John Rogan: “And who did (Aaron) Banks deal with regarding this funding?” (Brian Denny!) Another extract from “Bad Boys…” (31 Jan 2016) -

Lexit, Morning Star, 12 April 2016: “The new alliance formed on Monday night from rail union RMT, Trade Unionists Against the EU (Brian Denny), the Communist Party of Britain, the Indian Workers Association (GB), the Bangladeshi Workers Council of Britain, Scottish Left Leave, Counterfire and the Socialist Workers Party.”

The Socialist Party (above) were strongly Brexit, as were the SWP (Left, not so strong) and the CPGB (ML, top centre).

The National Crime Agency is investigating allegations of multiple criminal offences by Arron Banks’ unofficial leave campaign in the Brexit referendum.

Unity is strength, L’union fait la force, La union hace la fuerza, Η ανοίγμα της συνομιλίας, doàn kũDa sịgị mba ọ, Jednocity jest siła, ykeẹs on k装修公司, Η ανοίγμα της συνομιλίας. Midhimo iyo waa avwood, hundeb ydy chyndyra, Einheit ist Stärke, Вседолество прочность, единстве наша сила, vienybės jėga, bashkimi ben fuajine, एकता, unità è la resistenza, 团結就是力d, A unión faz a força, eining er stykrur, Einheid bezekent sterke, الوحدة هو القوة, Ni near go chur le còile, pagklakaisa ay kalakasan, jednota is siła, 일성은 이다 집 힘이, Workers of the World Unite! 
Where We Stand (extracts)

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

The Editorial Board is:
Gerry Downing, Ian Donovan, Carl Zacharia, Aliiah Dease, Paul Swainbank, John Owen, Frank Rudd, W. Spectror.

Socialist Fight, PO Box 59188, London, NW2 9LJ.
https://socialistfight.com/

Communist Workers Front—Brazil
http://leligacomunista.blogspot.co.uk/
Tendencia Militante Bolchevique, Argentina,
http://mbi917.blogspot.co.uk/
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Revolutionary socialism
1. We stand with Karl Marx: “The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. The struggle for the emancipation of the working class means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies but for equal rights and duties and the abolition of all class rule” (The International Workingmen’s Association 1864, General Rules).
2. In the class struggle we shall fight to develop every struggle of the working class and oppressed in the direction of democratic workers’ councils as the instruments of participatory democracy which must be the basis of the successful struggle for workers’ power.

Revolutionary strategy and tactics
3. We recognise the necessity for serious ideological and political struggle as direct participants in the trade unions and in the mass reformist social democratic bourgeois workers’ parties despite their pro-capitalist leaderships when conditions are favourable. In fighting the attacks of this Tory government it is now necessary to work within the Labour party as well as within other proto-parties such as Left Unity and RESPECT that seek to present socialist and anti-imperialist politics in opposition to the revisionist programme that is now deeply embedded within the Labour Party. We support all genuine left developments within Labour, such as the Corbyn for leader campaign.
4. We strongly support campaigns to democratise the trade unions’ traditional link to the Labour Party. We are for funding only those MPs who agree to and have a record of fighting for union policies.
5. We fight for rank-and-file organisations in the trade unions within which we will fight for consciously revolutionary socialist leadership in line with Trotsky’s Transitional Programme statement: “Therefore, the sections of the Fourth International should always strive not only to renew the top leadership of the trade unions, boldly and resolutely in critical moments advancing new militant leaders in place of routine functionaries and careerists, but also to create in all possible instances independent militant organizations corresponding more closely to the tasks of mass struggle against bourgeois society; and, if necessary, not flinching even in the face of a direct break with the conservative apparatus of the trade unions. If it be criminal to turn one’s back on mass organisations for the sake of fostering sectarian factions, it is no less so passively to tolerate subordination of the revolutionary mass movement to the control of openly reactionary or disguised conserva- ("progressive") bureaucratic cliques. Trade unions are not ends in themselves; they are means along the road to proletarian revolution.”
6. We totally oppose all economic nationalist campaigns like for ‘British jobs for British workers’ that means capitulation to national chauvinism and so to the political and economic interests of the ruling class itself. We are therefore unreservedly for a Socialist United States of Europe.
7. 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.

Special oppression and racism
10. We recognise that class society, and capitalism as the last form of class society, is by its nature patriarchal. In that sense the oppression of women is different from all other forms of oppression and discrimination. Sexism and the oppression of women is inextricably tied to the ownership and inheritance of private property. To achieve sexual and individual freedom women need to fight in the class struggle in general to overthrow class society itself. We cannot leave the struggle against women’s oppression until the revolution but must recognise it as one of the most fundamental aspects of the revolutionary struggle itself or we will never make that revolution.
11. We support the right of people to fight back against racist and fascist attacks by any means necessary. Self-defence is no offence, we support it. Two people might make racist/’far right’ comments but on challenging them one might turn out to be a hardened racist/fascist and the other might be mindlessly repeating the Sun editorial. It is necessary to distinguish. 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.
12. We oppose all immigration controls. International finance capital roams the planet in search of profit and imperialist governments disrupts the lives of workers and the abolition of all class rule’ (The International Workingmen’s Association 1864, General Rules).

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

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As we go to press May’s deal with the EU has received the formal endorsement of the 27 members of the EU, and an EU summit to finalise details is underway. Yet she has managed to unite both the hard-line Tory Brexiteers and Tory Remainers against her. Britain’s crime of partitioning Ireland, and even its continuing colonial possession of Gibraltar, has rebounded to bite it on the backside over Brexit.

The partition of Ireland in particular and the Good Friday Agreement which the UK signed to end the Irish war of the 1970s-1990s, makes it impossible for Britain to simply walk away from the EU in toto. So May’s deal involves a ‘backstop’, a permanent customs union with the EU in effect, with a graduated effect that distinguishes between the 6 Counties Northern Irish statelet, and the rest of the UK, in effect putting a trade barrier down the Irish Sea.

This has outraged the Democratic Unionist Party, May’s partners whose ‘Confidence and Supply’ agreement with the Tories has so far kept her in power, so they have gone on strike against her, voting with Labour on a measure in the Finance Bill, which is a complete violation of their agreement with May’s Tories. The other side of this is that May, and indeed even many of the Brexiteers even, are signed up to ‘No Hard Border’ between the 6 Counties and the Irish Republic, but at the same time to Brexit, ultimately to avoid another conflict with Irish nationalist anti-imperialists. These premises are ultimately incompatible.

On a more general level, Brexit is a reactionary development because it aims to tear British capitalism, and the British working class for that matter, away from Europe. But Europe is a natural economic unit. And a Socialist United States of Europe is a key programmatic goal of the Communist movement, a key staging post of the world socialist revolution. While we do not support in any way any of the imperialist powers that make up the EU, along with a number of semi-colonial former Soviet bloc countries and other borderline semi-colonies like Greece, we are opposed to the break-up of the EU along national lines, as counterposed to the goal of European state unity.

Among the working class base of Labour at the time of the 2016 Referendum the influence of despair at decades of neo-liberal attacks, and the right-populism of UKIP that exploited that despair, was very strong, and led to a situation where much of Labour’s working-class base in the North of England particularly, but not only there, voted to leave. The obvious danger of an economically catastrophic No Deal Brexit has caused a major swing back away from Brexit in the last few months among Labour’s working class base, according to a number of opinion polls and more than 100 constituency Labour parties submitted motions calling to the party conference in September to back a referendum on any final Brexit deal.

The Brexit referendum was a profoundly reactionary development occasioned by the pressure of right-wing populism on the Tories, a device to try to avoid them being torn apart by discontent at the despair-inducing neo-liberal attacks on the working class that they had been the vanguard of. But not all opposition to neo-liberalism is progressive, particularly when it is directed against migrant workers who are also victims of neo-liberal capitalism, and also against the economic integration of Europe.

Jeremy Corbyn, John McDonnell and the left-wing Labour leadership have been caught in a cleft-stick on this, as much of their background is in opposition to the EU on a national-reformist basis that was characteristic of the Labour left from the 1960s to the 1980s. They face aggressive opponents on the Blairite right who are enthused about the Euro because it is part of their version of the neo-liberal project. There is a danger, which must be determinedly opposed by all Labour supporters, that the Blairites could stab Corbyn in the back and form some kind of National Government with Theresa May to try to keep her in power as against Corbyn, making use of the recent betrayals by the trade union bureaucracy in scuttling Open Selection at conference. The demand for a General Election is essential.

The bulk of Labour supporters now support remain, even among Corbyn supporters, and a second referendum to nullify the first. What would be best is if all current options: May's deal, No deal, or remaining in the EU were on the ballot paper, as proposed by the Tory remainer Justine Greening. The Labour leadership’s reticence in calling for this provided an opening for the Blairites to maybe treacherously try to form a joint neo-liberal government with the likes of Greening, instead of using the bare bones of this correct tactic for the ends of the left.

Genuine socialists should argue against Brexit, not because of any support for Euro-Austerity as with the Blairites, who also supported Cameron/Clegg’s austerity, but because we demand more integration than the bourgeois EU can ever deliver. We demand a full fiscal union in the EU as well as the monetary union (the Euro) which Britain opted out of, and the cancellation of debts and full restitution to Greece and other countries which have been hammered to preserve the Euro without a fiscal union.

We demand a European-wide Constituent Assembly, and democratic, federal elected bodies on a European level with the full powers that today reside in the Council of Ministers and other non-elected bodies. Just the battle for these kinds of demands, on a Europe-wide level, will expose the fact that the bourgeois is incapable of uniting Europe, and that it is only the European working class that can do it, by means of a socialist United States of Europe.
The IWW’s Dual Union tactic is the best way to fight the bosses—and the TU bureaucracy—today

By John Carty—Grass Roots Left

Grievances can only be won when management understands that a grievance is no longer the concern of an individual, but instead has become the concern of all, and that problems lie ahead unless it is resolved.

Many socialists today when considering the extraordinarily low level of industrial action and militancy in the trade unions find it difficult to find a comparable lull in British labour history. This is because you would have to go back to the late 1800s. Traditionally the level of industrial action is the means by which we measure the militancy of the working class and in a period when the class is obviously moving left politically, we are left wondering why the long awaited surge from below has not occurred.

Leadership leadership put forward proposals you know they will oppose but you can measure how much support you’ll get if you challenge them by the way other branch members vote. The union is not the property of its leadership although it is the means by which they acquire their boss-like salaries and expenses paid for by a rank and file they despise. It belongs to its members, it exists solely to acquire their boss and employers and government the question remains on how to organise the fight back. We can no longer elect leaders on a strategy of one less of a prick than the other when the votes are counted you still get a prick, you need principled grass root candidates who are embedded in the organised working class who they know and trust.

If the union bureaucracy makes it difficult to organise the fight back within the union then organise outside it joint the IWW become a dual card holder and set up an organisation for your industry in that union. Meet every now and then with other branch members vote. How much support you’ll get if you challenge them by the way other branch members vote. The union is not the property of its leadership although it is the means by which they acquire their boss-like salaries and expenses paid for by a rank and file they despise. It belongs to its members, it exists solely to acquire their boss and employers and government the question remains on how to organise the fight back. We can no longer elect leaders on a strategy of one less of a prick than the other when the votes are counted you still get a prick, you need principled grass root candidates who are embedded in the organised working class who they know and trust.

During the Blair years trade union membership declined and as a result so too did trade union activism. Just as with the Labour party under Blair democracy within the unions suffered, when the Blairites rejected Labour’s traditional role as the party of the working class for the party most committed to accommodating and facilitating Thatcher’s neoliberalism. New Labour along with the hierarchy of labour in the trade unions cut deals with multinationals and financial institutions in order to suppress the levels of industrial action and keep wages down and profits high. In order to suppress rank and file militancy ballots were rigged and underhand methods were used to prevent militant activists from speaking at meetings. False allegations were levelled against members to have them removed or prevent them from reaching a position of influence within the union.

One example of the underhand methods used is the blacklisting of Brian Higgins and many more construction workers whose names were passed on to construction firms by a Ucatt official who is now a senior Unite official. While the trade union bureaucracy has never had the interests of workers at heart the degeneration of the labour movement under Blair exacerbated its inadequacy in defending its members from the capitalist onslaught on workers’ rights from Blair’s election 1997 to the present day. This has led to wholesale mistrust of the unions especially in blue collar industries like construction where there unsettlingly cosy relations with big construction firms leaves both members and non-members in disbelief and the corrupt practice of the brown envelope continues.

While there is growing discontent amongst rank and file members at a growing culture of collaboration between union leaders and employers and government the question remains on how to organise the fight back. We can no longer elect leaders on a strategy of one being less of a prick than the other when the votes are counted you still get a prick, you need principled grass root candidates who are embedded in the organised working class who they know and trust.

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California is burning!

By Dov Winter, 12 November

California deals with these devastating fires by forcing prisoners to work as slave labour for $1 an hour! Trained as firefighters the cannot get a job because of their criminal record!

California is burning. Even if your spot in California is not on fire, you need to have a mask, because the air is filled with fire material that is bad for you. The fires are getting so bad that living in large areas California will be next to impossible in the coming years.

“California’s fire record dates back to 1932; of the 10 largest fires since then, nine have occurred since 2000, five since 2010 and two this year alone, including the Mendocino Complex Fire, the largest in state history.” Nine of the ten largest fires occurred since 2000! We do not need the dialectics to understand that 1+1=2. This simply means that California fires are aligned perfectly with a worsening climate change that is destroying California. These days the fires routinely destroy tens of thousands of homes, and they kill many people. Now, whole towns are burned to the ground. In this round, Paradise and Malibu burned:

“This has been California since the Camp Fire broke out early Thursday morning, burning 80 acres per minute and devastating the northern town of Paradise. Later in the day, the Woolsey Fire broke out to the south in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties, prompting the evacuation of all of Malibu.”

Different events of fires and floods show that Climate Change is entering a new stage. We are no longer at the edge of Climate Change disasters that show a terrifying future. We are moving to the fierce stage of Climate Change, and there is no way back.

There is certainly no way back for California. If you live in California there is an increasing chance that your house will be on fire. And if it is not on fire, you can be overwhelmed with the smoke from the fires.

There is no escape. My friends from California tell me that they need to wear a mask. Do you believe that it going to get much worse? But it is. California normally start getting steady rain from the end of October. Now it is questionable if it starts raining before December.

Climate Change is costing capitalism billions of dollars. It is just a matter of few years before Climate Change will cause severe economic and political disruptions. At this conjecture, the Socialist Revolution must start, or the world will desert into barbarism.

Motion on Labour conference delegation

UNITE Retired Members North London passed this motion mem con at its branch meeting of 14 November:

This branch condemns the behaviour of our unions’ delegation to the NEC on 4 September and at Labour Conference in September 2018.

IHRA

Unite delegates on the NEC voted on 4 September to add the eleven examples of the already adopted International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) including ‘Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination e.g. by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour’.

The UNITE delegates at the NEC combined with other trade union delegates and with Jon Lansman, leader of Momentum, and Rhea Wolfson, to force Jeremy Corbyn to withdraw his caveat because he sought to defend the rights to criticise Israel as follows

“It cannot be considered racist to treat Israel like any other state or assess its conduct against international law. Nor should it be regarded as anti-Semitic to describe Israel, its policies or the circumstances around its’ foundation as racist because of their discriminatory impact, or to support another settlement of the Israel-Palestine conflict”

The adoption of the confused IHRA definition and eleven examples instead of the straightforward OED definition ‘hostility or prejudice against Jews’ puts all defenders of the Palestinians at risk of expulsion from the Labour Party

Open Selection and leadership contests

The manoeuvring to stifle debate on Open Selection and leadership contests at the Labour Party conference ensured that what should be a basic democratic right for constituency Labour Party members to vote for who their prospective Parliamentary candidate should be, has been denied and the election of the leader.

This is in odds with Unite policy on Open Selection adopted at Unite conference, the supreme policy making body of the union. Instead of supporting open selection, the delegation chose instead to support a position that was a compromise with the inadequate trigger ballot system. This requires Labour Party members in a third of wards to make a decision to run a ballot as opposed to this being automatic.

That anti-Corbyn Labour MPs will thus be allowed to remain in place without challenge means that a future Labour government may be opposed internally from implementing radical reform and electing another left wing leader will now be more difficult.

Currently, any MP must get the backing of 10% of their fellow MPs before they can stand for leader, but many members wanted that reduced to 5%. The Unite delegation allied with the right wing unions to retain the 10% of MPs, but a contender must also win the backing of 5% of local parties or 5% of trade union affiliate members, in effect giving a veto to two big unions.

We therefore call on our Executive Council to ensure that the issue of Open Selection and leader election is revisited at the earliest opportunity.

Notes

[2] Ibid. ▲
Economic nationalism; calling for import controls and the exclusion of immigrants and ‘foreign’ workers, has been enormously strengthened by the Brexit vote. It has also strengthened the aristocracy of labour, those skilled and privileged sections of workers with relatively good jobs, on whom the trade union bureaucracy essentially rests. As the spokesperson for the trade union bureaucracy and primary ideologue of and defender of this layer of workers the Communist Party of Britain (CPB) and their mouthpiece, The Morning Star (MS) is the foremost ideological advocates of exit from Europe in the labour movement.

In the last referendum in 1975 the MS could boast that they were the only newspaper to support the No campaign then, gathering under their banner Michael Foot, Tony Benn, Barbara Castle, Enoch Powell, Ian Paisley, the Communist Party of Great Britain, the Scottish National party, Plaid Cymru, the Ulster Unionist party and the Democratic Unionist party. A truly revolutionary popular front who shared platforms without regard to class, creed or politics but which nevertheless failed in its endeavours!

As the CPB/MS are Stalinists, the ideological foundation of which is socialism in a single country, they invariably follow the very patriotic line of defending capitalism in a single country too. In fact, this is the logical theoretical basis of all who seek the parliamentary road to socialism.

Who led the No Campaign?

The Brexit camp MPs includes those on the right of the Tory party, maybe up to 100 MPs, Labour MPs Kate Hoey, Graham Stringer, Kelvin Hopkins and Roger Godsiff. The campaign was: “bankrolled by a string of millionaire party donors, including Labour money-man John Mills, former Tory co-treasurer Peter Cruddas and spread-betting tycoon Stuart Wheeler, who has pumped a fortune into Ukip”, according to The Mirror.

MS-influenced TU leaders and many Stalinists influenced by its socialism-in-a-single-country ideology like Arthur Scargill are for exit as are both the Socialist Party (CWU) and the Socialist Workers Party (although the latter is far less ‘patriotic’).

In October 2011 then RMT president Alex Gordon made the following social patriotic statement to a conference of the Peoples Movement (Ireland) in Dublin:

“The Irish Congress of Trade Unions is demanding measures to protect particularly unskilled workers where social dumping is threatening jobs. “It is an iron law of economics that an abundant supply of labour pushes down its cost. It is insulting people’s intelligence to pretend otherwise,” it said in a statement. Across Europe, it is clear that we are witnessing large movement of capital eastwards as labour heads west. And this is happening in accordance to the principles of the single European market, which allow the ‘free movement of goods, capital, services and labour’, regardless of the social consequences. Single market rules, therefore, truncate all forms of democracy, including rights to fair wages, working conditions, welfare and social protection and collective bargaining. These EU policies can only mean a continuation of mass migration and, ultimately, feed the poison of racism and fascism, the last refuge of the corporate beast in crisis. To reverse this increasingly perverse situation, all nation states must have democratic control over their own immigration policy and have the right to apply national legislation in defence of migrant and indigenous workers.” [1]

What was the positive case for a Remain Vote?

In 1929 Trotsky explained:

“The leadership of the Comintern, and particularly the leadership of the Fourth International; Go Forward!”

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
the French Communist Party are exposing the hypocrisy of official pacifism… The slogan of the United States of Europe is not a cunning invention of diplomacy. It springs from the immutable economic needs of Europe which emerge all the more painfully and acutely the greater is the pressure of the USA… In the person of the Opposition the vanguard of the European proletariat tells its present rulers: In order to unify Europe, it is first of all necessary to wrest power out of your hands. We will do it. We will unite Europe. We will unite it against the hostile capitalist world. We will turn it into a mighty drill-ground of militant socialism. We will make it the cornerstone of the World Socialist Federation.” [3]

The leadership of the Tory party, the Labour party (with the small opposition above), the Liberal Democrats (almost no opposition here), the Scottish National party, Plaid Cymru (Welsh nationalists), the UUP, SDLP and Sinn Fein (three of the four north of Ireland parties) were in the Remain camp. The nationalist parties all hope to attract US investments by low corporate tax and large tax breaks and that vitally depends on staying in Europe, hence the big change there since 1975. Of the far-left Socialist Fight, Workers Power, Socialist Resistance and the Alliance for Workers Liberty were for remain. The SSP in Scotland and Left Unity in England and Wales also supported a remain vote. The CPGB (Weekly Worker) was for abstain.

Obama urged Cameron to fight to remain in Europe and Cameron visible strengthened his stance as a consequence, the leadership of France and Germany want the UK to remain in.

Of course, we acknowledge that the EU is a ‘bosses’ club’ that its structures are undemocratic even in the very limited terms of bourgeois democracy, that it does not have the advantages of a federal capitalist state in terms of bourgeois democracy, that monetary union is not fiscal union so all the weaker states in the EU are at the mercy of German imperialism in particular which exploits the size and strength of its economy to oppress all other nations. But revolution against the British State would be in a far better position to defend and extend itself with the assistance of the European and global working class if they are joined together in the EU.

How will it advance this historic task if we, first of all, succumb to national socialism, reject alliances with the other working classes of Europe and seek national solutions to the problems facing the working class in Britain alone, which are profoundly global in origins and whose solution is to be found only in the international arena? Lex- iteers may argue that it is profoundly contrary to their intention to advance British chauvinism in voting left Brexit but that is what has resulted as we predicted.

The SP has not softened their position on immigration control here in their British Perspectives 2013:

“We staunchly oppose racism. We defend the right to asylum and argue for the end of repressive measures like detention centres. At the same time, given the outlook of the majority of the working class, we cannot put forward a bald slogan of ‘open borders’ or ‘no immigration controls’, which would be a barrier to convincing workers of a socialist programme, both on immigration and other issues. Such a demand would alienate the vast majority of the working class, including many more long-standing immigrants, who would see it as a threat to jobs, wages and living conditions. Nor can we make the mistake of dismissing workers who express concern about immigration as ‘racists’. While racism and nationalism are clearly elements in anti-immigrant feeling, there are many con- sciously anti-racist workers who are concerned about the scale of immigration.” [4]

Imperialist governments are the executive committees of finance capital and the transnational corporations representing Wall Street, the City of London, Paris, Hamburg and Tokyo. The great corporations and their governments (executive committees) can only be defeated when we understand and fight them from the perspective of the world revolution like Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks did in 1917.

Left Remain

There is an extant Left Remain and Another Europe is Possible campaign, but they are led by the AWL. The role they have played in Momentum in assisting the anti-Semitic witch-hunts against Jackie Walker and the rest of the left is really despicable. This is how they describe Another Europe is Possible, Left Against Brexit tour sponsors:

“A grassroots group of Jeremy Corbyn supporters and trade unions is to launch a major UK speaking tour, billed as the left-wing campaign to remain in the EU. The Left Against Brexit tour will attempt to persuade Corbyn and his allies of the left-wing case for a pro-EU position and will argue that the party can reap electoral benefits from a shift.

Speakers on the summer tour of British cities will include Manuel Cortes, the general secretary of the transport union TSSA, Michael Chessum, who was on Momentum’s first steering committee, the Labour MEP Julie Ward and the former shadow minister Catherine West.

The speakers will not call for a rerun of the referendum on EU membership, but for Corbyn to formally reject leaving the EU and make the case that a vote for Labour would be a vote to remain – although the UK is set to formally exit the bloc before the next scheduled election in 2022.

“There is nothing about Brexit that will make life better for the working class,” Cortes said. “It was a right-wing brainchild won – and only narrowly – on a deceitful programme of dog-whistle racism and the big lie that the NHS would get £350m a week.”

A mainstream Remain group, Best for Britain, the anti-Brexit campaign that has the financial backing of billionaire philanthropist George Soros, has given £70,000 to Another Europe is Possible.

Notes

[1] Trade Unionists against the EU, Social Europe is a con, http://www.no2eu.com/?page_id=263
[3] Ibid.
John Downey was arrested by Gardaí in Creeslough, County Donegal on Monday 5 November. The High Court remanded him in custody on the foot of a European Arrest Warrant. His response was, “I’d say it was the DUP and not the DPP who decided to pursue the matter”.

He had been arrested at Gatwick Airport in 2014 over charges that he was involved in the Hyde Park bomb of 1982, but, to the disgust of the Loyalists, he was allowed free because Tony Blair gave him a letter that some republican ‘On The Runs’ got under the 1998 Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

Of course, this arrest is closely linked to the DUP/Tory pact, allied by the continuing appeasement of the Dublin government of the northern Loyalist and British imperialism itself. To assist with Brexit the former RUC figure Drew Harris was appointed Garda Commissioner in June, the first unionist to gain the post.

Drew Harris, a current Deputy Chief Constable of the PSNI police in the Six Counties, is to become the new Garda police commissioner in the 26 Counties, it has been confirmed. Mr Harris has worked in the RUC (later PSNI) more than 30 years and has been intimately involved in some of the most controversial aspects of policing in the North. He has been directly linked to a number of cover-ups as the head of PSNI legacy affairs, and previously headed C3/Special Branch, the agency responsible for directing, arming and protecting state agents within loyalist death squads.”

Sinn Féin, realising that the arrest was targeting their supporters who had accepted the Good Friday Agreement, expressed their outrage. Sinn Féin TDs Pearse Doherty, Dessie Ellis, Sean Crowe and Martin Ferris attended the first hearing. Pearse Doherty said:

“It won’t be lost on anybody that this has happened at a time when the British government and authorities are looking for a blanket amnesty for their own soldiers given the spotlight is on them for their activities in the North,”

His extradition hearing was adjourned for two months on 23 November. Families of the four victims of the Hyde Park bombing are currently suing him, seeking financial compensation and a finding that he was liable for what happened.

Oh dear, Perfidious Albion has shown its preference for Loyalists over former Republicans who had capitulated to them. Who would have thought they would be so ungrateful! ▲

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Tony Taylor released on 28 November

Great news. The meeting in the House of Commons organised by Austin Harney on Monday 19th, chaired by Chris Williamson MP with five Irish TDs (see back page) must surely helped in this. Now for the Craigavon 2, Brendan McConville and John Paul Wotton. Not forgetting justice for the Ballymurphy 11, see opposite, the struggle for political status and freedom for all Republican POWs, British troops out of Ireland and a socialist united Ireland. ▲
On the French ‘Yellow Jackets’

Is it not the responsibility of revolutionary Marxists to engage in all movements of the proletariat, all spontaneous developments? Surely a revolutionary socialist/Communist party has the responsibility of putting their forces into the fray taking on all comers?

Whether there are opportunist pseudo-left, or rightist demagogues, state provocateurs or whatever involved, isn’t this the real world? And do revolutionaries not have to engage in this movement to expose all of these, and win the leadership through their implacable commitment to the historical interest of the proletariat?

I think only if they are committed to the historical role of the working class will they have the confidence to engage in the struggle for proletarian leadership. It really is too difficult to see the difference between a genuine spontaneous popular development and something that has been cooked up by the right-wing populists. Taking proletarian leadership involves, at times, making decisions and taking a step into the unknown, but with the confidence and courage that comes from the revolutionary Marxist tradition.

Revolution and revolutionary situations will not come ready-made with clear road maps. Consequently, winning the leadership of the proletariat will involve building that leadership in reality, against all false prophets, pseudo left and counter revolutionary elements. It will require the courage of engaging in all working class developments, whether single issue or whatever involved, isn’t this the real world?

And do revolutionaries not have to engage in whatever involved, isn’t this the real world?

Interpenetrated peoples and Brexit

Politicians seldom speak the truth, not just because they have constantly to deceive the masses, often they have no concept of the truth at all. In the case of Ireland, most British politicians are organically incapable of knowing the historical truth.

The historical truth is something that asserts itself and they then have to frantically engage in all sorts of attempts at grafting their utterly false, imperialist narrative onto it in parliament and in the media etc. Their problem is, it won’t go away, and it never will.

Ireland as a colony was no different to any other colony: its capital, resources of food, labour resources and its freedom as a nation was taken and transferred to Britain. The six-counties remains a colony, a left-over of the British empire.

It has a portion of the population, which was historically privileged as descendants of earlier British settlers, organised to maintain the ideas of the British Empire along sectarian lines.

The British have at all times maintained their unofficial death-squads in the form of the unionist paramilitaries, to maintain British empire sectarianism in the six-county colony. The conflict in the six-counties, the war between the Irish republican and socialist forces and the British, including their orange death-squads, was not started by the Irish, it was started by the British army invasions of nationalist areas.

The republican war was one of defence against the British war machine and its death-squads. This simple fact, historical truth, is constantly denied by the British with overwhelmingly false narratives designed by their imperialist mindset. As of now with their latest problem over Brexit and the border, it is clear that the British would like to have another war in Ireland, not that they will come out and say so. But that is the essence of Brexit, it always was that. It wasn’t simply that they forgot about Ireland when they conceived of Brexit.

They believed they would roll over Ireland and force another conflict on their terms if it was necessary. This is still part of the thinking of those so-called hard Brexiteers. Recently, David Trimble, speaking to this theme said on RTE radio that the loyalist paramilitaries are mobilising again because of the statements coming from the Irish government about a united Ireland.

This was a threat from Trimble, and he was representing a section of the British Brexiteer hardliners.

On the matter of the Tories wishing to be rid of the north, this is nonsense. They are wedded to maintaining a colony in Ireland, it is sacred to them. Any talk of “having no strategic interest in the north” and so on, is so much political fishing on their part to see what way they can manipulate the various erstwhile republican and nationalist parties, no more than that. There could well be another conflict in Ireland, if so it will be like the last one, it will be started by British imperialism in one of its forms.

In a way, the infighting in the Tory party is about this prospect, and to a lesser extent, the same can be said about Labour. But the fact that there are some Trotskyist groups whose thinking with regard to Ireland is totally in accord with British imperialism tells us something about the depths of political degeneration which is possible. I am not inclined to engage with friends of my enemy in that case. Outside of just calling these people what they are: supporters of imperialism, I see no point in engaging with them, as they are obviously incapable of knowing the historical truth. Maybe they should be just left alone with their provocative, reactionary ramblings.

Ballymurphy Massacre Inquest Day 4

Alice Harper, daughter of Danny Teggart:

We waited a while in my mother’s and then phoned the hospitals from a neighbour’s house to see if they had daddy but nobody knew anything.

I checked with my uncle Gerard he told me he had left my daddy at the corner of Springfield Park and that was the last he seen of him. I then went to the Henry Taggart army post for the first time it must have been round 11am. I asked, “did you arrest my father?” I was just asking different questions and they said, “No, we hadn’t time for arrests we only had time for killing.” That was their words.

I was shocked and started walking away they started singing that song chorus “Where’s your Papa gone, Where’s your papa gone”. I returned to mummy’s house but there still wasn’t any word. I went to the army posts two more times that day, we started hearing stories of local people being shot.

I went back up to the Henry Taggart and they told me “there is a fucking unidentified body in the Lagan Bank morgue why don’t you try there?”

…Patrick told me that when he was around five years old he was playing in Ivecagh Street and there were two Saracens in the street. He said a soldier called him over and said, “We shot your da.” Patrick said “No you didn’t, my daddy is in England” The soldier said it again, “We shot your da” and they started to sing “Where’s your papa gone?”

Patrick ran into the house and said, “Mammy that soldier is after telling me they shot my daddy.” Mairt went to the barracks and complained but there was nothing done about it.”

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
The recent split in the already very small splinter group from the Spartacists, the International Bolshevik Tendency, has brought these groupings to a very difficult pass where their very existence is threatened. After more than 35 years of existence, they are really no bigger than when they started. This extended period of neo-liberal reaction has been extraordinarily difficult for the left, and many organisations have fallen apart or fragmented. There is nothing comforting to be said about this, as so many left-wing organisations have been built on either opportunist, or sometimes sectarian foundations that tend to be exposed by the sharpening class polarisations in the world today.

The only solution to this is to build and educate new revolutionary cadre. This can only be done in a two-fold manner – to push questions of theory and programme for discussion on the entire left, and to create an organisational form where questions of theory and programme can be debated democratically, in a way that drives the revolutionary left forward, not backward. This is counterposed to the ridiculous situation in the IBT, where strategic questions were disputed for 10 years and yet debated in private, in an organisation that managed to put out one magazine a year, with the organisation paralyzed for the whole of this period by a private debate out of sight of the wider left and labour movement.

It is 'reduction ad absurdum' and an incredible waste of political energy to debate world historic issues of the international class struggle in a political bubble, out of sight of the wider left let alone the workers movement and indeed the wider movements of the classes that fight each other in the real world.

Those debating have an incredibly narrow, elitist conception of themselves and their supposed relationship with the rest of the world. They believe that their cadre simply by being members of themselves supposedly uniquely correct political tradition, the tradition of the Spartacist League of the 1960s and 1970s, have a higher consciousness than all other elements of the workers' movement, including left-wing activists and theorists with a similar level of political commitment and experience to their cadre. This is an absurd sectarian conceit in our view.

If serious programmatic and theoretical differences arise within a Marxist organisation, it is 'fatal' to treat them as a secret for years on end. Fatal to the interests of the protagonists and fatal to the interests of the wider working class movement. Why? Because the working class movement needs education above all. And serious political questions should be discussed publicly (press, lectures, pamphlets) by individual comrades, and if so, in what form and scope. But even if the decisions of the organization or of the party leadership are regarded as wrong by other members, these comrades must in their public activity never forget that it is the worst breach of discipline and the worst error in combat to disrupt or, worse, to break the unity of the common front.' [1]

This was widely interpreted as an encouragement of party authorities to regard public discussion of political, ideological and programmatic differences in a communist party as something to be greatly regretted, a 'breach of the common front'. At the time this resolution was written, the main problem facing the Communist International was assimilating large number of new members, and whole new Communist parties, that were in the process of breaking from anarcho-syndicalism, Social Democratic politics or ultra-leftism, or left-wing nationalism or even guerillism in some backward countries, and basically promoting the assimilation of what a communist party
is actually supposed to do: act as a professional revolutionary political leadership within the workers' movement.

The Comintern barely had time to assimilate these lessons before it began to seriously degenerate as the embryonic Stalinist bureaucracy began a war within the Russian Party and then the international itself against party democracy in general and Trotsky's Left Opposition in particular. This buried the question of the precise meaning of democracy and centralism forever in the Third International, as it ceased to be a revolutionary organisation and therefore the question of the form of revolutionary organisation became a dead letter for it.

From 1924 Zinoviev set out to 'Bolshevise' the Comintern, i.e. impose the will of his triumvirate with Lev Kamenev and Joseph Stalin to oppose Leon Trotsky. In 1925 Stalin secured the dismissal of Trotsky as commissar of war, in 1926 he had him ousted from the Politburo. Now Stalin allied with the rightists Nikolay Bukharin, Mikhail Tomsky and Alexei Rykov. Zinoviev and Kamenev were forced to ally with Trotsky on the question of China in the Joint Opposition in the Summer of 1926. But as late as 1925 Zinoviev was still 'bolshevising' the Comintern affiliated parties, i.e. imposing the bureaucratic centralist form of party organisation Stalinism favours today as do so many self-declared Trotskyist organisation which takes the Zinoviev/Stalin version of internal party democracy as against the Bolshevist norms. Here is Zinoviev in 1925 setting out his bureaucratic views against Trotsky:

“It is necessary that the Party secure itself against a repetition of the "attacks" upon Leninism. Serious Party guarantees are necessary that the decisions of the Party shall be binding for Comrade Trotsky. The Party is not a debating society, but a Party, which, moreover, is in a very complicated situation. The slogan of the present day is: Bolshevising of all strata of the Party! Ideological struggle against Trotskyism!” [2]

What the Third Congress did not address

What the Third Congress resolution in 1921 did not address, was the possible arising of situations where groups of Marxists, who had assimilated the lessons of the Russian Revolution and the need for a Communist Party as an alternative political leadership of the working class, could themselves become divided by complex programmatic questions, involving different interpretations of the degeneration of a workers' state such as the USSR; the emergence of apparent clone states of the USSR throughout wide sections of the world after the Second World War; different interpretations of the relations of the degenerated Stalinist states with other forces, such as nationalist regimes and movements in semi-colonial countries; the disintegration of the old colonial empires which rendered the question of the oppression of the semi-colonial world and how imperialism controls it more complex; and then later the whole complex series of problems posed by the collapse of the Stalinist regimes and the restoration of various kinds of capitalism in those countries.

To say that these kinds of problems were not anticipated by the authors of the Comintern Organisational Resolution would be the understatement of the 20th Century, if not the 21st as well! They had the character of "unknown unknowns", to steal a useful idea from a thoughtful class enemy (former US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld). The perspectives of the authors of this document were that of tempered revolutionary optimism.

That although the immediate post-WWI revolutionary wave had receded, the retrenchment and proper organisation of Communist Parties, along with the proper application of the tactic of the United Front, in the imperialist countries with large Social Democratic parties, or the Anti-Imperialist United Front, in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, would see in a relatively brief period a revival of mass struggles, giving Communists the opportunity to lead; and thus the revival of the world revolution. They did not anticipate that all

this would be fatally undermined from within, by Stalinism, and the world Marxists would have to deal with would become qualitatively more complex and problematic.

Lenin's Misgivings

Indeed Lenin expressed his misgivings about this resolution in a famous speech at the subsequent, 4th Congress of the Comintern (1922), which has the quality of "I know there is something wrong with this but I cannot quite put my finger on exactly what is wrong":

“At the Third Congress, in 1921, we adopted a resolution on the organisational structure of the Communist Parties and on the methods and content of their activities. The resolution is an excellent one—but it is almost entirely Russian, that is to say, everything in it is based on Russian conditions. This is its good point, but it is also its failing. It is its failing because I am sure that no foreigner can read it. I have read it again before saying this. In the first place, it is too long, containing fifty or more points. Foreigners are not usually able to read such things. Secondly, even if they read it, they will not understand it because it is too Russian. Not because it is written in Russian—it has been excellently translated into all languages—but because it is thoroughly imbued with the Russian spirit. And thirdly, if by way of exception some foreigner does understand it, he cannot carry it out. This is its third defect. I have talked with a few of the foreign delegates and hope to discuss matters in detail with a large number of delegates from different countries during the Congress, although I shall not take part in its proceedings, for unfortunately it is impossible for me to do that. I have the impression that we made a big mistake with this resolution, namely, that we blocked our own road to further success. As I have said already, the resolution is excellently drafted; I am prepared to subscribe to every one of its fifty or more points. But we have not learnt how to present our Russian experience to foreigners. All that was said in the resolution has remained a dead letter. If we do not realise this, we shall be unable to move ahead. I think that after five years of the Russian revolution the most important thing for all of us, Russian and foreign comrades alike, is to sit down and study. We have only now obtained the opportunity to do so. I do not know how long this opportunity will last. I do not know how long the capitalist powers will give us the opportunity to study in peace. But we must take advantage of every moment of respite from fighting, from war, to study, and to study from scratch....

That resolution must be carried out. It cannot be carried out overnight; that is absolutely impossible. The resolution is too Russian, it reflects Russian experience. That is why it is quite unintelligible to foreigners, and they cannot be content with hanging it in a corner like an icon and praying to it. Nothing will be achieved that way. They must assimilate part of the Russian experience. Just how that will be done, I do not know. The fascists in Italy may, for example, render us a great service by showing the Italians that they are not yet sufficiently enlightened and that their country is not yet ensured against the Black Hundreds. Perhaps this will be very useful. We Russians must also find ways and means of explaining the principles of this resolution to the foreigners. Unless we do that, it will be absolutely impossible for them to carry it out. I am sure that in this connection we must tell not only the Russians, but the foreign comrades as well, that the most important thing in the period we are now entering is to study. We are studying in the general sense. They, however, must study in the special sense, in order that they may really understand the organisation, structure, method and content of revolutionary work. If they do that, I am sure the prospects of the world revolution will be not only good, but excellent.”

So what was the 'big mistake'? Lenin was musing about, but not sure how to concretely express? In my view it is not that the resolution reflected too much of Bolshevik experience, but rather that it was
suited for the immediate perspectives of the revolutionary Comi
tern in 1921, in what was considered a 'breathing space' for imperial-
ism within a situation when the Comintern was consolidating itself
and preparing through the 'conquest of the masses' for a further
offensive on power.

What it did not prepare the Communists for was how to politically
handle complex reactionary developments that would necessitate a
prolonged swimming against the stream of reaction, which the Trot-
skyists subsequently had to do. When that happened, in the face of
serious reactionary developments such as the final defeat of the 1905
revolution after 1907, or in the face of the destruction of the Second
International by social-imperialism, the Bolsheviks had to fight out
major programmatic and theoretical differences in order to go fur-
ther. And they inevitably were fought out in the public domain.

**Bolshevik Practice: Theory and Action**

The fight with Bogdanov and Lunacharsky, the so-called 'god build-
ers', was a fight to preserve the Marxist world-outlook of the Bol-
sheviks in a period of considerable retreat and political demoralisa-
tion of the revolutionary movement, both in Russia and in exile. The
expression of this was the publication of Lenin's well-known theo-
retical work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, which was about as far
as you can get from some obscure polemic in a secret internal bulle-
tin.

Then there was the fight over 'Imperialist Economism' during the
first world war, differences that arose with Bukharin and Pyatkov,
Bolsheviks who were somewhat influenced by the political rigidity about democratic ques-
tions associated with Rosa Luxemburg, which was again fought out in public, in the pages of
the Bolsheviks *Pravda*, and in Lenin's pamphlet *A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist
Economism*.

And most strikingly there is the debate/confrontation between Lenin, and the Old
Bolsheviks, led by Kamenev and Stalin, in
April 1917, when he presented his 'April Thes-
es', to the Party, and in effect to the public. Preceded by four 'Letters from Afar' only one
of which was published by Kamenev and Stalin in
Pravda, despite being written by Len-
in for the express purpose of publication, they
put forward a major corrective to the histori-

cal position of the party on the nature of the
revolution.

They steered away from the Bolsheviks' earlier halfway-house
demand for the 'Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and
Peasantry' in which the aim of the revolution was to create the con-
ditions for a rapid American-style development of capitalism, to the
immediate perspective of the proletarian dictatorship and an attack
on capitalism itself, in the context of an expected Europe-wide
working-class revolution.

This was fought out in public and was always intended by Lenin to
be public; the 'Letters from Afar' and his demand for their publica-
tion signify that. The return of Lenin was big news; as soon as he
returned via the Finland Station the party met in the full glare of
publicity and Lenin not only proclaimed his Theses openly, but also
soon made clear that if he did not get his way on this he would take
his case to the working class itself. The revolution itself was at stake!

An outrage from the point of view of the passage quoted earlier
from the Comintern Organisational Revolution, but Lenin under-
stood that the likes of Kamenev and Stalin represented backward-
ness in that context, that the newly revolutionised workers had leapt
far ahead of them politically. He openly threatened to use the non-

party revolutionary workers to get his way in the party – which
proved not to be necessary as he was able to win a clear majority of
the party to his perspective in a matter of a few weeks.

**Minorities Can Be Right!**

The point being that on questions of revolutionary strategy there is
no law that says that the leadership, or the membership, of a aspiring
revolutionary organisation must have a higher political conscious-
ness that those outside, or that the majority at a given time must be
right. Minorities can be right against the majority; even on occasion
minorities of one can be right against the whole organisation.

In all these cases, the minority should have the right to appeal to,
recruit to itself externally and put social and political pressure on the
majority to conform to its views. If the views of the majority and
minority are fundamentally incompatible in some decisive class
sense, this will result in a split, and nothing in terms of democratic
innovations will be able to prevent that. Such splits are in fact
healthy.

However if the views of the majority and the minority are not fund-
damentally incompatible in class terms, but nevertheless the views of
the minority are a significant improvement on the politics of the
majority within an overall common political framework, then it is
imperative that the minority be given every opportunity to become a
majority as soon as possible for the political health of the organisa-
tion as a whole. That means that it is in the interest of the revolu-
tionary organisation as a whole to allow the minority to direct its
propaganda not merely at the members of the majority, which could quite conceivably on the ques-
tion in dispute be deluded and incapable of being won over by force of internal argument alone.

The minority must be free to issue propaganda aimed at others outside the organisation who
are able to see matters more clearly, not only to recruit them directly to join the minority, but
also to exert social and political pressure on the majority to abandon what may be irrational or
flawed positions that are damaging the movement as a whole. But conversely, if it were the
positions of the minority that were flawed and damaging to the interests of the organisation,
then the same social and political pressure would act on them, and tend to bring them into
line with reality.

**Democratic Centralism: Its Real Meaning**

So what then is the real meaning of democratic centralism? The clue
is to be found at the highest level of the class struggle so far in the
entire history of the Communist movement, the organisation of the
workers insurrection in Petrograd, then the capital of the Russian
empire, planned for November 7, 1917. It is well known that Grigo-
ry Zinoviev and Leon Kamenev, two long time Bolshevik leaders
who were very close to Lenin prior to the February Revolution in
1917, objected not only to the change in the party perspective on the
revolution that Lenin won with the *April Theses*, but to the insurrec-
tion itself which they considered to be madness. So they went pub-
lic, condemning the plans for the insurrection and even naming the
day that had been planned. Lenin was furious, and called for their
evacuation from the party as strike-breakers against the revolution
itself.

In fact, he did not get his way on this; they were not expelled. This
actually shows the nature of the party regime at that point. In prin-
ciple they should have been expelled. This is the correct side of the
Comintern Organisation Resolution's condemnation of those who
'break the unity of the common front'.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
This is not about a disagreement about some theoretical or programmatic question that may impact on future actions down the road, or change their nature. This is going public about an action that had already been decided, that is underway. This is about disrupting and saboraging an action, which since the party’s whole purpose is to lead actions at the highest level of the class struggle, is an attack on the party itself. If an action of the party is aborted due to such sabotage, even if the action is mistaken, if the disruption succeeds it will most likely result in a severe defeat of the whole party.

As I noted earlier, the destruction of the Comintern as a revolutionary organisation, which right from the beginning of the degeneration resulted in severe attacks on the democracy of the Communist movement, meant that this question became a dead letter. The Comintern’s revolutionary successor, however, was the Fourth International, and though not entirely uncritical of its predecessor, on this question it adhered largely to an interpretation of democratic centralism that regarded questions of political agreement and disagreement as coming within the sphere of the ‘common front’ as the Comintern Organisational Resolution put it.

Trotsky-Cannon vs Shachtman-Burnham

This was decisively clarified in the fight with James Burnham, Max Shachtman and Martin Abern in the American Trotskyist movement, the Socialist Workers Party in 1939-40. The latter two with James P. Cannon made up the three founding cadres of the US Trotskyists. Trotsky, then in his final exile in Mexico, worked extensively with James P Cannon and other leaders of the SWP in the fight against the petit-bourgeois opposition. They wanted to abandon the defence of the USSR in the context of the Stalin-Hitler pact, capitulating wholesale to the bourgeois outcry against the USSR.

We consider Trotsky and Cannon to be right on all the disputed questions with the Shachtman-Burnham opposition. But one thing that set a precedent was the arguments used by both Trotsky and Cannon against conducting the factional dispute publicly, which have long been quoted by post-war Trotskyists in defence of keeping serious political differences internal. The Shachtmanites wanted to publish their own materials and appeal to the general public with their criticisms of the terrible Trotskyists for their alleged apologias for Stalin (i.e. their defence of the social foundations of the USSR against imperialism despite Stalin).

It would actually have benefitted the Trotskyist movement to conduct the dispute with Shachtman and Burnham publicly. It would have educated wider layers at the time about what the Trotskyist movement really stood for, drawing these new layers into the dispute. By forcing both sides to face the full force of the social and political pressures that resulted, it would likely have both accelerated the evolution of the opposition into the imperialist camp, and hardened up the SWP’s cadre by forcing them to face such pressure during the fight itself.

As it was it is now widely seen as a somewhat obscure and esoteric dispute, the first major one of many that splintered the Trotskyist movement into a large number of fragments, still increasing in number. Trotsky, who had the heritage of a great revolution behind him, was able to fight the actual issues out in a highly political and clarifying manner, which tended to minimise the negative effects of the hidden, secretive nature of this fight.

Trotsky And His Flawed Successors: Correcting The Error

But his successors did not have the same advantages and its arguable that a process was set in train that resulted in an organic tendency of groupings that follow the tradition of the Fourth International to become sects, to produce fragment after fragment, to give birth to horrendous bureaucratic regimes and cults based on the logic of conducting principled political disputes on matters that affect the entire working class movement in strict secrecy, behind closed doors.

The attempt to neutralise the effects of social pressure on the cadre of revolutionary groups by conducting disputes in secret does not in fact neutralise these effects at all. What it does is give expression to the same social pressures in a deformed, clausrophobic political environment. In sects built on this model, the majority has a built-in advantage over minorities as it has the right to gag them and prevent them from recruiting.

If the majority then decisively loses its real revolutionary bearings, therefore, it has the power not only to gag minorities, but to suppress and abuse them. The minority then has two choices: to capitulate, or leave. Either is possible: the former gives rise to cults and odious sects, the latter leads to fragmentation. Or it could equally be said that the former only delays the latter until the minority can bear it no more.

Conversely, it could be hypothesised that in a party model where the right to public programmatic and theoretical criticism was guaranteed, the exercise of this right by a sharp and politically revolutionary minority could, through political and social pressure again, save for revolutionary politics the cadre of the erring majority, or at least part of it, and thus allow an erring revolutionary organisation to be salvaged. Conversely, if the closed party paradigm were in place the majority’s degeneration would be unstoppable.

There you have the genesis of every cultist and sectarian outfit and regime that has ever blighted the Trotskyist movement. We in Socialist Fight seek to correct this organisational error, which as explained has its origins in the early Comintern, not the Fourth International.

We owe a certain debt in this regard to the critical ex-Stalinist CPGB/Weekly Worker group who brought to light the contradictions between contemporary Trotskyist practice and that of the Bolsheviks. But the CPGB, despite this positive contribution, is a centrist group that does not have the revolutionary programme to make full use of this insight. We do, and we seek to engage with them as well as today’s subjectively revolutionary would-be Trotskyists to correct this also.

Notes


Bolsonaro: A neo-Nazi in the presidency
Organize the resistance and self-defence of the workers and oppressed, blacks, women and LGBTI

Brazil, October 29, 2018

The “New Republic”, founded under the Constitution of 1988, has died. A new political regime is born. The country’s laws on tax, labour, and fundamental constitutional guarantees were profoundly modified after the 2016 coup. The Temer government’s exception regime will give rise to another, neo-Nazi type, and increased state terrorism against the working population.

In 2014, the escalating coup in Brazil began to be perceived by many, from the downing of the airplane of the presidential candidate Eduardo Campos. The strange “accident” killed the candidate of the PSB and cleared the electoral ground almost allowing the election of the gangster Aécio Neves, of the PSDB, then the main party of the bourgeois opposition to the government of the PT. The election of Dilma was contested, followed by pressure from the right that was answered with capitulation, fragilization and demoralization of the PT government before its foundations, a process that culminated in impeachment, a parliamentary coup d’état that made possible the expropriation of the people’s historical rights.

In two years (2016-2018), the Temer coup government, the NSA and CIA espionage, with the complicity of the Brazilian Armed Forces, and the US-based judicial intervention operation, the Lava-Jato (car wash) operation, [1] persecuted the PT and prepared the ground for finally installing an anti-PT government.

But, the persecution provoked the opposite effect and through a passive but growing popular reaction, Lula’s popularity skyrocketed. The people expropriated by the exception regime of Temer, the most unpopular in history for its counter-reform, identified with Lula, persecuted, imprisoned and banished, who had carried out popular reforms; his government was seen as their government. The phenomenon has been expressed in all polls of voting intention since 2017 and the PT leader threatened to win in the first round of 2018.

The coup regime had to double the ante. More judicial manoeuvres were launched, in addition to the campaigns of slander and defamation, intimidation, violence, attacks on freedom of expression, military intervention in Rio de Janeiro and murders such as that of Marielle Franco, a parliamentarian of PSOL. The media massacre carried out daily by the mainstream bourgeois traditional media, against the PT intensified in quality and paved the way for the right-wing transfer of political protagonists (PSDB-DEM-MDB) to the far right.

But what exerted the most pressure on these elections were the unconventional apparatus of communication. These elections were influenced more by social networks than by TV and radio. All traditional methods of manipulating elections by the economic power of capital, coupled with anti-PT political persecution, have proved to be insufficient, and the fraudulent characteristics of the elections need to be accentuated.

Imperialism was divided

Imperialism was divided. The sector most closely linked to financial capital and scholarships, politically more closely tied to the US Democrats, preferred that Brazil should be governed by the traditional right-wing party, the PSDB, which was presided over by the governor of São Paulo, Geraldo Alckmin. The Economist and much of the world media, linked to Atlantic financial capital condemned Bolsonaro.

This has confused the Brazilian left that believes that imperialism is a homogeneous whole. But the White House, occupied by an outsider tied to the US military-industrial-energy complex corporations, such as the Koch brothers, had more radical plans for Brazil: appropriating oil and launching a new offensive on the Latin American continent, where Brazil will occupy a central role in the future “anticommunist crusade” against, first, Venezuela, and then Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Cuba.

The transformation of a marginal Brazilian right-wing parliamentarian into a populist president was only possible because he was projected through an immense hysterical campaign of terror against the PT, accusing Lula’s party not only of being corrupt but of being a communist threat against morality, good manners, and private property. An accusation proven absurd by the very experience of the four capitalist mandates of the PT during which they never considered the communist threat against morality, good manners, and private property. The-wing of the most determined coup campaigners against the PT gathered a fund of at least 12 million reais (C$2,540,000), setting up the largest operation of “two boxes” (campaign money not officially declared by the candidate) of history. Curiously, this is the largest crime which the Lava Jato judicial operation charged PT.

Longtime Donald Trump ally Roger Stone (left) said he advised Trump on upcoming debate negotiations and the hiring of fellow dirty trickster Stephen Bannon. Stone is one of the most disreputable people in American politics: He’s advocated killing “cunt” Hillary Clinton, attacked opponents with racist and sexist slurs, and pushed conspiracy theories about the Clintons murdering their opponents.

The wing of the most determined coup campaigners against the PT gathered a fund of at least 12 million reais (C$2,540,000), setting up the largest operation of “two boxes” (campaign money not officially declared by the candidate) of history. Curiously, this is the largest crime which the Lava Jato judicial operation charged PT.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
children into homosexuals) and that PT candidate Haddad was a child rapist bombarded undecided voters. This technique was used millions of times during the campaign until it “became true”, not with radio and print newspaper as in the 20s and 30s of the 20th century, but with updated communication technology and tweaked algorithms of Facebook and WhatsApp contemporaries. Techniques of persuasion, already employed in the Brexit and Trump elections, which appeal more to the unconscious than to mass consciousness, were mounted by the think-tanks of imperialist reaction, such as Roger Stone and Steve Bannon, who were now used in the Brazilian elections. As Bannon himself reveals:

If it had not been for Facebook, Twitter and other social media, it would have been 100 times more difficult for this populism to rise because we would not be able to get past the media barrier. Trump could do that, Salvini and Bolsonaro too. (Folha de São Paulo, October 29).

All previous manipulation was carried out in combination with this scheme, thus allowing a new authoritarian regime to be legitimized by the ballot box.

We will have to reorganize ourselves to build a real resistance to the neo-Nazi project. We have chosen to use neo-Nazi and non-neo-fascist terminology because Nazism is racist, a preponderant element in the inheritance of the class struggle in Brazil. This resistance must learn to fight the hybrid against imperialism and capitalism as well.

Haddad won in 98% of the poorest cities

Haddad (won in 98% of the poorest cities. Bolsonaro won in 97% of the richest cities. A real division of classes in the elections.

We need to reach and organize the 47 million who voted for the PT candidate (he won in more cities than Bolsonaro, 2,810 vs 2,760). Haddad won in 98% of the poorest cities. Bolsonaro won in 97% of the richest cities. A real division of classes in the elections. Which further demoralizes the leftists who remained neutral, supporting the annulment of the vote or the abstention.

We need to co-opt for resistance also those who have not chosen anyone. And finally, let us establish bridges with the most gullible sectors of the exploited and oppressed population who, deceived by the bombardment of lies; neo-Nazi propaganda awakened barbarism in their subconscious and voted for their tormentor. These same voters, sooner than we think, will regret their choice, mainly thanks to the action of the new regime against them. These workers need to be recruited to defeat neoliberal and theocratic militarist neo-Nazism, representing the new project of imperialist colonization for Brazil.

Resistance will inevitably take on the face of freedom, equality, development and social justice which the bourgeoise has been unable to defend and which the working class alone can regain and defend. That is why we can not count on the bourgeois ‘allies’ who at best and only formally oppose the Bolsonazi wave.

However, while the snake of neo-Naziism shocked and gave birth to its egg, while the neo-Nazi candidate himself repeated that he was preparing a civil war against the workers and the left, once again the PT sought reconciliation, removed Lula’s image from the campaign in the second round and directed their militants not to mention the name of Bolsonaro. Haddad, who had grown from 4 percent to 30 percent in the first round, stalled at the start of the second round of the election. It was only in the last week of October that, with much hesitation, the campaign began to grow when the PT’s electoral propaganda began to explicitly (albeit timidly) criticize Bolsonaro’s adversary, denigrating him with torture and military dictatorship.

But, unlike the FCT and a few sectors of the left, the well-behaved political campaign of Haddad did not warn the workers against this new coup. At no time did the PT and CUT, who direct the mass movement, prepare the working class for the ensuing civil war. On the contrary, they downgraded the program and Haddad immediately accepted the defeat without any denunciation that the result had been the result of an immense manipulation of the elections, the hybrid war, and no recollection that Lula remains a political prisoner of the regime. Haddad acknowledged the outcome as if the elections had not been the most fraudulent, dirty and bellicose in the country’s history. As if the majority candidate, Lula, had not been arrested and if a mass of 3 million votes had not been rejected, as if the agents of imperialism had not manipulated everything, “legal” and illegally, as if the generals of the army had not threatened not to recognize the results and had not blackmailed the Federal Supreme Court and the Superior Electoral Court.

There was a great defeat of the left and the workers for the most truculent sector of the bourgeoisie, but a defeat still on the ground controlled by the enemy. The fight continues and now changes shape and content. For those who accompanied the political evolution of the masses within the left-wing campaign, the third round begins, in popular committees, in the reorganization of the exploited and oppressed, in overcoming the bureaucratic vices of the period of class conciliation. We will manifest collectively but individually preserve ourselves.

There is a pedagogical side to all this. From now on, every right will have to be secured by the struggle. The new generations will no longer be able to enjoy rights acquired by generations of previous exploited, since slavery, and will have to fight to defend their working conditions and their lives. They will learn to forcefully, but will still have the advantage that the path has already been opened by previous social fighters.

It will not be easy, but we will have to learn to make mass and collective resistance and fight with courage the persecution and violence that we will see in the next few days. We must prepare our axes in the united front and fight for the construction of popular committees and self-defense of that united front in all the places where the fight presents itself. We will be together in the struggle for our civil, political, democratic, labor and social rights. Alerts and together we will win comrades!

Notes
[1] Operation Car Wash (Portuguese: Operação Lava Jato) is an ongoing criminal investigation being carried out by the Federal Police of Brazil, Curitiba Branch, and judicially commanded by Judge Sérgio Moro since 17 March 2014. (Wikipedia). It was primarily used against the PT, although the majority of the criminals were their opponents. ▲

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The situation is characterized by an almost complete lack of support for President Macron internally with difficulties even within his government and by an alignment with Germany’s positions in its historical contradiction with US imperialism and the UK.

The Macron government was the product of a deception organized by both the financial and lobby sectors who preferred it to Fillon of the classical right. But it never really took off, Macron got 15% of the votes and won only because he labelled Marine Le Pen a “fascist”, although she is obviously still a far rightist today.

Recently, Macron, who displays a morbid, open contempt for the working classes, lost two of his key ministers. O was the environment minister, Nicolas Hulot, a media figure taken from the government and Gérard Collomb, a defector from the Socialist Party, Minister of the Interior and political pillar of the government, who left him to take care of his own Lyon City Hall.

Surely well informed about the lack of popular support that Macron had, Collomb left because he could not abide a policy exclusive- ly directed at filling the employers’ coffers and preparing for the military conflicts that were on the horizon. Macron spent two weeks looking for a replacement, finally he could not find one and was reduced to changing one of his relatives to fill a position that is still coveted... when it brings prestige and more because it has always been a political springboard of utmost importance.

This further shows the isolation of Macron and his hidden supporters: Alain Minc, Jacques Attali, the Zionist lobby and their Boards of Directors of finance capital. Even so, the government can be held back by the inability of the entire bourgeois political class to bring it down. To find money for the bourgeoisie and to increase the military budget to 2% of GDP Macron robs the pockets of pensioners, civil servants, workers in general but also strongly increases the taxes that affect the whole population.

The totally spontaneous demonstration of November 17, launched and organized by completely unknown groups, found a lighting support from the population except... the left-wing parties and trade unions! Mélenchon is the only one who gave his support on the left. The far right wanted to take over the case but the organiser, a black woman probably not inclined to the racists’ siren songs, coldly rejected this political gambit.

These demonstrations, which are becoming a major political event, if successful, will deal a terrible blow to Macron and his team and can become the turning point of his mandate and put him in a desperate position. They are becoming a turning point not only for Macron but for trade union and political life with the break-up of parties and trade unions that have been institutionalised for a very long time. Still less does this explain the stupidity of the leftist unions, the left-wing parties. The Communist party of France (PCF), in the middle of its Congress, did not say a word, they were waiting to see how things are developing, just like the “Trotskyists” (i.e. Lutte Ouvrière, part of the POI- POID [1] and the NPA [2] leadership).

But the most likely, and we are already seeing rebellions from the base and warning signs, is that they will eventually align themselves at the risk of remaining completely outside and overwhelmed, not to mention the internal problems that this will undoubtedly cause. [3] This shows once again the right-wing character of the NPA, which is becoming a Macron supporter in practice and leaves the way open for the extreme right, as well as the ultra-sectorial politics of the LO centrists who also lean to the right. All the while promoting “proletarian demands” outside the real movement of the class. This fundamentally absurd, leftist, sectarian tactic is the touch-stone that divides the left-wing communists from all the other tendencies that claim to be part of the proletariat.

Only a correct United Front policy, a step forward in the real political consciousness of the masses and participation in all their actions which develop their political consciousness in the class struggle of the masses is the right line to follow. Macron’s international politics is a continuation marked by his unsuccessful attempts, both in Syria where he followed the policies of his predecessors with some inflections caused by the victories of the heroic army.

Its subjugation to the US is first, and Macron still makes small concessions to them but the Franco-German pole is being born by necessity, stuck between the US and Russia because they do not want to be forced to fight for the US while trying not to give anything to Russia, while waiting for the benefits of a collapse of Russia. But the brutality of the Trump administration is convincing him that there is no future on this path other than complete subordination and worse still, being robbed by US imperialism that dictates its okukes [4] in Iran, China and against the big European capitalist corporations.

Lately Macron has gone as far as asking, opposite Merkel, for the construction of a European army to “defend itself against the Russians, the Chinese and “even if it has to, the US”, its true purpose, highlighting the bellicose tendencies that darken the future of humanity. So, internal war against the poor, almost complete loss of all support among the workers and even the political class, but complete lack of a left-wing communist organization to give it rugby tackle that would bring it down. He will lose heavily in the next European elections in 2019.

Externally, the continuation of one of the components of the French bourgeoisie’s external policy, the contradictory alliance with Germany against US imperialism and, incidentally, against British imperialism. The conditions of 1914 and 1939 are still in place, almost in the same form. Finally, we can say that the very real mobilization and the general lack of support for Macron do not guarantee the continuation of the movement. Only the emergence, in the struggle if possible, of a left-wing communist organization can be a guaran- tee for the future.

Notes
[1] The sovereigntist ‘Trotskyists’ Lambertists of the Parti ouvrier indépendant (POI). POI are not to be confused with their arch rivals, the Parti ouvrier indépendant démocratique (POID). The two split, very acrimoniously, a couple of years ago. Tendance Coatesy, Force Ouvrière union federation faces crisis as new Protests are launched in France, https://tendancecoatesy.wordpress.com/tag/lambertists/)
[3] This is what happened after a success that brought together more than 285,000 demonstrators and more than 2,000 blockades, the NPA called on Saturday to “continue the action” and LO, after a long silence also called but that today. The debates must have been difficult. The CGT does not pronounce itself and in the PCF this is being discussed firmly. I am writing this on Monday evening, the 19 November
[4] In Tsarist Russia, a decree with the force of law, an arbitrary or peremptory command. ▲
The International Bolshevik Tendency split apart in October. This very small Trotskyist organisation came together in 1990. It was the fusion of three different small groups, in North America, Germany and New Zealand, each of which originated with people who resigned or were thrown out of the Spartacists during the decline in the late 70s and early 80s of that organisation into an unsavoury political cult.

It came apart after 25 years without having significantly advanced during that period. This really does pose the likelihood that this tendency could disappear off the political map.

What is amazing about this split is that it has been in the making for a whole decade, and yet the major political difference that was its starting point was kept secret from the world for all this time. The division began after the Russian intervention in Georgia in 2008, when Bill Logan, the best known leader of the New Zealand group, declared that post-Stalinist Russia represented a new imperialist power (in the Leninist sense). This gave rise to a major, long lasting political discussion in which the Canadian grouping, led by Tom Robertson, argued conversely (and correctly, in our view) that Russia was no imperialist power but a powerful, dependent capitalist country, in effect a semi-colony.

This led to the different factional groupings taking positions that logically lead to different sides of the barricades on key world issues. Ukraine is a classic example: the Logan group condemned the referendum and campaign for Crimea to unify with Russia in the aftermath of the pro-Western, Nazi-infested Maidan coup in 2013. The other side, who became known as ‘nimps’ (not-imperialists – referring to Russia, as opposed to the Logan-led ‘imps’ who consider Russia imperialist) refused to endorse this, and though their own abstract method led them to take a neutral position on the Maidan coup itself, afterwards tended to be more aware that Russia was the target of a major imperialist offensive, and to call for the defence of Russia and its allies among the mainly Russian-speaking Eastern Ukrainians who rebelled against the Maidan regime.

**Left-Right Split?**

On the face of it, that seems like a left-right split on a major question of the class struggle. However, the Riley group’s abstention during the Maidan coup itself, and the method involved – a sterile abstentionism where conflicts involving imperialist proxy forces are involved, led to other disputes with the New Zealand-led group in which the latter were correct against the Canadian-led group.

The Riley group supported abstention, taking no side, in other key confrontations involving the imperialists using proxy forces to overthrow regimes they particularly dislike in the Middle East.

Such as the overthrow of President Morsi in Egypt by the military coup led by General Sisi in June 2013, where taking no side was an appalling abdication of the duty of Marxists to oppose a very transparent retaking of power by the massively American-funded, Israeli backed Egyptian military, against the government of Morsi, the only elected president in Egyptian history. They justify this with complaints that Morsi is an Islamist and therefore no principled defender of democracy, and in no way preferable to the imperialist backed military.

Similarly, when a coup led by pro-US proxies tried and failed to overthrow Turkey’s Tayyip Erdogan in 2016, likewise the Riley-led group was for abstention, refusing any defence of the elected Islamist president, who indeed is increasingly authoritarian and despotic, but from the point of view of imperialism too close to those who it considers its enemies – the Muslim Brotherhood, Iran, and even in a somewhat complex manner, Russia.

Of course when Turkey interferes in Syria’s civil war, it acts largely as an imperialist proxy. But Erdogan also seeks to bloc with Iran and other forces who do not take the imperialist shilling, as a counterweight to complete imperialist domination. Thus the US and NATO would love to see the old Turkish/NATO military regime typified in the past by Evren back in power. They are not keen on the rise of the AKP whose rise to power was very much fuelled by mass discontent at Turkish collusion in Zionist and imperialist crimes in the Iraq and elsewhere.

**Robertson’s Chauvinism and Spartacist ‘Historic’ Politics**

The Riley-led group evoked the Spartacists’ “Down with the Shah, Down with the Multibs” position on the Khomeini-led Iranian revolution of 1979 to justify their abstentionism. The Logan group did not dispute the precedent, but rather that it was not validly applied in a military coup to overthrow these governments.

However, what was not disputed was the validity of James Robertson’s 1979 position itself, which equated the anti-imperialist movement of the masses misled by the Shi’a clergy with the dictatorship of the Shah, in advance, in effect conceding that Khomeini was the legitimate leader of the actual struggle that the multimillion-strong Iranian masses were waging, and thereby damning the mass movement itself, not just the leadership, as reactionary.

The neutralism of the Robertson group was an expression of the same politics that originally led them, for the first decade or so of their existence, to argue that the correct position on the 1948 war that drove the Palestinian people from their homeland, was to defend the nascent Israeli state, against the semi-colonial Arab nationalist regimes that half-heartedly, treacherously and incompetently fought against this nascent imperialist predator and its seizure of the land of a colonised people.

They only moderated this chauvinist position in the mid-1970s, adopting instead a retrospectively neutral position, that the semi-colonial Arab regimes were no better than Israel, the imperialist predator. This is also a capitulation to Zionism and imperialism.

The IBT cadre, on both sides, may want to consider the programmatic affinity of Robertson’s position on Iran, and similar questions, with his well-known chauvinist outbursts about Albanian ‘goatfuckers’ and Kurdish ‘Turds’, its barely-veiled applause for the Israeli commando raid on Entebbe in 1977 against Palestinian guerrillas, or its call for US Troops to leave Lebanon ‘Alive’ in 1983, after they got their just deserts from the proto-Hizbullah for removing PLO fighters from Lebanon and thereby allowing unarmed Palestinian civilians to be massacred in West Beirut by their Israeli ‘allies’ Falangist tools.

Many of these capitulations were originally documented by the IBT. But they still regard Robertson’s position on Iran, and his later position on Israel, as real contributions to Marxism. That is an enormous contradiction in the IBT, both main factions of it.

**A third force?**

What appears to have finally brought about the split was the emergence of a third faction in the IBT, which rejected the Spartacist tradition on Iran, the neutralism on Egypt, Turkey and the Ukraine by the Riley-led majority (now known again as the Bolshevik Tendency, as against the Logan group which keeps the IBT name), as well as agreeing with the Riley group on Russia.

This third faction, based in semi-colonial South Asia, appears also to have rejected the Spartacist position on the Israel-Palestine conflict, the so-called ‘interpenetrated peoples’ position. We do not know at the moment if they complete their break with the Spartacist positions actually are, but obviously we are keen to debate and seek to work with these comrades as well as others from the other factions of this small, but politically quite important group who we are sure will be open to question their previous political history. ▲
On Dutch Imperialism and Brexit

By Wybo Spector

The elaborating of the political-economic character of the Netherlands, needs to be addressed, or rather that of Dutch imperialism as its finance capital operates from Amsterdam and its economic heartland which is situated in the industrial and port region of Rotterdam, whose main interests are given direction from the political capital the Hague.

We need to be able to set out the immediate main tasks of the working class and the longer term perspectives, which can lead indeed to - if led by an authentic revolutionary socialist vanguard party - a workers’ revolution in the Netherlands, i.e. overthrowing the dictatorship of finance and monopoly capital, and bringing that multi-ethnic majority and wealth-producing class to political power, via the setting up of its own dictatorship based on revolutionary workers’ councils.

As we know already a century ago in November 1918 (following the 1918 unsuccessful German revolution that had begun in the port cities and brought down the Habsburg monarchy, which in 1588 resulted in the establishment of a bourgeois republic and rapid capitalist development in the Netherlands.

Ever since that revolutionary (i.e. one class replaced by another as ruling class) ousting of the then dominant overlords in Europe, Philip II of Spain, during the Eighty Year War of Independence (1568-1648) [1] from what is a in fact but the a strategically located delta-region in north western Europe, the Dutch bourgeoisie of the western provinces have always dominated and subjugated the internal outer-regions, as well even more brutally the colonial outer-regions in the Antilles and Indonesia.

The next bourgeois revolutionary episode in Europe did not open for another 50 years, this time in England, the other European power with advanced capitalist relations.

This Brexit-departure is being led by right-wing conservative Tories and Ulkipers who are allied more with dominant US imperialism than with Germany, their traditional European foe. Germany is Europe’s primary imperialist power in the recent and still unfolding post-USSR era of increasing inter-imperialist tensions. In this context Brexit a very significant development which is reshaping the inter-imperialist power-relationships within the EU.

Of course this upgrading of status and influence gladdens the hearts of the ruling Dutch finance and monopoly capitalists, whose governing big business cabinet is the right-wing liberal People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy [VVD] and the royalist reactionary Christian Democratic Alliance [CDA] [2], whose stock market managers are looking forward to receiving much finance investment fleeing the UK from across the Channel, accompanied by all types of bank managers and who strongly prefer to stay within EU-borders so as to remain close to the economies and stock markets of German and French capital.

And, additionally, they anticipate the unique opportunity offered to Holland’s imperialist capitalists to replace the UK as a junior power of the US situated inside the EU-block which is dominated by German capital. They expect to be rewarded (thanks to past and present day contributions made by ‘peace-keeping’ Dutch Marines and F-16s from Afghanistan and Iraq then to Mali today) at future tables set up to divide up the imperialist loot (that always follow military victories of the imperialists in the neo-colonial territories) to their own benefit, in the obtaining of some, if not a great deal of booty in natural resources, access to cheap labour outside its national borders and footholds for their military forces in strategically important neo-colonial regions, of the imperialist loot.

Just as significant a factor, right now and historically, is the fact that the Dutch internal economic market is very much integrated into the Ruhr-region and Germany’s hinterlands. This economic dependency came about as a consequence of Holland’s strategic location as the late 19th-century rise of German industry assisted the parallel transformation of Dutch colonialism into its imperialist phase; and indeed the origins of several Dutch multinationals (the Shell, Rabo Bank, Heineken and Unilever) are to be found in ... Indonesia.

France is the other major imperialist power on the continent, which we can notice has its dominating presence in Belgium, a third rank imperialist power, whose threatening political pressure is never far off; since 1815 (following the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte) the Dutch has designated France more than Germany as its primary imperialist opponent. Hitler remained ‘a befriended head of state’ until the invasion by German fascist imperialism [3] while Shell venture capital ruled the land through its Colijn-government, [4] an ‘ex’-Shell CEO [5]

For the overthrow of ‘democratic’ Dutch imperialism and the bringing about finally of the dictatorship of one of the oldest working class known to capitalism.

Notes

[1] Wikipedia: The Eighty Years’ War or Dutch War of Independence (1568–1648) was a revolt of the Seventeen Provinces of what are today the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg against Philip II of Spain, the sovereign of the Habsburg Netherlands.
[3] Wikipedia: The Battle of the Netherlands lasted from 10 May 1940 until the surrender of the main Dutch forces on 14 May. Dutch troops in the province of Zeeland continued to resist the Wehrmacht until 17 May when Germany completed its occupation of the whole country.
[4] Wikipedia: Hendrikus “Hendrik” Colijn (22 June 1869 – 18 September 1944) was a Dutch military officer, businessman and politician who served as Prime Minister of the Netherlands from 1925 to 1926 and again from 1933 to 1939.
Back page images, meetings and pickets attended:
1. Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group campaigning for Brendan McConville and John-Paul Wootton (the Craigavon 2), Tony Taylor and political status for all republican prisoners, in Kilburn Square in June.
2. Socialist Fight attended the House of Commons campaigning for the Craigavon 2 and Tony Taylor organised by Austin Harney and Chaired by Chris Williamson MP, Picture; Left to right; Thomas Pringle, Independent Socialist Teacha Dála (TD), Eamon Ó Cuív (Fianna Fáil TD and grandson of Éamon de Valera), Siobhán McConville (wife of Brendan McConville), Austin Harney, Chris Williamson (Labour MP for Derby North and Chair of the parliamentary meeting), Mick Wallace and Clare Daly (Independent Socialist TDs).
3. Twitter outrage at the conduct of the Unite delegation at the Labour party conference in late September (see page 17).
4. Alliance for Workers Liberty’s Sean Matgamna, 2nd from the right, debates Rayner Lysaght, 2nd from left on the Permanent Rev
olution and Ireland. Rayner and Gerry Downy were the only ones defending the Trotskyist programme against Matgamna and the AWL, who declared it outdated.
5. Revolutionary Communist Group defending the Palestinians against the anti-semitism bogus witchhunt. Looking grim at a racist outburst from Jonathan Hoffman, the fascist Zionist activist.
6. Socialist Fight picketing the Ministry of Defence with the New Communist Party and the Posadists in Britain in defence of the Donbass, UK Govt. Stop funding and training fascist terrorists in Ukraine!
7. Socialist Fight picketing the Labour party NEC with Labour against the Witchhunt against victimisations by the Zionist-led anti-Semitism witchhunts.
8. Unite the union bus workers vote for strike action in 8 garages.
9. Kilburn Unemployed Workers Group picket the Department of Works and Pensions against Universal Credit.
10. Stand up to Racism campaigning against police brutality against a black youth in Harlesden, London
11. Women in Brazil protest against Bolsonaro and the rise of fascism.
12. The International Bolshevik Tendency suffered a three-way split in October where we learned some were neutral on the Maidan coup in Ukraine in 2014 and some wanted to hand Crimea and Sevastopol over to NATO. Whilst others were neutral on the coups in Egypt in 2013 and the failed coup in Turkey in 2016. And the third group from South Asia took the correct, anti-imperialist positions on these conflicts and earlier ones.
13. Jewish Voice for Labour in the 400-strong protest outside the Labour party NEC on 4 September in a vain attempt to stop the passage of the IHRA definition and all the examples, which opens up the whole left to expulsions from Labour.
14. Brent Momentum showing solidarity with the SWP’s Bookmarks after the attack by the fascists.
15. Far right and fascist Zionists counter-demonstrating against the picket of Labour’s NEC on 4 September.
16. Unite the union vote for strike action in 5 out of 6 garages—(Twickenham?)

BRENT TRADES COUNCIL MOTION ON PALESTINE
November 2018 Gerry Downing
Campaigning Against Apartheid Israel and Justice for the Palestinian people
Brent Trades Council deplores the pro-Israeli lobby’s aims to suppress the struggle for sovereignty and national determination of the Palestinian people. This must be strongly opposed. Campaigning for the Palestinians and opposing Israeli Apartheid must remain a priority for those trade unionists and activists who oppose the abuse of human rights in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and in Gaza and believe in upholding international law.
Brent Trades Council affirms the right of return of all Palestinians ethnically cleansed from their homes in the historic state of Palestine from the Great Nakba in 1948, where more than two thirds of the population of historic Palestine, upwards of 800,000, were driven out, by horrific massacres like the Deir Yassin atrocity and all subsequent refugees expelled since then.
Nikki Haley US Ambassador to the United Nations, was reported in the Jerusalem Post on 29-8-18 as saying, “I absolutely think we have to look at right of return.” It is incumbent on the entire labour movement to defend this basic democratic right of the Palestinians, now under such direct threat by the Trump administration. The Labour Conference 2018 passed a motion condemning Israel’s killing of Palestinian protesters; as of 12 November Al Jazeera reports 214 Palestinians killed and more than 18,000 wounded since the Great March of Return protests began on 30 March 2018.
Brent Trades Council supports the demands of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign to support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign (BDS). BDS’ non-violent tactics offer solidarity to the Palestinian people, aims to end the US & EU governments including the UK’s complicity in the oppression of Palestinian people and seeks to impose a two way arms embargo on Israel ensuring universities divest from companies profiting from Israeli apartheid and demanding banks such as HSBC sever links with the arms companies facilitating Israel’s massacres. We further ask the labour movement to urge transport workers to block the transport of arms and all exports to Israel, in line with the motion adopted at the 2018 Labour party conference demanding a freeze on arms sales, etc. as has happened in South Africa and San Francisco in the past.
Brent Trades Council condemns the denial of rights to the Palestinian people by an unjust system which now meets the legal definition of apartheid. The passage of the Jewish Nation State Basic Law by the Knesset has been widely condemned as undermining any claim Israel may have to being a liberal democracy under this legislation. Only Jews have a right to self-determination giving no recognition to the rights of 20 percent of Israel’s citizens who are Palestinians. The Leader of the Arab Joint List group of parties described it as ‘the death of our democracy’. These new laws build upon a range of discriminatory laws in education, health, housing, land residency rights allowing for example towns and villages to remain Jewish only and validating the right of settlers to seize Palestinian land and allow the demolition of Palestinian communities and homes.
Brent Trades Council believes this inhume act institutionalises racism in Israel and maintains the supremacy of one group of citizens over another within a state, dividing the people on the basis of ethnic, racial, religious, or cultural identity.
Brent Trades Council is also deeply concerned at the wave of accusations and attacks against Jeremy Corbyn by the right wing media, Tories and those MPs who are opposed to everything he represents and who are involved in a campaign of smears to destroy his leadership. With long-term Israeli intelligence agent Mark Regan as Israeli ambassador in London, we should not be surprised at the planned, coordinated and utterly dishonest campaign now being run against Jeremy Corbyn. Regan is a man who has never had the slightest shame when lying about Israeli massacres of innocent civilians inside and outside Israel. He and his fellow agents in the Israeli embassy should be expelled for their blatant and corrupt interference in British political life.
Brent Trades Council reiterates its opposition to any form of racism including anti-Semitism and recognises the huge contribution Jewish people have played historically in the progressive movement.
Brent Trades Council resolves that we: Circulate this motion to all affiliated trade union branches and other affiliates.
For an end to all settlements on stolen Palestinian lands and a return of all those lands in the West Bank and Golan Heights, etc. to its original rightful owners; all Palestine is occupied land.
For an end to the un-reformable theocratic, apartheid Israeli state and a single secular, multi-ethnic state of Palestine, in which all citizens have equal rights regardless of ethnic, racial, religious, or cultural identity.
Campaign for justice for the Palestinians including support for the BDS and its campaign, and workers’ industrial action to block exports to Israel. 

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