Treachery in Blairites, backsliding Corbyn in ‘national interest’ Brexit talks with May, national government danger, anti-Semitism witchhunt knife at throat of the left and whole working class; it’s capitalism, stupid!

Groveller!

Owen Jones
@OwenJones84

Chris Williamson has just been suspended by Labour. That's the right decision, and should be part of a healing process with Britain's Jewish community - so many of whom want a society free of injustice, exploitation and oppression - showing we take their upset seriously.

9:01 AM - 27 Feb 2019

Traitor Watson!

Zionist John Lansman and John McDonnell—more grovelling

Lansman joins the witchhunt, John McDonnell says Labour “clearly” has a problem with anti-Semitism and must “atone” for it. Immigration controls conceded by Corbyn to May; national government next?

The presence of a significant layer of reactionaries with special privileges to abuse others with supremacy and racism is totally inimical to socialism and anti-racism itself. We need an internationalist, anti-racist party, not a racist Zionist party.

Unity is strength, L'union fait la force, La union hace la fuerza, Η συνέντευξη ένας δύναμης, 聯合就是力量, Ejderkärä, एकीकरण की इमारत, Jednou je sila,قدام کریک سیمی, Jedność jest siła, yksyys on kesto, Η συνέντευξη ένας δύναμης, Mähöimo ovo owoord, hundeb ydy chryfder, Einheit ist Stärke, Воединство прочность, единстве наша сила, vienýbės jėga, bashkimi ben fuqine,روابطنا, unità è la resistenza, 団結は力だ, A unión faz a força, eining er styrkur, De eenheid is de sterke,الوحدة هو القوة, Ni neart go chur le càile, pagkakaaisa ay kalakasan, jednota je sila, 일성은 이다 함께, Workers of the World Unite!
 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 (always) and mass workers’ and social democratic bourgeois workers’ parties despite their pro-capitalist leaderships when conditions are favourable. In fighting revolutionary socialism.

We therefore reject the reactionary “intersectional” theory as hostile to Marxism, to the class struggle and to revolutionary socialism.

11. We also support the fight of all other specially oppressed including lesbians and gay men, bisexuals and transgender people and the disabled against discrimination in all its forms and their right to organise separately in that fight in society as a whole.

13. We fight racism and fascism. We support the right of people to fight back against racism 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.

14. We oppose all immigration controls. International finance capital roams the planet in search of profit and imperialist governments disrupts the lives of workers and cause the collapse of whole nations with their direct intervention in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan and their proxy wars in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, etc. Workers have the right to sell their labour internationally wherever they get the best price.

Revolutionary internationalism

16. We are for the immediate withdrawal and/or defeat of imperialist armies in wars like Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and Ukraine. Whilst giving no political support to the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Sunni and Shia militias in Iraq, Hamas or Fatah in Palestine, Gaddafi (as was) in Libya, Assad in Syria, the ‘Islamic State’ in Syria and Iraq, the theocratic regime in Iran or the Dohban leadership in Eastern Ukraine we recognise US-led ‘world imperialism’ as the main enemy of humanity and so advocate critical support and tactical military assistance from the working class to all those fighting for the defeat of imperialism as part of the perspective of Permanent Revolution.

18. We are for the overthrow of the Zionist state of Israel and for a Multi-Ethnic workers’ state of Palestine as part of the Socialist Federation of the Middle East.

19. As socialists living in Britain we take our responsibilities to support the struggle against British imperialism’s occupation of the six northern counties of Ireland very seriously. For this reason we stand against funding the Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group and we will campaign for political status these Irish prisoners of war and for a 2-county united Socialist Ireland. We reject all Irish nationalism and its allies.

21. We are for the re-creation of a World Party of Socialist Revolution, a revolutionary international, based on the best traditions of the previous revolutionary internationals, radically undertaking a new independent and Fourth Internationals, with their determination to combat and overcome both reformism and centrism. ▲
Editorial: BREXIT DELAYED – BREXIT EXITED?

The six-month delay, until 31st October indicates that Brexit is less likely to go ahead, as neither the bulk of the British ruling class, nor the population at large, has the stomach for the act of economic irrationality it would represent. However, ranged against that is a strong strain of right-wing opportunism and populism among the historically evolved cadre of the main party of the British ruling class, the Conservatives, and an ultra-reactionary fringe to their right that threaten violence.

This is fuelled by an insular chauvinism among part of the bourgeoisie with delusions about Britain’s ability to ‘rule the waves’ as it did before the rise of more powerful imperialisms such as Germany and the US. A good chunk of the petty-bourgeoisie in the Tory shires has the same delusions, as have a layer of the working class that is either politically backward and ‘working class Tory’, or has become demoralised by decades of defeats at the hands of neoliberalism and Thatcherism.

This layer has come to blame immigrants and ‘foreigners’ for their suffering, in particular EU migrants exercising their right to live and work in the UK under the terms of the single market (which also gives UK citizens the right to live and work in 27 other EU countries).

The talks between Corbyn’s Labour and Theresa May’s Tories are unlikely to bear fruit for either side, for two interwoven reasons. These are that while the bulk of the bourgeoisie do not want Brexit, they equally do not want a Corbyn government, and fear that the collapse of May’s government will bring about a Labour landslide victory, and potentially a strong Corbyn-led government even if the overtly neo-liberal elements hostile to Corbyn split away, try again to remove him internally, within the Labour Party, and/or try to sabotage his becoming PM in favour of some kind of National Government, which the bourgeoisie would likely prefer.

As things stand they could easily fail to do any of these things.

The end of May would likely presage the fall of the government, with the Tories, a dysfunctional party with a dysfunctional cadre from the point of view of the ruling class, tearing themselves apart along their Brexit fault-line. The ruling class do not want that, as they do not have a bourgeois alternative government in place yet that could keep the Corbynite Labour Party out of office.

However Brexit is not in the interest of the working class either. An economic tearing away from Europe would be profoundly irrational economically, as Europe is a natural economic unit under both capitalism and socialism. The development of European capitalism lays the basis for European socialism; the creation of a European working class with an interest in pan-European class unity is assisted by the right of free movement, that is the right of EU citizens to live and work anywhere in the EU. Defending those gains does not in any way signify support for the EU’s restrictions on non-EU workers, or for any project of European imperialist powers whether singly or in alliance, as some on the left incorrectly claim.

Corbyn has unfortunately gone along with this to a degree with his support for a soft Brexit, a customs union but an end to our rights of free movement, etc. What the working class really need is both the end of this government through a general election, a Corbyn victory and a Labour government, and a second referendum to overturn the reactionary result of 2016, and carry the struggle for socialism and working class unity into Europe, linking up with class movements throughout the continent. With this in mind we call for the maximum Labour vote in the coming European elections.

Populism vs Working Class Struggle

This right-wing populist response to neoliberalism is a dangerous force. It has its equivalents elsewhere in the EU, and in the United States, as neo-liberalism has led to both left-wing and right-wing responses to neoliberalism. Left-wing responses have been Corbynism in Britain, the movement around Bernie Sanders in the US, and less obviously the revolt from below in France, the Gilet Jaunes (Yellow Vests) movement in France.

Initially amorphous with elements of both the far left and far right attempting to capitalise on it, it has now thrown out the far right element, and is clearly a working-class revolt from below against France’s aspiring Thatcher/Blair composite, the slippery, authoritarian neo-liberal president Macron.

Macron’s party is a coded-together centrist Frankensteins monster, with bits from different parties, that the Umunna-Soubry Independent Group in parliament may harbour hopes of one day emulating. Indeed their remarkable letter to Sajiv Javid on the Julian Assange case, demanding his extradition to Sweden as a ‘priority’ over the US, signed also by dozens of Blairite ‘usual suspects’ and ex-Tory refugees from Brexit like Nick Boles, is no doubt intended to map out a blueprint for a Macron-like development in Britain. Though its chances of success are not so good.

Right-wing populist responses have generally resulted when opportunist right-wing politicians have exploited popular disillusionment with neo-liberalism and directed them towards bashing immigrants, various oppressed minorities, and those imperialist alliances and blocs like the EU that are seen as stepping, however tentatively, beyond the nation-state.

Though even these, in order to claim the votes of demoralised but formerly militant workers, have postured against some of the attacks of neoliberalism the working class, which means that part of their base of support is capable of being won to a genuine working class movement.

Trump’s election in the US, along with Brexit are the most obvious examples, but the coming to prominence and considerable power of the sinister, far right leader of the Northern League, Matteo Salvini, as Italy’s Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister in the populist coalition of the Northern Leagues and the more liberal-populist Five Star Movement, is a worrisome development.

The virulence of his anti-immigrant attacks and more general bigotry is a very bad portent because unlike Trump and some of the Tory caricatures like Johnson and Rees-Mogg, Salvini is charismatic, articulate and has popular appeal.

He could in due course become Italy’s outright leader, which would be truly alarming.

More generally, the attempt of the coterie of alt-right intellectuals around Trump, the likes of Bannon, Miller, Spencer etc. to create a unified and broader far-right movement in Europe may have hit problems, and Brexit now appears disastrous and distinctly an unappealing spectacle that has made Britain into a laughing stock around the world.

However, what these developments are not is a coherent ruling class project to replace neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism, it should be recalled, began in the 1970s as the Vietnam war came to an end and was the ruling class’s new broom to deal with problems of economic stagnation and inflation.

These resulted from the wounding down of the massive post-war boost and impetus to capitalist growth that resulted from the victory of US imperialism in...
Brexit—from page 3

World War II and its rise to world hegemony over all the European imperialist powers.

Neo-liberalism, the use of economic shock-treatment, the large-scale demolition of social security and welfare provision, the privatisation of state industries and public services, requiring the crippling of trade unions, working class parties, etc. was first tried out like a laboratory experiment in Pinochet’s Chile.

This neoliberal dictatorship operated under the supervision of a group of economists, the ‘Chicago Boys’, Milton Friedman, Jeffrey Sachs, etc. Later neoliberalism became the project of the regimes of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in the major Anglo-Saxon imperial countries.

Neo-Liberalism – an Anglo-Saxon Export

Thus the ‘Lexite’ populist hostility to the EU as a supposed bastion of neoliberalism is an inversion of the truth. Neoliberalism is an export from the United States and Britain to the rest of the world. Throughout the whole Thatcher period, when the trade unions were suffering from the worst set of attacks and defeats since the 1926 General Strike, and which have actually proved more long-lasting and damaging than that defeat, the main complaint of neo-liberals was that the EU was too slow in adopting neo-liberalism.

The idea put about by Lexiteers, that the EU is the source of the neo-liberalism that had devastated the working class in the North of England and the Midlands, is a nonsense. It is a capitulation to reactionary English-centred nationalism. Even though it has gained a toehold in Wales, which has a much greater assimilation into the English-centred UK state than the Scots and the near-majority Irish nationalist population in the Six Counties (which pulled a part of the Protestants with them against Brexit).

Inspirational globalised student movement against climate change

When Greta Thunberg, then 15 years old, decided not to go to school but begin her sit in outside the Swedish parliament on 20 August 2018 with her sign that read “Skolstrejk för klimatet” (“school strike for climate”), she could not have known the reaction her lone vigil there until the elections on 7 September, would have.

In 2015 there had been school strikes. On 30 November, the first day of the COP21, the UNFCCC Climate Conference in Paris, a “Climate Strike” was organized in over 100 countries; over 50000 people participated.

But her lone vigil received wide publicity and national and international support, including, crucially, from a great number of climate change scientists, who had long recognised the danger now posed to the planet from man-made emissions of gases, CO2 in particular.

She went back to school and as Wiki tells us she promised, “she would continue to strike every Friday until Sweden aligns with the Paris Agreement. She coined the slogan FridaysForFuture, which gained worldwide attention. She inspired school students across the globe to take part in student strikes.” The success her message achieved is phenomenal and that movement of school students is still growing powerfully.

The reasons that caused the social explosion are manifold. The effective ignoring of the Paris Agreement by the rich countries, the outright denials and vehement opposition of the Trump administration and the frustration of the growing mass of scientists who have been battling in vain for decades against a capitalist establishment which the students correctly understood had only profit for a god.

CO2 is a very dangerous greenhouse gas for global warming, but there was a tipping point and a great fear that beyond a global rise of 2 degrees there could be runaway consequences which could not be controlled. Terry Townsend observes:

“The price of prolonged inaction could be climate catastrophe. If the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets collapse, sea levels could rise by up to 10 meters in the space of a few decades. More moderate melting could slow or shut down the circulation of ocean currents in the North Atlantic, which are responsible for the relatively mild temperatures of Northern Europe.

More recent studies reveal that warming could cause the abrupt release of large quantities of methane — a greenhouse gas 21 times more powerful than carbon dioxide — stored in frozen, but quickly thawing, tundra; and this would greatly accelerate the process of warming. There many such “feedback loops” that may greatly speed global warming, all of which are unpredictable.”

But the militancy and determination of the youth who struck school on Fridays in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Denmark, Japan, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, Colombia, New Zealand, and Uganda gives old revolutions new hope. 1.4 million struck school in March.

Youth Strike 4 Climate Change, Extinction Rebellion and Earth Strike and the rest are obviously the hope for the future.

The latter have the most ambitious programme whose plan is for a GLOBAL GENERAL STRIKE beginning September 27. On the anniversary of Silent Spring, the book that kick-started the environmentalist movement.

On 27 Sept. “we begin our General Strike to Save the Planet!” they proudly declare.

Rachel Carson’s 1962 book forced the banning of DDT and other harmful pesticides, a turning point in the war against big business, who fought her furiously but lost that one.

Now the bigger battles are ahead and surely we will conclude with Terry Townsend we must “Change the system, not the climate.” ▲
The attack on and suspension of Chris Williamson is the most serious attack on the anti-racist, anti-imperialist left in the Labour Party since the expulsion of George Galloway in 2003. What is worse is that Jeremy Corbyn, John McDonnell, Diane Abbott, and it seems many of the leading lights of the Labour left have gone along with it. No one prominent that we know of right now is prepared to stick their head above the parapet and denounce it. But there is a considerable backlash from below. Many of those who in the constituencies who voted for Corbyn and were the mass base that forced the adoption of an unprecedented motion at the 2018 Conference that condemned the Naqba, the 1947-9 mass ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians from their homeland that is at the root of today’s Palestinian struggle, are incensed about this attack.

They correctly see it as an attack on the entire Corbynite left by agents of the Blairite split, the so called Independent Group of class traitors and class enemies who are in favour of benefit cuts, attacks on the poor, Israeli ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians and all the neocon wars, from Iraq to Afghanistan.

Tom Watson is now the leader of the racist, pro-imperialist fifth column in the Labour Party, an outright enemy of the over-class: Israel, and also to an extent Ireland, have a distinct whiff of Kinnock about them. John Lansman’s role as the sole owner of the completely undemocratic Momentum is also revealed as a reactionary attack on the mass base of the Labour party on behalf of Zionism and the right following his role in forcing acceptance of the IHRA definition on 4 September and acting as a cover for the right during the Labour party conference. He is an even more insidious fifth columnist in the ranks of Labour.

And what do we make of the grovelling specimen Owen Jones? A disgrace to his left-wing parents!

Chris Williamson has just been suspended by Labour. That’s the right decision, and should be part of a healing process with Britain’s Jewish community – so many of whom want a society free of injustice, exploitation and oppression – showing we take their upset seriously.

The motive for this purge is simply racism. It’s about ramming the IHRA pseudo-definition of ‘anti-Semitism’ down the throats of a Labour membership the majority of which are crystal clear that the struggle against Israeli oppression, dispossession, and slow-motion genocide of the Palestinians, is a struggle against the most murderous racism.

Supporters of that struggle in the Labour Party are the collateral targets. Whether they be Muslims of Arab or Subcontinental origin, Jews, Blacks, Irish, ordinary white Brits or anyone else, who support the Palestinian struggle and refuse to accede to the twisted logic that says that it is ‘anti-Semitism’ to condemn Jewish-Zionist racism is targeted by the Labour Party’s own analogue of the Ku Klux Klan: the Labour Friends of Israel; the Jewish Labour Movement, the Blairite Progress etc. Now the new Tribune have joined them and exposed the fact that they too are racist political gangsters of the same ilk as LFI etc.

The allegation of ‘anti-Semitism’ against defenders of the Palestinians is actually a charge of being ‘Arab-lovers’ by pro-Zionist racists, akin to the bizarre racist slur ‘pro*******-lover’ that was endemic in earlier struggles against open white supremacy.

Jewish supremacists have merely come up with a tortuous, long-winded way of saying the same thing about defenders of Palestinian rights. But today’s Jewish supremacist is every bit as disgusting and racist a threat to oppressed minorities and democratic rights as the white supremacist it allies with. That is why so many of today’s fascists, the likes of ‘Tommy Robinson’ and Britain First, have shifted their orientation away from demonisation of Jews and carry Israeli flags. Israel is de-rigour on the far right. That is what is behind the IHRA definition also.

Saying that it is ‘anti-Semitic’ to characterise Israel as a racist endeavour, when reality is that the ONLY POSSIBLE WAY it could ever have been created was the way it was: through the mass expulsion and dispossession of the Arab population, is effectively to define that Arab population as unworthy of basic anti-racist solidarity. It is to define them as sub-human, similar to the way the Nazis defined the Jewish population after Hitler came to power in 1933.

Likewise to say that it is ‘anti-Semitic’ to compare far-right Israelis to the Nazis, when mobs of state-incited racists march through Israeli streets chanting ‘Death to the Arabs’ as Nazi mobs chanted ‘Death to the Jews’ in Germany in the 1930s and neo-fascists mobs do today. Similarly, violent gangs of heavily armed settlers terrorise Palestinians...

Reinstate Chris Williamson! Socialist Fight Statement
Expel all Zionist racists from Labour! IHRA fake ‘anti-semitism’ definition is Labour’s Nuremberg law! Corbyn, the left must repudiate this racist purge!

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

Chris Williamson with Jeremy Corbyn on the campaign trail in the run-up to the snap general election in 2017. Photograph: Hannah Mckay/Reuters. No support now, however.
under occupation on the West Bank, dubbing ‘Arabs to the Gas Chambers’ on Arab homes. Or when, as happened a few years ago, the IDF flattened large areas of Gaza, causing the deaths of thousands of civilians, and a prominent Israeli minister threatened to carry out a ‘Shoah’ (Holocaust) against the Palestinians. To compare such things to the Nazis is appallingly ‘anti-Semitic’.

Or it is supposedly ‘anti-Semitic’ to note the highly organised racist activities of very wealthy, racist Jewish-Zionist bourgeois in the West, loyal to Israel, in pressing for US and other governments to adopt hard-line policies on Palestine, and other geopolitical issues like a threatened war with Iran, that reflect Israeli interests in line with those of the far right warmongers of US imperialism. Even more,jsparr in US interests in line with those of the far right warmongers of US imperialism, even more than they reflect the interests of the Western powers, rationally considered.

This is a fault-line in Western politics that has resonated from the Iraq war to Trump’s policy on Jerusalem and cutting all aid to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in August 2018, a move welcomed by Netanyahu, which would have cut all funding to schools, healthcare, and social services. But on 28 February the EU agreed to provide 82 million Euro to replace this funding, preserving access to education for 532,000 children, provide primary health care for more than 3.5 million patients and assistance to over 250,000 acutely vulnerable Palestine refugees. He also abandoned Obama’s nuclear deal with Iran, to gel with the warmongers in Jerusalem. But to speak of these glaringly obvious facts is ‘anti-Semitic’, apparently.

**For a Renewed Left to fight Zionism's Big Lie**

This is utter rubbish. The entire ethos of the IHRA fake-definition of ‘anti-Semitism’, which Labour only adopted because of the spineless political cowardice of the Labour left, and the left-wing of the bureaucracy such as Len McCluskey of Unite, is an implementation of the motto of Josef Gobbofs!, Hitler’s minister of propaganda: ‘Accuse the other side of that which you are guilty’.

So organised racists and supporters of atrocities against Arab civilians, part of a chain of alliances that lead to active fascists, are accusing the anti-imperialist left of ‘racism’ as an excuse for a witchhunt. We need a new left, which consciously and utterly rejects this lie. A key part of its programme should be to drive all supporters and apologists for Israeli racism out of the Labour Party. Labour would never have tolerated a “Labour Friends of the Third Reich” in its ranks; nor a “Labour Friends of white South Africa” or “white Rhodesia”.

It’s only the unprecedented reversal of fortune of the Jewish people in the late 20th Century, from victims of Hitler to partially the social base of a racist settler movement that has major bases of support in the West and is carrying out a slow genocide of its own against the Palestinians, that has allowed this racist movement to sink some roots in the workers’ movement.

But they are shallow, predominantly among the most privileged middle class hangers-on of the labour movement. These people, both the Zionist Jews and their non-Jewish fellows, are nothing like the Jewish left of old when large numbers of Jews were indeed oppressed and fought back by methods of working class struggle with the rest of our class.

The presence of a significant layer of reactionaries with special privileges to abuse others on the basis of supremacism and racism is totally inimical to socialism and anti-racism. We need an internationalist, anti-racist party, not a racist Zionist party. ▲

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**Reject the ‘left antisemitism’ tag! Reinstate Marc Wadsworth, Jackie Walker, Tony Greenstein etc., give all the auto-excluded, including AWL, Socialist Appeal and Socialist Fight supporters hearings and reinstate them too!**

Jackie Walker was expelled from the Labour party on 26 March, following the expulsion of Tony Greenstein (February 2018) Marc Wadsworth (April 2018). Ken Livingstone, former Mayor of London was forced to resign in May 2018. The labour movement must continue to campaign for all suspended and expelled leftists and victims of the bogus left antisemitism witchhunt. And not forgetting Gerry Downing, which some of these would like to ignore.

But it is the charge of ‘left-wing antisemitism’ that has gained such credence and become so damaging. On this false basis revolutionary socialists Gerry Downing, Ian Donovan and Socialist Fight were expelled from Labour Against the Witchhunt on 6 December 2018, with the assistance of Tony Greenstein, Jackie Walker and Marc Wadsworth. Having accepted the validity of the charge (Jack Conrad: “Of course we don’t thing you are personally anti-Semitic, Gerry, just politically”) it gained credence.

A whole swath of the so-called ‘left’ and some who are termed the ‘far-left’ (by the *Daily Mail* et al) have shamefully collapsed before the onslaught moving from the third campist left to the soft reformist left to the completely bogus left.

The three person Compliance Unit which expelled Jackie Walker was ostensibly ‘left wing’. The very undemocratic treasurer of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy Rejected the ‘anti-Semitism’ tag! Reinstate Marc Wadsworth, Jackie Walker, Tony Greenstein etc., give all the auto-excluded, including AWL, Socialist Appeal and Socialist Fight supporters hearings and reinstate them too!.”
Political Status for all Irish Republican prisoners! Free Brendan McConville and John Paul Wotton, no extradition to Lithuania for Liam Campbell

It is now more than 47 years since 14 civilians were murdered by 1 Para in Derry on 30 January 1972. These murders were seen on television internationally and caused universal outrage. Lord Widgery took just over two months to produce a lying report defending the killings.

Ted Heath had told him in a secret memo: that they were “fighting not only a military war but a propaganda war.” The massacre was ordered, directly or indirectly, by Ted Heath’s Tory government.

In 1998, 26 years after the murders, Lord Saville began a second inquiry which took 12 years to complete and directly contradicted the Widgery report. And now, 9 years later, just one man, Soldier F, is charged with just two murders. But again, the concern was to protect the British Tory establishment then led by Ted Heath. The Saville inquiry stated:

5.4: “In this belief soldiers reacted by losing their self-control and firing themselves, forgetting or ignoring their instructions and training and failing to satisfy themselves that they had identified targets posing a threat of causing death or serious injury … our overall conclusion is that there was a serious and widespread loss of fire discipline among the soldiers of Support Company.”

We reject this obvious cover-up; these hardened soldiers were obviously acting on order; 1 Para had returned from slaughtering the people of Aden in 1967. The massacre was organised on the foot of the advice of the top army commanders and strategists like General Sir Frank Kitson. Future General Sir Mike Jackson was an adjutant in 1 Para, but, although he has now admitted that innocent people were killed, persists in claiming incoming fire, an obvious cover.

General Sir Robert Ford Commander Land Forces, Northern Ireland—he organised the massacre.

Sir Robert Ford (7 January 1972): “I am coming to the conclusion that the minimum force necessary to achieve a restoration of law and order is to shoot selected ringleaders amongst the DYH (Derry Young Hooligans).”

He did just that three weeks later.

Kitson and this warrants the British government bringing charges of war crimes against them in the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

This massacre is in a long line of British imperialist massacres. At Rorkes Drift, 1879, British soldiers massacred up to 850 wounded Zulus after they won that battle. It is just over 100 years since the India’s Jallianwala Bagh massacre where some 1,000 in a mixed Sikh/Hindu/Muslim peaceful demonstration were slaughtered on the orders of General Dyer. A bogus inquiry endorsed the massacre.

In 2013 William Hague, then Britain’s foreign secretary, apologised and accepted they had killed 24 defenceless civilians. Batang Kali massacre in Malaya in 1948, Court found British troops guilty of the crimes against them in the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

We believe the material revealed in the Ballymurphy inquest adds to the accumulated evidence against Wilford, Ford and

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

IRPSG Statement on Soldier F and Bloody Sunday

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Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
Letter to the Morning Star—No Ifs, No Buts

Six famous Irish “republican terrorists” murdered by the British state for the Morning Star to condemn as guilty of treason, three Catholic and three Protestant, Padraig Pearse, James Connolly, Bobby Sands, Ronnie Bunting, Roddy McCorley, and Wolfe Tone.

These are the concluding sentences of the Morning Star article by Richard Rudkin, former British Army soldier, on March 28, Northern Ireland debate focuses too much on ‘terrorists’ — what about the peaceful civil rights activists?, that offended me:

“For while it is likely that all republican terrorists were of the Catholic faith, the British government completely ignored the fact that not all Catholics were terrorists, but nevertheless treated them as such.

“This is just one of the reasons why the civil rights marches was taking place on that day and why 14 innocent people with no links to terrorists or terrorism lost their lives.

Finally, Lord Saville stated in his report that the actions on that day by the British army were “unjustified and unjustifiable.” No ifs, no buts or “What about the terrorists?” Just innocent civilians.” [1]

The Letter: No Ifs, no Buts?

Richard Rudkin’s article (M Star March 28) sets out to emphasise the difference between innocent civilians who were Catholics and “republican terrorists who were of the Catholic faith”. But we cannot forget the tradition of Irish Presbyterian Republicans in the 1798 era like Roddy McCorley and Wolfe Tone, Church of Ireland but of revolutionary French Huguenot descent. Likewise, later Protestant Irish socialist republicans like Ronnie Bunting, son of Major Bunting, Ian Paisley’s sidekick in 1969. Irish Republicanism cannot be reduced to religious beliefs nor dismissed as “terrorism”.

Following the Ballymurphy and Bloody Sunday massacres the “innocence” of the nationalists was gone. Bobby Sands, the most famous of all the “republican terrorists” was elected in Fermanagh-South Tyrone in 1981 with 30,493 votes. The 100,000 who attended his funeral were not “innocent civilians” but militant republicans demanding their rights by showing solidarity with Sands. It was Ireland’s biggest funeral since that of Sinn Fein Lord Mayor of Cork Terence MacSwiney in 1920. Before him, many other “republican terrorists” like James Connolly and Padraig Pearse rose up against Britain and were executed in May 1916.

The Glenanne gang, the UVF and the rest of the Loyalist death squads were sectarian mass murders with the slogan “any Taig will do”. With Lenin, we acknowledge the fundamental feature of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat is revolutionary violence. Marxists should never apply one and the same abstract moral norms to the violence of the oppressors and the oppressed, as Trotsky reminds us because “it is the function of these abstract norms to prevent the oppressed from arising against their oppressors.” Irish republicans fought a liberating struggle, against the Loyalist/British army/MI5 death squads who fought a counterrevolutionary campaign to suppress those progressive and legitimate demands to self-determination for Ireland as a whole.

Yours Gerry Downing

Note


were detained in appalling conditions.

The de Silva Report (2013) on collusion with loyalist paramilitaries (into the murder of solicitor Pat Finucane, etc) “led to two further ‘unconditional’ British apologies for the behaviour of its security forces in Northern Ireland. In November 2013, a BBC ‘Panorama’ investigation into British counterinsurgency in Northern Ireland in the early 1970s revealed that members of a special covert operations unit known as the Military Reaction Force (MRF) admitted to the murder of suspects and unarmed Catholic civilians. These admissions by the state or its agents confirm previous claims by critics dating back many decades. Such abuses were not merely low-level tactical excesses by undisciplined and racist troops but were institutional, systematic, and approved or covered up at the highest levels.

Soldier F, who spent two days giving evidence at the Saville Inquiry, admitted killing at least four people in Bloody Sunday. He is now charged with just two murders and no other soldier is to be charged, because of a rule that their public statements to the Saville Inquiry cannot be used as evidence.

All the soldiers identified as killers in the Saville inquiry should be charged and the top generals who are still alive, Frank Kitson, Derek Wilford and Mike Jackson, be likewise charged with the murders. And blame is correctly attributed to those ultimately responsible, the entire British establishment led at the time by Ted Heath.

In a document published by the Inquiry dated 7 January 1972, General Sir Robert Ford Commander Land Forces, Northern Ireland (now dead), declared himself ‘disturbed’ by the attitude of army and police chiefs in Derry and added:

“I am coming to the conclusion that the minimum force necessary to achieve a restoration of law and order is to shoot selected ringleaders amongst the DYH (Derry Young Hooligans).”

He claimed not to remember this memo at the hearing and he wasn’t pressed on it but he did just that three weeks later. Seven of the murdered were indeed Derry teenagers, but not hooligans, peaceful demonstrators demanding their civil rights. ▲
In the Unite diary Bernard McAulay and Jerry Swain are listed as the National Officers of Unite Construction, Unite Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians (Ucatt). It is now ten years since the Blacklisting scandal broke. When their offices were raided in February 2009 the Consulting Association was found in possession of blacklisting files on 3,213 workers and probably had many more; the figure of 60,000 is mentioned. It compiled the names from public records but also secretly and perhaps illegally from police spies (“Mark Cassidy”), Mark Jenner of the Metropolitan Police’s Special Demonstration Squad (SDS) and others, including union officials.

The public inquiry set up by the then Home Secretary Theresa May in April 2005 revealed that Metropolitan Police units, the Special Demonstration Squad, the Special Operations Squad, the Special Demonstration Squad and the Special Duties Section spied on the following groups:

- Anarchist groups
- Animal Liberation Front
- Anti-Apartheid
- Anti-Fascist Action
- Big Flame
- Black Power movement
- Brixton Hunt Saboteurs
- Colin Roach Centre
- Dambusters Mobilising Committee
- Dissent
- Earth First!
- Essex Hunt Saboteurs
- Friends of Freedom Press Ltd
- Globalise Resistance
- Independent Labour Party
- Independent Working Class Association
- International Marxist Group
- International Socialists
- Irish National Liberation Solidarity Front
- London Animal Action
- London Animal Rights Coalition
- London Boots Action Group
- London Greenpeace
- Militant
- No Platform
- Antifa
- Operation Omega
- Reclaim the Streets
- Red Action
- Republican Forum
- Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation
- Socialist Party
- Socialist Workers Party
- South London Animal Movement (SLAM)
- Tri-Continental
- Troops Out Movement
- Vietnam Solidarity Campaign
- West London Hunt Saboteurs
- Workers Revolutionary Party
- Young Haganah
- Young Liberals
- Youth against Racism in Europe

Up to 40 of the top construction firms availed itself of the service of the Consulting Association, including Carillion, Balfour Beatty, Skanska, Kier, Costain, Laing O’Rourke and McAlpine. Almost two years ago there was an election for Unite General Secretary. Rob Evans published an article in the Guardian on 4 April 2017, “Union officials face allegations of collusion over blacklisted workers”, sub headlined, Files revealed during high court action show some employees were labelled ‘troublesome’ by union staff and were denied work by companies.

In 2015 McCluskey promised to “set up an independent union inquiry to investigate all evidence made available, I will not allow any officer who has colluded in blacklisting to work for Unite,” and Cartmail said: “Only a full public inquiry with judicial authority will fully explain the depth to which the state and employers colluded to deny construction workers employment.”

Evans recounted that both Len McCluskey, the incumbent GS, who was seeking (and got early) re-election and the acting General Secretary (now Assistant General Secretary), Gail Cartmail, promised action on the evidence that was in the public domain and which he had highlighted. Events tells us that McCluskey promised to “set up an independent union inquiry to investigate all evidence made available, I will not allow any officer who has colluded in blacklisting to work for Unite,” and Cartmail said: “Only a full public inquiry with judicial authority will fully explain the depth to which the state and employers colluded to deny construction workers employment.”

Two years later we are still waiting for any enquiry of any type. Ucatt had merged with Unite on 1 January 2017, following a Ucatt conference decision in May 2016 and an 85.5% vote of members in favour in November. But a huge scandal hung over this merger. Because during the court case of the blacklisted workers seeking compensation Evans tells us that:

“According to signed statements by managers involved in running the blacklist, trade union officials helped to get some of their own members excluded from jobs as they wanted to prevent disruption on industrial sites. Files from the blacklist show that trade union officials described individual workers as “militant”, a “troublemaker”, or with a warning to be “careful”. Evidence of the apparent collusion between trade union officials and managers has led a group of 41 blacklisted workers to call on Unite to commission an independent inquiry into the claims.”

And he points to yet more evidence:

“Daniel (Danny) O’Sullivan, who was once chairman of the secret agency that operated the blacklist, worked for more than 30 years until 2008 as a manager in the construction industry. He said that as part of his job, he had meetings with senior union officials. These included representatives from Unite and the Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians (Ucatt), which has merged with Unite.

“O’Sullivan said his discussions “made clear to me that the union officials were also concerned to prevent unnecessary disruption on site. Occasionally, union officials would give me information concerning a particular individual”. He gave as an example a worker who was described on his file in 2005 as a “troublemaker” by a union official.

“Another manager involved in running the blacklist was Dudley Barratt, who worked as the head of industrial relations at the Costain construction firm in the 1980s and 1990s. He said he was friendly with officials in a number of trade unions who appeared to be aware of the covert blacklist.

He added they “would occasionally tell me names of individuals who they thought should not be employed on sites, on the basis that there might be a risk of these individuals using the opportunity to cause trouble to undermine a project and the official trade union activities on that site.”

“Overall, I gained the impression that there was a quiet acceptance by certain construction trade unions of the [blacklist] and the ‘benefits’ of the checking service as such individuals could be disruptive of organised labour and the unions saw the benefit of having an organised site.”

Even though these “senior union officials” were not named by these two blacklisters and the task of any inquiry would be to find and sack these class traitors, we do have one name of a senior union official who participated in the blacklist and who is still employed by Unite; Jerry Swain, the joint head of Unite Construction, still called Ucatt, although the “U” now stands for Unite.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
Evans points us in the direction:
“The book says I raged against the blacklist. I did and still do. But I have to say the thing about it which angers, in fact, enrages me most, is that some full-time officials undoubtedly aided and abetted blacklisting of rank and file union members and some are probably still doing this as the Blacklist continues.”

“Entries in the file on bricklayer Brian Higgins, who has also received compensation for being blacklisted, identify union officials as the source of information about his union activities in 1992, 2002 and 2003. In one, an official state that Higgins “is connected” to a rank-and-file organisation of builders that campaigned for better conditions.”

Campaigning for better condition for building workers was a very serious crime in the eyes of the employers and those senior union officials who assisted in operating the blacklist. In early 2015 Dave Smith and Phil Chamberlain produced a book, Blacklisted, The Secret War between Big Business and Union Activists. The book revealed that Brian Higgins had succeeded in getting his own blacklisting file and a page showed a union official handing over his name, with the name of the official redacted. Subsequently he obtained the un-redacted paper and that name was Jerry Swain, then London and Eastern regional Secretary of Ucatt.

Brian, Secretary of the rank and file Building Workers Group, reviewed it:
“The book says I raged against the blacklist. I did and still do. But I have to say the thing about it which angers, in fact, enrages me most, is that some full-time officials undoubtedly aided and abetted blacklisting of rank and file union members and some are probably still doing this as the Blacklist continues.”

“IT is painfully obvious building employers – who regularly wined and dined full-time union officials, took some on golf outings and to sporting contests, to very expensive posh hotels, and even on visits to the Naval and Military Gentlemen’s Club – would demand some things in return! After all there is no such thing as a free lunch and we’re talking about this with knobs on GENTLEMEN’S CLUB to very expensive posh hotels, and even on visits to the Naval and Military

And Construction Agency employment terms are even worse than Zero Hours Contracts in other gig economy sectors; militant workers are simply refused the offer of further work on flimsy excuses and no need to apply to Unite for assistance. Or they may be sent to jobs hundreds of miles away, if they don’t go, they have breached their contract and are sacked by the Agency. A missing glove or a hard hat or goggles temporarily removed gets the sack for any mouthy worker. The past gains of workers in struggle are used to victimise workers today.

How can the sites be organised when the likes of Jerry Swain heads Unite’s Construction section?

Notes

[1] Undercover Policing Inquiry, [https://www.ucpi.org.uk/cover-names/?cookie=change=1552550785914#_ftn1
The arrest of Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London on 11 April is another imperialist crime and exposes once again that a key international role of the British imperialist ruling class, in the words of Assange’s friend Pamela Anderson, is to act as “America’s bitch”.

This after 7 years of political asylum in the face of a phoney rape prosecution in Sweden, which was always political cover for an imperialist attempt to cage Assange for political ‘crimes’ against imperialism, in that he evidently worked together with former US soldier and whistle-blower Chelsea Manning to expose imperialist crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan, including the notorious ‘Collateral Murder’ video that shows helicopter-borne US troops blantly murdering journalists in Baghdad under cover of fighting ‘terrorism’, killing with abandon civilians who happened to be near to a resistance fighter.

Assange’s arrest was facilitated by the imperialist bribery of the Ecuadorian regime of President Lénín Moreno with around $4.2 billion worth of IMF loans/aid. Moreno was denounced by his predecessor, the radical nationalist Rafael Correa, who gave Assange asylum in 2012, as “the worst traitor in Ecuadorian history” for this selling of Assange, and Ecuador itself, to US imperialism.

The delivery of Assange to imperialism by the traitor Lenin Moreno, is part of the hunt for anti-imperialist fighters promoted by the right-wing governments that now control most Latin American countries. The neo-Nazi government of Jair Bolsonaro revoked the right to asylum of activist Cesare Battisti, allowing his arrest and deportation to Italy.

Moreno and Bolsonaro act under the direct orders of imperialism.

At a stage of capitalism in which the capitalist mass media are all bought by the great financial and imperialist capital, WikiLeaks has carried out a fundamental historical mission for investigative journalism worldwide.

Assange and his collaborators anticipated the entire conspiracy of the judicial-parliamentary coup d’état and the rise of the pro-US extreme right to power in Brazil. In 2015, Assange revealed that the US spied on 29 phones from the Dilma government, the Workers’ Party, and even the presidential plane.

The articulations for the Coup have developed from 2009. As revealed by WikiLeaks, the Conference “Bridges Project: Building Bridges for Law Enforcement in Brazil” was held, between October 4 and 9, 2009, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, by US authorities for members of the Judiciary, Public Ministry and Federal Police of Brazil. The then Federal Judge Sergio Moro, today awarded the position of Justice Minister in the Bolsonaro government, participated in that Conference.

The “training” was continued by several visits of Moro to the USA. This frantic articulation served to initiate the great judicial-police operation known as “Lava Jato” (car wash). The central objective of the mega-operation was, in the name of combating corruption, to expropriate the Brazilian oil company Petrobras and incriminate and arrest the most popular left-wing political leadership in Brazil, former President Lula, although nothing had been proven against him. All this was previously revealed by WikiLeaks.

The judicial operation mounted by imperialism was initially supported by the PT. With the help of the PT itself, imperialism paved the way for the overthrow of the PT and the rise of the extreme right to the presidency. Assange was responsible for filtering thousands of documents that pointed to an intense espionage operation conducted by the National Security Agency (NSA) of the United States against the then Brazilian government.

Anomalous figures like Correa tend to be pushed aside by those more in tune with the class aims of the ‘national bourgeoisie’ in oppressed semi-colonial countries like Ecuador. Once again the ‘national bourgeoisie’ is shown to be an agency of imperialism within these countries. To really fight imperialism, capitalism itself has to be uprooted by the proletariat as part of an international revolutionary movement with the strategy of permanent revolution.

The Assange rape allegations are political cover for the liberal bourgeoisie and treacherous neo-left reformists and neoliberal fifth columnists within the workers movement to give their support for the persecution of Assange. The driving force of the case was a key neoconservative Blair-like figure in Swedish social democracy, Claes Borgstrom, and main alleged accuser, Anna Ardin, is a Swedish Social Democrat who remarkably is one of a microscopic minority of Swedish citizens who have been deported from Cuba for political activities. As Craig Murray, the former British Ambassador to Uzbekistan and now a principled anti-war activist laid out in detail, Ardin was the driving force of the case and coerced the other woman involved into going along with allegations she considered were fabricated by the police. [1]

Now the US had revealed its hand, it has exposed what has always been true all along – that the ‘rape’ setup was political cover for extradition to an American gulag. This is where Chelsea Manning has already been thrown, indefinitely, once again, for refusing to testify to a grand jury that is preparing further charges against Assange.

We are seeing the resurrection of the liberal refrain that Ardin, as a putative victim of sexual assault, should not be named however outrageous her behaviour in setting up Assange. However, according to Swedish law, both the putative victim and the suspect are supposed to remain anonymous, yet Assange was named in the media simultaneously with the beginning of the case. Ardin took advantage of this to attack him in the media right from the start. Given her history involving Cuba, and her documented behaviour towards Assange when he was in Sweden in 2010, the chances of her not being an imperialist spook appear negligible.

For defenders of democratic rights and opponents of imperialism, the right of accusers to anonymity do not trump the duty to expose an attempted frame-up by sinister imperialist spy agencies. The CIA is far more dangerous to the rights of ordinary people than any individual suspect in a criminal case.

The indictment against Assange that is part of the extradition demand includes Assange allegedly ‘conspiring’ with Manning to access material on government computers, along...
Palestinians alone cannot defeat one of the most powerful armies in the world  By Dov Winter

Now, after Netanyahu “won” the election, the oppression of the Palestinians is likely to accelerate. Netanyahu already announced his intention to officially annex the West Bank. So the Zionist state’s borders will span from the Mediterranean sea to the Jordan river. This is the grand Zionist dreams that the right-wing Zionists wanted to make a reality for a long time. The consequences for the Palestinian masses will be massive atrocities and a possible genocide. Up till now the Zionists routinely took Palestinian land in the West Bank, and they gave the stolen land to right-wing/fascist Zionist settlers. Now, as Israel officially annexes the West Bank, the Zionist settlements, and possibly towns and even cities, are going to grow dramatically—as mushroom rooms in the forest after the rain. To make the West Bank part of Israel, the Zionists are likely to oust as many Palestinians as they can from the West Bank. As we know the Zionist project is to make Israel a pure racist and reactionary country, not any different than the White project in South Africa. For this the Jews in the West Bank must be the clear majority. To make this happen the Zionists must kill many Palestinians and try to expel the majority of the Palestinians from the West Bank, so that the Jews will be a clear majority in the new version of the colonial project of Israel. They have done it in 1948, when they drove the Palestinians out of their homes.

The Kilburn Unemployed Workers Group picket of the Department of Works and Pensions HQ against vicious sanctioning and Universal Credit is between 12 noon and 1 pm on the first Friday of every month, Caxton House, Tothill St, London SW1H 9NA, Nearest tube St James Park. Please bring with your banners and placards. Labour party bodies and others to join us in issuing, as a matter of urgency, an open letter to the General Secretary and DWP Group President of the PCS union.

We ask them to instruct their DWP members to collectively refuse to carry out any duties connected with sanctioning of social security claimants. We ask for this to be implemented without delay.

With such ‘normal’ journalistic activities like seeking information not in the public domain from internal sources, seeking to protect the confidentiality of sources, etc. So such paranoia of the liberal bourgeoisie as the Guardian, the New York Times and the Washington Post worry that they could be next. But they were exactly the kind of people who threw Assange under a bus the moment the CIA tried to fit him up on rape charges. The treachery of this kind of people is epitomised by the so-called Independent Group of MPs, the Umunna-Soubry group, who have, along with dozens of Labour MPs and some Tories, 70 parliamentarians in all, signed a letter to the UK government demanding that Assange should be extradited to Sweden as priority, while the US should take second place. Fat chance – the Swedish case was a means to an end with a limited life, which has now run out, and the imperatives of US imperialism will take precedence.

They are no longer deniable, and there is no way the CIA’s tools in Sweden will stand in the way of Uncle Sam. These Tory-Blairites are merely seeking a political alibi for their own actions in support of such blatant attacks on journalism and elementary democratic rights by their imperialist allies. It is good that Jeremy Corbyn and Diane Abbott have spoken out against Assange being extradited to the USA, even if their statement was somewhat weak on the ‘rape’ calumny. This mirrors their chronic weakness in the face of the phoney ‘anti-Semitism’ smear campaign in the Labour Party, their failure to stand up for blatant victims of racist abuse by the racist apparatus of their own party, such as Jackie Walker and Marc Wadsworth.

But at least they have spoken out against Assange’s extradition and that ought to place some political obstacles in the way of Assange simply being rendered. There needs to be a broad-based labour movement campaign to stop Assange being buried alive by US imperialism.

● Free Assange!
● Free Manning!
● Defeat British/US imperialism.

Notes


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

KUWG MEETS

Thursdays, 3-5:30pm @ Kingsgate Centre 107 Kingsgate Rd NW6 2JH

KUWG Model Resolution: The Public and Commercial Services Union must stop cruel Sanctioning!

There is now a massive volume of evidence of the cruel and inhumane treatment, damaging to health and causing death, that social security sanctions are causing.

Sanctions have no place in a civilised society, and it is a reasonable expectation that DWP workers who are members of DWP trade unions, i.e. the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) should not bring harm upon us by implementing sanctions.

We also know that significant numbers of DWP workers have left their jobs or retired early because of their distress at being instructed to carry out sanctioning actions. It is indisputable that the mental health of such workers will be seriously put at risk when they sanction
Stop Sajid Javid and the Tories stripping British citizens of their nationality: Socialist Fight statement on Shamima Begum and imperialist racism

Sajid Javid has announced that the British government have stripped Shamima Begum of her British citizenship. This sets a dangerous precedent against anyone born in the UK if the government simply decide they are not ‘British’ enough. Since 2002 and the ‘war on terror’ the government have used the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act to strip British citizens of UK nationality from individuals using prerogative powers.

This policy will by default target non-white British citizens, as it will be they who are more likely to have parents with dual nationality, thereby showing its true nature. The government has assumed the role of judge, jury and executioner deciding at its own leisure and with no due process who is British and who is not, worryingly it was Theresa May who introduced a clause in the Immigration Act in 2014, which potentially allows removal of nationality even if it renders them ‘stateless’. This is disguised in the wording of Part 6 of the Act which allows the Home Secretary to simply decide if an individual may be able to seek citizenship elsewhere: “(c) the Secretary of State has reasonable grounds for believing that the person is able, under the law of a country or territory outside of the United Kingdom, to become a national of such a country or territory.”

This girl, who was 15 years of age at the time of running away from home, may not have committed any crime other than running to an area and ‘marrying’ a fighter who may well be dead. The government has provided no evidence to the contrary.

Removing citizenship and leaving someone stateless is illegal (Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) but this doesn’t matter to the British government, it is simply a continuation of the racist ‘hostile environment’ that deliberately targets people of colour.

The racist nature of this government with its rampant Islamophobia and deportation of British citizens with the Windrush scandal should be a concern for all of us who stand up against racism. 104 British citizens were deprived of their British citizenship in 2017, an increase from 14 individuals during 2016.

This has all the hallmarks of an attempt by Javid to show the Tory racists on the right of the party that he is as tough as May as Home Secretary. A populist on immigration demonising Muslims, immigrants, and refugees while pandering to voters in a looming leadership election and the nation at large, which has been exposed to the English nationalist fervour unleashed by Brexit.

This is not about terrorism, if indeed it was then we suspect that the intelligence services would be interested in interviewing Shamima Begum. This decision to remove her citizenship conveniently absolves the government from answering some awkward questions. In 2015 Turkey’s foreign minister, Mevlüt Cavuşoğlu, reported that a Canadian national was arrested, who was an intelligence agent working for the coalition.

It is claimed that he helped the three girls from Bethnal Green cross the border into Syria. If this is true, this needs answering as to what role the British government potentially played in assisting people to travel to Syria? For this government to claim that a 15 year old girl running away from home, after being groomed and radicalised online, and to have full cognitive awareness to understand the severity of her actions and not be a victim, exposes their hypocrisy and racism in full view.

If this girl was a 15 year old white non-Muslim girl groomed online under different circumstances, she would quite rightly be considered a victim and be provided with the support that both her and her newborn baby would desperately need. To suggest that she shows no remorse is contradicted by her statements that claim that she didn’t understand what she was getting herself into and clearly warning other young girls not to be taken in by the propaganda from religious fanatics. Her ‘bravado’ during her interview when atrocities were discussed may well be a genuine response to well-held beliefs, or it may be simply because she is confused having been exposed to the horrors of war. This is what she said:

“I do feel that is wrong. Innocent people did get killed. It’s one thing to kill a soldier, it’s fine, it’s self-defence. But to kill people like women and children, just like the women and children in Baghuz who are being killed right now unjustly by the bombings. It’s a two-way thing really. This is kind of retaliation. Their justification was that it was retaliation, so I thought that is a fair justification. That was unfair on them … They weren’t fighting anyone. They weren’t causing any harm. But neither was I and neither [were the] other women who are being killed right now back in Baghuz. I didn’t want to be on the news at first. I did hear a lot of people were encouraged to come after, but I wasn’t the one who put myself on the news.”

Since her interview Shamima Begum’s baby died of pneumonia in the terrible conditions of the Al Hawl camp, not yet three weeks old. This is the third child she has lost and she is only 19 years of age. She has been demonised for daring to suggest that the terrorist atrocity in Manchester was no different from the air strikes in Syria. She’s questioning why 70 civilians in Al-Baghuz are seen as collateral damage and is acceptable, whereas 22 people in Manchester (very rightly) are seen as innocent victims.

While this may be unpalatable to many, in many respects she is correct. Both are atrocities and to dismiss the culpability of this and previous British governments allows them to wriggle off from the hook.

UK foreign policy has provided fertile breeding ground for terrorism to grow with its imperialist hands dripping in blood in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. This blood cannot be simply washed off like some modern-day Pontius Pilate, absolving themselves of all responsibility by blaming Muslims.

The British government also has an aggressive policy of arresting British nationals fighting overseas, or even for providing humanitarian assistance in war-torn areas. The arrests of people fighting against Da’esh, or in the Donbass shows that the UK government has provided no evidence to the contrary.

The British government also has an aggressive policy of arresting British nationals fighting overseas, or even for providing humanitarian assistance in war-torn areas. The arrests of people fighting against Da’esh, or in the Donbass shows that the UK government has provided no evidence to the contrary.

Many UK nationals serve overseas in the IDF under the Mahal programme, an army that routinely violates international law and is responsible for supporting the illegal settlements in occupied Palestine. Soldiers of an occupying force who routinely carry out war crimes with impunity.

Where are Sajid Javid and the British government’s condemnation of these people? Tory racism is at the very heart of this. ▲
By Dov Winter

The level of hypocrisy in regard to the support of Zionism by the Democrats and the Republicans is reaching a new height. Representative Ilhan Omar told the simple truth on Twitter that American support for Israel is fueled by money from a pro-Israel lobbying group that has Jewish backing.

The response for these remarks is hysteria by the Republicans and the Democrats, who accuse Omar for promoting Anti-Semitism with these remarks. Once again the capitalist media cynically confuses anti-Zionism with Anti-Semitism. It is ABC that every capitalist politician in the US is bought by money.

But Zionist money is holy in the US. Any criticism that the Zionists buy American politicians is now “anti-Semitic”. This is, of course, laughable. Every capitalist politician is just a commodity who is bought by his/her capitalist masters. But when it comes to Zionism it supposed to be different. You cannot criticize holy money.

The US gives Israel billions of Dollars every year to crush any Arab resistance to US imperialism, and in particular to crush any Palestinian resistance in the occupied territories, which Trump wants to be formally part of Israel. So, when Israel massacres Palestinians in Gaza, for example, the massacre is backed by the US.

The American capitalist press is just a little shy from suggesting that strong criticism of Zionism could become a crime.

Open Letter: We are Jews Who Stand with Representative Ilhan Omar

As Jews with a long tradition of social justice and anti-racism, AIPAC does not represent us.

We are Jews who stand with Representative Ilhan Omar. She has been falsely accused of anti-Semitism since tweeting that GOP threats against her and Representative Rashida Tlaib for criticizing Israel were “all about the Benjamins baby.” When asked to clarify who is paying members of Congress “to be pro-Israel,” Omar replied, “AIPAC!”

There is absolutely nothing anti-Semitic about calling out the noxious role of AIPAC (the American Israel Public Affairs Committee), which spends millions each year to buy U.S. political support for Israeli aggression and militarism against the Palestinian people. As the NYC chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace summed up:

Accurately describing how the Israel lobby works in this country is not anti-Semitic. The never-ending smear campaign against Ilhan Omar is racism and Islamophobia in action.”

There is no denying that money rules U.S. politics, and that powerful lobbies from the NRA to the fossil fuel lobby to AIPAC play destructive, anti-democratic roles in our political system, wielding money for legislative influence. The pro-Israel lobby has played an outsized role in producing nearly unanimous congressional support for Israel. It has organized a national campaign to suppress Palestinian activism on campuses, made the Israel Anti-Boycott Act a legislative priority, and for decades has boasted about their power to make or break political careers. To point out this reality is not anti-Semitic.

Genuine anti-Semitism and the growth of white supremacy are indeed growing concerns in Donald Trump’s America. Omar and Tlaib, the first two Muslim congresswomen in this country’s history, are not part of this ugly growth of white supremacy. Instead, they are part of movements which seek to confront it. For that, and for their courageous support of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, they are being smeared by a racist and Islamophobic chorus, including the House Democratic leadership itself.

Signed by 1,240 Jews in the US and Canada. ▲
John Kelly writes the book from the perspective of a social(ist) scientist.

He has no 'dog in the race' so is relatively objective in his assessments. A former member of the Communist Party (1980s) there are certain indications of that political education in the book, but he is no 'Stalinist'. As he ranges over 22 Trotskyist groups in Britain and 23 Trotsky Internationals it is pertinent also to review the reviews of the book by those assessed at the same time, what they made of his assessments of themselves and where they thought he got it right and where wrong. This is necessary because this book and the reaction to it also constitutes part of the struggle for Trotskyism.

History is always 'this-sided'; the struggle between nature and nurture, between the subjective and the objective is the most difficult question, the most fought over and the most important of all questions facing Marxism. For instance, the Board of Deputies and every Zionist organisation in Britain and internationally has attacked Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour party with accusations of anti-Semitism. This is, in one sense an objective factor now in the political and class struggle in Britain and internationally.

But it was a subjective choice, and all evidence shows it was and continues to be a well-planned attack. How Corbyn, John McDonnell and John Lansman responded is also a subjective choice. But that choice determines the objective political situation in which the next general election and the general class struggle will be fought. And we must say the response could scarcely have been worse, with each of the latter two worse than the bad previous one.

And Marx famously wrote in The Introduction to Contribution to The Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy Of Right, “the weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism by weapons, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses.” (quoted by the Colin Foster, AWL in his review of the book)

What is Trotskyism?

John Kelly analyses those who claim the name and heritage of Trotskyism and sees Trotskyism today as having nine central tenets: (1) Permanent revolution, (2) The united front, (3) Transitional demands, (4) The USSR as a workers state, (5) The Fourth international, (6) The vanguard party, (7) rank and file-ism, (8) Soviet power, and (9) anti-imperialism. (p.18)

And he identifies seven families of Trotskyism in p. 72:

Socialist Fight would agree with all nine and consider we have been correctly located in the Orthodox family group. In fact, we would claim to be the only group to defend all nine with the consistency our resources allow.

Permanent Revolution

In a footnote on the inclusion of the Communist League (Jack Barnes, US SWP, British affiliate) in the Mainstream group with Socialist Resistance (USFI section) Kelly asks, “how many elements of the core doctrine can be rejected before you cease to be a Trotskyist?” (p. 74). The US SWP repudiated Permanent Revolution in a speech by Barnes in late 1982, Their Trotsky and Ours: in which he said, “most of us will not call this movement ‘Trotskyist’ before this decade is out”. They expelled almost half of the group, who rejected this capitulation, in 1983 and 84 and no longer claim to be Trotskyists and are not included in those big lists that give the names of the Trotskyist groups in each country. It was a mistake to include them, it is doubtful if they really support any of the nine tenets. Alex Callinicos of the UK SWP (Third Camp) defends many elements of Trotskyism against Barnes in his article, Their Trotsky and Ours in 1984. [2]

Barry Biddulph, in his review of the book, shows some of the problems of the of designation all these groups as ‘Trotskyist’:

“The IS/SWP rejected the USSR as a workers’ state, dismissed the vanguard party as toy town Bolshevism until 1968, abandoned rank and file-ism, revised permanent revolution as deflected permanent revolution, avoided Transitional demands for practical politics and veered away from the united front tactic for single-issue campaigns. The Militant/Socialist party abandoned Soviet power for the idea of a peaceful parliamentary road, prefers broad alliances to rank and file-ism and revised permanent revolution by insisting deformed workers states can be formed by non-working class forces.”

A repudiation of Permanent Revolution really does put you outside of the Trotskyist family, because the other eight tenets follow from that; Kelly rightly puts it at No. 1. Not that he understands it fully himself.

He gives several examples of peasant-led revolution (p 20) as examples of revolutions which succeeded without Permanent Revolution.

Where are they now? The Russian Revolution was working class led and has never been superseded because its internationalism threatened the citadels of imperialism in Europe and North America, etc.

Stalinists knew that socialism in a single country was a pact between Stalin and imperialism to guarantee the survival of imperialism without challenges as long as they were allowed to get on with their privileges in the USSR.

Trotsky changed his position on this depending on circumstances, Kelly thinks, citing Trotsky’s role in the Treaty of Rapallo with Germany in April 1922 as an example. You do not change your position, when you merely change your priorities in certain circumstances.

He has read Felix Morrow’s Revolution and Counterrevolution in Spain, notes its importance to all serious Trotskyists but then complains about his “sectarian hostility” to the Party of Marxist Unification (POUM) as outlined in a book by two POUM followers. Solano and Iglesias.

We do not have this book, but we do have an article by one of the two, outlining his differences with Trotsky on Spain, *The historical significance of the POUM* by Wilebaldo Solano (last General Secretary of the POUM, 1935-1980). He is somewhat economical with the truth in making his case: “The POUM was the product of the merger of two communist organizations that were independent of Moscow … the Workers and Peasants Bloc and the Communist Left.”

The United Front and the Right Opposition

The Workers and Peasants Bloc were followers of Nikolai Bukharin,

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
the Right Opposition, and the Communist Left were followers of Trotsky’s Left Opposition. This was a merger of the right and left against the centre, the Stalinists, which was a political collapse which Trotsky vehemently opposed, as we shall see later. Of course, you cannot have a party where the workers and peasants are in a equal bloc together; which class was to lead?

Nikolai Bukharin’s famous quote from his 1925 speech, “Overall, we need to say to the entire peasantry, to all its different strata: enrich yourselves, accumulate, develop your farms. Only idiots can say that the poor must always be with us. We must now implement a policy which will result in the disappearance of poverty” [3] marks him out as a capitalist roader which took the New Economic Policy (NEP) to the brink of capitalist restoration in the USSR. This forced his closest ally up to then, Stalin to adopt the ruinous policy of forced collectivisation from 1928. Far from enriching them he now proceeded to “liquidate the Kulaks (rich peasants) as a class” which resulted in the famine in the big agriculture regions, over seven million starved, particularly in Ukraine in 1931-32. That is one of the reasons for the rightist nature of western Ukraine and the predominance of fascist forces there. By the time of the Spanish merger in 1935 Bukharin’s days were numbered (executed by Stalin, March 1938).

We mentioned 1928 as the date of the commencement of forced collectivisation in the USSR. Trotsky had been expelled from the Communist party in 1927 a few months following the debacle of the massacre of the Shanghai Soviet while the perpetrator, Chiang Kai-shek, was still and honorary member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, on Stalin’s invite. Bukharin was expelled from the Politburo in 1929 and Stalin was now consolidating his personal dictatorial by snuffing out all opposition to him personally. But 1928 also saw the meeting of the sixth Congress of the Comintern and the adoption of the twin policy of forced collectivisation and the Third Period. Revolution was now on the cards everywhere in the immediate period.

The Third Period line was there was no time for uniting with other workers’ parties. The German Social Democrats (SPD) were the main enemy of the revolution and were, like all non-KPD working class groups, ‘social fascists’. In fact, the Nazis themselves were not such bad fellows; the KPD united with them against the ‘main enemy’, the ‘social fascists’ of the SPD, in Prussia’s infamous Red Referendum of 1931 and in the Berlin Transit strike of November 1932.

That this was lunatic ultra-leftism which disastrously split the working class and resulted in Hitler taking power in January 1933 without a shot being fired few on the left would doubt, apart from some cultist Maoists. John Kelly acknowledges this (p. 21).

But the charge of sectarianism against Trotsky for opposing the merging of the genuine revolutionary socialists of the Left Opposition with the Right Oppositionists shown his own confusion between what is a united front and what is a popular front. Wilebaldo Solano shows the same confusion on exactly that point:

“1934-1935, having learned the lessons of October, a process of clarification and unification took place in the workers movement. In this context, the Communist Left rejected what it called the “French deviation” of the Trotskyist movement—entrism in the Socialist parties in order to contribute to their radicalisation—and voted, after a period of debate and collaboration, to merge with the Workers and Peasants Bloc, in order to create the basis for a mass revolutionary Marxist party throughout the peninsula.”

Of course, Trotsky’s entry tactic in France was not “to contribute to their radicalisation” but to win workers and youth to revolutionary Trotskyism. This is a slanderous charge from Solan. Trotsky’s advice in Spain mirrored his advice in France; enter Largo Caballero’s mass youth movement and relate to revolutionary elements there, thereby win new cadre for the revolution. Having manoeuvred to oust Caballero and replace him with the rightist Juan Negrín after the May Days in Barcelona in 1937, the Stalinist won control of the youth movement, giving them a mass base for the first time.

It is a popular frontism to give uncritical support for the Catalan bourgeoisie, the same political mistake committed by the leadership of the POUM and the Anarchist CNT in the Second Republic, so clearly spelled out by Trotsky in his conflict with the POUM leaders, Andreas Nin of the Communist Left and Joaquin Maurín of the Workers and Peasants Bloc.

The Popular Front

The Popular Front was a rightist degeneration of Stalinism, officially adopted by the Comintern in 1935 at its Seventh and last Congress. Stalin’s man, Georgi Dimitrov, now explicitly abandoned class politics by allying with the liberal bourgeoisie, and the “democratic imperialists” to reject the Leninist-Bolshevik programme of socialist revolution as outlined in the April Theses and as won in the great October Revolution, for the stageist perspective of first defeat fascism and later – in practice never – the socialist revolution. In fact, the social revolution is only possible in moments of acute political and economic crisis such as developed in Spain in the middle 1930s.

Caught behind the lines Maurin was murdered by the fascists in 1936. Nin was tortured and murdered by the Stalinist GPU after they crushed the revolution by defeating the May Days uprising in Barcelona in 1936 to appease the “democratic imperialists”. Having failed to appease the “democratic imperialists” Stalin sought to appease the “fascist imperialists” in August 1939 via the Stalin-Hitler pact, when the Spanish Revolution was not yet cold in its grave.

Trotsky made this rejection of the popular frontism of Maurin in 1931, four years before Dimitrov adopted the policy of the Popular Front:

“Maurin, the “leader” of the Workers and Peasants Bloc, shares the point of view of (Catalan) separatism. After certain hesitation, he has resolved himself with the left wing of petty bourgeois nationalism. I have already written that Catalan petty bourgeois nationalism at the present stage is progressive. But on one condition: that it develops its activity outside the ranks of Communism and that it is always under the blows of communist criticism.

To permit petty-bourgeois nationalism to manifest itself under the Communist mask means at the same time to deliver a pernicious blow to the proletarian vanguard and to kill the progressive significance of petty bourgeois nationalism.” [4]

But Solan defends the Popular Front capitulation of 1936: “In February 1936, the POUM participated in the working class-republican electoral coalition without ever ceasing to criticize the policies of the Popular Front and always maintaining its class independence.” That was just what it did not do. Then he goes on:

“The POUM’s participation in the Council of the Generalitat (government of Catalonia)—which was, we must not forget, the institution of an oppressed nationality whose destruction was one of the main objectives of all the reactionaries—was bitterly disputed within the POUM, which was not a monolithic party. One may think that it was right or wrong. One may think, like Nin, Molins i Fàbregas and Landau—all of whom were former veteran Trotskyist militants—that the Generalitat of that time “displayed a mixture of institutions of dual power”, that it was “a transitional situation” in which the determinant factors consisted in the working class majority and the socialist program of the coalition. One may very well dissent from this point of view with equally valid arguments.” [5]

Two opposite arguments are “equally valid” And what were the “equally valid” opposing arguments? They are the ones supplied by Trotsky above, of course (to be continued). ▲

Notes

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!
Israel’s Role in the Middle East
By Dov Winter 29 March 2019

Israel is an equally a holy cow for both the Republicans and the Democrats. The Republicans and the Democrats give astronomical amount of money and weapons to the Zionists to impose US and Zionist interests in the Middle East. And I really mean astronomical: “Congress, citing ‘shared values’ and Israel’s strategic importance, among other things, votes to give military aid to Israel, which is currently $3.8 billion per year: $300 million in missile defense and $5.3 billion in foreign military financing, more military financing than the United States provides to the rest of the world combined.” (NYT, March 29, 2019)

The “more military financing than the United States provides to the rest of the world combined” tells the relations between US imperialism and Israel better than a thousand articles. The amount to money the US in the Zionists’ lap is staggering. This is so, because Israel is US’s boots on the ground to ensure imperialism’s control of the Middle East, that remain a key area for exploitation and extraction of oil for US imperialism. Israel is used to policing the Arab masses, and to make sure that any “Arab Spring” will be smashed by Israel. This is the case, when the local bourgeoisie in the Arab world does not collaborate with imperialism because of the masses’ pressure. Israel is de-facto the 51 state for the US, but a state with an agenda and a mind of its own, when it comes to the level of brutality against the Palestinians.

The recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by the US, is likely to follow, at some point, by the recognition of the West Bank as part of Israel by the US. This is likely happen as Israel routinely forces Palestinians at a gun point to leave their villages in the West Bank, that is to be occupied by right-wing and fascist Zionists settlers.

Of course, the US does nothing about it. The US (or at least the section of the bourgeoisie that Trump represents) just waits for the time when the Zionists settle over vast areas of the West Bank, to declare jointly with Israel that it is a part of Israel. Unless the Palestinians heroically drive the Israeli army out of the West Bank, Israel is likely to annex the West Bank.

The latest declaration by Israel that Israel is solely a Jewish state, to further diminish the few rights that the Palestinians have, only confirms the horrific levels of oppression that the Palestinians undergo every day in a country that gives them only the right to be super-exploited (the use of cheap Palestinian labour is common in Israel).

Many Palestinian workers must travel to Israel from the West Bank for work. They must return to the West Bank from work every day. Thus, they have only a few hours to eat and sleep before traveling back to Israel to work. This is clearly the life of oppressed working class slaves. The Palestinians villages are surrounded by the Israeli army. They receive no money for basic needs. It is not unusual to see sewages flow next to the village streets.

The Palestinians have no rights. It is not very well known that Israel uses the British imperialist rules from before 1948, to arrest Palestinians without charging them with anything; and subjecting them to indefinite imprisonment, where they are tortured and humiliated. Not any different than the apartheid regime in South Africa.

The Zionists cry “anti-Semitism” every time Zionism is criticized. They manipulate the fact that Anti-Semitism is on a rise because of significant rise of fascism in Europe. But Anti-Zionism is not Anti-Semitism. It is “Anti-Oppressor”. The objective truth is that for the Palestinians to be liberated from their oppression, Zionism, as the most reactionary tool of the Zionists and US imperialism in the Middle East, must be smashed and destroyed.

This is the starting point for real peace and co-existence between Jews and Palestinians. It is debatable whether the “two states solutions”, or the “one state solution” in which Jews and Palestinians can live peacefully together as equals, are viable. I think that to a large degree these are pipedreams as long as imperialism controls the area with its needs for a strong and a brutal state to control the Arab masses. But that does not mean that Socialists should not support such democratic demands, even though they are very unlikely to be implemented successfully without a socialist revolution in the Middle East. But any democratic demands in Palestine cannot be seriously fought for and implemented without smashing Zionism and its reactionary ideology in Palestine. ▲

43 Years since the Coup, Fight Against Capitalism’s terror Yesterday and Today!
Tendencia Militante Bolchevique (Argentina) 23-3-2019

On 24 March 1976 a genocidal blow was delivered at the Argentinian working class. This was preceded by several instances of terrorism Capitalist both by the state and state-owned organization. The result of the coup was the extermination of the militant vanguard in order to open the way to defeating the workers and the neocolonialization of the country, thus aborting the rise of workers’ and popular struggles that had been taking place.

The coup was part of a policy of continental domination driven by imperialism. The repressive apparatus was directed by imperialism itself. Framed in the so-called “doctrine of national security”, where the armed forces and security play a comprehensive role as the custodians of imperialist capital. In this was there began a certain economic model of accumulation of capital based on the snowball debt. This damaged the productive forces and deepened the backwardness and dependence of the country.

It was the workers’ own struggle that forced the dictatorship as a political solution to embark on the fight for the Malvinas, where the diplomacy, abandoning the imperialist template of the doctrine of national security, refused to make the Malvinas question part of an authentic anti-imperialist struggle, which led to the defeat in the Malvinas, thus precipitating the end of the dictatorship itself due to popular repudiation.

Today are Before a New Crisis of a Model of Accumulation of This Nature, Driven by the Macrismo. With Macri – Representative and Part Of all the Same Groups Economic To be Benefited with the Dic-tatorship Genocidal - Attended to a Strengthening of Fence Repressive as Is Come here The Impulse of ‘Trigger Easy. We are witnessing a reinforcement of the repressive fence as the easiest way out of their crisis.

In the past the genocidal dictatorship was necessary to impose the neo-colonization economic policy and the attack on the workers. At present the Macrismo needs to reinforce the repressive siege to impose its brutal adjustment on the workers. In the course of 2018, the state apparatus killed one person every 21 hours in Argentina. This was highest indicator since the end of 1983. In other words, state terror under the Macri has produced the most murders since the dictatorship.

All this in order to guarantee its pro-imperialist economic policy and super-concentration of wealth, the economic policy that today results in the crisis of mass improvisation with the consequent economic and social damage to the working class, because it is Impossible to carry forward a policy of that nature without deepening the repressive siege on the masses. This is given in a context where the offensive of imperialist terrorism on the continent grows, as seen in sabotage and blockade of Venezuela.

History has shown that an effective struggle against capitalist terrorism requires an independent working-class organization aimed at guar-anteeing the definitive victory of workers over the capitalist state itself.

● Punishment for all those responsible and for the beneficiaries of the genocidal coup!
● Freedom for all political prisoners! ▲
ONCE AGAIN ON THE YELLOW VESTS:  It is an arm-wrestling match that must be maintained until May 1 when the Yellow Vests should join the union’s demo. By Viriato Lusitania

The Gilets movement, which is still the main political element in France, continues its demonstrations but it stagnates in number of participants although the people participating in it change quite frequently. The pressure of repression is strong and the number of wounded and imprisoned is unprecedented for many years.

More than twenty GJs lost an eye, dozens with facial bones broken into several pieces, hands torn off, 800 GJs sentenced to prison terms and trials by the thousands are on-going. The government has enacted a law that allows the Prefectures to ban all demonstrations without the intervention of the courts and even to arrest people without a court order or justification.

The persistence and determination of the Yellow Vests shows that the movement has deep social roots and now is drifting to the left but not yet to much class consciousness. Today, three main currents are present in this movement. In any case, the movement by its own characteristics should move even further to the left.

- Mélenchon or France Insoumise.
- The anarchists, self-declared or not
- A serious coming together of other workers and Unions

To situate this paper in time, I assume the reader is aware of previous developments in other issues of SF. On March 16 there was a large demonstration of the Yellow Vests and ecologists, but the press concentrated on the action of some “black blocks”, a semi-anarchist group, rather than reporting on the fighting and the most proletarianized layers of the youth. On March 23rd, Macron deployed the army, which announced that if attacked, it would fire live ammunition. Neither on that day nor a week later, on the 30th, did the black blocks show up. It is part of their tactics.

After the fight which centered mainly in Paris, and the call to the army against the Yellow Vests, the influential currents in the Yellow Vests movement can be defined roughly as follows:

The dominant one is under the political influence of France Insoumise, and therefore of Mélenchon, which has resulted in the one hand in the disappearance of the right and the extreme right in any organized form in the movement but on the other the appearance of the types of demands and proposals which are put forward so that the tendency begins to organize the movement and advance demands in accordance with a political reform in the sense of a parliamentary republic and a Keynesian type plan to end the crisis.

The Algerian example, which peacefully but massively succeeded in kicking out Bouteflika and even the activity of the Black Blocks also had the negative effects of driving away the mass of demonstrators but even this had positive effects; it enhanced the image of the Yellow Vests as combatants. But it has reinforced Mélenchon’s tendency, because it appears to the majority that minority clashes against an organized and disciplined repressive body cannot decide the question.

Most likely, their influence will appear to be further strengthened after the Saint Nazaire meeting where more than 300 local general meetings, sent representatives. There is no other organization as broad and representative and the trend is to rely on the resolutions of Saint Nazaire.

The second trend is more the product of the abandonment by the left and far left of the Yellow Vests movement and by years of “socialist” governments in the service of the capitalists and against the workers. This trend is occupied... not by real anarchists but by their ideology which remains extreme liberal. It is composed of all tendencies who are opposed to any form of organization, some even coming from the ecology movement to save the planet, others who favour confrontation and “violence” smashing things up because they do not understand the development of a social movement of the masses and they despise the workers.

This growing trend among young people who are just starting to fight and who are enthusiastic about mediatized forms that seem to produce “concrete” results (although there is nothing but a strengthening of propaganda and repressive power laws) is particularly unclear, individualistic and youthful. It can be described as “semi-anarchist” because anarchists have a better understanding of the need to organize themselves. These semi-anarchists are opposed to any form of “pyramidal” organization that is necessary for the continuation of the movement as well as actions towards the still passive population and favors the actions of small groups which, according to them, disturb the “consensus”. There is a poorly hidden contempt for workers conceived as “stupid” or “conformists” and other forms of bourgeois thought.

Often Mélenchon’s supporters, the “Insubordinate France” (France Insoumise), and semi-anarchists coincide in their rejection of the “bureaucratic forms” that in their view mean any form of democratic centralism and delegation of power. Instead they promote a so-called “direct democracy” that is always transformed into command or maneuvers which they treat by denial. As a result, meetings and resolutions become very long and/or difficult to obtain and much more difficult to implement.

So, the tendency to move the movement towards the working class neighborhoods, is the result of a few militants, coming from the left or extreme left parties, dissatisfied with their leadership or trade union activists and/or some anarchists of proletarian origin and with greater fighting experience. For the past month, this trend has been distributing leaflets outside workplaces, the Metro and markets in working-class neighborhoods. The public reception is still good, and the popularity of the Yellow Vests’ demands remains high, although the movement itself has backed off by the image of “violence” that the press has managed to give it.

The aim is to attract workers but above all to direct the movement towards the conjunction between the working-class unions and class fighters. In trade unions there are also tendencies that push to join in the fight, but the direction from the national leaders put the brakes as much as they can. It is an arm-wrestling match that must be maintained until May 1 when the Yellow Vests should join the union’s demo.

We should add a sort of “youth tendency” because there are a significant number of young people who enter political life, initially through “action” and who begin to make their political weapons, often under the influence of semi-anarchists, in any case with their conception of ideas which appears quite clearly as a form of liberal and “anti-Leninist” thought... without having any idea of what is Leninism!

Assemblies are widespread and it is possible to put forward ideas and we already perceive that illusions are beginning to give way and that we can criticize capitalism, say it is reformable and propose its overthrow. Recently a meeting bringing together more than 250 local General Meetings all over France took place in Saint Nazaire. Things are moving forward and will continue to move forward on this aspect.

These days, the debate has been ideologically driven. A series of books and films have been published on the issue of the Yellow Vests, generally presenting the point of view of lawyers, philosophers and journalists, or relatives of the Insubordinate France. It is absolutely necessary to advance the point of view of proletarian thought; a very important task and comrades are working out a brochure.

This GJs movement should be studied by every person who fights capitalism. In the present conditions it would necessarily be the form of revolt against impoverishment, against Union’s bureaucracy and the so-called “left” parties who cannot give a lead to it. ▲
On 10th February 2019 five supporters of the Socialist Fight group (SFG) attended the London Anti-Fascist Assembly. We were sent an invitation from some left-wing elements involved in calling it, and as we fully agree with the necessity to build a strong anti-racist and anti-fascist movement centred on the organised Labour movement, we went along and joined in.

Zionist Smears
What seriously marred this meeting however, was the baiting of supporters of SFG by an apparently Zionist grouping who seem to be involved in organising this conference against the far right. Their presence became obvious at the Assembly quite early on.

The first speaker from the floor at the opening plenary was Gerry Downing of the SFG, who made a couple of basic points about the important role of Brexit in feeding the growth of the far right and fascism, and how the far right was a product of capitalism, how it was the ‘blood poisoning of the capitalist system’.

A speaker from the floor, unnamed, said that Socialist Fight should not be in the meeting, as we were anti-Semitic, we were apparently Holocaust deniers (!), we defended Gilad Atzmon, etc. At the ridiculous libel about anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial our people called out “that’s a lie” and it fell flat in the meeting, though we certainly defend the Israeli dissident and Jewish musician against Zionist racists and other capitulators to Zionism, despite our political differences with him which are quite a few.

We do not regard him as a right-wing figure, but a confused anti-racist repelled by the Nazi-like atrocities of the Israeli state, that he witnessed at close hand when he was in the Israeli army as a conscript.

A white, seemingly anarchist man, who eventually told us he was Jewish, repeated that we were anti-Semitic and confront us with an alleged quotation supposedly by Gerry Downing, supposedly endorsing remarks by Ian Donovan, in a debate on the Facebook group of Labour Against the Witchhunt more than a year ago, when our position on Zionism and the organised racist role of Jewish bourgeois organisations like AIPAC as a faction of the ruling class, was used by cowardly capitulators to Zionism to exclude us from this organisation.

Falsified quotations
This quotation was attributed to Gerry Downing by this anarchist man it had stored on his phone:

“Until such time, I stand with Donovan with respect to his allusions to a ‘Jewish subculture’ within the upper echelons of power that have deliberately conspired against the better interests of the rest of us.”

This, attributed to Downing by this character, was supposed to prove that he was solidarising with Ian Donovan in his supposed belief that there is a Jewish conspiracy against “the better interests of the rest of us”. As soon at Ian Donovan saw this quotation he deduced that this was a falsified quotation from somewhere that was being used as a deliberate libel by this character.

Actually, this ‘quotation’ contains NOT ONE SINGLE WORD that was written either by Gerry Downing, Ian Donovan, or any other supporter of the SF Group. It is taken from the Jewish News of 3rd Jan 2018, over a year ago, falsely attributing to Gerry Downing carefully selected remarks that were made by someone else entirely.

It is an extract from a comment made by a Labour Party member in their International section, Daniel Waterman, in our defence against the political cowards who excluded us from Labour Against the Witchhunt because they feared our consistent hostility to Zionist activities in the West would allow them to be falsely and demagogically accused by association of anti-Semitism (of course it did not save them from that anyway).

For Marxists, culture is the product of class interest derived from particular historical circumstances and does not play an independent role in history. In that context, comrade Waterman’s allusion to culture is based on his understanding of our position, not ours.

See full statement here: https://socialistfight.com/2019/02/17/%E2%80%9CBB%BFzionist-hysteria-mars-london-anti-fascist-assembly/ ▲

In the 1980s the group increasingly became a shrill, somewhat crazed pro-Stalinist sect. And then after the collapse of the USSR it declined into eccentric cultism and increasingly incoherent irrelevance. And indeed that was basically the position of the tendency when he died, although his followers, it is not entirely clear with his agreement or not, have begun to pick apart some of the positions the Spartacists were known for in the 1970s, particularly regarding nationalism.

What is also a sign of these flaws is that at two points, in the 1980s with the Bolshevik Tendency etc, and then in the 1990s with the Nordenite Internationalist Group, the Spartacists generated splinter groups that claim to stand for the ‘continuity’ of what the Spartacists were in their supposedly ‘healthy’ revolutionary period.

Yet these groupings have tended to reproduce the bureaucratism of their political parents, and have not been able to put together a unified regroupment even to carry on what ought to be their own project. They are too preoccupied with defending Robertson’s eccentricities up to the point they broke with his organisation to step back and address the overall problems with the trend as a whole. This to the point that they use cloned, colourless publication with the same low quality paper for publications and handwritten placards (IBT best at this) to maintain the appearance that they still belong to the Robertson ‘family’. Thus, they also are a symptom of the failure, ultimately, of this initially thoughtful, but fundamentally flawed ostensibly ‘anti-revisionist’ trend to rebuild the Trotskyist movement. ▲
James Robertson (1928-2019), the founder of the Spartacist League/United States and its political offsprings around the world, died on April 7th, having reached his 9th decade. He was the leader of a thoughtful group that aspired to refound the Fourth International, the revolutionary organisation founded in 1938 by Leon Trotsky and his followers to fight the degeneration of the Russian Revolution and then as an alternative to the Stalinist destruction of genuine revolutionary communism.

In the 1963 split from the US SWP the minority tendency, led by James Robertson, Shane Mage and Tim Wohlforth, correctly noted, after the economy was nationalised in the autumn of 1960 and then the regime proved it would defend that during the subsequent Bay of Pigs attack on Cuba, that Cuba had become a deformed workers state, led by a Stalinist regime, albeit an unconsolidated one, that needed to be overthrown in a political revolution by the conscious working class to open the way to socialism.

This US minority was aligned with the British and French groups of ‘anti-revisionists’ led by Healy and Lambert. But the political insecurity of those groups ‘anti-revisionism’, epitomised by their refusal to recognise the social overturn in Cuba, was a symptom of their own bureaucratic and unprincipled degeneration. Wohlforth and some followers split away from the Robertson-led Revolutionary Tendency in an unprincipled manner, basically based on personal loyalty to Healy.

This wrecked the formation of a stronger Trotskyist alternative to the SWP and left Robertson a lonely figure leading the isolated Trotskyist alternative to the SWP and left Roberson a Stalinist regime, albeit an unconsolidated one, that needed to be overthrown in a political revolution by the conscious working class to open the way to socialism.

This US minority was aligned with the British and French groups of ‘anti-revisionists’ led by Healy and Lambert. But the political insecurity of those groups ‘anti-revisionism’, epitomised by their refusal to recognise the social overturn in Cuba, was a symptom of their own bureaucratic and unprincipled degeneration. Wohlforth and some followers split away from the Robertson-led Revolutionary Tendency in an unprincipled manner, basically based on personal loyalty to Healy.

This wrecked the formation of a stronger Trotskyist alternative to the SWP and left Robertson a lonely figure leading the isolated group in the US that became the Spartacist League. When Robertson had withised the denial of reality of Healy/Lambert at the 1966 London Conference of the International Committee, the ‘anti-revisionists’, noting that “If the Cuban bourgeoisie is indeed ‘weak,” as the I.C. affirms, one can only observe that it must be tired from its long

Robertson’s weaknesses and Shachtmanite legacy

On the basis of this honourable episode the Robertson group came to regard itself as the continuator of the best aspirations of the ‘anti-revisionists’.

Gradually in political conflict with Pablotes and ‘anti-revisionists’ alike, the Robertson-led minority in the US SWP engaged with the movement, and in the 1970’s crystallised an ‘anti-revisionist’ tendency of their own, the international Spartacist tendency (iSt – now the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)), initially with groups in Europe and Australasia.

The problem is that Robertson’s aspirations to build a new anti-revisionist tendency against Healy and Lambert were not matched by his political understanding. And he did not have a real collective of peers around him to correct his own weaknesses, as other leading cadre of the Revolutionary Tendency (the Robertson-led minority in the US SWP) dropped out of politics around the time of the break with Healy, including Mage and Geoffrey White, the latter being probably their most senior SWP cadre. The result was an organisation marked by Robertson’s personal politics, and his own erratic deviations from Trotskyism, that played a greater and greater role as time went on.

Three questions epitomise this. One is the national question, where Robertson had never fully broken from his earlier political history in the Shachtman group. He had broken from their refusal to defend the USSR and other deformed workers states, obviously, but he had not broken from their Zionist-derived sympathy for oppressor peoples against the oppressed, particularly in some cases where this was sharply posed, e.g. Israel/Palestine, and Ireland. The Spartacists moved gradually from a pro-Zionist, pro-Ulster position (!!!) in the 1970s, to an ostensibly neutral position on these conflicts, based on their newly-minted theory of ‘interpenetrated peoples’, but this was hardly satisfactory from a Marxist standpoint, to put it mildly.

Secondly, they adopted an attitude to social democracy/Stalinism and their periodic involvement in Popular Fronts that seems designed to make it impossible to address the class contradictions and militant workers within them. Popular fronts obviously exacerbate the contradictions within such parties, when the pro-capitalist leaders make an alliance with the bourgeoisie against their own base. But the Spartacists say that this basic class contradiction is ‘suppressed’, and it is therefore a betrayal of principle to use any