Jail' Guptas. Bell Pottinger collapsed shortly after. An International Law Firm Hogan Lovells, accused of a cover up for the South African Revenue Service have been referred to the Solicitor's Regulation Authority for disciplinary action to be taken

against them, including withdrawal of permission to practice as Solicitors. Capitalist financial apparatus is so vast and well organised, that its sheer size and complexity taxes the intellect of the average person to comprehend its reach.

CR is spreading illusions about the system, he is proposing the same bogus trickledown economics we have heard over the years.

He is using pseudo-socialist rhetoric to sound revolutionary'. CR claims he will create 'Jobs and Housing'. He said the ANC policy of 'free tertiary education' for families earning less than R350,000 will be implemented... but gradually... (How long is 'gradually'?)

He said Land Redistribution will be implemented but WITH compensation...where will CR get the money to pay the settlers for the land? Guess there won't be any land redistribution soon. He said 'factions' will no longer be tolerated in the ANC. Where was Cyril for the last 20 years? Why is he only now pretending to address these issues?

The prosperity he is proposing cannot manifest. Capitalism is in a global crisis, they must loot from others or create destruction in general. South Africa needs a Worker's Party to mount a revolutionary challenge to Capitalist hegemony.

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa said that they would form a Worker's Party after they broke with the too corrupt to exist COSATU, but they have said nothing since then. The South African Working Class must continue the class struggle, continue their Strikes, Occupations and Protests ...RESIST, RESIST, RESIST. ▲

The Hegemonic Domination of US Imperialism: Why neither China nor Russia are imperialist powers

By Gerry Downing

1. The US Dollar is by far the world's leading reserve and trading currency for oil and almost every other commodity in the world (although Russia and China are challenging that now). It gives the US an enormous economic and political advantage over its rivals. Wars against Iraq, Libya, and Ukraine today are at least partially launched to protect this privileged position which enables it to rob every other nation. In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, the dollar's share in the world's foreign-exchange trades rose slightly from 85% in 2010 to 87% in 2013. The dollar's role as the undisputed reserve currency of the world allows the United States to impose unilateral sanctions against actions



dominated global finance for the past couple of centuries. However, political uncertainty from Brexit and the US election has had a "significant impact" on the state of affairs, as London and second place New York fell 13 and 14 points respectively compared to

the last Global Financial Centres Index by Z/Yen. Those were the steepest declines, bar Calgary, amongst the world's top 50 financial centres. The top five financial centres remained unchanged with London followed by New York, Singapore, Hong Kong and Tokyo.

But Singapore is fast closing in on the two cities ahead, rising eight points to be 20 points behind New York, having been 42 points behind in the last report. London was still comfortably ahead of other European cities - Luxembourg was 18th, Frankfurt 23rd and Paris 29th in the rankings.

3. Top 2,000 multi-nationals: We have abstracted these details from Forbes 2,000 top companies which gives a good indication of the balance of global economic forces: Of the top 2,000 firms in the world in 2017 **U.S. companies account for the most members of the list, 565**, followed by China and Hong Kong, which is home to 263 Global 2000 companies. The world's biggest companies have gotten bigger, more profitable and more valuable in the past year. 58 countries were represented, down from last year's 62. The 2017 list features public companies from 58 countries that together account for \$35.3 trillion in revenue, \$2.5 trillion in profit, \$169.1 trillion of

assets, and have a combined value of \$48.8 trillion. Of the top ten companies in the world, China has 4, including numbers 1 and 3, the US has 5 and the tenth is Japanese. Note here that in 2004 when the list first appeared the US had almost 1,000 in the top 2,000. **The decline since then is largely due to US transnationals locating their HQs abroad for tax avoidance purposes.**

In 2013 Ireland's 17 companies apparently placed it in the same league as South Africa, Mexico and Saudi Arabia, a ridiculous comparison. In reality up to half of those 'Irish' companies are not really Irish at all except in name. Take its top company, Accenture plc, which is "engaged in providing management consulting, technology and outsourcing services". It is 318th on the list with a market capitalisation of \$53.34 Billion. A Fortune Global 500 company, it moved its HQ from Bermuda and has been incorporated in Dublin, Ireland, since 1 September 2009.

In 2017, the company reported net revenues of \$34.9 billion, with more than 425,000 employees serving clients in more than 200 cities in 120 countries. In 2015, the company had about 130,000 employees in India, about 48,000 in the US, and about 50,000 in the Philippines and only about 1,000 in Ireland. It is a US transnational, of course.

And not only does the US have all these companies located abroad but the US dominates many others by its stock holdings. Some statistics would reveal the true nature of US imperialism's domination of almost every aspect of the trade, commerce, and lives of most of the population the planet. And where it does not fully dominate it demonise and makes plans to bomb and invade. Finance capital is interlinked in a global web of dominance spreading out from Wall Street and the City of London. If we take, for example, the role of Swiss banking is not a secret of the strong links it has with the City of London.

Equally important are the so-called 'tax havens' such as Luxembourg. Also finance capital plays a major role in the Spanish banking sector – there is the curious phenomenon of its relations to the Basque and Catalan banks, which are not really Spanish and behind much of the separatist agitation. Financial capital of British origin plays a big role in maintaining Gibraltar as a 'tax haven'.



performed between other countries.

On 1 May 2015 U.S. District Judge Lorna Schofield in Manhattan formally ordered the French bank BNP Paribas to forfeit \$8.83 billion and pay a \$140 million fine as part of a sentence that also called for BNP Paribas to enhance its compliance procedures and policies over claims that it violated sanctions against Sudan, Cuba, and Iran. These violations of U.S. sanctions were not laws in France or the other countries involved in the transactions. In 2014 Beijing and Moscow signed a 150-billion-yuan central bank liquidity swap line agreement to get around American sanctions, which may well now operate over charges that they have violated UN sanctions on North Korea.

2. Today London continues to top the list of the **world's leading financial centres, with New York close behind in second-place**, according to the latest edition of The Global Financial Centres Index. Sometimes referred to as Ny-Lon, these two cities have

4. Top Stock Exchanges Here are the top 11 stock exchanges (\$US billions) by market capitalisation as reported by “All of the Worlds Stock Exchanges by Size” in 2016.

1. NYSE Euronext, US, \$21,377.
2. NASDAQ OMX Group, US, \$9,585.
3. Tokyo Stock Exchange, Japan \$5,974.
4. Shanghai Stock Exchange, China \$5,043
5. Euronext, European Union, \$4,388
6. London Stock Exchange, \$4,297.
7. Hong Kong Stock Exchange, \$4,135.
8. Shenzhen Stock Exchange, \$3,688.
9. TMX Group, Canada, \$2,360.
10. National Stock Exchange of India, Mumbai, \$2,194
11. Deutsche Börse, Germany, \$1,486.

Note the two US stock exchanges are almost as big as the next 9 combined; with its allies, it is absolutely dominant.

5. The ranking of countries by Gross Domestic Product, this time the top 11: (Millions of \$US),

1. United States \$19,417.144,
2. China \$11,795.297,
3. Japan \$4,841.221.
4. Germany \$3,423.287.
5. United Kingdom, \$2,496.757.
6. India \$1,897,608.
7. France \$2,420.440.
8. Brazil \$2,140.940.
9. Italy \$1,807.425.
10. Canada \$1,600.265
11. Russia \$1,560.706.

Obviously, if we take the more meaningful GDP per capita we get an entirely different picture. That is headed by tax havens and petro-states Liechtenstein, Qatar, Monaco and Luxembourg and the US comes in at 20, Germany at 31, the UK at 38, France at 39, Italy at 51, China at 106, South Africa at 117 and India at 160.

6. Biggest military expenditure in 2016 and percentage of global total: The top 15 for military expenditure, (\$US billions):

1. United States \$611.0, 36%.
2. China \$215.0, 13%.
3. Russia \$69.2, 4.1%
4. Saudi Arabia \$53.7, 3.8%
5. India \$55.9, 3.3%
6. France, \$55.7, 3.3%
7. United Kingdom \$48.3, 2.9%.
8. Japan \$46.1, 2.7%.
9. Germany \$41.1, 2.4%
10. South Korea \$36.8, 2.2%
11. Italy \$27.9, 1.7%
12. Australia \$24.6, 1.4%
13. Brazil \$23.7, 1.4%
14. UAE \$22.8, 1.3%
15. Israel \$18, 1.1%

Note the US expenditure is almost equal to the combined total of all the other 14 on the list, all NATO or close US allies apart from Russia and China.

7. Fleets, aircraft carriers, warships and submarines.

The US has five battleship fleets, the Second Fleet in the Atlantic, the Third Fleet in the Eastern Pacific, the Fifth Fleet in the Arabian Gulf and Indian Ocean, the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and the Seventh Fleet in the Western Pacific. No other nation gets a look in here. This is a list of the aircraft carriers in service in 2013: United States 10, Italy 2, United Kingdom, 1, France 1, Russia 1, Spain 1, India 1, Brazil 1, China 1 and Thailand 1. Some other nations have added or planned one or two more carriers since then.

In addition to its 10 aircraft carriers, the U.S. Navy has nine amphibious assault ships, 22 cruisers, 62 destroyers, 17 frigates and 72 submarines. In addition to ships, the U.S. Navy has 3,700 aircraft, making it the second



The 10 American aircraft carriers are supercarriers. These are huge nuclear-powered war machines that can run for twenty years without needing to refuel. Each of them can hold up to 90 fighter planes. In fact, just one of these supercarriers holds more firepower than 70% of the world's militaries. The only other nation besides the United States that operates any nuclear-powered aircraft carriers is France, but it only has one.

nearly 800 military bases in more than 70 countries and territories abroad (depending on what you count as a base) outside the US, 2,639 including US home bases in 1993 (59 full bases in the US today). It has 38 “named bases” having active-duty, national guard, reserve, or civilian personnel as of September 30, 2014. Its largest, in terms of personnel, was Ramstein AB, in Germany, with almost 9,200 personnel. In addition, other NATO countries, such as France and the UK, have a further 200 such military locations within the network of global military control. The biggest “host” countries are those that once lost a major war in which the US was involved. Germany, Italy, Japan, and Korea are the four biggest ‘hosts’. France and the UK mainly have bases in the remains of their colonial empires. The UK is strong in the South Atlantic and around the Mediterranean; France is strong in the South Pacific and in Africa. The US is military deployed in more than 150 countries around the world, with over 300,000 of its active-duty personnel serving outside the United States and its territories. US personnel are engaged in active combat in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria openly and covertly elsewhere as we recently discovered when 4 US troops were killed on the Niger-Mali border in October 2016.

Russia has 7 military facilities in former Soviet republics, the Syrian Tartus base and the Cam Ranh base in Vietnam. The Crimean base HQ in Sevastopol is now part of Russia itself. India and Turkey have 6 each and China is building a massive base in Djibouti, in the Horn of Africa, next to a US base overlooking the Red Sea, guarding the access to the Suez Canal, vital for China's oil imports from the Middle East. France, Italy, and Japan also have bases in Djibouti. The UK has 17 full overseas military bases and France 11. ▲



Accenture HQ in Dublin: not an Irish company at all but a US transnational only there to avoid US taxes. Trump has promised to call all these home by slashing corporate taxes from 35% to 21% and effectively abolishing taxing their non-US earnings.

largest air force in the world – second to the US Air Force, that is. The USA has 14,612 military aircraft in total, Russia 4,827, China 3,000, France 223 and Britain 192.

8. Despite recently closing hundreds of bases in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States still maintains

Healthcare in Britain, the USA and Cuba Compared

By Gerry Downing

This Winter has highlighted the immediate and longer-term crisis of the NHS. This article is gleaned from many of these reports, apologies for lack of attribution of multiple sources.

There is a great myth that in Britain, despite recent very serious problems, the NHS is still amongst the best health care systems in the world, “free at the point of delivery” continuing to deliver relatively good value for money. Even at its inception the NHS was still far from the best healthcare systems; those in the USSR, Eastern Europe and China continued to improve their systems after WWII which were far better in terms of available resources.

Over the years the system in the USA, despite some improvements like Medicare and Medicaid from Lyndon Johnson in 1965, forced on it in times of heightened class struggle, continued to be by far the worst in terms of resources spent. The collapse of the USSR and the restoration of capitalism East Europe and China, Vietnam and Laos saw a dramatic collapse of those healthcare systems, with a disastrous fall in life expectancy of up to 10 years in the USSR and Eastern Europe as a result of the mass privatisation of the economies on behalf of western imperialism by Yeltsin, Walesa/Jaruzelski etc. But one healthcare system stands out in terms of delivering excellent healthcare with the very limited resources available to it which puts its neighbour the USA to shame, that of Cuba.

A few statistics will give us a better picture. Infant mortality rates in the UK is 3.7 per 1,000 live births, in the USA 5.4 and in Cuba 4.8. Life expectancy in the UK is 81.2, in the USA 79.3 and in Cuba 79.1. In both the USA and UK life expectancy is now falling due to the imposition of austerity and failing healthcare systems. Gross Domestic Product per capita in thousands of US Dollars: USA \$ 59.6, UK 37.8, Cuba 7.6. Of course, the US and UK figures hide gross and growing inequality. Of some interest also is the primary GDP figures in Billions of US dollars: USA 16,624, UK 2,649, Cuba 87.

Finally let us look at the percentage of GDP spent by the three countries on healthcare systems in 2014 according to the World Health Organisation; USA 17.1%, UK 9.1%, Cuba 11.1%. The USA's 17.1% in 2014 is the highest proportion of GDP spent of healthcare of all the countries in the world listed by the WHO. And given that its GDP is some 300 times the size of the UKs and 2,000 times the size of Cuba's we can see it produces perhaps the world's worst results in terms of healthcare for that expenditure grossly and proportionally.

Britain's NHS

NHS Providers, a trade association that represents acute, ambulance, community and mental health services, warned the number of people waiting more than four hours in A&E

would increase by 40% in 2018 to 1.8 million, and the number waiting more than 18 weeks for routine operations would rise 150% to about 100,000. Dr Adrian Harrop, an A&E doctor in North Yorkshire said in January:

“The patients who are at the front of the queue waiting to be seen next have been waiting 10 hours to see a doctor because there's no space to see them in. This year, with the current degree of winter pressure that we are feeling, this is the worst condition that I have ever seen the NHS in. A&E is not a destination in itself, it is like a sorting office. When I come onto the unit and I see the management disaster that the senior nurses in the department are responsible for sorting out, I feel desperately sorry for them because there is nothing they can do to help that situation. They are dealing with patients that have been there for an entire day in A&E. These are patients who are meant to be in and out of the department within the space of four hours... and we feel like we are failing... and we can't do anything to stop the ship from sinking. Everyone is working as hard as they possibly can, bailing water out of the Titanic with a bucket, but ultimately everyone can see the ship is sinking.”

A total of 16,900 people were forced to wait for more than 30 minutes to be seen by staff at emergency departments over the 2017 Christmas week, up from 11,900 the previous week, including 4,700 delayed for more than an hour.

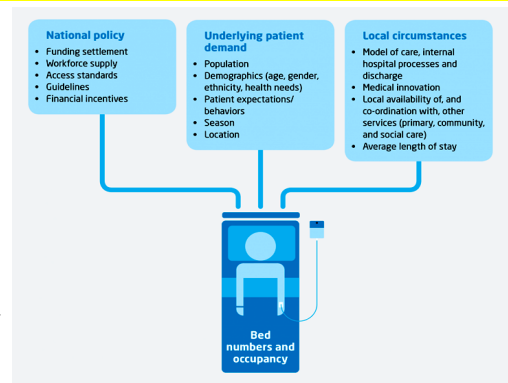
It warned the number of people waiting more than four hours in A&E would increase by 40% next year to 1.8 million, and the number waiting more than 18 weeks for routine operations would rise 150% to about 100,000.

The NHS is already under strain in the wake of the Brexit vote. The number of EU nationals registering as nurses in England has dropped by 92% since the referendum in June, and a record number are quitting the NHS.

Only 96 nurses joined the NHS from other European nations in December 2016 – a drop from 1,304 in July, the month after the referendum.

The service is also facing a long-term failure to hire enough people. Applications for nursing courses plummeted by almost a quarter in a year after the government axed bursaries for trainees in 2016. Numbers fell by 9,990 to 33,810 in 12 months, according to figures released in February by the university admissions service Ucas. Meanwhile, one in three nurses is due to retire in the next 10 years and there are 24,000 nurse jobs unfilled, Royal College of Nursing figures show.

The number of NHS hospital beds in England has more than halved over the last 30 years, from around 299,000 to 142,000. The UK has fewer doctors and nurses than many other comparable countries both in Europe and worldwide. According to the OECD, Britain comes 24th in a league table of 34-member countries in terms of the number of doctors they have relative to their populations.



A report by The Kings Fund, a think tank in England which examines the health system and is linked to GlaxoSmithKline, said this is partly because more patients with mental illness and learning disabilities are cared for in the community and patients generally need to spend less time in hospital than in the past.

The USA

Major problems with the NHS are the increasing inroads private healthcare providers are making into the NHS and the Private Finance Initiative, which was a device to suck money out of the NHS and into the profit balances of multinationals. The collapse of Carillon highlights the extent this has advanced, in both hospital building and maintenance and in service providing. The frequently expressed fear is that the NHS is morphing into a US-style healthcare system.

The healthcare system in the USA is the most expensive and inefficient in the world. It is obscenely dedicated to enriching transnational health care providers, drugs manufacturers and equipment providers. And the very wealthy doctors and consultants who seem to have no social conscience at all. This is not surprising because the neoliberal basis of the system looks at a hospital patient as a source of profit, not a human needing assistance in a very difficult time in their lives.

The fear is well based. Take the following table which sets out what happens to you if you fall seriously ill in the USA:

Deductible and coinsurance

Part A – For each benefit period, a beneficiary pays an annually adjusted:

A Part A deductible of \$1,288 in 2016 and \$1,316 in 2017 for a hospital stay of 1–60 days.

A \$322 per day co-pay in 2016 and \$329 co-pay in 2017 for days 61–90 of a hospital stay.

A \$644 per day co-pay in 2016 and \$658 co-pay in 2017 for days 91–150 of a hospital stay., as part of their limited Lifetime Reserve Days.

All costs for each day beyond 150 days.

Coinsurance for a Skilled Nursing Facility is \$161 per day in 2016 and \$164.50 in 2017 for days 21 through 100 for each benefit period (no co-pay for the first 20 days).

A blood deductible of the first 3 pints of blood needed in a calendar year, unless re-

placed. There is a 3-pint blood deductible for both Part A and Part B, and these separate deductibles do not overlap. [1]

Note the obscenity here that your Medicare stops after 150 days and only three pints of blood PER YEAR. But if you survive this illness you have the very attractive option of selling your own blood back to the people who gave it to you to pay off your medical bills. In the USA 643,000 are declared bankrupt over medical bills every year; this never happens in any other first world country, but is quite common in Africa and south-east Asia and Latin America, where it only happens to middle class people. The poor get no medical facilities in the first place, due to the global domination of US and European parasitical finance capital.

Cuba

According to the UN's World Health Organization, Cuba's health care system is an example for all countries of the world.

The Cuban health system is recognized worldwide for its excellence and its efficiency. Despite extremely limited resources and the dramatic impact caused by the economic sanctions imposed by the United States for more than half a century, Cuba has managed to guarantee access to care for all segments of the population and obtain results similar to those of the most developed nations.

Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), said in July of 2014 "Cuba is the only country that has a health care system closely linked to research and development. This is the way to go, because human health can only improve through innovation," She also praised "the efforts of the country's leadership for having made health an essential pillar of development"

Cuba's health care system is based on preventive medicine and the results achieved are outstanding. According to Margaret Chan, the world should follow the example of the island in this arena and replace the curative model, inefficient and more expensive, with a prevention-based system. "We sincerely hope that all of the world's inhabitants will have access to quality medical services, as they do in Cuba," she said.

Cuba has sent its doctors abroad and has trained third world doctors in Cuba to such an extent that even the adverse stories that are told about it are not believed. It is true that some Cuban doctors are corrupt and that its medical infrastructure is crumbling. But corruption is very much an exception and the infrastructure is a victim of US sanctions. Curiously the sanctions seemed to act as a spur to Castro, particularly after the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Since then the system has greatly improved and the global medical outreach is astounding.

Operation Miracle, a major vision restoration program launched in 2004 by Fidel Castro and Hugo Chávez. It is a free service treated cataracts and other eye diseases, re-

storing the sight of 3.5 million people in ten years. Currently, nearly 30,000 Cuban medical staff are working in over 60 countries around the world. Its vaccination campaign against malaria operated in 15 West African countries. Since its inception, 11,000 young people from over 120 nations follow a career in medicine at the Cuban institution. According to Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the UN, ELAM is "the world's most advanced medical school." He also praised the Cuban doctors working around the world, including those in Haiti: "They are always the first to arrive and the last to leave. They remain in place after the crises. Cuba can be proud of its health care system, a model for many countries."

In praising Cuba, the World Health Organization stresses that it is possible for Third-world countries with limited resources to implement an efficient health care system and provide all segments of the population with social protection worthy of the name. This is possible if the political will exists to put human beings at the centre of the project.

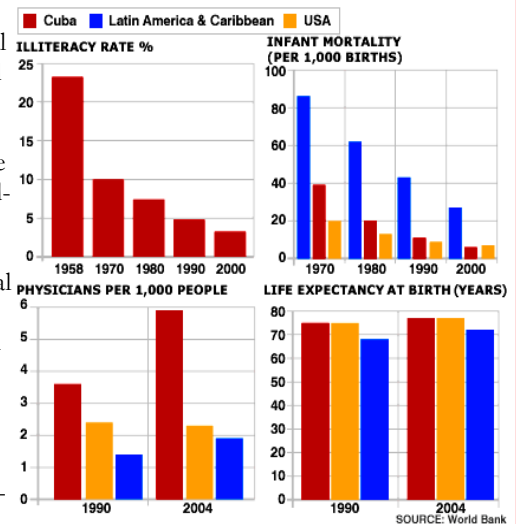
The success of Cuba's healthcare system is down to its national plan and its operation on the basis of need and not profit. No capitalist system could operate like this. Its doctors and nurses are poorly paid by first world standards but the psychological difference dedication to human deed could not be greater than that which operated in its northern neighbour, whose economy is 2,000 times its size.

The tiers of the system illustrate its integration: 1) the community containing individuals and families, 2) family doctor-and-nurse teams, 3) basic work teams, 4) community polyclinics, 5) hospitals, and 6) medical institutes.

While preventive medical care, diagnostic tests and medication for hospitalized patients are free, some aspects of healthcare are paid for by the patient. Items which are paid by patients who can afford it are: drugs prescribed on an outpatient basis, hearing, dental, and orthopaedic processes, wheelchairs and crutches. When a patient can obtain these items at state stores, prices tend to be low as these items are subsidized by the state. For patients on a low-income, these items are free of charge. [3]

Conclusion

All the reports and inquiries into the running of the NHS will not come up with a version of Cuba's healthcare system, capitalism cannot eliminate the profit motive from any aspect of life, although it can greatly suppress it temporarily in the face of the struggles of the working class. And here we would mention that the US working class is also a major factor in this equation; the struggle for a single payer healthcare system in the USA had had many false starts and Governor vetoes in states like California, Maryland and Massachusetts but the success of the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) and the great difficulty Trump is having reversing it has begun to



open up the possibility of a single payer nation wide centralised healthcare system. Despite the virulent opposition of many Republicans and Democrats. The *Harvard Business Review* reported in July 2017:

"By contrast, a single-payer model stands to be much more durable and provides a chance to build a health care system around the well-being of patients rather than the profits of providers and insurers. Thirty-three percent of the American public now support a single-payer system — a 5% increase since January." [3]

It seems that the sight of very wealthy Republican politicians feathering their own nests whilst attempting to cut healthcare to some 20 million US working class poor has outraged even Trump supporters. As *The Nation* reported in 1 August:

"Recent polls and reporting by *The New York Times* indicate that a lot of voters—including Trump voters—who opposed Obama's Affordable Care Act have changed their minds. They now not only like Obamacare but want to keep it and improve upon it. As one man in Pennsylvania told the *Times*, "I can't even remember why I opposed it." What's more, a Pew survey reports that fully 60 percent of Americans now say that health care for all is the responsibility of the government." [4]

Fears for the future of the NHS and Cuba itself may yet prove unfounded if the movement in the USA begins to develop on this vital question and the US working class begins to take its rightful place as the leaders of the world revolution against not only US imperialism but all of capitalism in the world.

Notes

- [1] Medicare 2018 costs at a glance, <https://www.medicare.gov/your-medicare-costs/costs-at-a-glance/costs-at-a-glance.html>
- [2] Wikipedia, Healthcare in Cuba, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Healthcare_in_Cuba#cite_note-37
- [3] Sandro Galea, JULY 18, 2017
- [4] The Harvard Business Review, <https://hbr.org/2017/07/is-the-u-s-ready-for-a-single-payer-health-care-system>
- [4] Ann Jones, The Nation, AUGUST 1, 2017, Is State-Level Single Payer Within Reach? Scandinavian-style health care is part of at least one candidate's platform for 2018, <https://www.thenation.com/article/is-state-level-single-payer-within-reach/> ▲

Recalling the Greensboro Massacre

By JOHN LESLIE, in Philadelphia

John is a supporter of the Philly Socialists. Reprinted with his permission from US Socialist Action, September 16, 2017

On Nov. 3, 1979, members of the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party (ANP) attacked an anti-Klan march in Greensboro, N.C., that was organized by the Communist Workers Party (CWP). Five members of the CWP were murdered and 10 others were wounded with the collusion of federal and local law enforcement.

Workers' Viewpoint Organization (WVO), which changed its name to the Communist Workers Party just days before the massacre, had been organizing in the North Carolina textile industry. Members had taken jobs in textile mills and worked to build multiracial union struggles. Their work in the mills had earned them the hostility of the textile bosses, local cops, and union bureaucrats.

In this period, the KKK was reasserting itself after being dormant for years. The CWP took part in a confrontation with the Klan in June of 1979 at China Grove, N.C., where the KKK was holding a meeting. Protesters at China Grove took up the chant of "Death to the Klan!"

The CWP prioritized anti-Klan organizing, seeing opposition to the KKK as an obligation for communists. Party activists and their allies planned an anti-Klan conference that was to be preceded by a march through Greensboro's low-income housing projects. The CWP leaflets, emblazoned with the slogan "Death to the Klan," exhorted the Klan and Nazis to come to Greensboro, stating, "you are nothing but a bunch of racist cowards. ... We challenge you to attend our November 3rd rally." (1)

March permits issued by the police stipulated that demonstrators not carry any guns, despite the fact that open carry was legal in North Carolina. Violation would result in revocation of the march permit.

Police and federal informant Edward Dawson, a convicted felon and long-time Klansman, was urged by his Greensboro police handler to attend

meetings where the Klan response to the march was taking place. Dawson spoke at a KKK meeting, where he urged armed action against communists.

Additionally, the American Nazi Party in North Carolina had been infiltrated by an Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) agent, Bernard Butkovich, who posed as an over-the-road trucker. Butkovich also encouraged the Nazis to go to Greensboro armed. However, he reported no discussion of an armed attack to his superiors.

In the weeks before the march, a United Racist Front was declared in a press conference by neo-Nazi leader Harold Covington and KKK Grand Dragon Virgil Griffin. At one gathering, Covington declared, "Piece by piece, bit by bit, we white people are going to take back this country." (2)

On Nov. 3, as marchers started to gather outside of Greensboro's Morningside Projects, a column of Klan and Nazi supporters in nine cars started to approach the parade route. Just before the fascists arrived, police officers were ordered by the dispatcher to clear the area, leaving the area unprotected. At approximately 11 a.m., the tactical unit responsible for protecting the rally was ordered to go to lunch. A Greensboro police detective had provided Dawson with a copy of the permit that detailed the parade route. Dawson rode in the lead car of the caravan, which was followed by detectives in an unmarked car.

CWP member Paul Bermanzohn recalled later, "Where are the cops?" Sandi asked me. ... We had a tense but consistent relationship with the police. They usually gathered in a swarm around us at least an hour before a march." (3)



Survivors, family, and community members gathered on May 24, 2015, for the dedication of a marker near the site of the 1979 Greensboro massacre. Photo by Lynn Hey/ News & Record

As the KKK arrived on the scene, people started yelling. Dawson leaned out of his truck window and shouted at Bermanzohn, "You asked for the Klan, you got it, you commie son of a bitch!" (4)

After a brief scuffle between marchers and fascists, the Klan and Nazis opened fire with rifles and shotguns, killing CWP members Cesar Cauce, Bill Sampson, Jim Waller, and Sandi Smith. Ten people were wounded. CWP member Mike Nathan died of his wounds in the hospital. Only a couple of CWP supporters were armed with handguns and a shotgun. The shootings were caught on film by the four different news crews that were on the scene to cover the demonstration.

Two subsequent trials revealed the extent of police and federal collusion with the fascists. In particular the role of Dawson, who was both a federal and local police informant, shows the role of police. At the urging of the police, Dawson had disrupted meetings of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), a Maoist grouping that had an intense rivalry with the CWP. There had been clashes between CWP and RCP supporters. The FBI, ATF, and local cops were intent on disrupting leftist political activity in North Carolina.

In the first criminal trial, six fascists were prosecuted by the state, five of them charged with murder. An all-white jury acquitted all of the fascists. In a federal civil rights trial, all nine defendants were acquitted by an all-white jury despite eyewitness testimony

and film of the massacre captured by news crews. Neither Dawson nor Butkovich were called to testify in the first criminal trial.

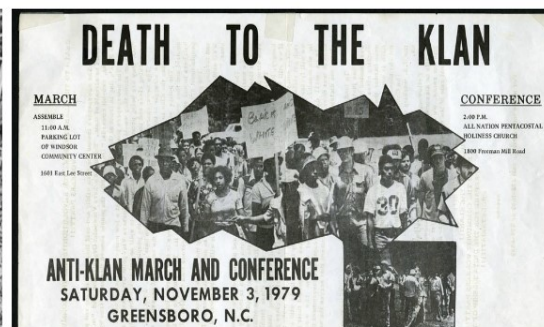
In court, the fascists claimed self-defense and played on the anti-communist prejudices of jurors. The ACLU refused to defend the CWP, citing the violence and arrests. Six CWP members and supporters were held on felony riot charges. For this reason, CWP members were uncooperative with the prosecution in the trials of the KKK and Nazis. They strongly be-

lieved that cooperation would help convict their comrades. The attitude of the prosecutor didn't help when he stated that most people thought that the communists got what they deserved. (5)

The Carter administration's Justice Department found no wrongdoing by police in the incident, but questions remain about why police were withdrawn from the neighborhood right before the shootings and why the tactical squad was sent to lunch at 11 a.m. Politicians closed ranks in defense of the behavior of the police.

Marty Arthur (Nathan) said later: "Believe it or not, the Klan and Nazi killers walked away free from all three trials [two criminal, one civil]. They were never punished, never spent one day in prison. How can the justice system acquit murderers who four TV videotapes show firing into a crowd and killing five people?" (6) The civil trial, which concluded in 1985, found the Greensboro police department, as well as the Klan and Nazis, liable for wrongful deaths; the CWP protesters were awarded \$400,000.

Progressive activists in the region and nationally wanted to build a mass political response to the killings. A mass march was called for Feb. 2, 1980, by an ad hoc coalition calling itself the February 2nd Mobilization Committee. The CWP was reluctant to work with other leftists or broader forces in the aftermath of the murders. CWP leader Jerry Tung had predicted a five-year period of struggle leading to revolution. This perspective of revolution on the immediate



horizon required sacrifice and confrontation with the agents of the state and the far right.

Strategy and tactics in the fight against fascism and the far right must be considered carefully. Activists should never underestimate the possibility of cooperation between rightists and the cops. The courts and capitalist politicians cannot be relied on to protect us. Revolutionaries doing anti-fascist work should avoid isolation from broader social forces by building united front counter-mobilizations.

The use of defensive slogans, rather than offensive slogans, is called for. James P. Cannon, a founder and early leader of the Socialist Workers Party, argued, "... defensive formulations are an indispensable medium for teaching the masses, who will not be convinced by theory but only by their own experience and propaganda related thereto.

This experience of the masses proceeds in the main along the line of defensive actions. That is why defensive formulations are most easily comprehensible and represent the best approach of the revolutionary Marxists to the masses. Finally, it is a tactical and legal consideration of no small importance in a bourgeois-democratic country that defensive formulas partially disarm the class enemy; or in any case, make their attacks more difficult and costly. Why should such advantages be thrown away?" (7)

After Greensboro, the state and media tried to paint the CWP as the aggressor, citing their rhetoric. The "violence on

both sides" argument we have seen after the Charlottesville fascist mobilization was used decades ago against the CWP.

Immediately after the murder of Heather Heyer last month, the whole establishment, from Mitt Romney to Nancy Pelosi, became "anti-fascists." Now, despite the evidence that rightists came to Charlottesville with violent intentions, the media and liberals seem intent to blame violence on anti-fascists or "antifa."

It's noteworthy that the cops in Charlottesville seemed oblivious to acts of violence that were committed by fascists. One example took place when a person, now identified as a KKK member, pulled a handgun and discharged it in the direction of counter-protesters right in front of a group of cops. The current witch hunt against "antifa" is designed to divert attention from the racist far right and to place an equal sign between the left and right.

Notes

1. Love and Revolution: a political memoir, Signe Waller, p 293
2. Through Survivors' Eyes- From the Sixties to the Greensboro Massacre, by Sally Avery Bermanzohn, p. 194
3. Through Survivors' Eyes- From the Sixties to the Greensboro Massacre, by Sally Avery Bermanzohn, p. 213
4. Through Survivors' Eyes- From the Sixties to the Greensboro Massacre, by Sally Avery Bermanzohn, p. 214
5. Codename GREENKIL, Elizabeth Wheaton, p 194
6. Through Survivors' Eyes- From the Sixties to the Greensboro Massacre, by Sally Avery Bermanzohn, p. 265
7. Socialism on Trial, by James P. Cannon ▲

Trump deals new blow to TPS immigrants

By Gloria La Riva Jan 09, 2018 Party for Socialism and Liberation

Liberation

Continuing its attack on immigrants, the Trump administration on Jan. 8 cancelled the Temporary Protected Status for 200,000 Salvadorans who were allowed to stay in the United States since 2001, when two earthquakes shattered El Salvador that year.

The Salvadoran TPS designation was maintained until now by continued renewals during the Bush and Obama administrations, due to conditions of gang violence and poverty in El Salvador. It was ended by Trump's Department of Homeland Security Jan. 8. Trump revoked Haiti's and Honduras' TPS status in November, setting the stage for deeper crisis in those communities.

The Temporary Protected Status is a federal program that began in 1990, after intense mobilization by Central Americans and their supporters.

For any country granted a TPS designation due to armed conflict, natural disaster or other extraordinary crisis, their nationals can remain in the United States for a period of time, but only if they were already in the United States at the time of the designation. That status can be extended. More than half of the Salvadorans under TPS were already living in the U.S., many who escaped the terror of a U.S.-backed dictatorship during the 1980s civil war.

TPS has enabled immigrants to build their lives in the United States and raise families, especially with the economic crisis and pervasive gang violence back home.

Whether they are Central American, Haitian, Syrian, Mexican or Yemeni, millions of immigrants are forced to flee the economic and military destruction of their countries by U.S. imperialism.

Now the future for TPS Salvadorans and their children — who are mostly U.S. citizens — could be drastically affected.

Thousands of Salvadorans being targeted in most recent attack

There are 192,700 U.S.-born children of the Salvadoran TPS recipients, according to research by the Center for Migration Studies. A total of 273,000

children of Salvadoran, Haitian and Honduran TPS recipients were born in the U.S.

On Nov. 6, 2017, the Department of Homeland Security terminated TPS for Nicaraguans, ordering a deportation date of Jan. 5, 2019.

On November 19, DHS terminated TPS status for 59,000 Haitians. They face a deportation deadline of July 22, 2019.

Haitians had been granted TPS after the 2010 catastrophic earthquake, which killed at least 300,000 Haitians. Haiti's crisis has worsened in its aftermath, with a cholera epidemic and more than 80 percent of the people living in poverty, 55 percent in deep poverty.

Remittances from immigrants to TPS-designated countries are a major source of revenue and stability. Haiti alone depends on remittances that are 25 percent of its Gross Domestic Product.

TPS has been extended for Hondurans to July 5, 2018, but their status is also threatened, given the Trump administration's now-predictable anti-immigrant actions.

Over 94 percent of all TPS members come from just three countries, El Salvador, Haiti and Honduras, 302,000 people. The other seven countries whose citizens have TPS status in the U.S. — some 18,000 people — are Nepal, Nicaragua, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Trump's decision means, effective immediately, Salvadorans who were on TPS lose their employment rights, and must leave the country by September 9, 2019.

Causing economic hardship

Blocking TPS members from work will create economic hardship. Deportation will force a cruel separation of their families. Their children will have to live alone if they remain in the U.S., or move with their parents to a country they never knew.

A much larger crisis of families being split up is on the near horizon, according to a 2017 study by CMS director Donald Kerwin and demographer Robert Warren.

The study shows that 3.3 million U.S. households are of mixed status, that is, one or more family members have residency or citizenship status — including 5.7 million children under 18. Others in the household are undocumented and face possible deportation.

The TPS attacks follow another blow: Trump announced the end of the program for 800,000 youth known as "Dreamers," effective next March. Brought to the U.S. by their parents as minors, they qualified to stay in the U.S., to work and study, under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, implemented by President Obama in 2012. Now DACA youth are set to lose their jobs, driver's licenses, financial aid for college and be deported. Their parents face deportation, too.



Interview with Salvadoran-American community activist

Ramón Cardona is director of Centro Latino Cuzcatlán in the Bay Area and a longtime Salvadoran-American community activist. He said today, “The terrible notice of cancelling TPS is a nightmare that the Salvadoran community will suffer until September 2019. They are filled with anguish that they could be deported. It is the same for Haitians, for Hondurans and Nicaraguans, who barely know their country of origin anymore and whose children have no history there.

“DHS says El Salvador has overcome the conditions that created the TPS status. That is a lie. There is no way for those countries to receive them in an integral way, with such high unemployment and generalized crime.”

“This is a true humanitarian crisis,” continued Cardona. “We have received calls and visits from TPS recipients all day, people crying, who tell us ‘I don’t know what I will do, maybe go to Canada.’ The vast majority is in shock.” He estimates that only about 15 percent of the TPS Salvadorans have possible options to file for some legal status.

Even Salvadoran President Salvador Sánchez Cerén called Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen last Friday, to urge her to postpone her decision until a Congressional solution could be found. She refused.

Cardona emphasized major steps in the coming fight.

“We must continue the struggle to create a favourable public opinion. We know that with this anti-immigrant phobia motivated by Trump, who gives carte blanche to white supremacists, it is not easy. But we have no other option.”

Cardona explained that a National TPS Alliance, “Salvemos al TPS,” has joined together affected communities and organizations in more than 32 cities to mobilize and fight for legislation that will allow permanent residency for TPS people.

Community organizing

The first Alliance conference was June last year. The second in October drew close to 400 people, with two-thirds being TPS recipients.

The next assembly will take place in Washington DC, February 4-6. They plan to fill the halls of Congress to argue their case for legislation to protect



TPS and raise visibility for the cause.

“We have done it before, during the 1980s when we fought in Congress and in 1990 TPS came into being,” says Cardona. “We sued the INS because it discriminated against the ABC settlement (American Baptist Church). Then, when Clinton signed the 1996 arch-reactionary, anti-immigrant law (IIRIRA), we succeeded with CARA, the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act.

He has no illusions about the ominous situation ahead. “When DHA said Haitians’ TPS should expire, claiming they were no longer in danger, that was our alarm. Haiti is in worse condition economically and socially than any other group, and yet they have been denied.”

A severe restriction in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996, pushed and signed by President Bill Clinton, provides that anyone who entered the U.S. “without inspection” and has lived here more than a year, once deported, is barred from applying for re-entry for 10 years. Before Clinton’s law, if that person became married to a U.S. citizen, he or she was allowed to remain in the U.S. while applying to legalize due to their marriage status. Or they could be sponsored by a family member who became eligible to do so. After IIRIRA, now that person must leave the U.S. for 10 years, and apply from abroad, with no guarantee of being granted permission to return.

“Without inspection” refers to someone who entered without permission, versus the other scenario, entering with a visa. But someone who overstays an entry visa, usually a tourist, can remain

in the U.S. while processing for legalization, if they meet other criteria.

The IIRIRA law has contributed to widespread racist discrimination against poorer immigrants from oppressed countries, especially Latino immigrants whose only usual option is to enter by crossing the Mexican-U.S. border.

“Brown-skinned immigrants, Mexican, Central American, are blatantly discriminated against. In 2017 for instance, the immigrants who overstayed their tourist visas the most are Canadians, 142,000. Only 74,000 Mexicans overstayed visas. Over 600,000 people, Europeans, Canadians, overstayed, but you don’t see them targeted,” said Cardona, exasperated. “This is so racist.”

Protests will continue to take place where TPS recipients are in higher concentration, including Los Angeles, Houston and Washington DC. A mass meeting of TPS recipients is expected Saturday at the Salvadoran consulate in San Francisco.

In a protest at the S.F. Federal Building last Friday, immigrants from several TPS communities spoke of the real crisis they now face. But they also promised to fight with determination and unity for their right to stay home in the United States.

Cardona says, “We will continue the popular struggle so everyone understands immigrants have contributed so much, economically, socially and in many practical ways. From DACA to TPS and all immigrants, these are intolerable attacks on vibrant, hard-working people.”

The racist, anti-immigrant offensive by Trump’s government must be strongly opposed by all. There are no borders in the workers’ struggle! ▲

Iran: Groundhog Day

The Persian Spring is over (at least its first stage)

By Avantgarde, Athens

Our comrades of the Communist Revolutionary Action, Greece set out the Marxist position on the recent 'colour revolution' in Iran. This article was originally published in Greek on January 7, 2018 by P. Pap for avantgarde. Translated by PK

At the time these lines are being written, tens of thousands of people are on the streets of Iran – expressing their resolve to defend their country against the schemes of the US and their client states. The Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Guards has announced that the recent plot against Iran has been defeated. (By the word "plot", he did not refer to the demonstrations; he referred to those who hid behind the demonstrators in order to advance their reactionary agenda.)

Before that, Iran saw something that was described by many Western media as 'a wave of massive anti-government demonstrations' or even 'an insurrection against the regime'. A closer look reveals a somewhat different reality. Anthony Cordesman, top strategic analyst of the important American CSIS think tank, aptly notes that 'many see what they want to see in latest round of unrest, particularly those who want the regime to fall'.

The *NY Times* report with great sadness about Tehran being "notably quiet" and describe the disappointment of the (few dozens of) university students whose demonstration did not attract more people. They describe the gatherings as 'relatively few ... drawing only a few hundred at a time'. The Wilson Center admits with sorrow that 'despite the protests, little will change in Iran'. *Geopolitical Futures* writes that 'at this point, considering their small size and that Iran's economy has been far worse than this in recent years, we don't yet think that the Islamic Republic is in danger of falling'.

Of course, a number of photos supposedly depicting massive anti-government demonstrations circulated – photos from different places and different times. Photos from a pro-government demonstration, the uprising in Bahrain, even scenes from a film were misrepresented as photographs of anti-government demonstrations in Iran. Well, at least they did not use photos from the Tahrir Square again...

Conclusion 1: no massive anti-government or anti-regime demonstrations took place in Iran. The only ones who "saw" such demonstrations were the MEK, an anti-regime organization of the Iranian diaspora



Pro Government rallies of tens of thousands were far bigger than the pro-US demonstration, often only hundreds strong, which got so much publicity in the western media.

[1] and a pet of secret services of the Empire, deeply embedded in their plans; the son of the Shah; and an overly excited, dreamer part of the Left that has celebrated one "triumph" after another since the '90s.

Conclusion 2: No serious person expected this movement to overthrow any regime. Apart from the aforementioned Left.

Conclusion 3: This kind of Left seems hell-bent on proving that it is more Catholic than the Pope. We wonder why that is.

Déjà vu

But if one were to take the general feeling here in the West at face value, one would have to reach a conclusion that looks like the following:

The people rise up and organize mass peaceful rallies against the regime. (The, by far, more massive rallies that are not against the government are buried.) Humanitarian concerns arise all around the Western civilized world, as dictators have not gone through the Enlightenment and, therefore, are prone to start massacring their own people. Violence breaks out, shots are fired, policemen and civilians drop dead. With a game of words, the victims are all blamed on the regime.

A Western audience –which might be incapable of finding the country on a world map – arms itself with its moral superiority and embarks on yet another civilizing mission in order to bring Democracy and Human Rights to it.

What if the last elections had a 70% turnout (much higher than most Western countries), with 41 million people casting their ballots? These people mean nothing. They do not represent The People. Those who mean something are the few dozen who tore up the poster of the dictator. These are The People, who demand freedom, democracy, and other nice words.

The usual company of Western leftists – with how many successes against their own

bourgeois class, really? – discovers internationalism and takes up the task of overthrowing the bourgeois class of another country, which happens to be an enemy of its own country. (Little do they worry that their internationalism is aligned with the internationalism of Trump, Haley (US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley) and Netanyahu – yet again.)

This play has been repeated countless times and the pattern is sadly predictable. One more colour revolution has begun, presaging a new imperialist intervention.

US bases

Let us continue with the memoirs of four-star general Wesley Clark. The general says that ten days after 11 September, the Pentagon was already making plans for the invasion of Iraq and invokes a document containing the notorious "seven countries in five years" plan, with Iran being the final target. He said more or less the same at Democracy Now in 2007. Let us also note that Iran was included in Bush's "Axis of Evil" in 2002 (along with Iraq and the DPRK).

In 2009, the Brookings Institute published a very interesting and thorough pamphlet titled 'Which Path to Persia? Options for a New US Strategy Towards Iran'. Note that Chapter 6 of this study is titled 'The Velvet Revolution: Supporting a Popular Uprising', and Chapter 7 is titled 'Inspiring an Insurgency: Supporting Iranian Minority And Opposition Groups'.

In October 2017, the CATO Institute also published an interesting pamphlet on the subject, examining similar alternatives. The Trump administration have been doing everything in their power to forge an anti-Iranian axis. In February, Trump labelled Iran as 'the biggest sponsor of terrorism in the world'. Then came his trip to the Middle East in May, after which Tehran was struck by a terrorist attack.

On June 2nd, 2017, the *New York Times* wrote about the 'Dark Prince' or 'Ayatollah

Mike', the nicknames by which Michael D'Andrea, the new head of the CIA covert operations against Iran, is known. His many credentials include the assassination of Imad Mughniyeh (Hezbollah's No. 2 man) in 2008 in Damascus and thousands of extrajudicial drone killings in Pakistan. The newspaper noted: 'Mr. D'Andrea's new role is one of a number of moves inside the spy agency that signal a more muscular approach to covert operations ... 'He can run a very aggressive program, but very smartly,' said Robert Eatinger, a former CIA lawyer who was deeply involved in the agency's drone program."

On the same day, the *Wall Street Journal* published a report about the 'new mission centre created by the CIA to turn up the heat on Iran', commenting that this action reflects the government's decision to turn the country into a higher priority target for American spies.

Let us also mention that the chief of the CIA is Mike Pompeo, an anti-Iranian hawk and one of the toughest opponents of the Obama approach towards the issue.

In addition, a meeting between US and Israeli officials took place in December 2017 to discuss "a strategy to counter Iran's aggression in the Middle East". It turned out that 'the U.S. and Israel see eye to eye the different developments in the region and especially those that are connected to Iran. We reached at understandings regarding the strategy and the policy needed to counter Iran. Our understandings deal with the overall strategy but also with concrete goals, way of action and the means which need to be used to get obtain those goals.' On 1 January 2018, we learned that the United States had given the green light to the Zionist state to assassinate the head of the Revolutionary Guards.

The above proves beyond any doubt that Iran is at the crosshairs of imperialism, and that the American foreign policy has recently become even tougher towards it. We do not know whether there are any crooks who wish to question this fact, but we seem to remember some who characterized the – equally well-known and documented – imperialist aggression towards Syria as 'imaginary', even claiming that the United States was in... some kind of alliance with Assad against the... revolution.

Some politics

Revolutions do not happen without political leaderships or without planning. The fact that a person is affected by a problem does not necessarily mean that this person also knows the solution to the problem – a Greek unemployed man may think

that it is immigrants who are to blame for his unemployment. When one sees people taking the streets, one ought to first ask under which agenda they are mobilizing; who leads; who finances; which ideology prevails. The above is so simple that it should be self-evident. Alas, this is hardly the case.

So what is going on in Iran? Who are the people demonstrating? What is this movement that we see in the streets, with which Trump, the MEK, the playground Left and various useful idiots rush to declare their solidarity?

In fact, there is no single movement. There are at least three or four. The first one consists of Principlist (dedicated to the principles of the 1979 Revolution), Islamists who are suspicious of the liberal reforms and the pro-Western (by the Iranian standards) attitude of President Hassan Rouhani. It seems that it was they who led the movement we saw on the streets in the first few days. This movement expressed economic demands based on actual problems and opposition to an existing liberal economic policy of the government, most likely in the context of an internal struggle between the two main political camps in the country (a struggle that is not limited to the economic level, but extends to foreign policy, the role of religion etc).

The *Kayhan*, a Principlist newspaper close to the Intelligence Ministry, acknowledged that people have grounds for economic complaints and that they are right to be on the street. Even the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei, was critical of the government's economic policy. One day before the demonstrations began, he said that the country was facing high prices, inflation and recession, and called on the authorities to address the problems. He did not speak against the protests as long as they were peaceful; he intervened only several days after the outbreak of violence, on 2 January (after five days of protests), saying that 'enemies have been using various tools to deal blows to the Iranian nation and the Islamic establishment in the course of the latest developments in the country'.

The second movement, the Reformists, is the evolution of the Green Movement of 2009, which contributed to the ascension of Rouhani to President. The reformist movement pushes for liberal reform, and recently it contributed to the lifting of the obligation of women to wear the hijab. This movement did not take the streets this time, distancing itself from the demonstrations. Rouhani himself, however, acknowledged that there were real economic problems and reasons for people to demonstrate, and described the initial demonstrations (before the outbreak of violence) as 'an opportunity, not a threat'.

In order to get an sense of the differences in terms of economic policy between the Principlists and the Reformists, one can read the following passage by Cordesman: 'The World Bank and IMF have both found that Ahmadinejad left office having created a nightmare of poorly managed governance and development, debt, food and fuel subsidies, expansion of the state sector, and barriers to private industry and development—effectively becoming one of the most incompetent single leaders in Iran's history.' Rouhani's reforms are moving in the opposite direction.

These two movements are pushing for the policies they see fit within the context of the Iranian state – they are not interested in overthrowing the Islamic Republic. Regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees with their policies, the people have every right to go out on the street and press for what they think is better. The Iranian government and the Iranian Constitution recognize that right, after all.

There is also a third movement, which, unlike the first two, is interested in just that: overthrowing the Iranian regime with the help of imperialism and on behalf of imperialism. The leaders of this movement are based mostly outside of Iran, and have become pets of the secret services of various countries of the Empire, embedded fully into their plans. It maintains a small network of supporters within Iran, but the bulk of it is abroad.

The basic organization of this movement is the MEK, the 'Mujahideen of the People', which hides behind the front of the 'National Resistance Council of Iran', based in France. In 2012, Haaretz wrote that the organization had murdered Iranian nuclear scientists on behalf of the Zionist state with the US government being aware of that. The MEK can be found in every serious document of imperialism, described as a potential proxy army on the ground during an attack against Iran and as a potential Quisling regime



Supporters of the MEK rally for the USA and reaction



US bases surround Iran, it has none because of the 1979 revolution.

for the day after.

A brief scroll down in the website of the MEK will reveal a number of articles with titles such as “United States Stands with People of Iran”, “Iranian protesters ‘ready to die’ for regime change, thank Trump but want more support”, “Trump is right about Iran” etc. And there is also the son of the Shah, an active political figure of the diaspora (based in – what a surprise! – Washington) with his followers. We support the merciless repression of these agents of imperialism and we smile with the news about the busting of their cells.

And then there are the various minorities of Iran. Protests in the Kurdish areas of Iran are a different movement that is not linked to the above. For example, when the Freedom Party of Kurdistan calls on the international community (i.e. NATO) to help it against the regime, everyone can understand that it does not mobilize the people under an agenda that is related to economic problems.

There have been several reports that reactionary slogans have been raised in the demonstrations. Next to the slogans expressing nostalgia for the dictatorial monarchy of the Shah, calling for ‘Death to the Dictator’ (apparently Khamenei) and ‘Death to Rouhani’, there are videos showing (small) crowds chanting ‘We are of Aryaee [Aryan] race, we don’t worship Arabs’, ‘Death to Hezbollah’, ‘Leave Syria, think of us’, ‘I give my life for Iran, not Gaza and Lebanon’. Who chanted these slogans? And who opened fire against police and demonstrators?

It is extremely unlikely that the first movement, that of the Principlists, has raised such slogans, as it remains committed to the principles of the 1979 Revolution. The second movement, that of the Reformists, would under no circumstances chant ‘Death to Rouhani’ nor call for the overthrow of the regime. The people who raised those slogans probably come from the third

movement (pro-Monarchists and MEK), who found the chance to hide behind the protesters in order to advance their reactionary agenda. In all the related videos, the crowds that chant these slogans are small; but manipulating images in order to fabricate a “reality” to be presented to the outside world is not a difficult task for one with the appropriate means (access to the Western media).

It is telling that, when the authorities asked the protesters to leave the streets after the outbreak of violence, the protesters did so. The people of Iran have drawn lessons from what is happening in the region. They saw what happened in Syria, where the Islamist insurrection took cover under a real movement for political reform that was out in the streets at that moment. Yes, a number of people are unhappy and have legitimate economic grievances, but they did not take the streets in order to overthrow their government or the Iranian regime – and neither to become useful idiots of the MEK, the Zionist state and the US. It was probably the same people who participated in the massive demonstrations that followed, condemning the intervention of the US and the Zionist state in their country.

If anybody from the overly excited Left wishes to specify which one of these movements they support, we look forward to hearing from them. But let them keep in mind that the answer ‘I support the Iranian people who are rising up to overthrow the regime’ has already been taken – by the MEK.

Reactionary vs progressive, or how words can lose all meaning

Several Western Marxists have been competing with each other in painting the Iranian regime in “reactionary” colours. They probably think that reviling the regimes of the countries that find themselves at the crosshairs of “their own” bourgeois class will win them a medal of class independence. What they really manage to do is back their own bourgeoisie, aligning themselves with it at the level of propaganda. The word ‘dictatorial’ (which comes from the virulently anti-communist academia of the Cold War, that divided the planet into liberal democracies and dictatorships) is also widely used.

With what exactly do they compare the Iranian political regime? Do they compare it with the regimes of the surrounding countries? Are they trying to say, for example, that Iran is reactionary in comparison with Saudi Arabia? In comparison with the Zionist state, maybe? Do they compare it with the regimes of their own countries, for which they have never used such characteri-

zations?

We ask: is it reactionary that a nation of 80 million people does no longer live under the imperialist yoke?

Is it reactionary that the surplus produced by the Iranian working class is not stolen away by foreign imperialists?

Is it reactionary that Iran has no US military bases? (It is the only such country in the region.)

If one looks into the currents of Islam in the Middle East, one will basically see three of them. 1. Wahhabism from Saudi Arabia, 2. the Muslim Brotherhood and 3. Shi’a Islam with Iran as a political and religious centre.

The first two currents utilize sectarianism and try to foment religious division and strife, and this is exactly the reason why they have such a long history of collaboration with the imperialists against the secular Arab nationalists and Pan-Arabism. The third current takes a firm stand against sectarianism and religious intolerance and calls for unity of Muslims regardless of doctrine against the Zionist state and America. Is this reactionary?

Is it reactionary that Christmas trees are decorated in Baghdad and that the leaders of the Axis of the Resistance congratulate Christians on Christmas?

Is it reactionary that Iran sends arms and aid to (Sunni) Palestine?

Is it reactionary that Iran has contributed – not only in words, but in deeds, and in deeds that have cost blood, to the crushing of ISIS and the other imperial-“Jihadist” “rebels” in Syria?

Is it reactionary that Iran supports Hezbollah, without which Lebanon would now be a province of the Zionist state?

Is it reactionary that Iran supports the Ansarullah (Houthis) in Yemen?

Is it reactionary that the Axis of Resistance has not allowed imperialism to turn the Middle East into its playground?

OK, but women are forced to wear the hijab, and this is reactionary, a liberal would say. Alas, this is no longer the case, women are free to not wear a hijab if they so choose.

The political regime of Iran is of course an authoritarian bourgeois one, and if we were in Iran, we would be in the opposition. The communist program cannot but fight for a socialist Middle East on the ruins of all the bourgeois regimes. But the question in the Middle East at this point is not socialism or capitalism (if somebody thinks that this is the question, we urge him/her to show us the political forces that are interested in bringing about socialism, so that we can support them too). The question is whether the Middle East will be under the

heel of the Empire or not. The dilemma is either anti-imperialist resistance or recolonization.

The tasks of the Communists

Communists in Iran have a very difficult job. On the one hand, they need to maintain their political independence and program and not capitulate to the clergy or any part of the Iranian bourgeoisie. At the same time, they must recognize that their number one enemy is imperialism that threatens both the country and the forces of resistance in the entire Middle East. We are very reserved when criticizing the Left in the countries that find themselves at the crosshairs of imperialism – to the extent that it has not turned into a mouthpiece for NATO and has not been formed during the days of the unrest (as was the case with a so-called Syrian ‘Left’ that various crooks promoted). We understand how difficult it is to take the correct – internationalist, that is, one corresponding to the interests of the global revolution – position in the face of the various national pressures.

Communists in the West have much simpler tasks. We are fortunate to be confronted with a single enemy, and one which happens to be nearby: “our own”, domestic bourgeois class. We need to defend the right of Iran to self-determination against the imperialist aggression, in which “our” country participates. But imperialist intervention doesn’t begin in a direct military manner.

The Empire has greatly improved its methods. Before the bombs comes a colourful revolution (usually rooted in real problems of the population), followed by the well-known demonization campaigns against the leadership and the people of the “enemy”. In the West, this has been tied historically to the missions and the high duty of “civilizing the barbarians”. International law has been shaped accordingly, including concepts such as the “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P) and the ‘humanitarian intervention’. These are deeply racist ideologies that poison the mind of the domestic proletariat, and we must totally and actively oppose them. We also need to counter the ‘humanitarian’ propaganda campaigns that will undoubtedly follow. We need to undermine the level of confidence that the domestic proletariat feels towards its bourgeoisie by exposing its humanitarian lies as what they really are: pretexts for imperialist robbery and subjugation of other peoples under its heel. We must demand the immediate lifting of the sanctions that are hurting our class brothers and sisters in Iran, and are responsible for their economic problems and grievances.

In Greece we need to struggle against the

foreign policy of the government, which is trying to strategically upgrade the country at the expense of the peoples of the region, allying itself with the Zionist state, selling arms to Saudi Arabia and escalating its provocations against Turkey. Let us mention here that the ships that bombed Syria last April sailed out of a Greek port. Let us also mention that this crime did not draw any significant opposition or protest. Of course! With a large part of the Left parroting the enemy’s propaganda about the ‘dictator who is murdering his own people’, who was there to mobilize?

The various communists in Greece and the West would do well to finally stop hiding behind the statements of the Tudeh. They have different tasks from that party. And if they do have, as they claim, any good suggestions on what the Iranian proletariat ought to do, they should translate them in Farsi and send them to it. The Iranian proletariat cannot read them in Greek, and it is a terrible shame to miss out on such wisdom...

Every progressive development in the Middle East and the planet requires the defeat and dissolution of the Holy Alliance of our days, which has had its headquarters in Washington since 1945. There are forces in the Middle East that do more than enough to this end. The Axis of Resistance (Muqawama), the major force that fights to liberate Palestine and to prevent the Middle East from becoming a NATO-dominated area, is emerging stronger after a tough battle against the forces of the Empire. The imperial-‘Jihadist’ ‘rebels’ have been crushed in Syria. ISIS has been wiped out in Syria and Iraq (until at least the Empire spawns ISIS Vol 2). Imperialism is thwarted by discord and confusion, with its internal contradictions deepening.

It is time for the conscious proletariat of the West to finally stand up to its tasks. The first step in this direction involves drawing conclusions from the bloody stream of regime change operations that we have witnessed over the last 7 years. Unfortunately, the articles written by the Left on Iran so far shows that we probably still have a long way to go; nevertheless, we are optimistic.

PS1. Those who decide to attend rallies in ‘solidarity with the Iranian people’ outside Iranian embassies would do well to take the flag of the pre-revolutionary (and colonized) Iran of the Shah with them. It is the one with the lion. They would also do well to not act surprised when the genuine social subject from Iran next to them unfolds a Zionist or a US flag. Even with the devil and his grandmother, comrades; whatever is necessary to overthrow the dictatorship!



A woman holds up the image of Mujahideen-e-Khalq leader Maryam Rajavi outside 10 Downing Street in London during a demonstration by Britain’s Iranian community. Photo: AP

PS2. Class struggle is not only waged by workers. It is also waged by bosses, states, secret services. The colourful revolutions that imperialism uses are an excellent means of class struggle, from which our class camp can learn much – things like updated art of the insurrection and what it means to act as a subject. Contrary to the predominant view in the Left about how these things are done, the Empire does not restrain itself to simply issuing calls for the Cuban wannabe start-up entrepreneurs to “take the situation into their own hands”.

Note

[1] Mujahideen-e-Khalq (MEK), or People’s Mujahideen, was long listed as a terrorist group in the United States and Europe but delisted in 2012 by Obama. The group, which also goes by the name of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, is based in France under the leadership of Maryam Rajavi. The group is backed by a wealthy elite in Europe and the US. And according to a New York Times article, in recent years it enlisted the public support of prominent Americans including former CIA directors and journalists, including Carl Bernstein of Watergate fame. ▲

Against the right-wing witch-hunt targeting Socialist Fight

Communist Revolutionary Action (Greece) unequivocally condemns the right-wing witch-hunt against our comrades of the Socialist Fight.

Suggesting that Socialist Fight has anything to do with anti-Semitism is nothing but a preposterous slander that has its basis in a capitulation to the Zionist agenda, a cornerstone of which is the effort to equate Anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism in order to whitewash the policies of Apartheid, ethnic cleansing and the continued crimes of the Zionist state against the Palestinian people. Alas, it seems that even people who consider themselves leftists capitulate to this agenda.

If condemning the crimes of the Zionist state is somehow anti-Semitic, then the self-styled modern Inquisitors should also condemn Jewish anti-Zionists such as Norman Finkelstein –who considers his stance against Zionism as a duty towards his parents who found themselves in the Warsaw Ghetto and Auschwitz– as anti-Semites. The principled anti-imperialist, internationalist, anti-racist – and at the same time deeply and truly humanitarian – positions of the Socialist Fight speak louder than baseless slanders such as these.

Communist Revolutionary Action

Brazil, a new dictatorship is born

Lula's imprisonment and military intervention are under way By Humberto Rodrigues, Frente Comunista dos Trabalhadores, in Rio de Janeiro

In 2016 there was a parliamentary coup d'état in Brazil. Imperialism and the right have used impeachment to interrupt the fourth consecutive term of the Workers' Party in the Brazilian government. Although it was a process legitimized by parliament, unlike the loss of a parliamentary majority by a prime minister in parliamentarism, or an impeachment such as occurred in 1992 in Brazil, the impeachment of 2016 was a parliamentary coup because it was carried out under the strategic goal of expropriating the rights of the people, just as Marx characterized it in Chapter XXIV of Capital.

The bosses unilaterally broke their pact with the PT, staged a coup d'état, set off on the extraordinary offensive against the workers, extinguished labour rights won over a century of struggles, imposed a new tax regime that established a containment of the social spending of the State and the payment of its workers for twenty years to prioritize the payment of public debt to international financial capital. The impeachment of Dilma Rousseff of the PT was born with the momentary adulteration of bourgeois legislation itself for two days to give a legal appearance to the coup.

In early 2018, the two main measures of the coup regime are the prohibition of the PT to return to power, with the arrest and conviction without evidence of of Luís Inácio Lula da Silva and the approval of a pension reform to eliminate workers' retirement rights, greatly increasing the appropriation of pensions by financial capital.

Lula, a former metalworker, is Brazil's most popular political leader in history. In all the surveys carried out since the coup, Lula is the preferred candidate for the 2018 presidential elections. This means that there is unanimity in Brazil today between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between the right and the left, if they abandon the Lula dispute he will win the election and beat all the other candidates.

Thus, on January 24, the Brazilian political regime took a step forward towards the consolidation of a new political dictatorship, and Lula was arrested.

Most workers and the poorest believe that if Lula comes back, he will stop the attacks on our rights. They bet on Lula's candidacy as an instrument of resistance to the coup. However, the PT opposes to a consistent struggle against the coup regime and sees its main historical leader as disbelieving to be crushed by the reaction and in the measure and form of our time, as were other bourgeois nationalist leaders such as Patrice Lumumba, Salvador Allende, Saddam Hussein,

Muamar Gaddafi ...

Despite reaffirming his candidacy for the presidency, Lula and the PT prepare the spirit of their voters for resignation:

"I never had any illusions with the court's decision. Never ... because there was a pact between the judiciary and the press and they decided that it was time to end the PT and our governance [...] A human being can be arrested. (Nelson) Mandela has been in jail for 27 years and his fight has not diminished. He returned and became president of South Africa" Lula said in São Paulo at the first demonstration after the Federal Regional Court unanimously approved his imprisonment in a closed regime for 12 years and one month.

In just over a year, the coup government has eliminated more rights than all previous ones, imposing a reactionary legal and political regime.

Yellow fever, tuberculosis, dengue, begging, hunger and slave labour, have again appeared forcefully and have decimated the people, but the most perverse consequences of the coup have not yet been felt directly by the people. It greatly increases the expropriation and slavery of the poor and hard-working people, extending the looting to the resources of the country and the state by imperialism and great coup capital. Therefore, they are only increased the corruption they used as an excuse to overthrow the PT.

What was already very bad, is becoming a hell for our class. Until then, to subject the workers to the regime of exploitation, an undeclared war was carried out against the dominated classes, a war that is expressed through the murder of 60 thousand people a year, of the genocide of black youth by the police apparatus that kills most in the world, from the prison of nearly one million poor and black people who are treated as animals, from 25 million underemployed and unemployed, used to blackmail the country's more than 100 million wage earners to work harder and harder to earn less.

But all of this still tends to worsen with the coming into force of the new coup legislation. In order to subject the population to the new and infinitely more cruel regime of slave labour without even the rest of



retirement, they are increasing the war against us. This is what you prepare in post-Temer, whatever the process for your succession. In other words, the coup plotters prepare a new dictatorship, worse than the previous one (1964-85), through military intervention, already announced by the Armed Forces summit.

The coup makers want to hunt Lula and make a fraudulent election to legitimize the coup and its deepening. We defended Lula and his candidacy against his thugs of the right-wing coup, but not his policy of class collaboration, which disarmed and disorganized the workers to face the coup and the bosses' offensive.

The directions of the CUT, PT, CTB, PCdoB, who until 2016 ridiculed those who warned against the risk of coup d'état via impeachment, now in 2018 do not believe in the threat of military intervention, nor are they prepared to avoid it.

The union and leftist leadership do not call the working population to the street mobilization in addition to a timid defense of Lula and democracy, they suspended the general strike scheduled for 30/06/2017, they were paralyzed before the approval of the 'labour reform' and also suspended the national strike scheduled for 5/12/2017.

While the right wing prepares the second phase of the coup, the left-wing leadership makes a move that is far from the potential mobilizer of the unions and social organizations they lead.

Some organizations that historically are identified as Trotskyists, such as the PSTU (LIT) and its satellites, adopted a sectarian and pro-imperialist political course and supported the parliamentary coup d'état and Lula's arrest with an anarchist phrase "Out All!" And adhered to the hysterical demagoguery of the right "for the arrest of all corrupt!" In line with this reactionary turnaround, at the international level, these same organizations sup-

Continued on p. 39

BHAGAT SINGH: THE 'BECOMING' OF A SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARY

By Akhar Bandyopadhyay in Kolkata

"The whole edifice of this civilization, if not saved in time, shall crumble. A radical change, therefore, is necessary and it is the duty of those who realize it to reorganize society on the socialistic basis. Unless this thing is done and the exploitation of man by man and of nations by nations is brought to an end, sufferings and carnage with which humanity is threatened today cannot be prevented. All talk of ending war and ushering in an era of universal peace is undisguised hypocrisy."

Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutta
Delhi Sessions Court Statement
6th June, 1929

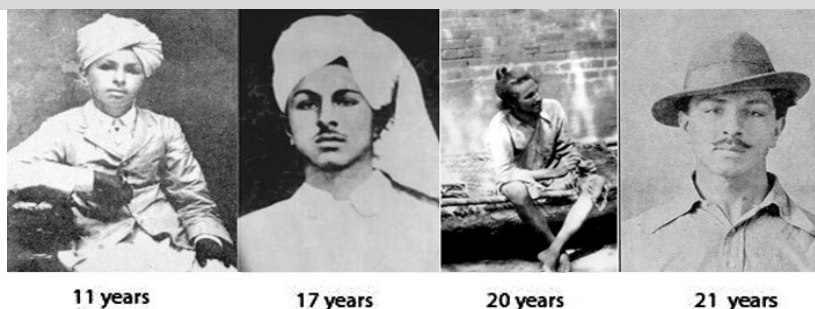
Com. Bhagat Singh (1907-1931), the socialist revolutionary martyr, can be defined to the world as a young man from a village in Punjab, who strived to fight the imperialist system in un-partitioned India with a scientific revolutionary spirit. He had a very brief period of political life. Perhaps this itself is indeed a thing of wonder and awe for the prevailing mindset.

On 14th April 1919, the day after the mass slaughter took place at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar in Punjab in the hands of General Dyer, twelve-year old Bhagat Singh visited the Bagh without attending his classes at the Lahore D.A.V. High School. He collected some blood-soaked mud from the Bagh inside a small glass jar and then came back home in a completely transformed mood.

This event left a larger impact inside young Bhagat Singh's mind and brought about serious changes in his attitude towards everything, though his innocent mind was already disturbed to witness the ever-continuing and shameless brutality of the imperialist rulers. His first-hand experiences of the unjust implementation of the Martial Law and merciless suppression and slaughter of the people by the British imperialists further acted as the major variables in shaping Bhagat Singh's personality.

Bhagat Singh was first enchanted by the example of Irish independence from British rule. After the unexpected failure of the non-cooperation movement (1920-22) led by bourgeois Gandhi, not only Bhagat Singh, but nearly all the disillusioned young people of those days were impressed by the recent news of Irish freedom. They came to know about the guerrilla tactics used by the Irish revolutionaries.

The Indian revolutionaries decided to adopt the Irish tactics to gain freedom from colonial bondage. Later in 1924, Irish revolutionary Dan Breen's autobiography *My Fight for Irish Freedom* was translated and pub-



Photos of Shaheed Bhagat Singh

lished into Hindi by Bhagat Singh.

The Hindustan Republican Association/Army (Henceforth HRA) was created in 1923 by those young men who were greatly influenced by revolutionary Ireland. Shachindra Nath Sanyal, Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee, Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, Chandra Shekhar Azad and others who had left their faith in the bourgeois Gandhian ideology—belonged to this group. The HRA believed in establishing a federated republic of United States of India by means of an armed revolution. +

The Kakori Train 'Robbery' was performed by the HRA revolutionaries on 9th August 1925, though Bhagat Singh was not actively involved in that action. All the leading revolutionaries of the party except Chandra Shekhar Azad were arrested. Bhagat Singh attended the court proceedings of the Kakori case as a journalist from Akali paper, which was published from Amritsar in Punjab. Later on in December 1927, four of the Kakori accused: Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, Thakur Roshan Singh and Rajendranath Lahiri, were hanged.

This proved to be a major turning point of Bhagat Singh's life. He himself had recollected:

"... up to that period [before the arrests of the Kakori revolutionaries] I was only romantic idealist revolutionary. Uptil then we were to follow." ["Why I am an Atheist", October 5-6, 1930]

The trial and hanging of the leading HRA revolutionaries changed everything in the political life of Bhagat Singh and his comrades. It was the time when Bhagat Singh had to rise up to the position of a leader of the party along with his comrades like Chandra Shekhar Azad. His mind was then bogged up with the question: Was not there anything 'sensational' in our country that could have the strength to awaken the masses from their slumber?

According to Bhagat Singh, all the movements and rebellions till date have had failed to generate a long-lasting revolutionary spirit

that could have brought forth popular mass movements which could have forced the British imperialists to leave the country. Bhagat Singh's mind was in a state of helpless dilemma... romanticism and sheer mysticism was proving to be useless. Bhagat

Singh believed that alienation of the revolutionary party from the masses was the chief reason behind the failure of the previous revolutionary movements.

Earlier in 1924, Bhagat Singh was taken to the Belgaon session of the Congress by his father Kishan Singh in order to make him understand the fact that studying is an essential need for becoming a leader like Subhash Chandra Bose or Jawaharlal Nehru. He was also introduced to revolutionary and mystical atheist Nirlamba Swami by his father.

In the Belgaon Congress, the debate between bourgeois leader Gandhi and HRA revolutionary Shachindra Nath Sanyal ensued on political questions. Bhagat Singh was keenly following the debate as a correspondent of Akali. He also began to hold serious political discussions with his comrades related to the problem-questions of the upcoming struggle. To say simply: he started seriously to prepare himself for the coming tomorrow.

Let us return to the state of his dilemma in the post-Kakori phase in 1925-1926. He wrote:

"Now came the time to shoulder the whole responsibility. Due to the inevitable reaction, for some time, the very existence of the Party seemed impossible. Enthusiastic comrades – nay leaders – began to jeer at us. For some time I was afraid that someday I also might be convinced of the futility of our own programme." [ibid.]

But then he might have re-remembered whatever he studied up till then, and what his father had told him about studying during the Belgaon Congress. That time of confusion and uncertainty proved to be the fertile ground for sowing the seed of his future revolutionary work based on scientific lines and thus it became a turning point of his revolutionary career. Bhagat Singh later declared:

"Study was the cry that reverberated in the corridors of my mind. Study, to enable yourself to face the arguments advanced by opposition. Study, to arm yourself with arguments in favour of your cult. I began to study. My previous faith

and convictions underwent a remarkable modification. The romance of the violent methods alone which was so prominent amongst our predecessors was replaced by serious ideas. No more mysticism, no more blind faith. Realism became our cult. Use of force justifiable when resorted to as a matter of terrible necessity: non-violence as policy indispensable for all mass movements. So much about methods. The most important thing was the clear conception of the ideal for which we were to fight.” [ibid.]

One can understand the complete transformation in his outlook. From the Gandhism of his childhood days he had made a fast transition to revolutionary anarchism and individual terrorism. But already by 1927-28, he began to move away from revolutionary anarchism and individual terrorism towards the ambit of revolutionary Marxian socialism, solely as the result of serious study in the post-Kakori phase.

Because as soon as he assumed the leadership position in HRA, he got ample opportunity to study the various ideals of the world revolution due to the reason that there were no important activities in the field of action at that time.

Studying and reflecting in detail about the example of socialist Russia revolutionized him politically, and he started to gain a mature insight into the existing order of things. The words “freedom” and “revolution” started signifying a new meaning and a new spirit to him.

Let us hear directly from him about his study:

“I studied Bakunin, the anarchist leader, something of Marx the father of Communism, and much of Lenin, Trotsky and others, the men who had successfully carried out a revolution in their country. They were all atheists. Bakunin’s ‘God and State’, though only fragmentary, is an interesting study of the subject. Later still I came across a book entitled ‘Common Sense’ by Nirlamba Swami. It was only sort of mystic atheism. This subject became of utmost importance to me. By the end of 1926, I have been convinced as to the baselessness of the theory of existence of an almighty supreme being who created, guided and controlled the universe. I had given out this disbelief of mine. I began discussions on the subjects with my friends. I had become a pronounced atheist.” [ibid.]

Along with the development of a scientific socialist mindset in him, his blind attraction to Ireland was also in the process of reaching an end. Bhagat Singh said in a note to a letter written to young political workers in February 1931:

“The Irish parallel, I have to warn, does not apply in our case. In Ireland it was not sporadic terroristic activities she witnessed; it was a nationwide rising... Ireland after all had to be satisfied with an unaccomplished movement. It has lessened the bonds but not released the Irish proletariat from the shackles of the Capitalist, native and foreign. Ireland is a lesson to India and a warning—warning how nationalistic idealism devoid of Revolutionary social basis although with all other circumstances in its

favour, may lose itself in the shoals of a compromise with Imperialism. Should India, if she could imitate Ireland still?” [Notes to a Letter to Young Political Workers, February 2, 1931]

About the bourgeois-reformist Gandhian ideology, Bhagat Singh maintained:

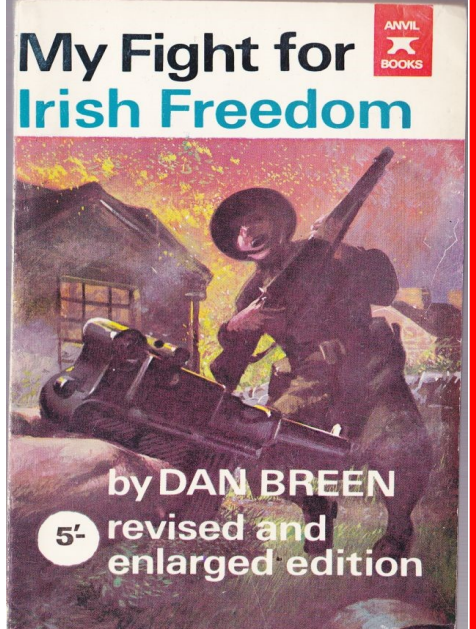
“We should not have any illusion about the possibilities, failures and achievements of Congress movement, which should be, as it is today, be better stamped Gandhism. It does not stand for freedom avowedly; it is in favour of ‘Partnership’—a strange interpretation of what ‘complete independence’ signifies. Its method is novel, and but for the helplessness of the people. Gandhism would gain no adherent for the Saint of Sabarmati. It has fulfilled and is fulfilling the role of an intermediate party of Liberal Radical combination fighting shy of reality of the situation and controlled mostly by men with stakes in the country, who prize their stakes with bourgeoisie tenacity, and it is bound to stagnate unless rescued from its own fate by an infusion of Revolutionary blood. It must be saved from its friends.” [ibid.]

His idea about terrorism can also be highlighted from the notes to the same letter and is as follows:

“Terrorism is a confession that the Revolutionary mentality has not penetrated down into the masses. It is thus a confession of our failure. In the initial stages it had its use; it shook the torpor out of body politic, enkindled the imagination of young intelligentsia, fired their spirit of self-sacrifice and demonstrated before the world and before our enemies the truth and the strength of the movement. But by itself it is not enough. Its history is a history of failure in every land—France, in Russia, in Balkan countries, in Germany, in Spain everywhere. It bears the germ of defeat within itself. The Imperialist knows that to rule 300 million he must sacrifice 30 of his men annually. The pleasure of ruling may be bombed out or pistolled down, but the practical gain from exploitation will make him stick to his post. Even though arms were as readily available as we hope for, and were it pushed with a thoroughness unknown anywhere else, terrorism can at most force the Imperialist power to come to terms with party. Such terms a little more or less, must fall short of our objective—complete independence. Terrorism thus hope to wring out what Gandhism bids fair to attain—a compromise and an installment of reforms—a replacement of a white rule at Delhi by a brown rule. It is aloof from the life of the masses and once installed on the throne runs the risk of being petrified into a tyranny.” [ibid.]

Jagmohan Singh, nephew of Bhagat Singh, has remarked:

“Bhagat Singh as a revolutionary not only announced that ‘when he is convinced of a scientific principle, he lives it.’ He understood the basic scientific principles and applied these to the realities around and was thus able to affect the direction and outcome of the events qualitatively. As proclaimed by him that revolution is a social change and for that is only possible by a “Scientific, dynamic, social force”. We can see that his transcendence to a revolutionary was complete. Humanism is the basic



motive force of a revolutionary. All his actions are motivated by his deep concern for the weakest person in the society and it is with his benefit in view.” [Bhagat Singh: Transcendence from Romantic to True Revolutionary]

What was Bhagat Singh’s idea of revolution?

“...revolution means the complete overthrow of the existing social order and its replacement with the socialist order. For that purpose our immediate aim is the achievement of power. As a matter of fact, the state, the government machinery is just a weapon in the hands of the ruling class to further and safeguard its interest. We want to snatch and handle it to utilise it for the consummation of our ideal, i.e., social reconstruction on new, i.e., Marxist, basis. For this purpose we are fighting to handle the government machinery. All along we have to educate the masses and to create a favourable atmosphere for our social programme. In the struggles we can best train and educate them.” [Letter to Young Political Workers, February 2, 1931]

This proves that Bhagat Singh systematically began to understand the fact that India needed to have a proletarian revolution based on Marxist-Leninist lines to actually get rid of the imperialist system since the post-Kakori phase. It was only the revolutionary proletarian class which should become the leading force of the true revolutionary movement against imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. He comprehended:

“But if you say that you will approach the peasants and labourers to enlist their active support, let me tell you that they are not going to be fooled by any sentimental talk. They ask you quite candidly: what are they going to gain by your revolution for which you demand their sacrifices, what difference does it make to them whether Lord Reading is the head of the Indian government or Sir Purshotamdas Thakordas? What difference for a peasant if Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru replaces Lord Irwin! It is useless to appeal to his national sentiment. You can’t ‘use’ him for your purpose; you shall have to mean seriously and to make him understand that the revolution is going to be his and for his good.

The Revolution of the proletariat and for the proletariat... We require, to use the term so dear to Lenin - the 'professional revolutionaries'. The whole-time workers who have no other ambitions or life-work except the revolution." [ibid.]

To materialize the ideal of proletarian revolution, Bhagat Singh, along with his comrades, formed the Naujawan Bharat Sabha (henceforth NBS) in 1925-1926 based on the model of Mazzini and Garibaldi's Young Italy. It was a mass-based organization which finalized its aim as socialism.

The Punjab Students' Union, Lahore Students' Union, Bal Bharat Sabha and Bal Students' Union acted as its' other units. The NBS as a whole strived to organize the workers and peasants on a class basis; it also propagated anti-communal, anti-casteist and anti-fundamentalist revolutionary sentiments inside the people by organizing several public meetings. The NBS organized magic lantern shows, depicting the exploits of the revolutionary martyrs.

All these efforts were made solely to generate a long-lasting revolutionary spirit inside the masses, to prepare them for the final battle. Bhagat Singh made close acquaintance with the Moscow-returning Ghadrite revolutionaries during that period. Even while being in Kanpur, Bhagat Singh was already in touch with many communist leaders and working class activists of the country, including Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Muzaffar Ahmed, Shaukat Usmani and many others.



Investigating the ever-growing 'seditious' activities of the newborn NBS, the British authorities arrested Bhagat Singh in May 1927 on false charges in connection to the Dussehra Bomb Case. Actually the Britishers needed some sort of an 'excuse' to arrest the 'dangerous' revolutionary! He was released in July 1927 only after a bail bond of 60,000 rupees was paid by his father!

Bhagat Singh proceeded to re-organize the HRA and changed its name to 'Hindustan SOCIALIST Republican Association/Army' (Henceforth HSRA) on 8-9th and Bhagwati Charan Vohra are equally mentionable in this case, too.

By that time, Bhagat Singh had written articles on different relevant September 1928 in Delhi, indicating a truly ideological development of the party agenda, which was obviously a consequence of the ideological development of the new young leader named Bhagat Singh. His comrades like Sukhdev and socio-political issues in various magazines including 'Kirti', 'Matwala', 'Maharathi' and 'Chand' in a multiple number of as-

sumed names like 'Vidrohi' (Rebel), 'Ek Punjabi Yuvak' (A Punjabi Youth), 'Ranjit' etc.

Whatever followed after the formation of HSRA is 'history' in its true sense. By means of some splendid political actions against the various institutions of the imperialist system, he came up to the political forefront of the country by winning the support of the masses and finally dedicated his life at the age of twenty-three years along with comrades Sukhdev and Rajguru to the cause of socialist revolution by getting hanged on 23rd March 1931. In this way he became Shaheed-e-Azam, the king of all revolutionary martyrs!

Bhagat Singh created a legend and became a household name that reverberated from the rural to the urban. The immortal revolutionary socialist slogan: "Inquilab Zinda-bad" (Long Live Revolution) became popular inside the masses to an unimaginable extent, because of him. Bhagat Singh, like the other great revolutionaries of the world, was nothing but the product of his times. Still Bhagat Singh is, undoubtedly, an eternal revolutionary. The few articles, letters and statements which he composed within his revolutionary life hold magnificent relevance inside such a turbulent time. The war against all sorts of exploitation in which he participated continues even today.

"In the very near future the final battle shall be fought and final settlement arrived at. The days of capitalist and imperialist exploitation are numbered. The war neither began with us nor is it going to end with our lives. It is the inevitable consequence of the historic events and the existing environments." [Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru's Last Petition to the Punjab Governor, 20th March, 1931] ▲

Brazil, from p. 36 ported other pro-imperialist coups against nationalist leadership (Libya, Egypt, Ukraine, Syria), also under a puerile leftist phraseology. The result of this disastrous policy was the implosion of the PSTU, in accelerated political and trade union decadence in Brazil.

The thousand popular committees scattered throughout Brazil, proposed by us from FT since 2014, can not be restricted to the defense of the candidacy of Lula or to be mere electoral campaign committees of this or that candidate for deputy of the popular front.

The committees must organize the general struggle against the coup regime and its measures in the workplace, housing and study, with the perspective of defeating the counterrevolution and the struggle for a revolutionary workers' government.

The time of Conciliation is over and the less the Brazilian left understands, the greater its tragedy will be. As we said in the editorial of Folha do Trabalhador No. 28:

"Now the war and the exploitation are more open than ever. In this tragedy there are profoundly pedagogical elements. We must use them to build a credible political alternative and for what the class believes is worth fighting for. Class collaboration is over, the side of here needs to be aware of that as well. However, let us not feed on illiterate workers or voluntarists. The organized battalions of the proletariat will only return to the scene with all their power if they are under new bases, those of class war. This also requires a fresh rewarming of the economy that is not on the immediate horizon."

Without the reorganisation of the workers, overcoming the reformist policy of the PT will not be possible to preserve their rights historically conquered nor to defeat the coup d'etat. For this we need a revolutionary party who can act in a united front with the traditional leaderships of the labour movement while conquering their social bases in practice of exposing the inability of their existing leaders to take this fight to the victory. ▲



Dialectics is the science of all movement and change – in nature and its reflection in human consciousness

By Tony Fox

Trotsky's Notebooks 1933-1935 says::

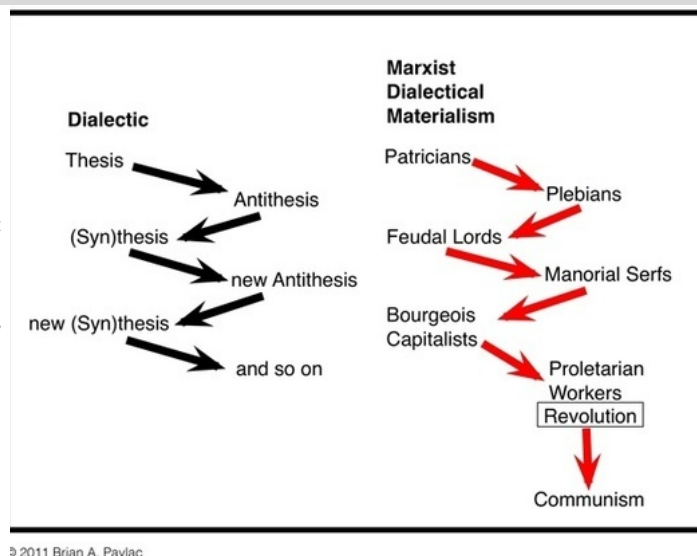
"Hegel's absolute idealism is directed against dualism-against the thing-in-itself of dualism, Isn't the recognition of the reality of the external world outside a cognizing consciousness and independent of it a return to dualism? Not at all, for cognition is in no respect an independent principle for us, but a specialized part of the objective world."

Cliff Slaughter was quite right on this matter in 1962:

"Lenin very specifically says that the self-movement of things through the struggle of opposites is the science of dialectics. This is the logical consequence of the understanding that dialectics is the self-movement of reality, and of the concepts reflecting reality, and not an external logic which imposed its own distinctions and comparisons on reality. Dialectics is the theory of how reality sorts itself out, with growing human knowledge seen as the latest development of this reality, rather than a way of sorting out reality. Hegel is quoted by Lenin to this effect: "Thinking reason, however, sharpens, so to say, the blunt difference of diverse terms, the mere manifoldness of pictorial thinking, into essential difference, into opposition. Only when the manifold terms have been driven to the point of contradiction to they become active and lively towards one another, receiving in contradiction the negativity which is the indwelling pulsation of self-movement and spontaneous activity."

Absolutely central to that is the recognition of movement as a property of matter; there is no movement without matter, there is no matter without movement. Self-movement is a property of matter and does not require an outside force to set it in motion or to stop it; matter has always moved, and it always will. The source of movement is the unity and conflict of opposites within every phenomenon, natural and human. Thought itself is a natural phenomenon, matter which thinks via the movement of micro electrical impulses between brain cells, not a mysterious process only understood as a gift from a god in the sky. [2]

All things are only at rest relative to one another; they appear so because they are moving at the same rate and in the same direction. Rest on the planet earth is relative whilst that planet is hurtling through space. Equilibrium in the class struggle and in human class consciousness is a dynamic equilibrium which inevitably will break to reveal its essence at certain points under certain circumstances. Accident, i.e. the emergence of Jeremy Corbyn as the leader of the Labour party in 2015, his re-election in 2016 and Labour's consequent record-breaking



surge in the 2017 general election, is how necessity reveals itself.

And if we are not satisfied with how Marx and Engels dealt with this most essential of philosophical concepts for Marxism let Lenin speak on what he did contribute; *On the Question of Dialectics*:

The same is true of Engels. But it is "in the interests of popularisation..." and not as a law of cognition (and as a law of the objective world).

- In mathematics: + and —. Differential and integral.
- In mechanics: action and reaction.
- In physics: positive and negative electricity.
- In chemistry: the combination and dissociation of atoms.
- In social science: the class struggle.

The identity of opposites (it would be more correct, perhaps, to say their "unity," — although the difference between the terms identity and unity is not particularly important here. In a certain sense both are correct) is the recognition (discovery) of the contradictory, mutually exclusive, opposite tendencies in all phenomena and processes of nature (including mind and society). The condition for the knowledge of all processes of the world in their "self-movement," in their spontaneous development, in their real life, is the knowledge of them as a unity of opposites. Development is the "struggle" of opposites. The two basic (or two possible? Or two historically observable?) conceptions of development (evolution) are: development as decrease and increase, as repetition, and development as a unity of opposites (the division of a unity into mutually exclusive opposites and their reciprocal relation).

In the first conception of motion, self – movement, its driving force, its source, its motive, remains in the shade (or this source is made external—God, subject, etc.). In the second conception the chief attention is directed

precisely to knowledge of the source of "self" – movement.

The first conception is lifeless, pale and dry. The second is living. The second alone furnishes the key to the "self-movement" of everything existing; it alone furnishes the key to "leaps," to the "break in continuity," to the "transformation into the opposite," to the destruction of the old and the emergence of the new.

The unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute.

NB: The distinction between subjectivism (scepticism, sophistry, etc.) and dialectics, incidentally, is that in

(objective) dialectics the difference between the relative and the absolute is itself relative. For objective dialectics, there is an absolute within the relative. For subjectivism and sophistry, the relative is only relative and excludes the absolute.

And from Frederick Engels:

"When we consider and reflect upon nature at large or the history of mankind or our own intellectual activity, at first, we see the picture of an endless entanglement of relations and reactions in which nothing remains what, where and as it was, but everything moves, changes, comes into being and passes away. This primitive, naive but intrinsically correct conception of the world is that of ancient Greek philosophy, and was first clearly formulated by Heraclitus: everything is and is not, for everything is fluid, is constantly changing, constantly coming into being and passing away.

...To the metaphysician, things and their mental reflexes, ideas, are isolated, are to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, are objects of investigation fixed, rigid, given once for all. He thinks in absolutely irreconcilable antitheses. "His communication is 'yea, yea; nay, nay'; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." [Matthew 5:37. — Ed.] For him a thing either exists or does not exist; a thing cannot at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another, cause and effect stand in a rigid antithesis one to the other.

...Nature is the proof of dialectics, and it must be said for modern science that it has furnished this proof with very rich materials increasing daily, and thus has shown that, in the last resort, nature works dialectically and not metaphysically. But the naturalists who have learned to think dialectically are few and far between, and this conflict of the results of discovery with preconceived modes of thinking explains the endless confusion now reigning in theoretical natural science, the despair of teachers as well as learners, of authors and readers alike.

Of course, all serious Marxist dialecticians

defend the triad as set out by Engels:

It is, therefore, from the history of nature and human society that the laws of dialectics are abstracted. For they are nothing but the most general laws of these two aspects of historical development, as well as of thought itself. And indeed, they can be reduced in the main to three:

1. The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa;
2. The law of the interpenetration of opposites;
3. The law of the negation of the negation.

All three are developed by Hegel in his idealist fashion as mere laws of thought: the first, in the first part of his *Logic*, in the Doctrine of Being; the second fills the whole of the second and by far the most important part of his *Logic*, the Doctrine of Essence; finally, the third figures as the fundamental law for the construction of the whole system. The mistake lies in the fact that these laws are foisted on nature and history as laws of thought, and not deduced from them. This is the source of the whole forced and often outrageous treatment; the universe, willy-nilly, is made out to be arranged in accordance with a system of thought which itself is only the product of a definite stage of evolution of human thought. If we turn the thing round, then everything becomes simple, and the dialectical laws that look so extremely mysterious in idealist philosophy at once become simple and clear as noonday.

Lenin regarded Heraclitus (c. 535 – c. 475 BC) as a founder, with Plato, of dialectics. Here we see Lenin on Lassalle and Heraclitus in his *Philosophical Notebooks* in 1915:

Lassalle emphasises and rehashes the idea that Heraclitus not only recognises motion in everything, that his principle is motion or becoming (Werden), but that the whole point lies in understanding the processing identity of absolute (schlechthin) opposites” (p. 289 and many others); Lassalle, so to speak, hammers into the reader’s head the Hegelian thought that in abstract concepts (and in the system of them) the principle of motion cannot be expressed otherwise than as the principle of the identity of opposites. Motion and Werden, generally speaking, can be without repetition, without return to the point of departure, and then such motion would not be an “identity of opposites.” But astronomical and mechanical (terrestrial) motion, and the life of plants, animals and man—all this has hammered into the heads of mankind not merely the idea of motion, but motion precisely with a return to the point of departure, i.e., dialectical motion.

This is naively and delight-

fully expressed in the famous formula (or aphorism) of Heraclitus: “it is impossible to bathe twice in the same river”—

actually, however (as had already been said by Cratylus, a disciple of Heraclitus), it cannot be done even once (for before the

whole body has entered the water, the latter is already not the same as before).

And the words of Heraclitus: “The world was created by none of the Gods or men, but is eternally living fire and will always be so” (ibidem).

Let us quote again Alex Steiner on Heidegger in the WSWS article in 2000:

Sartre and the French existentialists adopted from Heidegger the themes of loneliness and alienation as well as the corollary notion of a heroic and resolute voluntarism in the face of an absurd world. Fritzsche maintains that whatever the merits of their own works, the existentialists misunderstood Heidegger. Fritzsche’s argument for reading Heidegger as the philosopher of National Socialism is impossible to summarize here. It relies on a very sophisticated historical and philological analysis of the text of *Being and Time*. After reconstructing the actual content of *Being and Time*, Fritzsche compares it with the writings of two other notorious right-wing authors who were contemporaries, namely Max Scheler and Adolf Hitler. Fritzsche demonstrates that the political content of *Being and Time* and *Mein Kampf*

Dialectics: Unity & Struggle of Opposites

- **Materialist dialectics is a way of conceptualizing change in everything: in nature, in history & in thought.**
- **Change is the inevitable process of struggle, contradiction & tension between opposite, yet unified, mutually transforming forces.**
- **Contradiction transforms each side, negating both & producing a new conflicting unity.**
 - **Something old is transformed into something new.**
- **Quantitative & Qualitative change are dialectically related to each other.**



are identical, notwithstanding the fact that the first book was written by a world-renowned philosopher and the second by a sociopath from the gutters of Vienna.

One of the myths Fritzsche exposes is that Heidegger’s notion of authenticity bears some relationship to the traditional conception of individual freedom. Fritzsche demonstrates that for Heidegger achieving “authenticity” means precisely the opposite of exercising freedom. Rather it means that one answers a “call” to live life according to one’s fate. The fate whose call one must answer has been preordained by forces that are outside the scope of the individual. Answering the call is therefore the very anti-thesis of any notion of freedom. In support of this thesis, Fritzsche quotes the following passage from *Being and Time*:

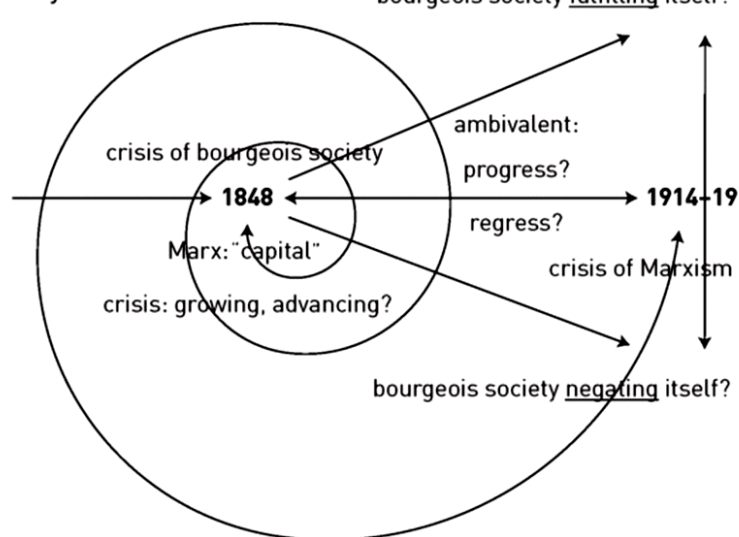
“Dasein [Heidegger’s term for human being] can be reached by the blows of fate only because in the depths of its Being Dasein is fate in the sense we have described. Existing fatefully in the resoluteness which hands itself down, Dasein has been disclosed as Being-in-the-world both for the ‘fortunate’ circumstances

which ‘comes its way’ and for the cruelty of accidents. Fate does not arise from the clashing together of events and circumstances. Even one who is irresolute gets driven about by these—more so than one who has chosen; and yet he can ‘have’ no fate.” [7]

We must defend the dialectical materialist approach of Engels’ *Dialectics of Nature*, Marx’s agreement with this approach and Lenin and Trotsky’s development of that method. We exposed the “philosophy of praxis” as a non-Marxist approach of the pro-Stalinist and anti-Marxist ‘Marxists’, Lukács, Gramsci and Sartre. Their ‘praxis’ was not only cowardly politically but bureaucratic to the core and lacked all aspiration to

Lenin: history not linear but spiral

why return to Marx?



revolutionary practice themselves, never seriously seeking to build a revolutionary leadership to take the working class to power. The distinction made in the philosophical idealist approach of Hannah Arendt to Aristotle via Heidegger and Herbert Marcuse's approach to Aristotle who wrote, "in Marxian terms as world-constitutive and historical labouring activity". Whatever our criticisms of Marcuse his approach was materialist and so essentially correct here.

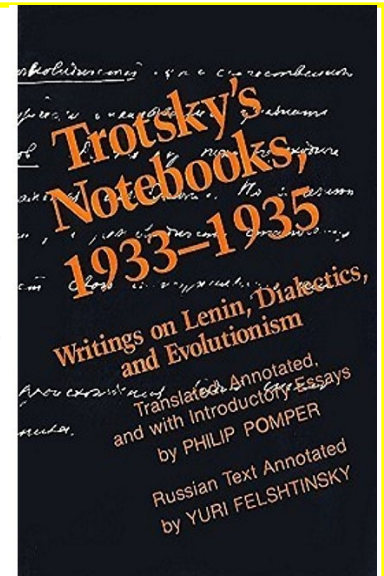
Lastly a comment on Trotsky's Notebooks of 1933-1935. It is, of course, true that the development of dialectical materialism did not stop with Marx and Engels, or indeed with Lenin. With the latter, there was a development of the material conditions that put some flesh on the bones of the dialectics outlined correctly by its founders. The organised working class emerged as a mass force from the late 1880s and early 1890s, in Britain, the USA and in Europe in general. And in 1905 the emergence of the Soviets in Russia, the workers' councils, showed the form that a nation and a world ruled by the working class would look like; direct democracy with instantly recallable delegates reflecting the revolution aspiration of the whole working class. That is the content of that marvellous 1915 piece by Lenin on Dialectics, from which we quoted above,

"the distinction between subjectivism (scepticism, sophistry, etc.) and dialectics, incidentally, is that in (objective) dialectics the difference between the relative and the absolute is itself relative. For objective dialectics, there is an absolute within the relative. For subjectivism and sophistry, the relative is only relative and excludes the absolute."

For Trotsky, the distinguishing role of thought in history was its pursuit of 'certain practical outcomes'. It was impossible to speak of historical causality without acknowledging teleology, or pur-

pose, as 'a partial aspect of the cause'. Determinism, as a theory of objective causality, denied the salience of human intervention. Pure materialism and objective determinism suggested the impossibility of political practice, whereas Trotsky believed it was precisely through political life that quantitative social change becomes qualitative. Human history did not happen; it was made. And politics grew out of economics for the purpose of reconstituting economic relations. 'Living people' used political institutions as superstructure 'levers' to impose their own subjective ends upon the objective world. Trotsky's philosophical differences with the tradition stemming from Engels distinguished him clearly from the mainstream of Bolshevik thought.

Lenin very specifically says that the self-movement of things through the struggle of opposites is the science of dialectics. This is the logical consequence of the understanding that dialectics is the self-movement of reality, and of the concepts reflecting reality, and not an external logic which imposed its own distinctions and comparisons on reality. Dialectics is the theory of how reality sorts itself out, with growing human knowledge seen as the latest development of this reality, rather than just a way of sorting out reality. ▲



Difference, facing page ness and culture, and he saw the federal and centralizing principle as a characteristic of the socialist order. The problem had presented itself then in

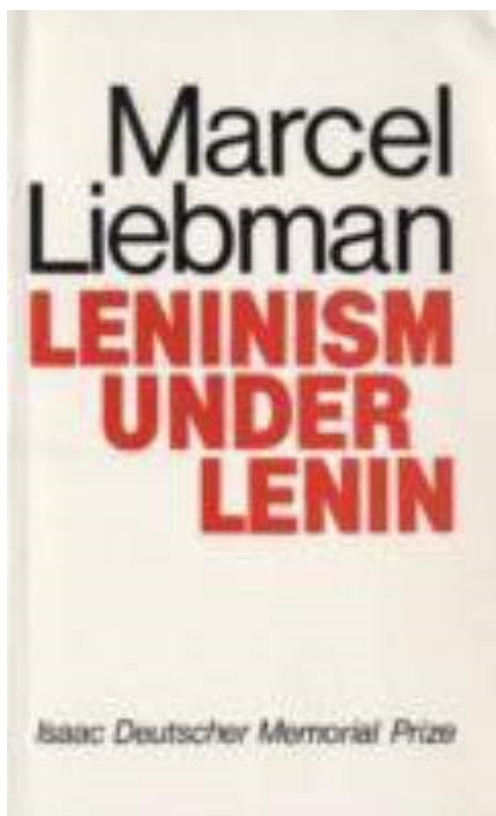
terms of the "suppression" of national prejudice, national boundaries etc., and he had been very optimistic in 1919 about the pace at which those would disappear. At the Twelfth Congress that optimism had disappeared: "the more often we discuss this question the further away we are from a communist understanding and solution of the national problem".

"There were many in the party in 1923 who believed that the national problem had already been solved. Rakovsky asked: "Tell me, comrades, how many of you can explain in what way the October revolution solved the nationalities question?" It did not resolve it, nor could it have. National culture does not cease to exist because the state is a workers' state or because the economy is no longer privately owned. National culture is "the only way" through which the working and peasant masses will gain access to political and cultural life. "And hand in hand with national consciousness comes that feeling of equality which Lenin speaks of in his memorandum. Because of centuries of tsarist domination, the nationalities are now experiencing that feeling of

equality in a much deeper and stronger way than we think." So the problem posed before the Communist Party was not one of the suppression or "overcoming" of national consciousness. "It (the party) faces the question of how to find the bond between proletarian communist internationalism and the national development of wide layers of the peasant masse with their aspirations for a national life, for their own national culture, for their own national state." [3] [4]

Notes

- [1] *Documents of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency*, The LTT was the result of the 1991 fusion of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency of Belgium and Germany, the Workers International League of Britain (which emerged from the collapse of Gerry Healy's WRP) and a group of South African Trotskyists <https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/document/ltt/index.htm>
- [2] Marcel Liebman: *Leninism under Lenin*, <https://socialistfight.com/2016/03/04/marcel-liebman-leninism-under-lenin-epilogue-the-end-of-lenin-pp-417-425/>
- [3] Gus Fagan, *Biographical Introduction to Christian Rakovsky, Rakovsky and the Ukraine* (1919-23) <https://www.marxists.org/archive/rakovsky/biog/biog3.htm>
- [4] Lenin, *Trotsky and Stalin on the rights of nations to self-determination*, <https://socialistfight.com/2016/03/04/lenin-trotsky-and-stalin-on-the-rights-of-nations-to-self-determination/> ▲



What is the difference between a Leninist and a Trotskyist?

A Facebook Question: Hi Gerry.

We met back at Labour conference in Wetherspoons. I have a question for you regarding political labels? Could you explain to me the difference between a Leninist and a Trotskyist please?

Trotskyists assert there is no differences and many Trotskyist groups refer to themselves as Leninist-Trotskyists. Leninism is essentially the theory that a revolutionary vanguard party is necessary to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat. The latter phrase refers to a workers' government where the capitalist class is expropriated and the working-class rules directly via workers councils, soviets as they were called in Russia in 1905 and 1917. This is the only possible way the working class can rule, and initially it must be dictatorial because it has to suppress the capitalist class who will use their army and police and ideological supporters in the mass media to suppress the revolution.

In his earlier years Trotsky disagreed with Lenin on the nature of the revolutionary party necessary to make a revolution but when Lenin produced his April Theses in 1917, turning the Bolsheviks towards a new revolution he agreed he had been wrong on that and Lenin's perspectives came together with Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution. Both these theories are diametrically opposed to the Stalinist theory of Two Stage revolutions and socialist in a single country. Both Lenin and Trotsky never wavered in their proletarian internationalism and in their struggles for those policies that would forward that cause:

"It is not national interests we are upholding — we claim that the interests of socialism, the interests of world socialism, rank higher than national interests, higher than the interests of the state." Lenin address to the Party Central Committee (14 May 1918); Collected Works, Vol. 27, pp. 365-381.

Hitler came to power in January 1933 because of the lunatic Stalinist Third Period turn from 1928 — all other political groups were fascists; the Socialist Democrats were the main enemy against whom they allied with the fascists in the infamous Prussian 'Red Referendum' of August 1931 and the Berlin Transit strike of November 1932. No shot was fired to stop him as the working-class parties were locked in fratricidal conflict. So, Trotsky concluded that workers' democracy had to be restored in the 'degenerated workers state' in political revolution. But always the USSR had to be defended against imperialism because it still produced according to a plan which was not geared to capitalist profits but to workers' needs, despite the corrupt bureaucracy that ruled.

Trotskyism is identified with 'Transitional Demands' as outlined in his Transitional Programme of 1938; not immediate reformist demands for today and a socialist revolution somewhere in the never-never but demands the led towards that revolution, that gave the class strength and confidence in its ability to force change in the first place and then to actually abolish capitalism itself in the end.

So we use a 'transitional' programme of demands that bridge between daily struggles of the working class and the 'maximal' ideas of the socialist transformation of society. The following four goals are those I consider necessary today:

1. the necessity to raise the level of wealth to superabundance to satisfy all human need by planned production on a global scale,
2. the class character of the era of imperialism consists of two remaining great classes, the capitalist/imperialist and the working class/proletariat,
3. The indispensable need for workers' councils/soviets and workers' democracy to suppress the capitalist class, the real meaning of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and
4. the self-emancipation of the class to achieve social and economic equality.

On the names, I was once a member of the Workers International League, British section of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency, who were for many years quite a good international tendency, from whom I learned a lot. [1]

I still think the CWG — LTT Fusion Documents, which includes the LTT / WIL Fusion Document of March 1991 and a shorter January 1993 elaboration that cemented the CWG — LTT fusion are excellent revolutionary documents, although I do not now think that South Africa is a minor imperialist country.

I think the questions of imperialism and the national question are vital questions to understand and so I include this piece from a polemic I did some time back:

Look at how Christian Rakovsky handles the national question in line with the developments made by Lenin as recounted by Marcel Liebman:

"Refusing to be content with 'an abstract presentation of the question of nationalism in general', he (Lenin — GD) insisted that 'a distinction must necessarily be made be-



Rakovsky, Trotsky and Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea at a pre-revolution meeting in Bucharest, Romania.

tween the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of an oppressed nation, the nationalism of a big nation and that of a small nation'. And he declared that, 'in respect of the second kind of nationalism, we, nationals of a big nation, have nearly always been guilty, in historic practice, of an infinite number of cases of violence; furthermore, we commit violence and insult an infinite number of times without noticing it.' Lenin concluded that 'internationalism on the part of oppressors or "great" nations, as they are called (though they are great only in their violence, only great as bullies), must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice.' As regards relations with Georgia and with the national minorities as a whole, he advised: 'it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency toward the national minorities?' [2]

Note how different all this is from Stalin. It explains why Lenin that took such umbrage at Stalin's Great Russian Chauvinism, as he called it, in regard to Georgia from 1922 until his death in 1924. This passage relates how Rakovsky himself developed his views on the subject; these views then became those of the Left Opposition and Trotsky's own views:

"What was the specific problem which the national question posed for the Communist Party in the Soviet Union according to Rakovsky? In 1919, in the article already mentioned (Relations between the Republics), Rakovsky had analysed nationalism and national culture as specific to the bourgeois state order, an extension of the concept of "private ownership" to the level of the state. Therefore he saw the elimination of capitalist private property as undermining once and for all the basis of specifically "national" conscious-

Continued on facing page

Ahed Tamimi; a true revolutionary icon

By Michael Blakey



28 August 2015: 14-year-old Ahed Tamimi struggling along with other women against an armed Israeli soldier to free her 12-year-old brother (left). "We the Palestinians are not going to wait for Saladin to liberate us. We are going to make our own Saladin and liberate ourselves."

The phenomenal arrival onto the world stage of a true revolutionary icon is a rare event, that the phenomenon is a Palestinian teenager all the more powerful for the awakening that is underway amongst the mass of the world population to the fascism of the Zionist entity.

As the actions of the extreme Zionist wing within the Trump administration to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of the illegal occupiers' state sought and failed to garner support from anywhere but the former CIA outposts of Guatemala and Honduras and some cowardly abstentions from Australia most notably the world was treated to a brief glimpse on the mainstream media of a young girl using her bare fists to resist a fully armed soldier who wished to invade her home and use it to fire at other children.

The event itself has stirred consciousness far beyond the original reaction to the immoral and illegal declaration by the US president deliberately designed by Netanyahu's Likud to stir trouble which can be used to further the ethnic cleansing now over 50 years old.

However the plan has been turned rapidly on its head. During its course this latest assault on the Palestinians has pushed Gary Lineker to the fore attacking the Israeli regime for its treatment of Palestinian children, and Jeremy Corbyn in the midst of his fight against false accusations of antisemitism in the Labour Party.

Kiwi diva Lorde has cancelled her intended visit and demonstrations worldwide have called for the continued recognition of Jerusalem as the capital

of Palestine.

The hope that this recognition by Trump would hasten the extinguishment of Palestine as an entity that needed any state whether one or two in solution...the hope also to speed up the final denouement of the Palestinians 3,000-year-old history by stealing their culture, even food and clothes as Jewish and fulfilling their lie that Palestine never existed.

In the US and UK Jews have spoken out about this foul decision and in France have said it has brought them under attack and it is this that gives the plans hoped for a response, individual terrorist attacks on Jews to be blamed on Jihadists, antisemites, and fascists.

The destruction of the social infrastructure of the middle eastern countries introduced to the US democracy interventions has put the troops for these attacks on the ground and under the eyes of the security services reporting back to Mossad.

The narrative cooked up in advance of the Haley declaration has been seriously impeded by this young girl and her entire family's resistance to the theft of their land and rights which are not to be supported by the UN as the US will cut aid to the Palestinians as a punishment for refusing to sit and pointlessly discuss the two state solution, long ago a 'solution' to the Israelis who no intention of anything but genocide and a fraudulent waste of time much enjoyed by the previous US Presidents.

Within the Arab world, a huge new impetus for resistance and support for the Palestinian is well underway and the

corrupt Arab bourgeoisie leaders are once more on the spot along with the feudalists in the gulf.

The treatment of the Palestinians, in particular the children, have been put the hubris of Trump, Kushner, Netanyahu et al firmly on the political agenda of the world and have produced the opposite of the hoped-for quiet acquiescence from the world whilst the fascist IDF continues to murder protestors and children.

The spotlight has been shone into the dark corners of the fascist psyche of the Zionists with journalists encouraging rape and abuse against Ahed in the dark corners of her imprisonment.

Attacks on the family have been pathetic and weak from the usually robust lie machines of Hasbara on social media, implications that Ahed wears modern teenage clothes to get sympathy, her hair and complexion are similarly a ruse, caught completely off balance they have proceeded to imprisonment and the truth has spilled out.

The IDF shot a rubber bullet into Ahed's cousin's brain, her mother has been locked up, her cousin, the world's youngest reporter has described the arrest which was carried out subsequent to the incident wherein the child actually responded to the soldier who had hit her the course of breaking into her home.

At each term the opposite is achieved by the oppressors to their intentions, Hegel calls this point in time measure, what at first seemed a great victory rapidly turns into the source of their destruction. ▲