Major setbacks for Anglo-American imperialism:
Corbyn humiliates the Blairites and the US-sponsored coup fails in Turkey
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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 spheres 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 disrupt the lives of workers and cause the collapse of whole nations with their direct intervention in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistam and their proxy wars in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, etc. Work- ers 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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Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
Editorial: ‘Trotskyism’, Chicken Coup paranoia, and the Labour Split: Turn Labour into a genuine workers’ party!

The victory, with an increased mandate, of Jeremy Corbyn in the September Labour leadership election logically creates a new situation irrespective of the weaknesses of Corbyn and the Labour leftists who share his political worldview. This is not simply a repetition of 2015, and key illusions that surrounded Corbyn’s victory a year ago have been battered by events. The idea that there can be ‘party unity’ and collaboration between a Labour leadership such as Corbyn’s that aspires to defend the interests of working class people in an elementary sense, and New Labour’s carefully chosen representatives, the followers of Blair, Brown and ultimately Thatcher (the real ideological godmother of New Labour) always was a fantasy.

Since Corbyn’s new victory this idea has taken a further battering with the stitch up of the new NEC by the old, having created new unelected Scottish and Welsh Blairite NEC members to negate the membership’s election of Corbyn supporters on the NEC, and the pre-conference, pre-election purge of Corbyn supporting delegates to stitch up the Conference itself. The right is choosing not to split, as yet, because the left still has not consolidated its hold over the party.

A further period of explosive factional warfare is inevitable in order to carry out the wishes of the membership and put Corbyn genuinely in power in the party, and not merely in office. When the left finally does consolidate its power, which is likely given a modicum of determination, but not inevitably, a split with the neo-liberals is well-nigh inevitable.

For those in the PLP and Labour Party apparatus who have defied Corbyn and the membership over the last three months are enemies of the Labour Party as a putative working class party, which it is clear the majority of the supporters of Jeremy Corbyn aspire to so make it. The PLP and other scabs are the extreme manifestation of the contradictory class nature of the Labour Party as it was founded.

A bourgeois workers’ party
Labour at its founding was not simply an assertion of the independent politics of the working class against the bosses. That was part of the impulse from below that led to its founding. But the new party’s working class nature was fatally compromised by social imperialism. The crisis that led to the formation of the Labour Party was one of British capitalism losing its world monopoly as an imperialist power.

But it was also a period of increasingly fierce inter-imperialist competition leading up to the first world war, and Labour, more openly than many other European Social Democratic parties, identified with its own ruling class in that inter-imperialist competition even as it crystallised as a putative working class party. The party was dominated by the labour bureaucracy and labour aristocracy; important sections of skilled and higher paid workers identified with imperialist oppression of other peoples as the apparent source of social gains and privileged for the working class in imperial Britain.

Though this social imperialist trend later proved to be a Europe-wide phenomenon, Labour’s Fabian and Fabian-influenced leadership was the most backward in Europe. It was aided at a crucial period by the sectarian weakness of would be Marxists such as the Social Democratic Federation who refused to participate in Labour at the beginning, allowing imperialist liberals to dominate the party.

As a result Labour consolidated itself as a bourgeois workers’ party, with a built in contradiction between a petty-bourgeois, privileged pro-imperialist leading caste, and a working class base that saw the party as the apparent source of social gains and privileged for the working class in imperial Britain.

There always was a left in the party that to a varying degree was opposed to this pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist politics dominating Labour. But despite this, the left was usually in a minority and was ideologically incoherent and ultimately servile to the right wing, in the name of Labour unity. Many decades, two world wars, a prolonged Cold War between Western imperialism and the USSR, and now the imperialism of the ‘war on terror’ have brought out the pro-capitalist logic that was always there in germ in the politics of right-wing Social Democracy, with its embrace of free market attacks on the working class, imperialist revanchism and even Zionist militarism during the 1990s and 2000s.

Class contradictions and Old Labour
In the circumstances of 2015-16 and the repeated electoral humiliation of the neo-liberal right wing of Labour, even though it tolerated a half-hearted soft left like Miliband when the working class movement demanded some pretence of class representation, in the end the treachery of the Blairites ignited a fully-fledged political revolt by Labour’s working class base, in particular a large new layer of often newly politicised younger working class people who used Jeremy Corbyn’s candidacy as an opportunity to strike back against the Thatcher-lovers in the Labour Party.

Since then we have seen a cavalcade of sabotage and anti-democratic attacks directed against the membership and elected leadership of the Labour Party by these neo-liberals. Essentially they are class enemies of the working class, as the class contradiction in Labour between its bourgeois top and working class base has come to the point where a parting of the ways is essential for the party’s survival and continuance. One way or another, there must be a split of the pro-capitalist excrecence from Labour.

The spontaneous consciousness of the mass of Labour Party members is certainly class conscious, but it is far from being revolutionary. It is in many ways ‘old Labour’. But in reality it is the old Labour left that is the dominant ideological force in Labour today, not the ‘Old Labour’ right wing. I.e. it is the politics of Jeremy Corbyn, Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone and on the periphery of the constellation, George Galloway that are the main political ideologues of this ‘Old Labour’. The old right wing of ‘Old Labour’, the bourgeois bureaucratic figures like Harold Wilson and the like, are today firmly in the Blairite camp.

No one personifies this more than Tom Watson who spent a great deal of effort, with
a certain amount of sincerity particularly over the Murdoch phone-hacking scandal, to project himself as a custodian of ‘Old Labour’ politics, only to become the most dishonest, most disingenuous and corrupt element of the Blairite coup. His irrational belief that hundreds of thousands of new Labour Party members are being manipulated by a small minority of Trotskyists appears very strange to most people who understand the minimal influence and sectarian incontinence of most of the ostensibly Trotskyist left in Britain today.

**Trotskyism and paranoia**

But in a way it is like Watson is viewing political reality through a grotesquely distorted mirror, perhaps at a fairground. What he is really afraid of is the political logic of the coming split in the Labour Party, essentially a split between its working class base and the dominant political wing of its existing, historic political-bureaucratic leadership, whose pro-capitalist decay has made impossible to seriously pose as any kind of leadership of the working class.

This is what happened in Scotland in the 2015 General Election. Confronted with a choice between left-talking nationalists and a Labour Party whose leaders offered nothing except more attacks on the working class, they decided to decamp wholesale to the SNP who at least promised them some reasonable-sounding reforms. If the Corbyn left were ousted from the Labour Party, something similar would happen to Labour in much of England. It was probably only Corbyn's critical posture towards the neo-liberal EU, even though he projected a 'stay in and fight for something better' perspective, that has saved Labour from this fate already. If Labour had done what the likes of Owen Smith and the PLP wanted in the EU referendum, a Scotland type wipeout in England would have been a racing certainty. So the logic of this situation is that Labour breaks with the historic core of its bourgeois leadership, and undivided power is gained by the wing of the old Labour Left that in recent times, particularly through the Stop the War Coalition and the anti-war movement in general, has expressed strongly anti-imperialist positions, even though within a largely parliamentarianist framework.

**Logic of breaking from social imperialist right**

The hysteria expressed by Watson and co is not because he is stupid enough to believe that the mass of Corbyn supporters are tools of Trotskyism. It has a more profound basis. It is because circumstances have arisen where the core of Labour’s social imperialist political bureaucracy is facing political extinction at the hands of a left-wing movement whose real logic is to break with the politics of the pro-imperialist labour bureaucracy itself.

**Trotsky: ‘The left faction on the General Council is distinguished by a total ideological formlessness and for this very reason it is incapable of consolidating around itself organizationally the leadership of the trade union movement … The rights win despite the fact that the lefts are more numerous. The weakness of the lefts arises from their disorder and their disorder from their ideological formlessness’**

Watson sees the danger that a cataclysmic split resulting from this situation could see Labour effectively expel its social-imperialist core (including himself) and become a real working class party, instead of the contradictory organism that a bourgeois workers’ party by definition is.

For Labour to become a real working class party would require overcoming the weaknesses and incoherence of the traditional Labour left, its traditional servility towards the right. As Trotsky wrote in a series of observations on the British Labour movement in 1925, months prior to the 1926 General Strike:

> ‘The left faction on the General Council is distinguished by a total ideological formlessness and for this very reason it is incapable of consolidating around itself organizationally the leadership of the trade union movement.

This too explains the impotence of the lefts within the Labour Party. The latter rests of course upon the same trade unions. It might appear that the left faction which ‘leads’ the General Council would have taken control of the Labour Party. But we see something quite different in reality. The extreme rights continue to control the party. This can be explained by the fact that a party cannot confine itself to isolated left campaigns but is compelled to have an overall system of policy. The lefts have no such system nor by their very essence can they. But the rights do: with them stands tradition, experience and routine and, most important, with them stands bourgeois society as a whole which slips them ready-made solutions. For MacDonald has only to translate Baldwin’s and Lloyd George’s suggestions into Fabian language. The rights win despite the fact that the lefts are more numerous. The weakness of the lefts arises from their disorder and their disorder from their ideological formlessness. In order to marshal their ranks the lefts have first of all to marshal their ideas. The best of them will only be capable of doing so under the fire of the most ruthless criticism based upon the everyday experience of the masses.’

**Labour Left and anti-imperialism**

This along with the fact that today’s Labour Corbynite lefts, for all their weaknesses, have gained real credit for their failure to capitulate to imperialism over a major imperialist war of our time: Iraq and the War on Terror. The greater differentiation of the right from the left today, as opposed to when Trotsky wrote the above passage, poses the real objective possibility of Labour breaking from bourgeois politics in the workers’ movement. This would take a major split and a driving out of the right wing Chicken Coup faction in its entirety, one way or another, either through the straightforward method of expulsion, or a more piecemeal driving out of the cretinous...
and demoralised rabble. Whatever happens, they need to be helped on their way with the maximum of expediency.

This is where Marxism, or Trotskyism, comes in. A real workers’ party is, in its real logic, spontaneously inclined towards genuine socialism, which is revolutionary Marxism.

That is what the Old Labour right-wing fixer-hack Watson is afraid of and where his apparent delusions about hundreds of thousands of Trotskyists taking over Labour, come from. There are of course no such hundreds of thousands. If there had been, a mass revolutionary party would already have existed in this country and Corbynism would never have happened in the first place. The leftist impulses of those who became Corbynites would have been channelled through that.

Corbyn and the trade union bureaucracy

But the possibility of hundreds of thousands of working class people, led by a stubborn, principled but still ideologically parliamentarist left around Corbyn, McDonnell, Abbot, Livingstone, Galloway and others, driving out the core of the right-wing, has a logic that must lead to a clash with the right-wing core of the trade union bureaucracy also. In fact it is already happening.

The NEC sub-committees that actively tried to rig the election for Owen Smith are dominated by the most venal and corrupt elements of unions like the GMB, the very Blairised bureaucracy of UNISON, etc. Iain McNicol is a prize specimen.

These bureaucratic thugs are the agents, in a very direct sense, of bourgeois Thatcherite politics in the workers’ movement and also need to be removed from office, the bureaucratic strutures they inhabit shattered, and the union officialdom subordinated to a revived trade union rank-and-file.

This clash, if carried to its conclusion would logically lead to a real struggle for the subordination of trade union officialdom to the interests of collectively organised workers, which is similar to some the measures (empowering the membership) endorsed workers, which is similar to some the elements (empowering the membership) endorsed in Labour, must take the lead in motivating the need to carry out the destruction of the Blairite faction to its logical conclusion. At the same time we must be the firmest advocates and practitioners of fraternal, comradely political debate with those on the right side of the class line that these events have drawn through the Labour Party. We need a genuine working class party, which in its actual programme must be revolutionary and internationalist to succeed. Our tasks in this regard were anticipated by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto of 1847, whose words are amazingly relevant today:

‘In what relation do the Communists stand to the proletarians as a whole? The Communists do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement. The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole. The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.’

(https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch02.htm).
**Suspend McNicol: workers’ democracy in Labour Party**

By Stuart McGee, Labour Activist

Despite the blatant ballot rigging and the purging of thousands of his supporters Jeremy Corbyn has won a second leadership election in the space of a year.

With a left wing dominated NEC, the backing of some very new, but very competent and loyal MPs, trade union leaders and senior practitioners in the legal profession, the leadership must confront and deal with the individuals consistently attempting to undermine the party and attack the membership.

After Jeremy’s victory in the 2015 leadership election the first words he spoke in his acceptance speech were to thank Iain McNicol, the general secretary of the Labour party and his staff for their hard work in undertaking the administrative tasks involved in conducting the election.

After the 2016 leadership election one of his first tasks should be to ensure that Iain McNicol is suspended pending a disciplinary investigation. Following some of the outrageous reasons given for suspending and expelling so many members in the course of the election to deprive them of a vote. This is something no democratic socialist party worthy of the name can ignore.

To say that some of the evidence to justify the actions of those conducting this witchhunt, which amounts to mass discrimination against people for their left wing social democratic beliefs, was, in many cases, flimsy, farcical, false or non-existent. That is an understatement and painting things in a bright light. The way much of this information was obtained could only have been through blatant breaches of the Data Protection Act.

Who employed the extra staff to undertake these tasks, what was their remit, where were these people employed from, how much has it cost the party? Or is it largely a Progress project funded by their billionaire backers like Lord Sainsbury, Sir Alan Sugar etc.? We need to know.

This issue cannot be passed over in silence, the hand of friendship cannot be extended for a second time to employees responsible for such behaviour.

The leadership of the Labour party has a team around it and with proper organisation and delegation it should be possible to start addressing and dealing with some of the problems that have surfaced repeatedly in Jeremy’s first year as leader. Organisation and effective delegation and above all a determination to confront and overcome problems. Nothing else will do.

- **Suspend McNicol pending a disciplinary investigation.**
- **Scrap the compliance unit.**
- **Introduce disciplinary rules that ensure due process.**
- **Full workers’ democracy in the Labour party.**

**Defeat the Purge; win the Labour party for Socialism**

By Steve Forrest, Harrow West CLP (personal capacity)

Like many thousands of others I received an email from the Labour Party informing me that I had been suspended. The email alluded to an issue of conduct at a meeting but it was in an affront to the norms of natural justice, the letter informs me that full details will be provided later.

I have been a member since 1985 and have held many posts; CLP Chair, Conference delegate, stood for council and I am currently an EC member in Harrow West CLP.

I remained in the Labour Party throughout the Blair years advocating the ideas of socialism and a democratic Labour Party alongside Jeremy Corbyn and others in what was at that time a minority opinion. I proudly defended 82 year old Walter Wolfgang at the 2005 Conference as he was physically ejected from the Labour Party conference and was duly ejected with him. Only to receive an apology from Tony Blair and the Party Chair the next day and readmitted. There are now 5 prominent left wing activists in Harrow West CLP who have been suspended or expelled from the Party, 4 officials and a councillor this in my view is no accident and is a deliberate attempt to silence the voice of the left in the Party at a local level in preparation for the re election of Jeremy Corbyn as leader.

This is an organised purge that would make McCarthy proud of the tactics in order to isolate Corbyn and take back control of the Party from a left socialist movement to the calm waters of austerity-lite. Like McCarthy it is a campaign to fuel hysteria at the base and demoralise and destabilise the move to the left in the Party.

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

The Focus E15 mums were evicted from a hostel in London to make way for luxury flats.

It was great to hear Jeremy Corbyn speak about the need to fight social cleansing, during his victory speech earlier this month. The Focus E15 campaign has been on the front line of this battle for the past two years and while we congratulate Mr Corbyn on his new position, until he challenges the actions of Labour-run councils as well as government policy, we remain sceptical.

We’ve supported many people through very difficult housing problems including those who’ve been evicted and socially cleansed from east London. Many are moved far away from support networks and family to make way for luxury apartments no working class person could ever afford. The campaign has fought battles with private landlords, property investors, bankers and housing associations, but our biggest battle of all has been with the Labour-run Newham Council.

Corbyn has said he is against austerity and believes in socialism. This is welcomed but from our experience of meeting numerous Labour politicians it has become very clear that the Labour party on the ground is not very different to the Tories on this issue and is sometimes even worse.

It’s great that Corbyn is willing to speak against social cleansing but I wonder in practice how this will pan out. Will he really make a stand against his own councillors when they turf local people out of their homes and allow private landlords to move in and make a profit?

For housing campaigners and political activists to take Corbyn seriously, he needs to challenge those within his party who are contributing to the suffering and abuse of the working class.

He could start with the Labour mayor of Newham, Sir Robin Wales. In September 2013 when some of the 29 mothers who were being evicted from the Focus E15 hostel asked what support he would give us, Wales’ response was: ‘If you can’t afford to live in Newham, you can’t afford to live in Newham’. That says it all. How can Wales and Corbyn be in the same Party? Whose policies are going to win out on the ground?

The young mums and their children who lived at the the E15 hostel were evicted and offered homes as far away as Manchester and Birmingham. But some of us decided to fight back and after occupations, protests and marches we were offered housing in the borough, albeit on short term tenancies. And this is happening across London, there have been similar accusations of social cleansing by Labour-run councils in Lambeth, Greenwich and elsewhere.

Our conclusion is that we cannot rely on Corbyn to tackle this issue. He is opposed by most of his Shadow Cabinet and by many Labour MPs. For this reason, we will carry on organising, getting out on the streets and taking direct action. We have to represent ourselves, we can’t rely on politicians whether they are in Westminster or our local council.

I wish the new Labour leader well and would ask him to join us on the streets with the working class people who are taking a stand against social cleansing but for now it remains to be seen whether the rest of his party will follow his lead. ▲

The Fight for Democracy in Labour

Following Jeremy Corbyn’s great victory in the leadership election by 62% he invited the wolf into the sheep pen and they were all amazed when the wolf killed the sheep, who would have imagined he would do that? Trotsky’s observation about the ideological formlessness of the Labour left leading to their organisational chaos as quoted in our editorial was never more apt. The right packed Conference and Momentum and the rest of the left let in most of his Shadow Cabinet and by many Labour MPs. For this reason, we will carry on organising, getting out on the streets and taking direct action. We have to represent ourselves, we can’t rely on politicians whether they are in Westminster or our local council.

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The return of pogroms to Ukraine

The village of Loschchyivka in the Odesa region, Ukraine, is up in arms over the rape and murder of 9-year-old girl allegedly by a Roma man.

At the end of August, about 10 Roma families numbering approximately 80 people were forced to flee from the village of Loschchyivka in an incident described in the Ukrainian media as a ‘Gypsy pogrom’.

An amateur video captured the August 27 incident in which a crowd of men threw rocks at windows and broke doors, as police watched but did nothing. The next day, about eight homes were destroyed — the walls knocked down with tractors, one home burned, another was left without a roof. Inside, television screens were smashed, mattresses ripped, a kitchen stove was thrown on its side.

‘We got a phone call, they said, ‘Leave now or we will kill you.’ We didn’t have time to take our things or our documents. We just grabbed the children and ran,’ Nikolay Churali, a Roma man who fled from his home with his wife, two children, his elderly mother and 10 relatives, was quoted as saying. ‘We were outside. We cried. The mosquitoes bit us. A half hour later, they started to break down the houses. I can’t describe it with words.’

The curator of the Moldova’s Jewish Heritage Museum, Irina Shihova, said it’s horrible that pogroms have ‘not changed over centuries.’

‘The mechanism of the blood libel [including the willingness to invent a crime], the willingness to transfer the guilt from one criminal to an entire community, and the readiness to take the law into one’s own hands and to start a pogrom — as well as the xenophobia, the fear of the outsider — these things are the same,’ Shihova wrote on Facebook. ▲

The fruits of the Maiden ‘revolution’; shame on its leftist supporters:

Following Jeremy Corbyn’s great victory in the leadership election by 62% he invited the wolf into the sheep pen and they were all amazed when the wolf killed the sheep, who would have imagined he would do that? Trotsky’s observation about the ideological formlessness of the Labour left leading to their organisational chaos as quoted in our editorial was never more apt. The right packed Conference and Momentum and the rest of the left let in most of his Shadow Cabinet and by many Labour MPs. For this reason, we will carry on organising, getting out on the streets and taking direct action. We have to represent ourselves, we can’t rely on politicians whether they are in Westminster or our local council.

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Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
In the aftermath of the narrow vote for Brexit on 23 June, there has been a major escalation of racist and chauvinist attacks on both East European workers, and people from long established ethnic minorities such as Afro-Caribbeans and South Asians. Social media has highlighted the frequency and nature of these attacks, with racist thugs loudly proclaiming that ‘we’ the ‘indigenous' population had voted to ‘get rid’ of ‘foreigners’, and some of the reality has found its way into the mainstream media.

Polish and East European workers have been the targets: leaflets have been pushed through doors threatening ‘Polish vermin' with violence. Polish cultural centres have been attacked and daubed with racist graffiti, and there have been a rash of violent attacks, including the disgusting murder of a Polish man, Arkadiusz Jóźwik, over the August Bank holiday weekend, in Harlow, Essex. This was followed up by another violent assault a week or so later in the same town.

Black and Asian people have been abused and threatened by pro-Brexit racists and told to ‘go home’. These incidents are just a small sample of a large litany of incidents. The Institute of Race Relations compiled a list of over 100 incidents in the month after the referendum vote just by monitoring media (http://www.irr.org.uk/news/post-brexit-racism/). But even these are undoubtedly only a small fraction of what is actually going on. Many victims of abuse and even violent racial crime do not report such incidents because of justified distrust of the police and the legal system.

**Leave, Remain, and Xenophobic Bigotry**

This wave of racial abuse and violence can be put at the door of the bourgeois politicians on both sides of the recent referendum vote. The entire thrust of Johnson, Gove and Farage’s ‘Leave’ campaigning was whipping up hatred of migrant workers; but the bulk of the ‘Remain’ side was no better, endorsing both fortress Europe racism against migrant workers and demands for an ‘emergency brake’ on European migration, agreeing with the Leave side that migrants were to be treated as an enemy population.

Theresa May, now Prime Minister and pro-Remain, was responsible for sending vans with the hate message ‘Go Home’ (ostensibly to illegal immigrants, though in the small print) touring round areas with heavily immigrant communities in the recent past.

Not only East European migrants but also Syrian and Middle Eastern refugees were targets for the hatred of the Leave campaign as Farage in particular banged the drum against those fleeing the wars the West and the Israelis have waged in the Middle East. These wars destroyed Iraq and Libya and continue to destabilise great swathes of the Fer- tile Crescent and North Africa, in pursuit of the objective of creating anarchy, social collapse and fragmentation of the Arab world in particular. This is not only aimed at asserting US global hegemony but also at preventing any coherent Arab unification that may threaten Israel’s ability to seize Arab land with impunity.

Often the patter that came from the pro-Remain Tories and Blairities was that staying in the EU was the way to halt EU migrants and refugees though a deal with the EU itself, whereas an ‘isolated’ UK would not get cooperation from the EU. This was desperate stuff on the part of the Remain campaign, cringing in the face of the anti-immigrant populism that has gained much influence in British society because of the relative absence of working class politics for more than two decades.

**Labour movement chauvinism**

Even where elements of working class politics existed, it often undermined itself because of its parliamentary reformism and thus programmatic ties to the nation-state. Britain is not just any old nation state; however, much it may have declined from its heyday of empire, it is still an imperialist state and a key, if junior, partner of the United States in its imperialist crusades around the world.

Therefore, British national sentiment does not contain any element of justification or a struggle against oppression, as does, say, Palestinian, Irish or Latin American nationalism. It is reactionary and simple – we as Marxists do not support the ‘right’ of British chauvinists, even those with ties to the labour movement, to exclude or restrict migrants from British soil.

Unfortunately, the Labour left has been historically bound to reformist schemes involving the nation-state here as a potential vehicle for reforms in the supposed interests of the working class. And it is true that real gains have been won within the framework of the national state: the existence of the National Health Service is apparently a case in point. Legislated into existence by Attlee’s post WWII Labour government, it was the realisation of a proposal actually made by Beveridge, a Liberal peer, during the war.

But it is profoundly misleading to see the NHS as a product of national reformism. It was rather one of a series of concessions made by the ruling classes in the imperialist countries in circumstances of the extreme discredit that fascism threatened to bring upon capitalism itself at that time. In order to try to obscure the connection between fascist barbarism and the capitalist system, relatively generous social welfare concessions were made to the working class across the imperialist world.

It was fear that the widespread hatred of workers for fascism would come to be directed against the system itself, and lead to its revolutionary overthrow, that led the imperialists to adopt ‘welfare capitalism’ as a disguise for the system.

Only decades later, at the dawn of the neoliberal era in the 1970s, would capitalism seriously break with the ‘welfare capitalism’ consensus and launch a prolonged, but often quite cautious, offensive against these gains. It is the potential for class struggle on an international level that offers the hope of defeating and reversing this offensive, not a return to delusions about ‘national’ reformism. But that is one of the key weaknesses of the Labour Left.

**‘Lexit’ Delusion**

Thus the most ‘radical’ elements of the left campaigned for so called ‘Lexit’ – left wing exit, in the name of Britain taking control of its sovereignty from the EU in order to elect a left government that could legislate for socialism, or at least some serious social re-
form. This is the ideology that motivated the likes of No2EU in the past, leading elements of the RMT Rail Union, the Socialist Party, the SWP, and in the referendum itself, George Galloway.

The problem is that, reformist illusions aside, Britain is an imperialist country and the demand for its ‘sovereignty’ – which was never violated in any case but merely voluntarily and partially delegated to EU institutions - can only have reactionary consequences. The result is that organisations and individuals who were and still are among the most subjectively fervent opponents of racism and chauvinism against immigrants, and who have led movements that have mobilised millions to protest against imperialism’s worst recent crimes, find themselves rubbing shoulders with reactionary chauvinists like Farage and even endorsing demands for immigration restrictions on migrant workers.

This is the dead end of nationalist reformism. Galloway for instance had the courage to openly side with Iraqi resistance against British and US imperialism, but in the referendum this most pro-immigrant of Labour politicians was rubbing shoulders with Farage and denouncing ‘unrestricted’ immigration.

Militant/Socialist Party have always flinched from opposing immigration controls as a matter of principle, as part of their accommodation with imperialism, including such manifestations as Zionism and Ulster Loyalism, thus showing their chauvinist, parliamentarianist deviation from Marxism.

The SWP (and its splinter group Counterfire), which historically stood, at least in theory, for the abolition of all immigration controls, nevertheless lined up in a victorious campaign politically dominated by anti-immigrant chauvinists like the ‘Tory right and Farage.

**Corbyn and the EU**

Jeremy Corbyn historically had similar views on the EU to the Bennites that are probably most characteristically associated today with George Galloway (since the Greek debacle, prior to which he was actually pro-EU). Corbyn called for a critical ‘Remain’ vote in the referendum. He was savagely attacked by the pro-Remain Blairite PLP for his critical stance, as part of the political rationale for the coup aimed at unseating him.

In fact, it is likely that it was his critical stance on the EU that saved Labour from being completely undermined in England and Wales, outside London, in the way it was wiped out in Scotland in the 2015 general election. It was Labour’s joint neoliberal campaign with the Tories against Scottish independence that drove Labour’s discontented working class base to the SNP. It is not difficult to imagine something similar happening South of the border if the Blairites had had their way over the EU referendum. The Blairites are fully aware of this; their propaganda against Corbyn on the EU is reflective of their indifference to the very survival of the Labour Party.

Corbyn’s ‘Remain and Reform’ stance on the EU at least defended the rights of migrant workers. He has talked of ‘solidarity’ when confronted with chauvinist agitation against migrant workers in the labour movement. His perspective of reforming the EU, however, is indeed another variant of left reformism, as the EU itself is a capitalist, neoliberal bloc dominated by imperialist states like France and Germany, and not a vehicle for gains for the working class.

Greece showed that very clearly. We do not endorse the EU’s single market for labour and capital, just as we do not endorse capitalist markets in general. But we do defend workers’ rights, and a key right of any worker is the right to sell his or her labour for the highest price s/he can get. We are opposed to all restrictions on this, including chauvinist ones that purport to benefit one section of the working class (‘indigenous’) workers against another migrant section.

**Proletarian internationalism not labour protectionism**

Working class support for labour protectionism actually helps to divide the working class along national lines and severely damages the possibility of international solidarity. And since capitalism has become more and more internationalised for many decades, and the IT revolution in the more recent decades has made capital flight qualitatively easier, international solidarity is going to be a crucial weapon even in defensive struggles in many countries, both imperialist and semi-colonial, in the future. Without it, the working class will suffer more very damaging defeats.

One positive effect of migration is that it brings into existence, despite all the strains, an international working class, not as an abstraction, but as a material reality. That has always been true of capitalism. In an earlier period, by drawing into the cities and industry enormous numbers of former poor peasants, it created its potential gravedigger in subsequent generations. This is also true of migration: and it is why all kinds of reactionary backward-looking bourgeois nationalists hate migration and migrant workers.

We as socialists and supporters of workers’ rights, in the Labour Party, have to make a leap of our understanding, and realise that migrant workers’ rights ARE workers’ rights. Just as much as the right to join trade unions and to strike and struggle for better wages and conditions, so the right to seek work where the best conditions are available is also indivisible for workers. To say otherwise is to poison the relations between sections of workers with different national origins, and so destroy the prospect of class solidarity both domestically and internationally. In effect, such chauvinism encourages different groups of workers to scab on each other’s struggles.

We need to fight to win so-called ‘indigenous’ workers to defend migrant workers’ rights and struggles as the same as their own. We need to organise a movement that will physically defend migrant workers against racist and xenophobic attacks, whether from organised non-state racists and fascists, or indeed the state.

The new Labour left should have no truck with labour protectionism, but should adopt as its own the slogan:

**BRITISH WORKERS, MIGRANT WORKERS, SAME STRUGGLE SAME FIGHT, WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE! ▲**

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Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
Tommy McKearney’s 2011 book takes us through the Troubles in the north of Ireland from their inception in the mid-1960s to the general election in the south in 2011. It is enthralling as a coherent narrative and ties up many issues for the reader in the overall picture he paints so well. I certainly understood many things in their context much better after reading it.

But this review will concentrate on the politics he espouses in the book with which we found many disagreements. The first are points out many times, the result of the ‘Irish Republic’. He says (p 204):

‘...dissident’ Republicans. He says (p 204):

‘Single-issue Republicanism focusing exclusively on a unitary Irish state has shrivelled because it has finally accomplished as much as it was able to achieve. The reality is only a small handful of people within Republican ranks promoted a semi-spiritual and Nationalist vision of the ‘Irish Republic’.

There is no mention of or defence of the political or even human rights of hold-out Republican prisoners in Maghaberry or anywhere else.

He takes issue with Bob Purdy [1] and states unequivocally that reform of the state was not possible and Purdy was wrong to suggest it was unlike the Civil Rights movement in the US (unqualified success?) because discrimination was less ‘intense and blatant’ and if ‘the liberals in the North had been able to win a constitutional option for the ‘sectarian state’ (and for other reasons the government in London) could not simply concede to the civil right demands in spite of the fact that they were indeed, by any standards on any contemporary ‘normal’ bourgeois democratic govern-
March 1914, he made the following commentary:
‘And now that the progress of democracy else-where has somewhat muzzled the dogs of aris-tocratic power, now that in England as well as in Ireland the forces of labour are stirring and making for freedom and light, this same gang of well-fed plunderers of the people, secure in Union held upon their own dupes, seek by threats of force to arrest the march of idea and stifle the light of civilisation and liberty …

Such a scheme as that agreed to by Redmond and Devlin, the betrayal of the national democ-rracy of industrial Ulster would mean a carnival of reaction both North and South, would set back the wheels of progress, would destroy the oncoming unity of the Irish Labour movement and paralyse all advanced movements whilst it endured. To it Labour should give the bitterest opposition, against it Labour in Ulster should fight even to the death, if necessary, as our fathers fought before us.’

McKearney tells us that even though ‘Northern Ireland’ became a ‘militarised society’ nonetheless it had ‘an indelible demo-cratic hue’ (p.4) and then goes on to sym-pathetically evaluate the views of pundits O’Dowd, Rolston and Tomlinson on what was the differences between ‘Northern Ire-land’ and ‘other bourgeois liberal states’ (p.6) and ‘most other liberal states’ (p.7) in apparent disregard that this is precisely what ‘Northern Ireland’ was not and is not. It was and is an illegitimate, artificial state, like col-o-nial Algeria, Rhodesia and South Africa were and like Israel and some of the south-ern states in the USA like Alabama and Mis-sissippi still are; states that are not nations but created artificially to defend the privileg-es of a religious of racial colonial minority thereby dividing the working class along those lines. As he outlines so well that is precisely what ‘Northern Ireland’ is and why it should be referred to as ‘the north of Ire-land’ or the ‘six north-eastern counties of Ireland’ to reject the British imposition.

He is therefore profoundly wrong to con-clude in his introduction: ‘If we were to ar-gue, for example, that we will forever let our differences about the ‘Border’ (why do we need these inverted commas?) divide us, then prospects for a properly developed opposition to neo-liberalism will be hope-less’ (p.19). The total opposite is the case. We cannot develop a proper opposition to neo-liberalism, now enforced by Sinn Féin in alliance with the DUP, without workers’ equality and, given that the border is still there, that ensures Loyalist supremacy and continuing working class inequality and divi-sion.

Kearney is simply wrong about the grow-ing equality that he claims is now happening because of the GFA. In reality the Loyalist and Nationalist middle class are doing well out of it but the working class Republicans and Loyalists have got nothing but austerity. And the Nationalists have got more austeri-ty; they are still significantly more unem-ployed than Loyalists and the Housing Execu-tive is notorious for hiding its results but what happens in North Belfast in gerryman-dering and discrimination in housing just cannot be hidden. And the Loyalist working class still blame the ‘Catholics’ for their oppres-sion not their own ruling class—because of the border! The ‘Flags’ confrontation and ‘Peace Walls’ as clear evidence of a growing far right movement amongst Loyalist workers, whose Orange Lodges welcome all types of far rightists and fascist from Britain and Eu-rope and whose youth attack immigrants far more than the Nationalist community. The ‘Border’ is not alone physical but it is a political and ideological weapon against workers’ unity. It is a priority to demolish it in the course of the struggle defeat British imperialism and to overthrow capitalism north and south.

This error is reinforced by the assessment of Britain’s reasons for opposing democratic rights for Nationalists (pp.59-60). He implies Britain would have conceded to the NICR but for the cold war with the USSR, ‘its NATO allies viewed remaining in Ireland as a strategic asset that had to be kept within the Western alliance’. This understanding is profoundly one sid-ed and therefore incorrect. It follows from this that the collapse of the USSR in 1991 should have removed that cold war threat and by the time of the GFA Britain would have been supported Irish unity.

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Britain and Irish political leaders North and South opposed the mass movement that the NIRC sparked from 1969 to the 1971 introduction of internment and the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre, and the mass movement around the hunger strikes ten years later because they were movements of revolutionary proportions which threatened both Irish capitalism and British imperialism and therefore the partition of Ireland.

And here we note the other great error, the wrong analysis of the relationship between the struggle in Ireland and the class struggle of the British working class. In his chapter on The War in England (p.127) he speculates:

'The IRA’s English campaign certainly made a powerful point, reminding Britain that its war in Ireland was not a cost-free exercise. Whether in the long run it was the best option for Republicans is another question. Might a different approach to a British working class banded and embittered by Thatcherism have paid higher dividends? Might it have been possible to create a firm political alliance with sections of Britain’s alienated and marginalised population that would have put real pressure on Westminster? We cannot know.'

We can and do know the answer to that question and its came during the great miner’s strike of 1984-5. As we wrote in Class Consciousness and the Revolutionary Party:

The struggle itself had made the miners and their communities open to political advances in all areas as shown by the struggles of the Women against Pit Closures, the Lesbian and Gay support groups etc. The Irish and Black support was reciprocated. But it needed a real revolutionary party to concretise those advances in terms of new cadres for the revolution. This largely did not happen, few miners actually joined far left groups but there was a huge influx into the Labour Party. Here the obvious opportunity to qualitatively develop class consciousness on vital issues for the British working class – racism and Ireland – was criminally rejected by the WRP and many other left groups to maintain unprincipled relations with Arthur Scargill. Their ‘united front’ with the NUM was unprincipled and one sided, it amounted to an opportunist rotten bloc with Scargill and the opportunity to win miners to revolutionary politics was lost. This was a major factor in the break-up of the WRP and other left groups after the defeat of the strike. However, it would be wrong to conclude that all is now lost from that strike. The heightened class consciousness still lives on even in the Labour party and in the trade unions. [2]

However, despite its proximity to the hunger strikes, the IRA/Sinn Féin leadership had no such orientation. And none, apart from individuals and small groups like Workers Power, had this orientation in Britain then. Learning from 1920 and early 1921 [2] the appeal should have been to the British working class ranks and file and that fight should have been conducted within the unions against the pro-imperialist leaders of these unions.

Many did sterling work within the unions on Ireland but the IRA tactic of the bombings of civilian areas in Britain and the North of Ireland made that unity very difficult to achieve. McKearney sees the solution as a ‘new and different republic – one that is not merely independent but a republic that is socialist.’ (p.208). But not one achieved through revolution (p.209):

‘it is logical therefore to argue that ending the current constitutional position of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom would be a positive step towards ending sectarianism and replacing it with normal class politics – a vital step towards building a socialist republic’.

One wonders what makes that former IRA prisoner and hunger striker, Marxist of sorts, leading member of Congress ‘86 and Forthwrite magazines, different to the Officials/Workers Party who slip-slid away from opposition to British imperialism and Irish capitalism under the cover of Marxists/Stalinists/Michael Collins two stage theories (‘a vital step [ing stone] towards building a socialist republic?’) to embrace ‘normal (reformist) class politics’.

Notes
Here's a war going on in feminism. Played out over Twitter and the blogosphere, within the minefield of intersectionality, radical feminists (radfems) and trans activists are, on a daily basis, knocking lumps out of each other. Each accuses the other of various forms of misogyny, hate-speech, transmisogyny, lesbophobia and protecting the hetero-normative-patriarchal-hierarchy. Does your head hurt yet? Well this guide hopes to be an antidote for what some are calling 'gender-fatigue'.

Obama has issued an edict declaring that students in America should be allowed to use the bathroom which corresponds to what they identify as their own gender as opposed to the gender given on their birth certificates. Feminists were furious, but it was two tribes of feminists against one another. This follows on from similar moves in Canada where one transwoman took to social media posting photos of herself doing her make-up in public toilets whilst men urinated behind her to highlight the absurdity of this.

The radfems in turn spoke up to say that allowing ‘men’ or transwomen into female bathrooms put women, and young girls, at risk of sexual assault. Wasn’t that very reason we have separate WCs in the first place? WELL…

TERF, came the cry from trans activists, a blackball acronym standing for ‘trans exclusionary radical feminist’. Misogyny, replied the TERFs, concluding that they were being targeted because they’re outspoken women defending other women.

Most debate around trans matters focuses on the body of the transwoman, someone who has transitioned from male to female.

Amongst the radfem crowd some have it that though gender is a social performance, sex is designated at birth, whilst others go further still arguing that gender is designated at birth, calling themselves ‘womyn-born-womyn’ (WBW, the spelling differentiating them from man, see?). This cannot be altered any more than one can alter XX or XY chromosomes.

Trans people and their allies disagree, some going as far to even claim that sex is a social construct, and demand they are granted recognition as complete women. So on the one hand we have biological-determinism, and on the other socially constructed gender, with all the malleability that would have to entail.

Firewoman, a radfem blogger, has it that transwomen are really still male, a gender essentialist argument which places the source of all womanhood at birth. Moreover, as a lesbian she thinks that transwomen are actually just straight men who inauthentically appropriate lesbianism.

Some radfems insist on calling transwomen by their given male name whilst all trans activists will use a person’s chosen name. Where the issue gets really serious however is not when a self-identifying woman is called a man’s name, or when they are thrown out of a women’s toilet, but when we look at the suicide rate amongst trans people. It is disproportionately high when compared with the rest of the population, and seems to, in the majority of circumstances, occur amongst young people whose parents cannot accept their transition. The TERF community seem almost willingly blind to the fact that many young trans people would rather die than live as a gender they don’t identify with.

But to revisit biological determinism as put forward by radfems, surely this way of approaching gender and sex has a major flaw. If advances in technology cannot be used to transition someone from one sex to another, there is a parallel argument to be made that advances in technology should also not be used to provide women with safe abortions. Isn’t that also a skewing of ‘nature’? Doesn’t the foetus then possess some innate characteristic that would entitle it to be preserved?

I’ve yet to encounter any serious feminist who stands against abortion rights; it’s almost a shibboleth for feminism, yet the illogical argument that one state can be altered, pregnancy, whilst the other, sex, cannot, doesn’t seem to faze the radfem mentality.

That said, there is a certain McCarthyism prevalent within how trans activists go about defending their comrades. Johann Hari wrote a scathing piece which correctly identified this trend making the essential point that once identified as a TERF you are targeted by a hugely active and very vocal sections of activists. It reduced the renowned scholar Mary Beard to tears when she, apparently inadvertently, signed a letter which was identified as transphobic. Peter Tatchell likewise has been blackballed recently, along with Julie Bindel whose gender essentialist arguments have caused outrage amongst trans people and their allies.

The strongest argument advanced by radfems is the idea that male privilege advances transwomen. The term is used within intersectionality which has it that if you are male you have certain innate advantages over women. Likewise if you are white, able-bodied, heterosexual etc. All these points intersect, meaning that the lived experience of a black women is multi-faceted as she must put up with two forms of oppression, these based on her skin colour and gender. When it comes to trans issues the radfem contingent argue that transwomen are inordinately protected in law and have made such advancements in a relatively short period of time (in comparison in more traditional women’s movements) because they are really men, and have male privilege.

Cisgendered privilege is used to counter this argument; if you were born to a sex which corresponds to the later gender role you will perform, i.e. female and woman, you have the advantage over someone who wasn’t. That many trans people have experienced being attacked in the street by complete strangers supports this argument.

It might also be suggested that by abandoning manhood, you voluntarily relinquish male privilege. Moreover, the radfems have the ear of reactionary senators.

On 25 May 2016 42 Republican members of Congress joined 180 Democrats to vote through Obama’s transgender directive that transwomen can use the bathroom of their choice. No Democrat voted against; all 195 noes were Republicans. Obama’s directive is being strongly challenged by many states.

Some have suggested that TERFs constitute a hate group, are disproportionately listened to as the voice of feminism and use their influence to pass into law various measures which are transphobic.

The test of that will be whether Obama can really see through his edict and allow trans students in America to use the bathroom of their choice. ▲
Historic Compromises, Ralph Miliband, Allende 1973 and Jeremy Corbyn

By Wang Hongwen

Socialist Fight Introduction

Ralph Miliband (father of former Labour leader Ed and contender David) wrote this very radical reformist article on the other 9/11, Chile 1973, just a month after the terrible coup.

He does consider the revolutionary alternative to Allende’s course but rejects it ultimately in the paragraph quoted below and so finishes a very informative and detailed article on that coup in a very lame and apologetic manner.

The significance of the article for the prospects of the government of Jeremy Corbyn and what might follow him from the left are obvious, as are the analysis of the character of Allende compared to Corbyn. Surely as compromisers at the head of a mass socialist movement they are very alike. Let us remember the warning the British general made immediately Corbyn was elected [2] and the outcome of the coup in Chile in 1973. [2]

Note that Miliband senior seems to defend the obviously correct instincts of the masses as the revolutionary situation developed. The soviets in the Russian Revolution are the obvious political ancestors of the comités de la Unidad Popular which developed everywhere in Chile in that revolutionary period.

Miliband sees these spontaneous organs of working class power as mere creations of Allende and says the new regime ‘must from the start begin to build and encourage the building of a network of organs of power’ but then displays his own fatal inability to see the capitalist state as the absolute intractable enemy of the working class in revolution because these ‘organs of power’ must be made ‘parallel to and complementing the state power’.

Lastly we really cannot let any account of the Chile coup pass without mentioning the absolute class treachery of Mao Tse-tung, who actually supported the coups in Chile and Mobutu in Zaire and welcomed the fascist regimes on the basis that they were allies of the USSR, the most dangerous imperialist power on the planet. The US agreed, obviously.

This is where Ralph Miliband definitively rejects revolution:

‘What this means is not simply “mobilizing the masses” or “arming the workers.” These are slogans — important slogans — which need to be given effective institutional content. In other words, a new regime bent on fundamental changes in the economic, social, and political structures must from the start begin to build and encourage the building of a network of organs of power, parallel to and complementing the state power, and constituting a solid infrastructure for the timely “mobilization of the masses” and the effective direction of its actions.’ [3]

I write this as short as I can, because to review the whole article needs or a book. I make very few references to the British situation because I do not know it well. Corbyn is not an Allende, the Communist Party of Chile (Partido Comunista de Chile) led by Luis Corvalán, were not looking for socialism but for a gentleman’s agreement with the centre right to make some very necessary reforms to the backward Chilean capitalism. But this nonetheless gave the Soviet Union a foot in the back yard of US imperialism and they would not tolerate a ‘new Cuba’ without a big fight. The USSR let Allende down and the CP, even though after the coup they took an ultra-left turn and reproached the USSR later for their ‘pacificism’, didn’t want a ‘new Cuba’ either... The whole struggle was condemned from the beginning and the CP knows it. They had forced their best militants not to vote for Allende in 1970! They tried in every way to arrive at their cherished compromise but to no avail.

As with Romeo and Juliet we might see them as doomed to failure by their own destinies; ‘A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life,’ / Whose misadventured piteous overthrows / Doth with their death bury their parents’ strife.’ In this real and political world, as Saint-Just has said, ‘Those who make revolution half way only dig their own graves’. In fact, you can’t achieve anything worthwhile with a half-hearted effort.

The CP are still trying the same in Chile today. More disenchanted and corrupt, but the same policy and with the same result. But the masses are more reluctant to follow them—they have just lost the elections in the Unions because of their treachery. Please, don’t miss your chances if ever there is one in Britain. Better, strive to confirm Marx’s predictions. For that abandon every dogmatism, but don’t forget the laws of the class struggle always apply. They will be verified always, but often at the last moment. Before, is the ability and efforts of the most militant combined with extreme flexibility that will move the process forward.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
The coup was mainly directed against Allende’s win in the elections (they believed that Allende and his political coalition were sincerely fighting to institute socialism), the peasants were occupying the landlords’ lands in great numbers and the ‘poblabores’, people without a decent roof over their heads, were occupying open pieces of ground on the periphery of the main towns to build their shantytowns.

For the rest, the description of all the particularities of the legal and parliamentary fight that was going on is quite accurate but, even it is very important to hold all the particularities of a fight in a country with some democratic-bourgeois traditions and institutions, he dares not go to the roots of the problem. Even if he goes very far for a social democrat, he has a left social democrat point of view, he just cannot see that the main aspect of the whole question was not the failures of the Allende coalition, or the importance of the reactionary offensive (this aspect will always be there) but the lack of a political direction for the rapidly rising working class movement.

What he sees as an electoral ‘triumph’ for the Allende coalition (when they get 44% in March 1973) is in fact the expression of the rising consciousness of the masses, which even confronted by the sabotage of the right and centre under the direction of US imperialism, even if they still remain attached to Allende and the UP, were asking to go even further towards socialism but mainly against (and in the rough ways of the working class) against the ‘momios’ (the rightist opposition).

The coup was mainly directed against this rising of the working class will to fight and their class consciousness which was going ever further left but could find no real guidance. The main leftists in Chile then were the MIR, [4] a sort of POUM [5] and the left wing of the Socialist Party a sort of Largo Caballero [6] mess. This should not be forgotten. If the plebiscite that Allende was to propose the 11 September 1973 to solve the ‘institutional crisis’ was not accepted it was because, as one of the main conspirators and head of the bosses said: ‘The plebiscite would have signified the end of the Allende government and on this we can count on Allende’s word of honour, he would respect his word, but who can guarantee us that the working class will follow him?’

That’s the real ground reason of the coup. This reason underlies and determines all the constitutional, political parliamentary strife and every other form that covers this question.

The problem is that after the fall of Allende, every sensible social democrat politician has taken the conclusion that the leftist course of Allende was bound to fail because it will go exactly the same way as Allende.

Mitterrand in France will make the reforms that were acceptable by a large minority of the bourgeoisie. Blair in Britain moved even further to the right to the point of making social democracy a better help to imperialism and initiated more attacks against the labour movement and the working class than their traditional rightist politicians. Going back, one of the main ‘errors’ of the Allende’s Popular Unity government was to dissolve, to abandon the Comités de la Unidad Popular, the militants grass roots committees that had helped achieve the electoral triumphs and were organised all over the country in every factory, works, public administration, poor neighbourhood, etc.

Well, it should be said that, on account of the international situation, the scope of the most influential political party of that time (and going back to 1934 till today at least) the CP was not trying to make a new Socialist society, in whatever form they could imagine this, but to conclude a compromise with the ‘middle classes’ represented or by the Radical Party in the 30-40s or with the Christian Democrats in the 60-70 till today. And with ‘a part’ of US imperialism ‘the ones interested in some capitalist (or “progressive”) development of the Latin American countries. Because, they ‘theorise’, that they will have a broader market to sell their products in. That is the ‘Historical Compromise’ [7] that at the time was proposed and imposed to the communist parties in Europe and in Latin America.

And the Chilean Communist Party follows that line blindly.

Without this two important, fundamental questions, the article is a very good one (that is a very social democrat article of a bourgeois intellectual but it is useless, not to say dangerous to be followed. There is no real conclusion at its end because there is no possible solution on the basis of its analysis. Revolutions take place with the conscious participation of the masses. There can exist some real consciousness or a sort of Real Need that forms a distorted form of consciousness. The question of the leader comes here with big force.

The limitations of all bourgeois politicians, even left social democratic ones

Allende was an old political member of the right wing of the Socialist Party. He has been minister, senator, parliamentary for decades and was the candidate of the CP and the far right spectrum of the UP (Popular Unity). He ended his life with arms in hand fighting a coup as another franc-macon (freemason) and president of Chile died, committing suicide after a lost civil war at the end of the nineteenth century instigated by the British imperialism that time.

First of all, it should be said that when the masses enter into in the uprising the whole spectre of the political life fractures to the left and to the extreme right. Allende dying as a hero is an expression of the great amounts of energy the working class could give if they were called to fight. But, as a bourgeois politician, and he was one of them, and they will never call the work-

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
ing class for that fight. The middle classes fear most, not the massacres of the army but the working class destroying every obstacle in front of them. And they know that they can’t allow the explosion to begin because they could not know where it might stop.

When the time came for fighting, for the ones who were willing to fight, were to overcome many obstacles. These did not include the CP or Allende who had the broader support of the masses. The obstacles included bourgeois legality, the laws against the arming of the population, the lack of organisation of the broader masses — remember the dissolution of the ‘Comités de la Unidad Popular’ –, the force of the bourgeois propaganda which controlled 70% of all the mass media, the Allende propaganda telling that the army is ‘the people with uniform’, the calls ‘No to the Civil War’ by the CP and the personal ties the MIR leaders had with Allende and their absolute lack of militants and influence. Not to say the lack of revolutionary leaders or a revolutionary party which are conditions sine qua non of a revolutionary situation so complicated of a class struggle situation such as this (and every other).

This elementary conclusion has been taken by every ‘responsible’ social democrat all over the world and out of a capitalist crisis, they have taken the only possible way. To capitulate and to be better bourgeois politicians than their ‘concurrents’ from the right. With the crisis, the question that are propelled to the fore are, with every difference coming from different countries and circumstances, more or less the same, and the problems should also be similar. The basic laws of revolutions should confirm themselfs always, but the particularities will change.

My own conclusions from my own struggle; three problems and three solutions

Chile was in need of three main changes, the ones the UP try to resolve in its own way: 1. the agrarian question that was resolved finally in a capitalist form; 2. the question of the riches of the country (copper and other minerals) in the hands of imperialism, the problem today is even worse, and 3. the poverty problem which is more or less the same.

Our fight had to have some result. Not the one we fight for, a socialist agriculture, but a capitalist one. The result of your fight is never nothing. As Engels tell us, the result is always something no one looked for but always sole sort of progress. What are my personal lessons for all this? Nothing much original. 1. First of all, you need a real working class party and a very good leader. Without that you got nothing. 2. Second you need an organized working class on the rise. 3. Third you need the absolute consciousness that this will be a fight ‘à la vie, à la mort’ (in life and in death).

But also, favourable international conditions (which Allende lacked) or a strong international working class movement will be of much help. The main aspect of all this are the two first ones. The ones we lacked.

Notes
[1] The Guardian 20 September, Propaganda of a capitalist form; 2. the revolutionaries to the last.
[5] The Workers’ Party of Marxist Unification (Spanish: Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista, POU; Catalan: Partit Obrer d’Unificació Marxista) was a Spanish communist political party formed during the Second Republic and mainly active around the Spanish Civil War. It was formed by the fusion of the Trotskyist Communist Left of Spain (Izquierda Comunista de España, ICE) and the Workers and Peasants’ Bloc (BOC, affiliated with the Right Opposition) against the will of Leon Trotsky, with whom the former broke. The writer George Orwell served with the party’s militia and witnessed the Stalinist repression of the movement, which would help form his anti-authoritarian ideas in later life. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/POUM
[6] Francisco Largo Caballero (15 October 1869 — 23 March 1946) was a Spanish politician and trade unionist. He was one of the historic leaders of the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party (PSOE) and of the Workers’ General Union (UGT). In 1936 and 1937 Cabaliero served as the Prime Minister of the Second Spanish Republic during the Spanish Civil War. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Largo_Caballero
[7] In 1973, the Italian Communist Party’s General Secretary Enrico Berlinguer launched in Rinasica (a communist magazine) a proposal for a ‘democratic alliance’ with the Christian Democracy, embraced by Aldo Moro. The call for this alliance was inspired by the overthrow of the Allende Government in Chile. For Berlinguer, the events in Chile proved that the Marxist left could not aspire to govern in democratic countries without establishing alliances with more moderate forces. After the 1973 Chilean coup, there was cooperation between the PCI and DC that became a political alliance in 1976. Then Berlinguer’s PCI attempted to distance itself from the USSR, with the launching of ‘Eurocommunism’ along with the Spanish Communist Party and the French Communist Party. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historic_Compromise
The Socialist Fight group has been targeted by the right wing and parts of the left for witch-hunting over our opposition to Zionism. And the CPGB has echoed the allegation of anti-Semitism against us, and even on some occasions implied that we have something in common with Nazism because of our forthright anti-Zionism and hostility to expressions of Jewish racism and chauvinism, which we see as just as dangerous as any other form of imperialist chauvinism. This reflects both the CPGB’s Stalinist background, and a degree of political capitulation to Zionism; both Stalinists and Zionists are well known for Nazi-baiting their leftwing critics.

What the CPGB really objects to is our pointing out the overlap of the Israeli ruling class with the ruling classes of the US, UK and other advanced countries. This is the result of a shared ethnic-nationalist project of a politically self-selected part of the disproportionately large section of these ruling classes that are of Jewish origin, with the ruling class of Israel. It is a material fact that the representation of Jewish bourgeoisie in the ruling classes of the advanced countries greatly exceeds the proportion of Jews in the population.

We consider this creates a unique relationship between Israel and the older imperialist powers, and gives Israel a political clout over specifics that individual imperialist powers generally do not possess in each other’s politics, even when they are allies. For example: in the decades of Irish republican struggles against British imperialism, a considerable section of US bourgeoisie mobilised world opinion ‘getting killed’ by the Israelis, in order to mobilise world opinion against British colony, there was no ethnocentric nationalism, a considerable section of US bourgeoisie in considerably greater numbers than in the general population.

But the hugely powerful Zionist bourgeoisie in US (and British) politics has a Jewish bourgeoisie political core with a common interest with the Israeli ruling class, through a common bourgeois citizenship embodied in Israel’s racist ‘law of return’. To seriously criticise Israel’s abuse of the Palestinians is to court almost certain ruin of a career in bourgeois politics, or even in academia.

The reason for this overrepresentation of Jews in the bourgeois classes of the imperialist countries is a tricky historical question, which Socialist Fight has addressed in Marxist historical materialist terms, most synthetically in our Draft theses on the Jews and modern imperialism, September 2014. Much of our analysis is an extension of the approach of communists, including Karl Marx and Abram Leon, who followed a pattern that is also true today, that some of the most penetrating analysts of Jewish politics, and critics of its reactionary sides, have been of Jewish origin themselves. This is a historical statement, but it is essential that non-Jewish leftists should acquire the political cojones to get to grips with this difficult subject.

When Ian Donovan, speaking as a Socialist Fight supporter in discussion at Communist University in Norman Finkelstein’s session on the ‘future of Palestine’, made some of these points, he was loudly heckled by some CPGB supporters and friends, and ran out of speaking time because of this disruption. He was then denounced, as is usual, by among others the CPGB’s Jack Conrad, who, apart from calling our views reprehensible in a manner that he could not actually define, flatly denied that Jews are represented in the ruling class of the US and Britain in considerably greater numbers than in the general population.

But it is simply a fact. Forbes, which is a kind of American Who’s who of the bourgeoisie, notes that the representation of Jews among US billionaires is close to 50%, whereas the Jewish population of the US is only around 2%. These facts are not disputed by Jewish sources - indeed some boast about the influence and prestige they bring.

To mention these facts is apparently a political crime. But while Marxism bases its materialist analysis of the world on facts, the CPGB apparently subordinates its Marxism to liberal prejudices against highlighting the role of Jewish ethnic-nationalist interests in politics. The fact that some of these issues have been exploited by Nazis and other racists should not put them off limits to Marxists, while the Palestinians, on the receiving end of the oppression resulting at least in part from these things, are shafted and cannot be properly defended - a betrayal of internationalism.

We have considerable differences with Norman Finkelstein, who has a Maoist political past and has long since renounced Marxism. He has regrettably also developed a ‘pragmatic’ two-statist position on the Israel-Palestine conflict. This relies on apparent contradictions between the words and the deeds of the ‘international community’ - ie, the imperialists - over the illegality of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and Golan. He seeks to exert pressure through a Gandhian strategy of civil disobedience and non-violent protesters ‘getting killed’ by the Israelis, in order to mobilise world opinion - even though he admitted this may not even work. As he said, an occupation that is not temporary
amounts to annexation. This certainly is the case with the large-scale settlement of the West Bank. Gaza is a different facet of the same strategy, in this case to make a territory uninhabitable for its people and refugees.

Despite making some of these criticisms in his curtailed contribution at CU, Ian was gratified that Finkelstein, whilst not endorsing our analysis, came to our defence against the CPGB’s calumnies. To paraphrase, even views considered somewhat malvolent should be listened to, as they may contain an element of truth. On some key specifics, he argued, we were at least partly right and should not be heresy-hunted and heckled down.

‘Of course’ the activities of the Zionist lobby, of Jewish bourgeois, like for instance Sheldon Adelson, were examples of ethnic influence in US bourgeois politics.

Of course ‘Jewish lobbies’ (the term he used) had influence in US politics, and, on matters not fundamental to US imperialist interests, could force adoption of policies that are irrational from the point of view of the interests of US imperialism. Of course there was no US interest in associating themselves with the most egregious atrocities of the Israeli right, but they frequently do.

Finkelstein noted that on some seemingly fundamental issues for US imperialism, the Zionist lobby had lost - for instance over Obama’s nuclear deal with Iran. We are not so sure. The Republicans, even prior to Trump’s ascendency, were united against it. Hillary Clinton was notoriously slow to endorse it, and has rhetorically made stringent ‘demands’ of Iran and may sabotage the deal if she succeeds Obama. It may prove that Obama’s defiance of Netanyahu was a transitory product of the US electoral cycle - a president in the second half of his second term can never face re-election, and thus enjoys exceptional latitude with regard to lobbies. Finkelstein also compared the Jewish/Israeli lobby with the Cuban Gusano lobby, which saddled the US with an irrational policy towards Cuba for decades, until very recently.

There are both similarities and differences here. There cannot be an overlap between the Gusano elements in the US ruling class and Cuba itself - there are counterrevolutionary exiles hostile to the Cuban state at the centre of their project. But the overseas Jewish-Zionist bourgeois has deep roots in the imperialist bourgeois Israeli state, and common citizenship by birth.

Notwithstanding these caveats, Finkelstein’s defence of our right to dissent and be heard, and even more his statements that, on key aspects, what we say is right against the CPGB, are devastating to these people. He was their honoured guest as an undoubtedly courageous Jewish dissident and fine writer, despite his flaws.

The denunciation of Socialist Fight as an example of ‘left wing anti-Semitism’ is now a point of honour and goes to the very root of the integrity of the CPGB leadership of Jack Conrad, which both hounded out Ian Donovan from its sponsored platform in Left Unity for his views, and then took an absurd, contradictory position on the Zionist/rightwing attack on Gerry Downing in the Labour Party, professing to defend us on democratic grounds while agreeing with the right wing that our views are anti-Semitic.

In fact, the case against Gerry Downing made by the Labour Representation Committee collapsed because Gordon Nardell QC, for the LRC’s complaints sub-committee, could not give a legal definition of anti-Semitism, and would not say what the original complaint was against him or who had placed it. (See https://socialistfight.com/2016/06/16/lrc-drops-charges-against-gerry-downing.)

After the meeting, there were red faces from CPGB cadre. At lunch, their comrade Tina Becker expressed shock that Norman Finkelstein had defended us and even agreed with us on some things. Jack Conrad even seemed to evidence good humour in responding to an ‘egg on your face’ gesture from comrade Downing.

Tony Greenstein was amongst the first on the left to join the right wing witchhunt against Gerry Downing, giving the lead to the LRC right wing and others (‘Confusing the question’, Weekly Worker, March 17).

He himself was then suspended from the Labour Party for … anti-Semitism! He wrote: ‘It was August Bebel, the leader of the German Social Democratic Party, who described anti-Semitism as the ‘socialism of fools’. Gerry Downing - the leader of a tiny Trotskyist group, Socialist Fight, one of the splinters resulting from the implosion of the Workers Revolutionary Party of Vanessa Redgrave fame - is nothing if not a fool.’

But it was he who looked foolish as he spluttered his outrage at Norman Finkelstein’s defence of the very principles that he had condemned as anti-Semitic in Gerry Downing and Socialist Fight. We will not be holding our breath for the apology.

Gerry Downing and Ian Donovan Socialist Fight ▲

TONY GREENSTEIN: WE WONT BE HOLDING OUR BREATH FOR THE APOLOGY

I'M WITH CORBYN

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
Apple Corp. and global capitalism post Brexit, Part 1

By Gerry Downing, 31/08/2016

The weak recovery from the 2008 economic collapse has already petered out in Europe and China and the recovery in the US is a parasitic one; it is highly dependent on the dollarization of world trade and consequent benefits accruing to the US from that and from the domination of the world by the US transnational corporations on the back of constant wars and threats of war by the USA. Anglo-American imperialism is more clearly defined now post Brexit in its opposition to European Franco-German imperialism. The USA did not want Brexit because they knew it would mean a significant loss of influence for them on the continent of Europe. And the case of the €13 billion tax bill the EU has now sent to the Apple Corporation on behalf of a reluctant Ireland has highlighted that very sharply. Remember the Apple judgement may take years to settle legally but the ill-willed dice have been cast.

Back in May 2013 there was apparent consensus on taxing major corporations but by August 2016 relations between the EU and the US have deteriorated rapidly and Brexit has exacerbated this situation. Events seem to take on a logic of their own beyond the control of human agency. Even David Cameron signed up to the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank floated by China, in defiance of US strongly expressed wishes. In March 2015 the UK, Germany, France, Italy, Australia and South Korea joined, much to the annoyance of the USA. Even Canada joined at the end of August 2016.

New British Prime Minister Theresa May’s delay in approving the Hinkley Point nuclear plant because China has a 33% stake also demonstrates the post Brexit orientation of Britain to the US. David Cameron and George Osborne strongly supported the Hinkley Point deal and hailed it as the start of a ‘golden decade’ in which Britain would be China’s ‘best partner in the West’.

If the US retaliates against the EU Apple Ireland judgement what price the sanctions on Russia, which have cost Europe far more than they have cost the US? The US demanded and got the sanctions in retaliation against Putin for events in Ukraine. And who has forgotten Victoria Nuland’s ‘fuck the EU’ and NSA’s hacking of Angela Merkel’s personal mobile phone calls, to mention just a few of the gross insults arrogantly visited on the EU by the USA in recent times? Certainly not Germany.

Apple and Ireland

It is now very clear that the outcome of the British Referendum on 23 July marked a new stage in the crisis of global capitalism. Back in 2013 there seemed to be a global consensus that large transnational corporations were using all sorts of legal loopholes and dodgy manoeuvres to avoid paying their taxes. Forbes staff writer Connie Guglielmo reported in May 20, 2013 in an article called The Little Black Book of billionaire Secrets, Apple Used Loopholes To Skip Paying U.S. Taxes On $44 billion In Offshore Income, Senate Committee Claims:

Apple relied on a ‘complex web of offshore entities’ and U.S. tax loopholes to avoid paying billions of dollars in U.S. taxes on $44 billion in offshore income over the past four years, according to excerpts from a Senate subcommittee report to be released tomorrow as Apple CEO Tim Cook testifies on the company’s overseas operations.

The maker of iPhones and iPads used at least three foreign subsidiaries that it claims are not ‘tax resident in any nation’ to help it avoid paying billions in ‘otherwise taxable offshore income,’ the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations said in a statement today. The bi-partisan committee, headed by Carl Levin [D-Mich.] and John McCain [R-Ariz.] plans to issue a 40-page memorandum with findings and recommendations. ‘Apple wasn’t satisfied with shifting its profits to a low-tax offshore tax haven,’ Sen. Levin said in today’s statement. ‘Apple sought the Holy Grail of tax avoidance. It has created offshore entities holding tens of billions of dollars, while claiming to be tax resident nowhere. We intend to highlight that gimmick and other Apple offshore tax avoidance tactics so that American working families who pay their share of taxes understand how offshore tax loopholes raise their tax burden, add to the federal deficit and ought to be closed.’ [1]

Of course Ireland was the main country referred to above. EU Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager has revealed on 30 August that the EU has judged that Apple has illegally avoided paying €13 billion (€11 billion, $14.5 billion) plus interest (€6 billion by some estimates) to the Irish revenue commissioners. With the added interest this is the worst case scenario of €19 billion predicted by investment bank JP Morgan and is 190 times greater than the hoped for €100 million of the Irish government.

The figure was arrived at by using Ireland’s ultra-low Corporate Tax rate of 12.5%. In the United States the Corporate tax rate is 38.90%, in China it is 25.00%, Japan 32.26%, Germany 29.65%, United Kingdom 20.00%, India 34.3% and France 34.30%. The average of the 33 most developed countries of the OECD, weighted by country GDP, is 28.3%. In reality Apple alone has avoided over €61 billion in Corporation tax, just part of the direct subsidy the rest of the world pays to the US transnational corporations.

Because the tax was avoided on Apple sales in the EU, the Middle East, Africa and India these countries naturally feel it is mainly their tax, not Ireland’s and if these claims succeed then clearly Apple would be faced with the far higher bill than €13 billion; €61 billion+. And even if that claim failed once Ireland got the €13 billion it would be a relatively simple task to relieve the Irish tax man of the burden they never wanted in the first place. Apple paid corporate tax of 1% to Ireland on its European profits in 2003 and managed to reduce even that to 0.005% in 2014 by the stratagem of the bogus head office outlined by Vestager above.

Severe threats against the EU from the
US failed; a letter from US treasury chief Jacob Lew to EU Commission president Jean-Claude Junker warned him off intervening in the affairs of US companies. Vestager revealed that the vast majority of Apple's profits from its sales in the EU went to a head office that 'only existed on paper.' This head office 'has no employees, it has no premises, and it has no real activities,' she said. 'The head office was subject to no tax in Ireland or elsewhere.' This is massive fraud in law as the EU Commission has ruled. Notable there is no proposal to prosecute those who have broken this law, merely a proposal to stop them doing it in future and make them return their ill-gotten gains.

Neither does the Irish government want the €13 billion but will mount a legal challenge against having to receive it, as will Apple at having to give it. The money will be held in a holding account pending the outcome of the legal case. Unspecified retaliatory measures are also threatened by the US in a White Paper in late August, just a week before the judgement which described any adverse outcome which would transfer tax take from the US to the EU as 'deeply troubling'. It predicted this would have a 'chilling effect' on US-EU cross border investments; the EU were allegedly 'undermining the international consensus on tax' etc. As the research and development takes place in the US then US transnational corporations should not be made to pay tax on overseas profits is the ridiculous arguments used in defence of this robbery.

The response of the US to the major rebuff from the EU

The Irish government does not want the €13 billion because it would undermine a large part of the Irish economic strategy over decades under successive governments; acting as a tax haven for large US corporations, some of which are registered in Ireland and so are Irish companies only in legal terms. Companies like Alphabet Inc.’s Google and Facebook Inc. have their HQs in Ireland. More than 700 U.S. companies have units there, which employ 140,000 people, according to the American Chamber of Commerce in Ireland. [2]

More, like Apple, use the willingness of the government to find ways to avoid even the minimal corporation tax of 12.5%, for the provision of some 6,000 jobs in Cork, Ireland’s second city on the south coast. The US, anticipating this outcome, has begun to renegotiate their tax relationship with Ireland and a number of other EU members independently of the EU Commission, obviously in an attempt to break up the EU as an economic rival. [3]

Dara Doyle of Bloomberg spells out the economic significance of the judgement as a culmination of previous cases:

The Apple case may set a new standard for collections among a recent group of European investigations into so-called ‘state aid’ provisions to corporations. The Commission in January ordered Belgium to recover about 700 million euros in what it called illegal tax breaks from at least 35 companies, including Anheuser-Busch InBev NV and BP Plc. Last year, Starbucks Corp. was ordered to pay 30 million euros in back taxes to the Dutch government.

The EU also has open state-aid investigations into Luxembourg’s tax agreements with Amazon.com Inc. and McDonald’s Corp.

Commission-ordered repayments could wind up costing American taxpayers under U.S. tax law, while benefiting EU taxpayers, the U.S. has said. That’s because multinational corporations with large foreign operations, like Apple, are allowed to claim a credit against their U.S. tax bills for any foreign taxes paid. The offset reduces such companies’ U.S. tax payments. [4]

But the US has an obvious way to massively increase its tax take from its major corporations. But, like Ireland, it is strangely reluctant to benefit from this great windfall. Apple has over $230 billion cash in offshore accounts which it refuses to repatriate to the US because it would have to pay up to 40% tax on it, $92 billion. Apple, and all the rest in their situation, are pushing hard to avoid paying this level of tax but the US Inland Revenue has the option to impose a tax without repatriation, a step it is very reluctant to take.

The last US Tax Reform Act was back in 1986. Sponsored by the Democrats it is popularly referred to as the second of the two ‘Reagan tax cuts’. All US politicians in the two big imperialist parties get huge donations from these sources. In this election year Hillary Clinton is a far greater recipient of the largess of these transnational corporations than Donald Trump. So the crocodile tears of the Democrat Levin the Republican McCain about the problems of American working families will produce little advance in taxing major US transnational corporations in the immediate future, still less any hope for funding a proper health service or unemployment benefits.

Clearly the €13 billion is peanuts for Apple, less than three months’ profits, but $92 billion is a different order of magnitude. Nor are Apple alone in this practice. The top 50 US companies hold over $1.4 trillion offshore with General Electric, Microsoft, Pfizer and IBM constituting the rest of the top five U.S. companies with huge offshore accounts. That of all US corporations now amounts to $2 trillion, according to USA Today on 31 August, 40% of which would yield some $800 billion for the Inland Revenue.

And, even though they won’t pay the US Inland Revenue taxes on these profits, the US are their champions in ensuring they pay little or no taxes in the countries where the profits are earned, as they are kindly allowed to offset taxes paid abroad against taxes paid at home, as we saw above.

Ultimately the declining global hegemon needs to rob its world rivals as well as the semi-colonial world via these transnational corporations or concede their very lucrative role as the world’s policeman/robber.

Google, Starbucks and Amazon

In Britain Google, Starbucks and Amazon have been in the frame for tax avoidance because they produce figures that ‘prove’ they earn tiny profits here and some even claim losses.

After a big public row Starbucks has agreed to make a one-off payment to the taxman to tide them over until the brouhaha dies down, without, however, altering their practices in

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
any way. Theresa May, the new Tory Prime Minister, has promised legislation on this. We remain sceptical on any really favourable outcome on this.

**The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership**

In the midst of the furore a very significant item of news appeared. The TTIP is dead in the water. On Monday 29 August it was reported that Angela Merkel’s deputy economics minister Sigmar Gabriel said that after 14 rounds of talks no agreement was forthcoming on any of the 27 TTIP chapters of the proposed deal after 14 rounds of behind-closed-doors bargaining:

‘In my opinion the negotiations with the United States have de-facto failed, even though nobody is really admitting it’ he said. The French president Francois Hollande confirmed the debacle the following day: ‘The negotiations are bogged down, positions have not been respected, it’s clearly unbalanced.’

Again it is clear that the EU feel that the US are demanding what they are not prepared to concede. It is widely understood that the US has escaped the recession of 2008, albeit weakly and with little hope for escaping a new recession in the next immediate period, at the expense of its rivals by using its domination of the global finance markets bolstered by the threat of the weight of its military superiority.

On Monday 29th the Communist Party of Britain’s *Morning Star* was celebrating this ‘victory’. They quote Global Justice Now spokesman Kevin Smith as saying:

‘The capitulation is testament to the hundreds of thousands of people who took to the streets to protest against TTIP, the three million people who signed a petition calling for it to be scrapped, and the huge coalition of civil society groups, trade unions and activists who came together to stop it.’

It really is criminally short sighted to celebrate the impending abandonment of TTIP by imperialism (not ‘defeat’) without recognising what is about to replace it. If TTIP fails and the even more important Trans Pacific Partnership fails – both are now rejected by both major US Presidential candidates – then the consequences will be dire if they fall to the right.

Neo-liberal globalisation is under attack from the right, from the poisonous perspective of economic nationalism and protectionism that Donald Trump, Nigel Farage, Marine Le Pen and others have made respectable.

Those, like the *Morning Star*, who failed to see this in the Brexit Referendum and fail to see it in every major capitalist country now, are adherents of Popular Frontist class collaboration and are blind to the dangers of WWII posed in these developments.

**The Popular Front**

The Popular Front was the policy of Stalin from 1935 which rejected the class struggle in favour of class collaboration which forebode strikes and occupations so as not to alienate their middle class allies; Liberal politicians, radical priests and vicars etc. It was the main ideological barrier that prevented revolution in France and Spain before WWII and made that war inevitable consequent on the defeats of those working classes.

Ominously the US trade union federations are well-weigh uncritical supporters of their own ruling class in defence of domestic jobs versus ‘outsourcing’. The *Morning Star* of 16 September quotes David Durkee, president of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union, condemning TPP as ‘an awful trade deal that will put Americans out of work, degrade environmental protections and increase prescription drug prices.’ but then revealed his reactionary economic nationalist position, shared by the *Morning Star*, of course:

‘It also will give more than 9,000 foreign corporations the right to sue the United States for unlimited amounts of taxpayer money if these corporations feel their rights as foreign investors have been violated.’

However, the majority of the British trade unions opposed Brexit, recognising its backward nationalist and chauvinist anti-immigrant dynamic, the Sanders surge in the Democrats has petered out without any indication that his disgruntled supporters will break for the Democrat milieu and form a mass Labor party but the Corbyn surge in Britain is still uncontainted by the combined efforts of the British ruling class, the right wing Labour traitor MP in parliament and Zionism and their allied mass media of press and television.

Obviously the global tensions between the EU and the US, between Franco-German imperialism and Anglo-American imperialism essentially, are part of the global struggle by US imperialism to retain its position as the global hegemon and this is manifest in the wars in the Middle East, in the conflict Ukraine, in the South China Sea and in the Americas.

It is in the latter that the US are having their greatest success, removing Dilma Rousseff from the presidency of Brazil in the coup/impeachment trial orchestrated by its close allies there and moving ever closer to the overthrow of the government in Venezuela all in the context of the rapprochement with the Cuban deformed workers’ state.

**Notes**


The failed coup in Turkey: Down with US imperialism and its agents in the Army

LCFI Statement 25/7/2016

No political support for Erdoğan’s reactionary government!
Self-determination for Kurdistan!

On 16 July at 00:15 Gerry Downing of Socialist Fight Britain wrote in his Facebook wall:

‘Absolutely no support for this coup. As reactionary as Erdoğan is we cannot support a coup by the military in the ridiculous name of ‘democracy’ against an elected government. They don’t call it a revolution as they did in Egypt but this can only benefit the US and NATO in the region. Images seems to indicate that the masses and the left are resisting the coup and it will fail. If it does it will also undermine the autocracy of Erdoğan. Down with the coup! Victory to the popular masses!’

It is likely that this coup attempt was assisted, encouraged if not actually directed by US imperialism in response to Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s moves to seek rapprochement with Russia (he apologised at last for shooting down the Russian jet) [1] and with Syria’s Assad. [2] He also sought to mend relations with Israel all in the past few weeks. As The Economist reported on 5 July:

‘Mr Yıldırım (the prime minister) has got off to a good start. In a single day last month, Turkey agreed to restore ties with Israel, with which it has been at odds since 2010, and apologised to Russia for bringing down a jet that veered into its airspace in November after a bombing run over Syria. Officials from the ruling party have since raised hopes of progress in peace talks in Cyprus, divided since 1974 between an internationally recognised Greek south and a Turkish-occupied north. They have also floated a cautious opening with Egypt and a rethink of Turkey’s botched Syria policy.’ [3]

Erdoğan has finally lost patience with the US, who are using the YPG as ground troops to attack ISIS. He fears that they want bases in Rojova, Kurdish Syria, to use against Russia and they will guarantee a Kurdish state to get them. Erdoğan fears this will encourage the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) in Turkey to join with them in creating a Greater Kurdistan. Because of the situation in Iraq that Kurdish region is also independent. But all Kurdish leaderships, Abdullah Öcalan’s PKK, the Democratic Union Party (PYD/YPG) in Rojova and Masoud Barzani’s Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) in Iraqi Kurdistan are, to a greater or lesser extent, clients of the USA – Barzani is by far the most reliable US ally, the other two maintain only a relative independence. But he is also a close and economically dependent ally of Turkey, who assisted him greatly in the civil war of the mid-1990s.

Turkey has been bombed several time now by ISIS, the most recent was Istanbul’s Atatürk airport on 29 June which took 41 lives, in revenge for Turkey’s volte face in supporting the US attacks on them in Iraq and Syria. So stopping supplies to ISIS is now more acceptable to Erdoğan (though he still supplies his other Syrian ‘rebels’ allies); he has allowed several breaches of his ‘red line’, the Euphrates. But any real attempt to join the two Kurdish cantons would surely meet with immediate military intervention. The SDF is 60% YPG/Kurdish and claims to be fighting to create a secular, democratic and federal Syria, similar to the PKK’s stated goals for Turkey.

The rights of the Kurdish nation to self-determination

The People’s Democratic Party (HDP) are the main representatives of the Kurds in parliament but they have also appealed to all the poor and oppressed:

‘By 2007 Kurdish political leaders regarded the hegemonic Kurdish nationalistic discourse as the cause for poor performance at the polls, and for consistent legislative attacks from the state. In order to address this, the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) aligned with twenty socialist parties to form the People’s Democratic Congress (HDK); it won thirty-six seats in the 2011 general elections. In 2013 HDK was given a historic opportunity to push its pluralist agenda to an even broader audience after the Gezi Park protest movement erupted in central Istanbul, driven by objections to gentrification in Istanbul and deteriorating press freedoms. The Gezi Park movement offered the HDK a mouthpiece within Turkish urban centres. In October 2013 the HDK established the People’s Democratic Party (HDP), the most inclusive Kurdish-led political party thus far, which appealed to anti-austerity, socialist and progressive Turks who had found a platform at Gezi.

In the 7 June 2015 general election the HDP won 16.3% and 80 in the 550-seat parliament but its vote fell to 10.75% in the November 2015 and they were left with 59 seats. A falling out with the PKK following the collapse of their ceasefire with Erdoğan in late July 2015 and a consequent shift of the more conservative Kurdish voters to the AKP and the leftist youth to the PKK are blamed for this.

We have nothing to withdraw from this extract of our LCFI statement on 13-7-2015 with the addition of the new situation ‘Turkey is in as observed above:

What ISIS are creating cannot be described as a nation or indeed any modern version of a state; the Islamic State is a vile reactionary utopia and has no legitimate right to self-determination. And the US proxy nations, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey and even Israel still support and supply them, because, though the US is at war with them now, they are an insurance policy for US imperialism and they may come in useful later in deposing Assad and even the Iranian regime. Both regimes in Syria and Iran still reflects the anti-imperialism of the Syrian and Islamic masses, the working class and poor peasants, in however distorted a way. Regime change in Syria, Iran and then Russia and China remains the geo-political strategic goals of US imperialism and its European and Japanese allies, whatever temporary diversions may occur and however reluctant these allies might be at times.

Therefore, we must oppose the US bombing of ISIS but we cannot blame the Kurds for taking advantage of the bombing to defend Kobane and other territories that are a legitimate part of a real nation without a state, in fact the largest such entity in the whole world, Kurdistan. Moreover, the Iraqi Kurds, both Barzani’s Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Talabani’s Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), are puppets of the US/Israel. Also even Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) who were the most leftist opponents of Barzani in the 1994-97 civil war have been attempting to accommodate with Turkey and imperialism at the expense of the Kurdish nation. He now puts forward as his models Gerry Ad-

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
The Dördüncü Blok and the RCIT

The two joint statements of Dördüncü Blok (Turkey) and the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT/DKUE) came in the early morning and late evening of 16/7/2016. [5] [6] One puzzling thing for those not familiar with the politics of the RCIT is the use of the phrase ‘Great Powers’. This is a quaint term from the epoch of colonialism so we had to look up its modern application. It is the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany and Japan; China, Russia, France, the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany and Japan. Why not say ‘imperialism’, the modern Marxist term?

The LCFI has always identified the global hegemon, US imperialism, as humanity’s main enemy in this region, as it is in every other. Its subordinate imperialist powers in Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan etc. cooperate in exploiting the globe under its leadership still, however grudgingly and unwillingly for some. Neither Russia nor China or any of the other BRICS states, Brazil, India and South Africa, are imperialist in that Marxist sense of dominating the globe via their finance capital and forcing compliance via military superiority and its CIA-organised coups, though they are all advanced capitalist states with clear imperialist ambitions, Russia and China in the first place. These ambitions cannot be satisfied while the US remains the global hegemon. On the contrary the US is continually planning and manoeuvring to reverse its relative decline over the past several decades. The details of how the CIA and MI6 organised the 1953 Anglo-American coup that overthrew the democratically-elected government of Mohammad Mosaddegh on 19 August 1953 (codenamed TPAJAX by the CIA and Operation Boot by the MI6) were published in 2013 illustrating how they still operate today. [7]

On the other hand, the RCIT designates Russia and China as imperialist powers; [8] Since that statement over a year ago the YPG in Syrian Kurdistan has become even more the foot soldiers for the US against ISIS in the region and, after the rapprochement with Russia and Syria by the Turkish government and the failed coup of 15-16 July, may pay a heavy price for that alliance with the US; a joint assault on them by both Assad and Turkey is now in the ofing which Russia will be obliged to support or at least ignore to prevent the setting up of permanent bases against themselves in Rojava. The conflict in the region seems to have no end, but it is changing form rapidly.

The RCIT are of the opposite opinion. [9] We will not go further into the arguments here except to note that neither statement examines the geo-political significance of the attempted coup as a possible explanation of why it was attempted. In fact, point 2 of the first statement makes the following claim:

2. The reason for this coup is that Erdoğan has not sufficiently served the interests of the western Great Powers and the Turkish capitalists. He tried to keep some independence while establishing a presidential police state with him in power. However, the coup is in the first line not directed against Erdogan, but against the popular masses and the Kurdish people and their already limited democratic and social rights. Revolutionaries still have to consistently politically oppose the bourgeois-reactionary AKP which tried in the last years to undermine democratic rights and oppress our Kurdish brothers and sisters. But we oppose any military prosecution of the AKP. This expresses not our political sympathy but underlines that the main enemy of the workers, peasants and poor is the military!

Would it not be better to say that the coup was directed against Erdogan in order to have the power to more immediately defeat the popular masses and the Kurdish people? And keeping the whole thing as a Turkish affair means we do not have to examine the geopolitical manoeuvrings of the ‘western Great Powers’ i.e. imperialism proper in its wars in Libya, Syria Afghanistan and Iraq and whether this was another one of those attacks. And the use of the term suggests that the ‘eastern Great Powers’ are just as bad in their war-mongering and global oppression, a manifestly false notion. Whilst the RCIT are close to the LCFI in many ways we have sharply differed with all those who seek to apologise for the crimes of US imperialism or to minimise them in any way. We have made our differences known on Libya and on Syria very strikingly. [10]

The RCIT and the al-Sisi coup in Egypt

The RCIT are not so good on coups which involve reactionary mass mobilisations. On 2 July 2013 they issued a statement on the situation in Egypt. On the following day al-Sisi launched his coup. This statement was full of wild enthusiasm for the revolution then unfolding in Egypt, which was victorious the following day with the accession of the revolutionary General al-Sisi![1] Under the heading ‘A New Revolutionary Wave’ counterrevolution was mistaken for revolution because the mobilisation was reportedly 15-17 million strong. The fact that these demonstrations were sponsored and/or supported by Egyptian billionaires, by the Army, by Israel and the CIA counted for nothing against such numbers:

The current revolutionary wave is the largest mobilization of the workers and the poor so far. Not tens of thousands as the supporters of Morsi hoped, not one million as the organizers hoped, but 15-17 millions took to the streets in different cities on 30th June! These cities did not only include Cairo, Alexandria or Suque but also for example the industrial proletarian stronghold of Mahalla where hundreds of thousands of workers were gathered at Al-Shoum Square.

Before, Morsi said that there would not be a second revolution in Egypt, but by the end of the day he was hiding while anger against Morsi swept the streets. At least seven people were killed and more than 600 wounded in clashes between the pro and anti-Morsi groups. Former leader of the Muslim Brotherhood Tharwat Kherbawi said that President Mohamed Morsi is hiding now in an undisclosed location, in preparation for his escape out of the country. While Morsi declares no revolution will take place five Ministers deserted him. The rats are leaving the sinking boat. One year in power has been sufficient to expose the nature of Morsi regime. It showed to be a bourgeois regime in religious cloth, serving the imperialists and the local capitalists as well as an ally of Israel (as was Mubarak before Morsi). On June 30 different marches met in Tahrir Square. The fact that the revolutionary masses took over Tahir square is by itself an indicator of the relationship of forces in favour of the revolution. The march from Giza was led by Nasserite presidential candidate Hamdeen Sabahi and the Kamal Abou Eita, the leader of the newly formed Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions. This march merged with another one led by liberal opposition leader Mohamed ElBaradei. [11]
It did note a few political problems with these demonstrations but nevertheless it was almost certain, we felt, that these problems would be overcome in the course of the 'revolution'. Certainly the Revolutionary Socialists had crossed the line by joining an actual bourgeois alliance rather than by only collapsing politically to it as the RCIT did:

The lack of such a party is clearly visible if one looks to those forces which claim to be revolutionary and pro-working class. The Revolutionary Socialists (sister organization of the British SWP) is part of the bourgeois-dominated alliance National Salvation Front. The RCIT is of the opinion that while it is necessary to take part in joint actions with those forces — even if they are bourgeois — who lead sectors of the rebellious masses against the Morsi regime, it is a betrayal to the principles of working class independence to join a political alliance with them.

So while it is correct to march with the June 30 coordination committee — including the forces of the Nasserite Hamdeen Sabahi and the bourgeois Liberal ElBaradei — as part of a united front, the question is which class will lead this revolution. This magnificent show of the power of the masses must not be wasted by the bourgeois leaders of the Salvation Front who simply want to take the place of Morsi in order to do the same-serving the imperialists and the local capitalist.

Surely it wasn’t a united front it you allied with the likes of the ‘bourgeois-liberal ElBaradei’, unless you could portray him as some kind of principled anti-imperialist, which clearly he was not. Such alliances are called Popular Fronts. Some six weeks later, on 14 August, the RCIT defended its stance of 2 July:

The protests against the al-Sisi regime are currently led by the Bourgeois-Islamist leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood. The RCIT does not support in any way the politics of this party. Quite the opposite, the RCIT supported the mass protests against the Morsi government on 30th June and before. These protests were progressive because the workers and poor fought for bread and democratic freedom against the bourgeois-democratically elected Morsi government. However, the military coup created a completely new situation. The army command takeover was thoroughly counter-revolutionary albeit it claimed to be related to the 30th June demonstration. In fact, this claim was nothing but a fig leaf for the army command, the imperialists and the fulool (remnant of the Mubarak regime) to take power directly in their hands and to start an anti-democratic rollback. [12]

Oh dear! A good attempt as damage limitation but what a disastrous error! The ‘protests’ produced the coup, were part of the preparation for it, were consciously organised and orchestrated by the Army and the CIA and bankrolled by billionaire Naguib Sawiris to enable the coup. The claim that the coup and the protests were unrelated is nonsense on stilts. The fact that the counter-revolution encountered no resistance from the bogus ‘revolution’ shows that unquestionably they were the same thing!

Kudos to the RCIT for recognising it as a counter-revolutionary coup, others on the far left, like Rob Sewell, of Socialist Appeal/IMT and the Revolutionary Socialists/SWP and the WRP News Line refused to do even that; it was a stolen revolution! [13] [14] But mistaking a counterrevolution for a revolution is as bad as you can get; being unable to correct the error means that the method that produced has not been reassessed and it will be repeated. They were also in good company on Libya and Syria but some on the left were more sensible, like the CWI, and rowed back on Syria when that ‘revolution’ proved to have no revolutionary programme, leadership or followers and was only a ‘revolution’ because Barack Obama and David Cameron said so. On 12 June 2013 in Syria threatens sectarian middle east war Peter Taaffe wrote:

Egypt; the coup that wasn’t a coup and the revolution that wasn’t a revolution

Initially there was a popular uprising of ‘hundreds of communities’ in Syria, inspired by the ‘Arab Spring’, against the monstrous police state of Assad. Previously, there had been movements of trade unions and workers against reductions in living standards and the privatisations carried out by Assad. It appeared in the first instance that a genuine movement had developed against a dictatorial regime and, moreover, one striving to bridge the divide between the majority Sunni population and the country’s minorities, including the biggest minority, the Alawites (a branch of the Shias) to which Assad belongs. But this changed with the outside intervention of the reactionary forces opposed to revolution in the region — notably the semi-feudal monarchies of Saudi Arabia and Qatar — backed up by imperialist forces. They hoped to repeat their success in Bahrain and particularly in the detailing of the Libyan revolution. [15]

Of course the Benghazi rebels never led any kind of a revolution nor was any ‘revolution’ advancing in Syria, it was merely a legitimate struggle for democratic rights at the start, but such pragmatic accommodation to the facts from the CWI was the least one might expect from Marxists. The RCIT are even now supporting the jihadist ‘revolution’ in Syria.

Notes


[6] Ibid.


[14] Socialist Fight, 22/7/2013, Egypt the coup that wasn’t a coup and the revolution that wasn’t a revolution Turn to the mass organisations of the working class! https://socialistfight.com/2013/07/22/egypt-the-coup-that-wasnt-a-revolution-turn-to-the-mass-organisations-of-the-working-class/

Coup D'état in Brazil, Organizing the resistance to prepare for a new rise of the masses to defeat imperialism and its national agents!

By Humberto Rodrigues, Communist Workers Front (FCT) Brazil

The working class of Brazil is experiencing its worst moment since the military dictatorship (1964-1985). This time, the coup was executed by the combined action of the legislature, judiciary and the Vice-President of the Republic, Michel Temer (Pmdb), against class collaborating Workers’ Party (PT) government. The political unification of the opposition with traitorous sections of the government of Dilma was possible only after the unification of the majority of the bourgeoisie, under the reorientation of imperialism to isolate the PT and expel it from the government.

Preparing the geopolitics of the coup d'état

The PT spent 13 years of governments (2003-2016) serving and profiting the bourgeois and imperialism. There was a containment of the class struggle after the wear and tear of the governments of the neo-Liberal decade of the 1990s. According to the Departamento Intersindical de Estatística e Estudos Socio-econômicos (DIEESE), the body of research and statistics on the CUT (Trade Union Federation) and the PT, the era of Lula and Dilma saw the lowest number of strike in the last 30 years.

It is true that the PT had a policy of raising the minimum wage. The land occupations have decreased, and as a result, the expropriations of land for agrarian reform too.

However, the gains of the working class have been infinitely smaller than the profits of the capitalists. Actually, there was a relative impoverishment of the working class in relation to the wealth that they created. With the retreat from the fight by the workers and the illusion that could improve their life continuously and quietly, the big capitalists accumulated vast profits.

The four PT governments have kept up the agri-export orientation of the country since the arrival of the Portuguese and also kept the high interest rates that discouraged national industrialization and encourage financial capital. The Brazilian bankers earned eight times more in the two terms of office of Lula than in the two mandates of Cardoso (Psdb).

In the first three years of Dilma, the profitability of the nine largest banks in the country were six times greater than in the eight the mandates of the neoliberal Psdb.

How do we explain that finance capital supported the coup to overthrow the president of the PT? Financial suicide? Indeed no. National peculiarities represent in itself a combination of the fundamental characteristics of the world economy in that period. The main causes of the coup d'état are not within the national economic policy, but in the world political economy and its expressions in the geopolitical changes after the 2008 crisis in the USA.

The economic crisis in the heart of imperialism changed the winds that for a decade and a half swelled the sails of the PT. There was now an exceptional situation with a sharpening of inter-capitalist rivalries not seen since world War II. This has created a new cold war and the government of the PT had joined the opposition to imperialism. That marked the change of direction of imperialism in relation to the PT.

Resisting the wave of neo-liberalism in the 1990s, the PT and a series of left-wing populist governments were elected in the American continent. The popular uprising against neoliberalism overthrew the Argentine government in 2001, and brought to power Chavez in Venezuela (1999), Lula in Brazil (2003), Tabaré in Uruguay (2005), Evo Morales in Bolivia (2006), Correa in Ecuador (2007) and Fernando Lugo in Paraguay (2008). They were all different versions of the remodelled bonapartism of the Latin American left in the first years of the twentieth century.

Governments were established by the force of class struggle and so they were not the governments dreamed of by imperialism, because they also contained elements of the rise of the fight against neoliberalism and imperialism itself.

During the global economic crisis of 2008 and 2010, these governments were polarised by new emerging capitalist powers that came to buy their commodities they could no longer find markets for in the imperialist centres. So BRICS was founded under the direction of China and Russia, who had exceptional assets in human resources, energy and increasing military power from their origins as bureaucratised workers’ states.

When the USA managed to get itself into great financial turmoil in 2008 they sought to recover lost ground by mobilising their political, judicial, economic, military and mass media agents under the command of the secretary of state Hillary Clinton.

In Brazil, these agents are Serra, Temer, Moro, etc. Popular dissatisfaction against the economic crisis arose. It was revolutionary but diffuse and without direction and, as in the so-called ‘Arab spring’, it was manipulated as an instrument of this policy of re-colonialisation. In 2013, the extreme right has infiltrated ‘days of June’ to prepare the ground for the coup, as pointed out the comrades of the Lenin Collective: http://coletivolenin.blogspot.com.br/2013/06/a-extrema-direita-toma-as-manifestacoes.html

Mercenaries sponsored by the CIA merged with the opposition wing of the bourgeoisie. In several countries, this offensive from the US and Europe has resulted in Civil War (Libya, Syria, Yemen, Ukraine). In other nations there were parliamentary coups (Honduras, Paraguay, Brazil).

In South Africa, the impeachment coup attempt against Zuma was defeated. In Turkey, the attempted military coup orchestrated by the USA was smothered and the government in Ankara was pushed even more to compose a political and military front with Russia, China, Iran and Syria to defend against the US intervention in the region of the Middle East.

In the nations in which it has resumed political control over the governments by these raids imperialism has increased its financial parasitism. In some, the raid was carried out in conjunction with the balkanisation of the states: Iraq, Sudan, Libya, Syria, Ukraine. Even so none of these economies today can dispense with trade relations with China.

From Ukraine to Brazil, the new governments puppets are more unstable and so they have resorted to more police and military repression to implement their programmes of re-colonisation, sparking strong and broad anti-imperialist oppositions. This offensive has caused hatred in the semi-colonial world including in the US colony of Puerto Rico.

Centrism disarmed before the coup d'état

The collaboration of classes and the opportunism mistook, desmobilizar and disarmed and politically the workers. Another Ally of the offensive con artist was the political and ideological confusion of parties of the left.
Overcome illusions in reconciliation of classes, electoratism and parliament to build a revolutionary way forward for the workers!

Unfortunately, during the growth of the struggle against the coup, much of the left was led by the PT and PCdoB and they sought solutions on the territory of the bourgeoisie that was controlled by the putschists; ‘general election’, ‘direct elections now!’, ‘constituent assembly’. Defeating the blow by the ballot box and voting for Lula in 2018. We understand that at this time, these parliamentary and electoral illusions are more useful to putchist escalation than to the political organization of the victims of the coup.

The shrewdest sectors coup front, the large media organizations, are already preparing ‘Plan B’ after the failure of the Temer government. Even left-wing coup leaders PSTU and its splits, the ‘MAIS’, also support the policy of ‘general election’. These slogans may help the bourgeoisie to replace a fragile coup government, every day more hated by the masses, by a strong government of the right. The big coup media, Globo, View, Leaf, ESP, as well as the ‘Collor Out!’ (1992) and ‘June days’ (2013, the ‘Arab Spring’ in Brazil) wants to appropriate the repression will be far more open. We cannot let this counterrevolutionary regime consolidate under Temer or worse, a dictatorship that can impose on us the political, social and economic penalties they want. We have no time to lose and we must take advantage of its weakness and contradictions.

The right wants to ‘get rid of this race for the next 30 years’ and the direction of the PT bet all their chips on the 2018 elections

Now there are elections for mayors and councillors in 5,500 cities in Brazil. Through these elections, the coup regime intends to legitimise its militarisation in place. PT and PCdoB are immediate targets the coup, the fury of the right, the antipathy towards the PT and the criminalisation of their political activities. The right has already expressed openly that wishes to root left out the of political life, ‘get rid of this race for the next 30 years,’ as stated by a former senator of DEM, main political successor of the ruling party during the military dictatorship.

Despite the threat becoming increasingly real, the PT and PCdoB do not use the election propaganda material as an instrument to denounce the coup, much less mobilise the organisation of workers against the historical attacks announced by the coup. And worse, PT and PCdoB support ‘the fight against corruption’; operation ‘car wash’ and its witchhunt against the left. In hundreds of cities these parties are affiliated with the

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
Through courting suffering and hoping thus to finally convert your opponent to your point of view.

When a revolutionary believes certain things to be his right he asks for them, pleads for them, argues for them, wills to attain them with all the soul-force at his command, stands the greatest amount of suffering for them, is always prepared to make the highest sacrifice for their attainment, and also backs his efforts with all the physical force he is capable of.

You may coin what other word you like to describe his methods but you cannot call it violence, because that would constitute an outrage on the dictionary meaning of that word. Satyagraha is insistence upon truth.

Why press, for the acceptance of truth, by soul-force alone? Why not add physical force also to it? While the revolutionaries stand for winning independence by all forces, physical as well as moral, at their command, the advocates of soul-force would like to ban the use of physical force. The question really, therefore, is not whether you will have violence, but whether you will have soul-force plus physical force or soul-force alone. (From the ‘Philosophy of the Bomb’, by Bhagwati Charan Vohra: a close comrade of Bhagat Singh)

That’s the point!

I have shown in brief about Bhagat Singh’s ideological position. More things are needed to say about him. He was a remarkable intellectual and activist at such a young age. He kept clear-cut views regarding his ideology… even by mistake, we can never call him a terrorist. We may obviously call Bush, Obama, Narendra Modi and many other ‘powerful’ capitalists… as the real terrorists who live by exploiting earth and its people.

Acknowledgements

Websites:
http://www.shahidbhagatssingh.org/,
https://www.marxists.org/archive/bhagat-singh/.

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Unify the struggles of resistance, build new tools for organizing the masses and vanguard

We need to unify the struggles, strikes, occupations, wage campaigns, union meetings, towards the construction of a general strike to defeat the coup. The experience we have gained in defending our rights, accumulated over time, must become the force to forge a revolutionary workers’ government.

The tasks in this period for the Brazilian section of the Liaison Committee for the Fourth International (LCFI), the Communist Workers Front (FCT), should be to seek to establish solid roots in the working class and prepare for the new upsurge of the masses in the next years.

We must learn from the mistakes of the struggle against the military dictatorship in order not to repeat them now. The first expressions of that struggle after the 1964 coup was opportunistic, ‘revenge of the polls’ (vote for MDB, opposition party created and allowed by the dictatorship) and the main focus was on sectarian, agrarian and urban issues.

But it was only a new upsurge of the masses and the workers’ strikes of the late 1970s that created a new vanguard, a fighting instruments, the PT, and the mass organisations, the CUT and the MST, to harass the dictatorship. Neither a new electoral cretinism (‘Direct Elections now!’; ‘Vote for Lula in 2018’) nor a new adventurous localism can defeat this new-era coup, far more threatening and remote than the last.

With the best fighters of the anti-imperialist resistance, both the anti-coupists and anti-capitalists, we need to build a new instrument of struggle, able to overcome opportunism of the PT, which disarmed the mass organizations of the country against the coup, and the sectarianism of those who supported the coup with a leftist phraseology.

It is essential to build unified fronts in practice against the coup with the PT and all groups in all mobilizations; strikes, occupations, etc.

At the same time, we must explain educate the masses in the experience of the PT governments; that class collaboration can only disarm us politically, create ideological confusion and again encourage our enemies to enslave us.

Workers need to believe only in their own strength and in the instruments of the past and the cutting edge that these forces prepare, the general strike, a regroupment of association and vanguard fighter derived from resistance struggles of the united front and of a new upsurge against the coup regime and slavery led by a revolutionary workers’ party.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
Bhagat Singh: Terrorist or Communist?

By Akhar Bandyopadhyay, 03/09/2016

Marxism has always spoken against acts of Terrorism. Marxism has always said that by killing imperialist or capitalist individuals, nothing fruitful would be achieved. (Ref. Leon Trotsky’s ‘Why Marxists Oppose Individual Terrorism’: https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1911/11/tia09.htm)

The famous Marxist revolutionary, Bhagat Singh was hanged (23rd March, 1931) because he, together with his comrades, was accused of killing an English policeman named John Saunders (17th December, 1928). For a time, it would seem that John Saunders is an individual, and murdering him would be against the basic tenets of Marxism; and it would also seem for a moment that Bhagat Singh was not really a Communist, rather a so-called ‘terrorist’.

This term – ‘terrorist’ is being annexed at present with the name of Bhagat Singh by many authoritarian and pseudo-nationalistic right-wingers. In reality, Bhagat Singh was against terrorism. He himself said that he was not a terrorist, rather a revolutionary; he also said that we cannot gain anything through acts of terrorism. So how a man like this killed an individual?

The answer lies in a poster written by Bhagat Singh himself after murdering Saunders. In it, it was written:

“We are sorry to have killed a man. But this man was a part of a cruel, despicable and unjust system and killing him was a necessity…. This Government is the most oppressive government in the world.’

and

‘Do not injure the feelings of a downtrodden and oppressed country. Think twice before perpetrating such diabolical deed, and remember that despite ‘Arms Act’ and strict guards against the smuggling of arms, the revolutionaries will ever continue to flow in if no sufficient at present for an armed revolt, then at least sufficient to averge the national insults.’

Saunders was killed only to avenge the cruel murder of one of India’s most respected leaders- Lala Lajpat Ray. Saunders was not killed for any personal hatred towards any race or nation. Bhagat Singh’s ideology was against ‘primitive national or racial hatred’. Bhagat Singh was against the system of exploitation which in one epoch takes the name of Feudalism, in another epoch it again comes as Capitalism. But all these are mere supporters of either man by man or country by country exploitation (For Capitalism, it is both).

Let me share something more interesting about this. Bhagwan Das Mahore, a comrade of Bhagat Singh, made some important comments on this. Let us read them with attention:

‘After [Saunders] murder I met him (Bhagat Singh) with B.K.Dutt, I saw his face, it got fixed in me forever. There were high emotions written on his broad forehead, which I cannot describe. He was upset. His anxiety and uneasiness was seen. He had unlimited respect for human life and its importance and above all its grandeur. No doubt it was Bhagat Singh’s proposal that the nation’s insult on account of Lalaji’s death due to lathi blows be avenged and our meaningful presence be shown to world.

But Bhagat Singh’s face, which always showed its emotions, was pitiable. The spectacle of that worshipper of humanity, which I saw on that day, makes my head bow before him most reverentially and I felt that I should lift the dust and dirt from under his feet and smear my forehead. Bhagat Singh and B.K.Dutt sitting in a secluded corner, talked for quite some time in the late night. It was clear that their hearts were heavy. Bhagat Singh’s emotions were at peak…’

Great, isn’t it? How simply and quite foolishly we add the tagline of ‘terrorism’ to the ‘worshipper of humanity’! Pr. Jawarlal Nehru later remarked regarding the murder of Saunders, that:

‘Bhagat Singh did not become popular because of his act of terrorism but because he seemed to vindicate, for the moment, the honour of Lala Lajpat Rai, and through him of the nation. He became a symbol, the act was forgotten, the symbol remained, and within a few months each town and village of the Punjab, and to a lesser extent in the rest of northern India, resounded with his name. Innumerable songs grew about him and the popularity that the man achieved was something amazing.’

Although due to personal bias, Nehru fails to see the non-terroristic attitude of Singh, but he perfectly expresses the thing Bhagat Singh and his comrades uplifted through the murder of Saunders, that is, the national respect for the national leader (or, as Bhagat Singh himself called Lalaji as the ‘respected leader of 30 crores’).

By studying these sentences, one this is clear- and that is: Bhagat Singh was not a terrorist. We must remember that he held ‘human life sacred beyond words’ (as he himself described in the statement he made at the court during the Assembly Bomb Case trial).

How can a man who strongly believed in ‘universal brotherhood’ (vishv-sambhram) ever be a terrorist? Stop accusing true revolutionaries as ‘terroristic’- those who are accusing him to be one, are the supporters of the existing exploitative capitalist regime. Capitalism is the greatest form of terrorism.

Bhagat Singh and others members of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association and Naujawan Bharat Sabha wanted to build a society which ‘...the sovereignty of the proletariat should be recognized and a world federation should redeem humanity from the bondage of capitalism and misery of imperial wars.’ That is, a perfect communist society based on ‘social prosperity’ (Ref. Bhagat Singh’s last petition to the Punjab Governor).

In the same way, the throwing of bombs in the Assembly was meant only ‘to make the deaf hear’ (the capitalists, imperialists, colonialists being deaf), and not to kill or injure anyone. Again, during the historic hunger strike (started from 15th June 1929-ended in 5th October, 1929), the HSRA members proved their indomitable soul-force and their desire for complete independence.

To understand more clearly what Bhagat Singh really wanted, let us read the last passage from the poster after Saunders Murder:

“We are sorry

Continued on inside cover

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