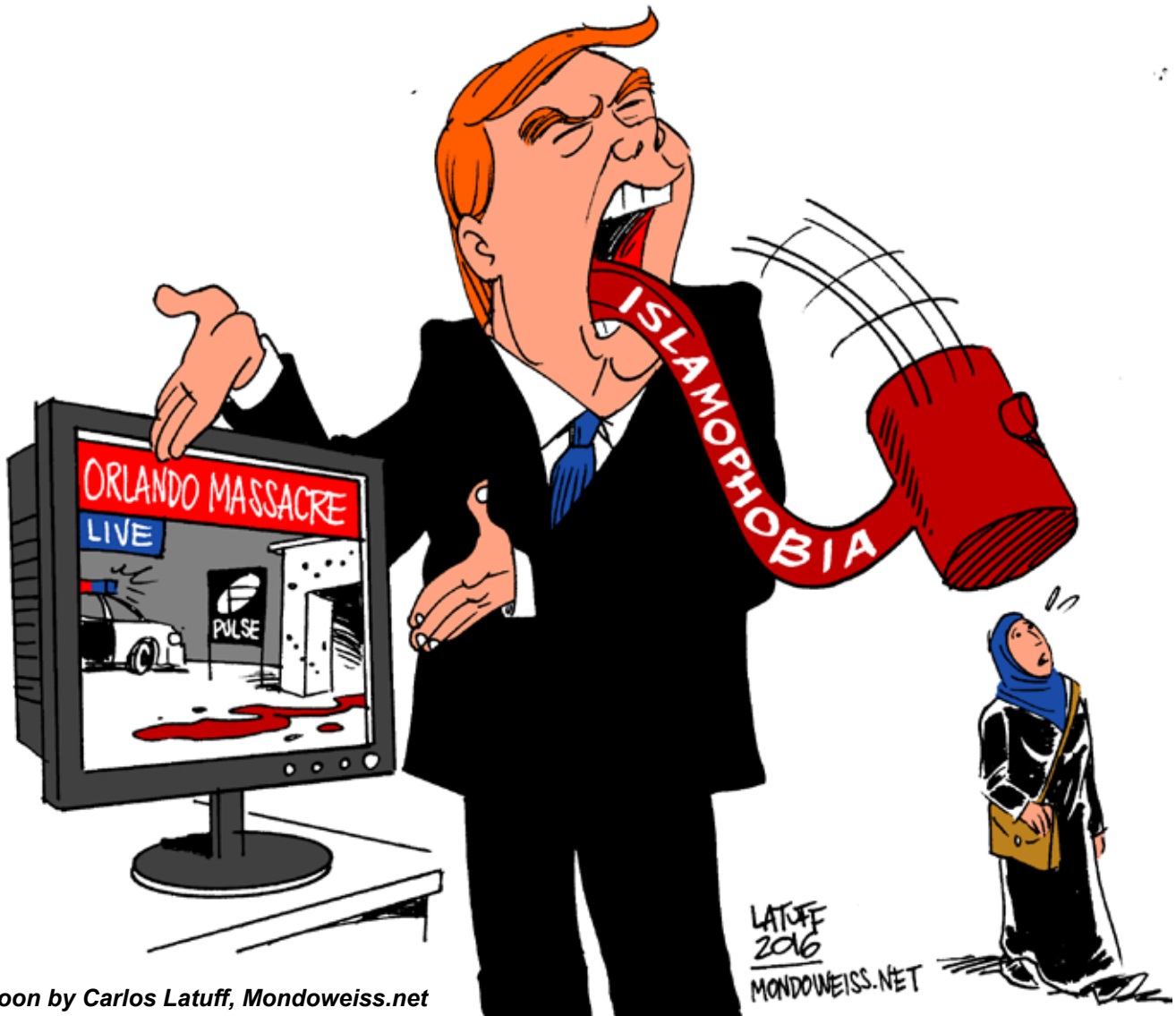




REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

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ONE WORLD - ONE STRUGGLE - ONE REVOLUTION



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff, Mondoweiss.net

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The State of the Class Struggle

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World Perspectives 2017:

**The Struggle against the Reactionary Offensive
in the Era of Trumpism (Part 2)**

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World Perspectives 2017: The Struggle against the Reactionary Offensive in the Era of Trumpism (Part 2)

Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries

Document of the International Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, 18 December 2016

IV. THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE STATE OF THE ARAB REVOLUTION

67. In the following sections we will give a brief overview of the key political issues in the different regions of the world and the main tasks for the international class struggle in each region. The new Revolutionary World Party can *only* be successfully built if it is *not* content to merely combine purely descriptive surveys of political developments while paying lip service to some abstract phrases about socialism – this being precisely the behavior typical of weak-minded centrism. No, in order to build a serious organization – let alone a party – it is indispensable for revolutionaries to find a correct orientation towards the key events in the world class struggle and draw the necessary conclusions from them when formulating their tactics.

68. The Arab Revolution, the most important revolutionary process to have developed since the start of the new historic period in 2008, and still remains in a *process in a state of retreat* which the RCIT has already analyzed in past documents.⁵² Naturally, this retreat is *not* taking place along a straight line, but is a process replete with contradictory aspects. Nor, however, is this process irreversible. But in the current phase, there are clearly more defeats than advances.

69. The reasons for this development are clear. First, the uprising of the workers and peasants has met a determined campaign of annihilation being waged by much stronger enemies: the traditional ruling classes in the region which possess an oversized repressive apparatus, trained for decades, which was not successfully smashed in the first attempt. In addition, the Arab Revolution faces the opposition of literally *all* imperialist Great Powers – in particular the US, Russia, the EU and China. They all support the reactionary dictatorships like that of General al-Sisi in Egypt and the Gulf monarchies. And, in the case of Assad, Washington has already reconciled itself with his staying in power as the only realistic option to “restore law and order” in Syria. Second, the workers and oppressed started a revolutionary process but lacked a leadership which could drive the struggle forward to victory. The petty-bourgeois liberal forces remained isolated from the downtrodden masses and soon sought to become servants of the imperialist powers and assume the guise of slightly “reformed” versions of the old ruling class (like the old Ben Ali clique in Tunisia led by the current President Beji Caid el-Sebsi). Bourgeois Islamists, like *Ennahda* in Tunisia or Morsi’s *al-Ikhwan* in Egypt, also

Order from our contact adress past issues of the RCIT’s Journal Revolutionary Communism!

The image shows five covers of the journal 'Revolutionary Communism' from the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT). The covers are for issues No. 5 (September 2012), No. 4 (August 2012), No. 3 (June 2012), No. 2 (January 2012), and an issue from September 2011. Each cover features a red hammer and sickle logo and the text 'WORKERS AND OPPRESSED UNITE'. The headlines on the covers are:

- Issue No. 5: **South Africa: The Miners fight, ANC/SACP betrays**
- Issue No. 4: **China as an imperialist power: background, nuances and tactics**
- Issue No. 3: **UK: Elections, United Workers' Government**
- Issue No. 2: **Occupation Movement and Resistance in Pakistan**
- Issue No. 2: **General Strike in Greece**
- Issue No. 2: **plus: Occupation Movement, Fith International, Iran, Lybia, Israel...**
- September 2011: **Theses of the Arab Revolution**
- September 2011: **rising of the Poor in Britain**

Additional articles listed on the right side of the image include:

- plus: Theses on Migration
- Workers Struggle in Pakistan
- What We Stand For

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saved the rule of the capitalist class in the midst of the Arab Revolution by demobilizing the popular masses. And the petty-bourgeois populist Islamists usually led the popular struggles into a sectarian and guerrilla-elitist dead-end (e.g., *Jabhat al-Nusra* and *Ahrar al-Sham* in Syria). And, third, the international workers' movement has completely failed to deliver any meaningful support to the revolutionary masses in Syria. Most social democratic, Stalinist or centrist organizations either openly or covertly sympathize with the counterrevolution, or they take a neutral position towards this ongoing revolution.

70. *Syria* remains the key area of the Arab Revolution.⁵³ This is because (a) it is an ongoing revolutionary process, despite all the defeats and setbacks; and (b) it is in the focus of imperialist Great Powers US, EU and Russia as well as numerous regional powers (Turkey, Iran, Saudi-Arabia, etc.). Unfortunately the revolutionary masses have recently experienced a number of defeats. In particular, they lost Daraya, a suburb of Damascus, and most recently Aleppo – the Syrian people's Stalingrad – where Assad's forces and the Russia air force have slaughtered them merciless. Assad conquest of Aleppo might possibly lead to another massacre like that in Srebrenica in Bosnia in 1995. The loss of Aleppo represents a significant defeat for the Syrian people. It will probably strongly encourage the efforts of the Great Powers to finally liquidate the revolutionary process.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, it would be wrong to assume that the revolution is over. The fact remains that, while the rebels continue to enjoy popular support, the Assad regime can only continue the war because of massive military and financial assistance by Russian imperialism, the Iranian regime and Hezbollah. Iran officially announced in late November, 2016 that more than 1,000 of its soldiers have already died in Syria.⁵⁵ From this one can conclude that there must be tens of thousands of soldiers fighting in Iranian militias in Syria. Iranian sources themselves have admitted that 20,000 Shia fighters alone from Afghanistan are engaged in Syria on behalf of Assad.⁵⁶ The fact is that regular Syrian soldiers constitute only a minority of Assad's forces, and they are highly demoralized. According to Mikhail Khodarenok, a retired Russian general, it is the foreign troops and private militias who are doing most of the fighting, while Assad's official army mans checkpoints to extort bribes from the population. The general comments on *Gazeta.ru*: "It would be easier to disband the Syrian army and recruit a new one."⁵⁷

71. The RCIT affirms its support for the ongoing Syrian Revolution, despite the terrible defeat in Aleppo, along with our hostility towards all Great Powers and lesser, regional powers who all share the desire to liquidate the Syrian Revolution. However, to persevere and to revitalize the revolution, the workers and peasants must draw the lessons of past defeats. Amongst the most important lessons are:

- * *No trust in and no collaboration with any Great Power!*
- * *No to sectarianism! For multi-religious and multi-national unity in the struggle against the Assad dictatorship! For full national self-determination for all national and ethnic minorities!*
- * *No trust in the official rebel leaderships!*
- * *For the formation of popular councils and popular militias!*
- * *The international workers movement must rally to support the Syrian Revolution! For a workers aid campaign for the Syrian people – as it was done in solidarity with the Bosnian people in*

1992-95!

* *The international workers movement must organize a campaign to boycott the regime of Bashar al-Assad and his capitalist business friends! For workers actions against the imperialist forces attacking the Syrian people!*

* *Open the Borders for the Syrian Refugees!*

* *Most of all: For the building of a revolutionary party in Syria as part of a new revolutionary International!*

72. General al-Sisi's dictatorship in *Egypt* continues to brutally suppress the Islamist-led opposition. However, the regime is constantly losing support even among the layers which initially lent support to the coup – the liberal urban middle class. Cairo's decision to sell two islands in the Red Sea to its main backer – Saudi Arabia – has resulted in widespread protest among all layers of the society. However, fundamental problems in the struggle against the regime remain, as the leadership of the trade unions has been corrupted by the regime, the bourgeois leadership of *al-Ikhwan* – that is, that which has not been killed or imprisoned – continues to preach passive resistance, and its youthful supporters increasingly turns towards desperate street demonstrations or armed resistance.

73. However, it is important to bear in mind the unevenness of the revolutionary process in the Arab world. The *Yemeni people* are successfully continuing their just resistance against the massive invasion by foreign forces led by Saudi Arabia, despite cruel massacres by the latter like the bombing of a hall in which a funeral service was taking place, killing at least 140 and wounding 525.⁵⁸ Given the geostrategic importance of Yemen for world trade – the Yemeni war could easily escalate and draw in the imperialist Great Powers. In fact, there has already been a limited military confrontation between the Houthi rebels and the US Navy.⁵⁹

74. Similarly, there has been an upswing of mass protests in *Morocco* since the death of Mouhcine Fikri. These mass demonstrations are an important development, as this kingdom has been one of the stable bourgeois regimes in the region until now after a relatively short period of protests in the spring of 2011.⁶⁰

75. In *Turkey*, Erdoğan is increasing his repression of the Kurdish people as well as that of the opposition in general. In this way he has transformed a successful mass mobilization against the attempted reactionary coup d'état on 15 July into a counterrevolutionary attempt to create a Bonapartist regime. At the same time, the regime is trying to expand its influence in the region by military intrusions, both in Syria and in Turkey. In this, Erdoğan is helped by the accelerating rivalry between the imperialist powers which allows the regime to make itself less dependent on the US by moving closer to Russia. Revolutionaries continue to oppose all attempts of the Erdoğan regime to build a Bonapartist regime, but without lending any support to pro-coup elements like FETÖ, etc. Revolutionaries also continue to support the Kurdish people's struggle for national self-determination and the demand to liberate imprisoned HDP politicians and all other Kurdish activists.⁶¹

76. Let's finally deal with some arguments which some centrists have put forward in order to justify their neutral position in Syria or in other flash points of the Arab Revolution. Some adopt a defeatist position,

proclaiming that the Arab Revolution is already finished. To centrists of this ilk, we reply: There can be no doubt that the revolutionary masses suffered a series of defeats. But the revolution is not over as is demonstrated by the ongoing civil wars – albeit under worse conditions – in Syria, Libya and Yemen, as well as by the upswing of mass protests in Morocco in October and November of 2016 and in Tunisia in January of this year.⁶² Revolutionaries don't leave the battlefield before the masses do, but only after the latter have been defeated! Furthermore, it is worth reminding these defeatists that, historically, various revolutionary processes have faced ups and downs. The Spanish Revolution, which began in 1931 with the overthrow of the monarchy, suffered a terrible defeat in October 1934 with the crushing of the insurrection by Asturian miners. However, the revolution experienced another surge forward after General Franco's coup d'état in July 1936, but again suffered a bloody defeat with the May 1937 Stalinist counterrevolution in Barcelona. And even then, the revolutionary process continued until 1939, when Franco won the civil war and conquered all of Spain. Revolutionaries continued to support the Spanish Revolution from its beginning to its end despite all the setbacks and despite the counterrevolutionary efforts of Stalinism and social democracy. Similarly, the RCIT – in contrast to fickle centrists – will *not* abandon the workers and oppressed struggling against reactionary dictatorships and Great Power aggression!

77. Stalinists and some centrists proclaim that the Syrian rebels have, for years, been agents of US imperialism.⁶³ Of course, they could never show any serious evidence for this. As a matter of fact, the Americans indeed *tried* to recruit some rebels and build forces under their control. But these groups remained very small and were quickly disarmed and dissolved by the Islamist rebels.⁶⁴ One only needs to examine some basic facts: if the Syrian rebels were agents of the US, why has the US put the most important organizations like *Jabhat al-Nusra* on its list of "terrorist organizations"?! Why do they kill their leaders?! Why not send them modern MANPAD weapons to bring down the Syrian and Russian aircraft bombing them every day?! Why do they stand aside when Assad and Putin slaughter the people of Aleppo day after day, week after week?! The logic of these Stalinists and centrists resembles that of their intellectual mentor who organized the Moscow trials in 1936-38 and who accused the Trotskyists and all other opponents of being "agents of Hitler"!

78. Furthermore one cannot fail to take note of the following absurdity: the Stalinists and centrist left repeatedly denounce the Arab Revolution as puppets of US imperialism, while at the same time uncritically praising the Kurdish Peshmerga. However, if there *is* a force in Syria and Iraq which could be described as "US agents," it is precisely the fighters of Mustafa Barzani and the PKK militias who operate alongside hundreds of US "military advisers" and in close collaboration with the US air force! This only demonstrates that the Stalinists and centrists themselves don't even take seriously their own allegations that the Syrian rebels are "US agents."

79. Another favorite arguments of numerous centrists against support for the Syrian Revolution – and the Arab Revolution as a whole – goes as follows: how can this be a democratic revolution if its leadership is dominated

by Islamists who advocate an anti-democratic program? To this we reply the following: Marxists – in contrast to petty-bourgeois centrists – characterize a revolutionary process as "democratic" *not* based on the specific ideology of its leadership. Not the ideology of the leadership, but *objective causes and the social forces driving* a given process of political struggle are the decisive factors when determining the character of a mass struggle. The Berbers in Northern Africa, who fought under the leadership of Mohammed Abd al-Karim against Spanish and French imperialism in 1921-26, did so in the name of Islam, and were fighting against "the infidels." During those years, Al-Karim built a state based on a strict interpretation of Sharia law. The rebels also committed not a few massacres against their opponents. This, however, did not stop the Communist International from characterizing this struggle as "democratic," as *objectively* it was a national liberation struggle against imperialism. The Comintern waged a mass international solidarity campaign for the Berbers liberation struggle, including a one-day general strike in France in October 1925. They did the same in solidarity with the Syrian insurrection directed against the French occupation at that time. Yet another example is the brutal Mau Mau Uprising in Kenya against the British occupation forces and their local supporters in the 1950s. On the other hand, we do not consider the wars of US and European as "democratic," but as unjust and imperialist despite the fact that they are waged in the name of "democracy," and that there is indeed a bourgeois democracy in these countries. Neither do we consider China's plundering of Africa as "communist," but as imperialist despite the fact that the Communist Party's leadership in Beijing camouflages its policy with "Marxist-Leninist" phrases.

80. We note in passing what has repeatedly happened in history when uprisings for goals which are part of the program of a democratic revolution took place under the cover of religious slogans. One need not go back as far as the *Zanj Slaves Rebellion* against the Abbasid Caliphate or Thomas Münzers' movement during the *Great Peasant Uprising* of 1525 in Germany. Likewise, the *Taiping Heavenly Kingdom* in China or various Islamic anti-colonial rebellions in the 20th century took place under religious slogans. However, this religious garb did not prevent the classic Marxist leaders from considering these movements as *historically progressive* and *democratic* in their social content.

81. No, Marxists do *not* consider a struggle as just and democratic (or unjust and anti-democratic) because of the specific ideology under which it is waged. Instead, the RCIT characterizes such struggles on the basis of the *class forces involved and their objective goals*. Whenever there is a popular uprising against the ruling capitalist class, the struggle has a progressive and democratic character irrespective of the specific ideology of its leadership. When a Great Power wages a war against an oppressed people, it is reactionary and imperialistic, irrespective of the specific ideology by which these powers try to justify it.

82. We conclude this chapter by re-emphasising that the entire process of the Arab Revolution, with all its failures and defeats, cannot be understood other than as a resounding crying out for a workers' party completely independent of all ruling classes and Great Powers or, in other words, a revolutionary party. Such a party can *only*

be forged by means of undertaking a combined struggle which participates both in the ongoing popular rebellions against dictatorships and imperialist aggression on the one hand, while simultaneously waging political and ideological battles against the various petty-bourgeois leaderships on the other. Naturally, the conditions for building a revolutionary party vary greatly in different countries. In some countries, revolutionaries can operate under conditions of relative legality (e.g., Tunisia, Morocco or Lebanon), while in other countries they face severe repression (e.g., Egypt or the Gulf monarchies) or even face the extreme conditions of civil war (Syria, Yemen, Libya). Under all conditions, revolutionaries should focus on advancing the independent organizations of the working class and oppressed (e.g., trade unions, factory

committees, councils of action, workers' and popular militias, workers' parties). However, such a struggle for working class independence cannot and must not take place *outside* of the existing mass organizations but rather *inside* them in order to break a sector of the workers and oppressed away from the corrupted leaderships.

Daesh, Imperialism and the Revolutionary Struggle

83. A correct Marxist understanding of Daesh is of crucial importance in the present period, as it is a central issue both in the Arab world as well as in imperialist countries where the ruling class uses it as a means to justify increasing state repression at home and military aggressions abroad. Contrary to the "*professional confusionists of centrism*" who operate with superficial petty-bourgeois idealist methods, Marxists have to approach such issues in a dialectical and materialistic way, focusing on the inner contradictions of the classes involved in the political process.

84. The emergence of such reactionary forces like the Salafi-Takfiri *Daesh* has been the *product of demoralization* among sectors of the youth and the rural poor resulting from the defeats of the Arab Revolution. In addition, the intensifying Islamophobic racism and the dire outlook for Muslim migrant youth in the imperialist metropolises are pushing a sector of them into the arms of Daesh. Furthermore, the imperialist war-drive in Syria and Iraq under the banner of "War against IS" and the massive state repression (Muslim youth in Europe are thrown into prison for only sharing a video of Daesh on Facebook!) increase the credibility of Daesh in the eyes of some Muslims as a "revolutionary" and "anti-imperialist" force. These factors – defeats and demoralization, the intensifying Islamophobia, and the imperialist war and repression – are the main sources of strength of Daesh, and *not* the supposedly secret support of US imperialism or Assad, as many silly leftists claim who replace Marxist political class analysis with obscure conspiracy theories.

85. Daesh's social composition is dominated by a coalition of sectors of the impoverished petty-bourgeois intelligentsia and the urban and rural poor. Its policy represents a strange combination of shades of ideological adherence to the struggle against the "infidel" dictators – the driving force of the Arab Revolution – with unlimited counter-revolutionary (one could even say "fascistic") hatred and repression against each and every form of democratic rights and popular self-governance, in fact against all non-Muslims and even all other strands of Muslims outside of their own sect. Where they establish power, it takes the form of an outright theocratic sectarian dictatorship – in fact its basis is a "deal" with the local bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie: While Daesh usurps complete political and ideological power and imposes its rules with terrorist might it ensures security for the owners of private property. Reports from Daesh-controlled territory show that the highly centralized character of Daesh's "Caliphate" and the qualitatively less corrupt nature of the Daesh fighters (given their religious commitment) have created more security in public life for many people (provided they submit to Daesh's strict cultural rules) than this has been the case in areas controlled by Assad or the Bagdad government



Vienna (Austria): Rally in Solidarity with Aleppo on 19 December 2016

with all their highly corrupt and rivalling militias. The main desire of Daesh's leadership is to establish their small "Caliphate" (one could characterize this as an Islamist version of the Stalinist utopia of "socialism in one country"). Such a "Caliphate" represents a theocratic and terroristic dictatorship of a petty-bourgeois, Salafi-Takfiri elite on the basis of a capitalist economy (dominated by small property owners). Hence, Daesh's vision of a caliphate is nothing else than a dictatorship on the basis of keeping the capitalist property relations – in other words, precisely the opposite of the political freedom for which the workers and poor in Syria and Iraq are fighting.

86. Despite its (counter)-"revolutionary" rhetoric, this is basically a conservative project and from this flows the principal desire for accommodation with the ruling class by Daesh's leadership. This is, however, completely utopian, as the whole dynamic of the Arab Revolution, as well as the advancing counterrevolution, leaves no place for such a petty-bourgeois reactionary utopia.

87. Daesh is an outright and direct enemy of the working class, and must to be defeated by the workers and peasants of the region. Daesh needs to be driven out of every movement which resists imperialism. Its attacks on forces which are fighting against US-imperialism in Afghanistan, including the Taliban, demonstrate how urgent this task is.

88. However, it is important to understand the contradictory nature of Daesh in a dialectical way. It would be wrong to equate Daesh with such counterrevolutionary reactionary forces like the *Basij* militia in Iran, which is simply a tool of the ruling class which has held power for decades. Nor would it be correct to equate it with fascist forces like the UDF loyalists in Northern Ireland, which have their origins in the struggle to keep the British imperialist occupation and the sectarian privileges in place. Daesh neither represents an established ruling class or an imperialist power, but has emerged as a reactionary product of a revolutionary process.

89. In any conflict between the imperialist forces and Daesh, we say that the main enemies are the Great Powers (like the US, Russia and France). In such cases, we lend support to the military struggle of Daesh against the imperialist forces. However, at the same time it is crucial to denounce Daesh as counter-revolutionaries and to unmask their true nature. While in certain situations they might be forced to oppose the forces of imperialism, their program and their strategy can in no way be characterized as anti-imperialist. Furthermore, one cannot exclude the possibility that they seek negotiations with the Great Powers. The workers, peasants and poor of Syria and Iraq are the *only* force which can really defeat imperialism. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen all those rebel forces closely connected with the popular masses. Clearly, with the exception of situations involving direct confrontation between the imperialist forces and Daesh, the struggle against Daesh remains of primary importance.

90. In summary, Daesh represents an arch-reactionary, petty-bourgeois force based on the extremely sectarian Salafi-Takfiri ideology. It is an outright and direct enemy of the working class. However, we emphasize that the biggest murderer of the Syrian people is *not* Daesh but the Assad regime and their imperialist backers! We, therefore, strongly reject the imperialist, Stalinist and centrist myth

that the main character of the Syrian civil war is the war against Daesh. In fact, this is a subordinate element! Revolutionaries support the struggle of the Syrian rebels against Daesh (but certainly not the military campaign of Assad's mercenaries or of the Bagdad government). Likewise, we support the struggle of Kurdish rebels where they defend Kurdish territory, but not where they advance as lackeys of US and Russian imperialism (e.g., in their attempts to attack Raqqa). Hence, we reject the widespread uncritical praise for the petty-bourgeois nationalist YPG/PKK by most of the Stalinist and pseudo-"Trotskyist" left, as this organization is closely aligned with US and Russian forces, which have hundreds of their "military advisers" among its ranks. In fact, the Stalinist and centrist hype for the YPG/PKK leadership is nothing but a camouflaged adaption to imperialism.

91. Daesh's origins in the struggles against dictatorships, state repression in Europe, and the ongoing imperialist war-drive against, all help Daesh to gain some credibility and popularity among sectors of the impoverished layers. Revolutionaries in Europe should oppose the state repression being directed against the migrant youth. Likewise, revolutionaries should stand for the defeat of the Great Powers in any confrontation with Daesh. A defeat for the Great Powers at the hands even of such a reactionary force like Daesh would be a step forward for the global struggle against imperialism, and not a step backward. In contrast to the revisionists, we base our politics on Trotsky's position that Marxists even defend "fascists" against the "democratic" imperialists, As he wrote at the end of the 1930s: *"I will take the most simple and obvious example. In Brazil there now reigns a semi-fascist regime that every revolutionary can only view with hatred. Let us assume, however, that on the morrow England enters into a military conflict with Brazil. I ask you on whose side of the conflict will the working class be? I will answer for myself personally—in this case I will be on the side of "fascist" Brazil against "democratic" Great Britain. Why? Because in the conflict between them it will not be a question of democracy or fascism. If England should be victorious, she will put another fascist in Rio de Janeiro and will place double chains on Brazil. If Brazil on the contrary should be victorious, it will give a mighty impulse to national and democratic consciousness of the country and will lead to the overthrow of the Vargas dictatorship. The defeat of England will at the same time deliver a blow to British imperialism and will give an impulse to the revolutionary movement of the British proletariat. Truly, one must have an empty head to reduce world antagonisms and military conflicts to the struggle between fascism and democracy. Under all masks one must know how to distinguish exploiters, slave-owners, and robbers!"* ⁶⁵

V. CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE US AFTER TRUMP'S VICTORY

92. In the following chapter we will summarize the main findings of our pamphlet which we published after Trump's victory at the US presidential election. ⁶⁶ As we stated, the Trump administration will be the most reactionary government in the history of the US. Its ascent marks the beginning of a new political era for both the US and the world.

93. The election's outcome is an example of the undemocratic character of bourgeois democracy in general and of the US electoral system in particular. Trump "won" the election despite the fact that his rival, Hillary Clinton, received more than 2.5 million votes more than he did! In fact, Trump was elected to office by only slightly more than 1/4 of the US electorate.

94. The main reason Trump won was the collapse of working class support for the Democratic Party. While Trump received an amount of votes similar to that garnered by Republican candidates in the recent previous elections, many millions of workers, blacks and Latinos who, in the past, voted for the Democrats didn't vote because they were disgusted by the misery and repression which they continue to experience after 8 years of an Obama government; and for them, Clinton openly represented the interests of Wall Street and the super-rich.

95. While the majority of the lower and middle strata of the working class, of the blacks and Latinos, who went to the polls, voted for Clinton, the majority of better paid workers, the middle class and the bourgeoisie slightly favored Trump. Worryingly, Trump managed to win the support of sectors of the white working class on the basis of a program of chauvinism.

96. The Trump administration being formed and which will assume power on January 20, represents a thoroughly reactionary government. Given its electoral campaign and its initial announcements, it stands for: (a) White chauvinism, Islamophobia (the call to ban Muslims for entering the US, etc.), a policy of anti-immigration (building a wall along the Mexican border, mass

deportation of undocumented migrants, etc.); (b) Economic protectionism (a 45% tariff for Chinese imports, rejection of free trade agreements like TPP, NAFTA and TTIP, pulling out of the WTO, etc.); (c) Neoliberal financial liberalization (e.g., reducing corporation taxes from the current 35% to 15%; eliminating Wall Street regulation, including the rescinding of the Dodd Frank Wall Street reform - the anti-bank bailout regulation put into place after the 2008-2009 financial crisis); (d) Immediate cancellation of the Climate Change Accord, based on Trump's disingenuous charge that climate change "is a myth created by the Chinese to harm American manufacturing"; (e) Deep attacks against social and health care programs (the plan to abolish Obamacare, etc.); (f) Attacks on women's rights like abortion; (g) Calls to reduce US obligations arising from long-term alliances with other states (e.g., demanding from the EU, Japan and South Korea to raise their defense budgets so that the US can reduce its expenditures defending them; loosening or even abolishing NATO); (h) Calls for more military aggression against "Islamic terrorists."

97. The Trump administration will be basically an unstable coalition of three main groups: (a) the Trump clan itself, which lacks strong political beliefs; (b) the very-right-wing conservative Republicans (including Christian evangelical fundamentalists and Tea-Party populists); and (c) the white supremacist alt-right movement.

98. This administration is likely to prove to be an unstable government, as it lacks the support of the majority of all important classes/layers (monopoly bourgeoisie, urban middle class, lower and middle strata of the working class). While the monopoly capitalists certainly are in favor of the proposed radical cuts in corporate taxes, they fear Trump's declared protectionist measures and the end of stable alliances with the EU. The administration's racist and social attacks will likely provoke the mass resistance of workers and oppressed. Likewise, it can face important setbacks by engaging in risky foreign military adventures. A governmental crisis is therefore a realistic possibility.



NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

The Origins of the Jews

By Yossi Schwartz, July 2015

Chapter I: What are the origins of the Jews?

Chapter II: The Rise of Anti-Semitism

Chapter III: Anti-Semitism and Zionism

Chapter IV: The Russian Revolution:

Bolshevism, the Bund, and Stalinism

99. The spontaneous mass protests which arose, after Trump's victory, under the slogan "Not My President" and which seem to be culminating in a day of mass protests on 20 January 2017, the day Trump is to be inaugurated are a positive harbinger for the future. This movement includes, in particular, many youth, migrants and blacks, and has emerged in nearly all big metropolises throughout the country. It has already resulted in a number of schools, universities and even entire cities declaring themselves as "sanctuaries" for migrants threatened with deportation. While it remains to be seen how many of these plans will in fact be implemented by the relevant local authorities, they are certainly an encouraging expression of mass solidarity with migrants and against the reactionary Trump administration.

100. Another recent encouraging result for the class struggle is the remarkable success of the mass protests at Standing Rock in North Dakota against the Dakota Access Pipeline, owned by Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners LP. This \$3.8bn project was planned to run under Lake Oahe, a reservoir of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe, and threatened to contaminate the water supply and to damage sacred tribal lands. The refusal of the army to give a permit for this project is a victory for the joint protest of the Native Americans and climate activists that was conducted for several months. However, there is a clear danger that the new Trump administration will overrule this decision.

101. Revolutionaries in the US must emphasize the lesson of Trump's victory. The most important one is that the Democratic Party is *not*, has *never* been and will *never* be a party serving the interest of the workers and oppressed. Hence, revolutionaries must not lend support to left-bourgeois figures like Bernie Sanders and Elisabeth Warren, who serve as a left fig leaf covering the nakedness of the Democratic Party. Therefore, forces like the CPUSA, which called to vote for Hillary Clinton, or SAIt (the CWI section) who campaigned for Sanders, objectively acted as supporters for one of the two main parties of US imperialism. The later support by the ISO (a group in the Cliffite tradition) and SAIt for the Green Party of Jill Stein – a petty-bourgeois party with no connection with the workers and oppressed – was similarly an irreconcilable contradiction with the principle of working class independence.

102. Instead the strategic task of revolutionaries in the US is to break the trade unions and the mass organizations of the blacks and Latinos away from the Democratic Party and to advance the formation of a *Multi-National Workers Party*. Socialists should advocate a *transitional program* – combining immediate economic and democratic demands with the goal of the expropriation of the capitalist class and the creation of a workers' government – for such a party, without making its adoption a precondition for participation.

Books of the RCIT

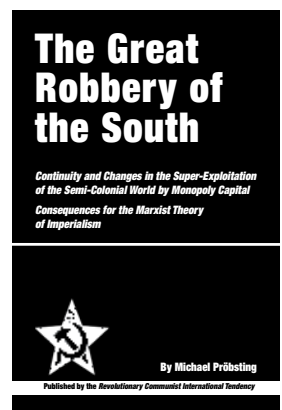
Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *THE GREAT ROBBERY OF THE SOUTH*. The book's subtitle is: *Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism*. The book is in English-language. It has 15 chapters, 448 pages and includes 139 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who is the International Secretary of the RCIT.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting analyses the super-exploitation and oppression of the semi-colonial world (often referred to as the "Third World") by the imperialist powers and monopolies. He shows that the relationship between the small minority of rich capitalist countries and the huge majority of mankind living in the semi-colonial world forms one of the most important elements of the imperialist world system we are living in. The Great Robbery of the South shows that the past decades have been a complete confirmation of the validity of Lenin's theory of imperialism and its programmatic conclusions. *The Great Robbery of the South* demonstrates the important changes in the relationship between the imperialist and the semi-colonial countries. Using comprehensive material (including 139 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that never before

has such a big share of the world capitalist value been produced in the South. Never before have the imperialist monopolies been so dependent on the super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world. Never before has migrant labor from the semi-colonial world played such a significant role for the capitalist value production in the imperialist countries. Never before has the huge majority of the world working class lived in the South – outside of the old imperialist metropolises.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting argues that a correct understanding of the nature of imperialism as well as of the program of permanent revolution which includes the tactics of consistent anti-imperialism is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future. Order your copy NOW! \$20 / £13 / €15 plus p+p (21\$ for US and international, £9 for UK, €10 for Europe)



VI. THE REACTIONARY OFFENSIVE OF THE RULING CLASS AND THE RESISTANCE IN LATIN AMERICA

103. Trump's policy of anti-immigration chauvinism and protectionism will also have dramatic consequences for semi-colonial countries, in particular for Latin America. His plans for mass deportation of undocumented migrants, the strengthening of the migration control policy and the extension and expanding of a wall along the southern US border with Mexico,⁶⁷ and the renegotiation or even abolition of NAFTA will affect these countries in several ways.

104. Firstly, such steps will result in massive loss of remittances sent by migrants to their families in their countries of origin. In 2013, for example, migrants from Mexico in the US sent more than \$23 billion to their families at home. Secondly, mass deportations of migrants back to Mexico will create additional burdens on that country, as these millions of people will have to be looked after by the Mexican state. It will also affect other Latin American countries, as the Mexican government will use the forced return of its own citizens as an excuse to deport migrants from other countries who have settled in Mexico itself.

105. Regardless of whether Trump abolishes or renegotiates NAFTA, the terms of trade for Mexico in relation to the US will certainly worsen. Unsurprisingly, Trump's victory has already led to a substantial devaluation of the Mexican *peso*. In addition, Trump's victory is likely to politically damage the conservative Mexican government of Enrique Peña Nieto. Peña already welcomed Trump in September, during the election campaign, which infuriated many people in his country. The PRI government has already become unpopular and his sympathies for Trump will only increase this.

106. It is crucial to defend the rights of migrants – both of the Latinos in the US as well as of the Central American migrants living in Mexico. Revolutionaries have to organize the struggle on both sides of the border in order to smash the wall, and to cancel the NAFTA along with other imperialist trades and security projects (ASPAN, Plan Mérida). They should work to forge close links between the workers and oppressed from both Mexico and the US. One opportunity for this in the near future will be the organization of coordinated mass protests against the inauguration of Trump on 20th January.

107. The coup d'état against Brazil's popular front government of Dilma Rousseff and the establishment of the Temer government reflected an advance of the reactionary right-wing forces. The Temer government has already announced a number of outright reactionary attacks on the workers and oppressed – including attacks involving austerity measures and against labor rights, education and democratic rights. However, the hard-line conservative forces – extending from the PSDB to outright fascist forces – are not satisfied with these measures and are determined to go further.

108. At the same time there have been a number of mass protests against the Temer government. All this gives the government a rather weak and instable character

as it is attacked both from the left as well as from the right. Revolutionaries in Brazil should mobilize for an unlimited general strike against the pro-austerity policies of the putschist regime. They should call for the setting up of action committees in factories, unions, neighborhoods, slums and outlying regions. The struggle to defend democratic rights should include the convocation of a national constituent assembly and – as the overriding task – the formation of a workers' government in alliance with the peasants, urban poor and landless.

109. The continental ascent of reactionary forces also has led to an acceleration of the offensive of the right-wing opposition alliance, MUD, against the Maduro government in Venezuela. There can be no doubt that, should MUD come to power, they will launch a counterrevolutionary offensive aiming to liquidate all the, albeit limited, social and democratic reforms that have been achieved since 1999. However, revolutionaries point out that the bourgeois-populist government of Chavez and, since his death, Maduro himself, has always worked to maintain capitalist property relations in the country. Furthermore, Maduro's government is constantly looking for compromises with the right-wing opposition instead of taking serious steps in the interest of the working class.

110. The strategic task in all these countries is to *break up the popular fronts* which bind trade unions, other workers organizations, as well as organizations of the poor peasants, to petty-bourgeois or outright bourgeois forces. (e.g., the alliance of the PT, CUT and MST with the PMDB in Brazil, the alliance of UNT and other mass organizations with the Chavista PSUV, MORENA in Mexico, the alliance of the trade unions with the Kirchnerist party in Argentina, etc.). Applying the *united front tactic* to these mass organizations in the struggle against the reactionary offensive of the right wing forces and for social and democratic reforms, revolutionaries call upon them, as well as upon all other progressive mass organizations, to fight for an independent Workers' Party which would organize an energetic struggle in defense of the popular masses and against the bourgeoisie. We militants of the RCIT would propose a revolutionary program of action based on the transitional method for such a party, however, without making its adoption as a precondition for our participation.

111. The death of Fidel Castro represents the symbolic end of a period in Cuba's modern history. However, contrary to the Stalinist song of praises for Castro's regime, Marxists strictly distinguish two things: On the one hand, our appreciation of the Cuban Revolution in the late 1950s and early 1960s and the social and economic gains of the Revolution and, it follows, our unconditional defense of the country against sanctions and the aggression of US imperialism; on the other hand, Marxists opposed the Stalinist regime and stood for a political revolution by the working class. Furthermore, revolutionaries also recognize that, in the past years, the regime led the country towards

the restoration of capitalism – a process which went hand in hand with the advance of Chinese capital in Cuba, as well as the reconciliation process between Havana and Washington.⁶⁸

112. In *Columbia* President Juan Manuel Santos finally succeeded in signing a peace agreement with the petty-bourgeois guerrilla movement FARC. The agreement was initially rejected in a referendum because of the resistance of the ultra right-wing conservative forces around former president Uribe. Marxists have always criticized the guerrilla strategy as advocated by FARC or similar, petty-bourgeois nationalist rebel movements like the EPL. This strategy has always constituted a dead-end as it isolates militant fighters from the working class and the rural poor. Despite this criticism, revolutionaries have always supported guerrillas in any conflict with the army and the right-wing death squads. The peace agreement cannot be supported by revolutionaries, as it effectively means the incorporation of the FARC leaders into the bourgeois-parliamentary system, the disarmament of the militants, and most likely a weakening of the forces fighting for the interests of the working class and poor peasants. This was so in the case of similar “peace processes” like that in El Salvador.

113. One of the most encouraging recent phenomena in several Latin America countries has been the *mass demonstrations against violence against women*. On the backdrop of a series of rapes and murders of women (*feminicide*) – in Mexico 6 women are killed every day! – a mass movement recently emerged under the slogans “*Ni Una Menos*” and “*Ni una muerta más*” (“Not one more female death”). This has resulted in huge marches of hundreds of thousands of women (and men supporting the cause) in Argentina as well as Mexico, Peru, El Salvador, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. Revolutionaries unconditionally support these mass movements. They denounce the governments’ attempts to control and incorporate them. Contrary to the perspective of petty-bourgeois feminists, who currently dominate these movements, revolutionaries advocate the construction of a *revolutionary working class women’s movement* and of *self-defense units dominated and controlled by women*. Instead of trusting the system of bourgeois state justice, revolutionaries advocate the formation of *workers’ tribunals* which should be nominated by the workers’ movement, and especially by the proletarian women’s movement.⁶⁹

New Book of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Marxism and the United Front Tactic Today

The Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony in the Liberation Movement and the United Front Tactic Today.

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – MARXISM AND THE UNITED FRONT TACTIC TODAY. The book’s subtitle is: The Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony in the Liberation Movement and the United Front Tactic Today. On the Application of the Marxist United Front Tactic in Semi-Colonial and Imperialist Countries in the Present Period. It contains eight chapters plus an appendix (172 pages) and includes 9 tables and 5 figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

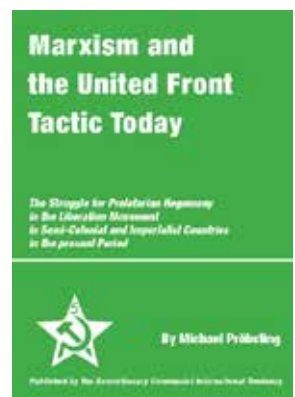
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

The united front tactic is a crucial instrument for revolutionaries under today’s circumstances in which the mass organizations of the working class and the oppressed are dominated by social democratic, Stalinist and petty-bourgeois-populist forces.

The purpose of this document is both to summarize the main ideas of the Marxist united front tactic while at the same time explaining its development and modification which have become necessary due to political changes which have transpired in the

working class liberation movement since the tactic’s original formulation.

In this book we initially summarize the main characteristics of the united front tactic and elaborate the approach of the Marxist classics to this issue. We then outline important social developments in the working class and the popular masses as well as in their political formations in recent decades. From there we will discuss how the united front tactic should be applied in light of a number of new developments (the rise of petty-bourgeois populist parties, the decline of the classic reformist parties, the role of national minorities and migrants in imperialist countries, etc.). The eight chapters of the book are accompanied by nine tables and five figures.



VII. IMPERIALIST INTERFERENCE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY IN SUB-SAHARA AFRICA

114. Africa – the fastest growing continent economically as well as in terms of population – comes increasingly into the focus of the imperialist Great Powers. The Western imperialist powers – in particular the US and France – are increasingly sending troops to the continent and to expand their military presence. They are already intervening with the deadly drone programs in several countries. China has become one of the biggest foreign investors in recent years and has sent, for the first time, “peace-keeping” troops to South Sudan.

115. In the last two decades *Ethiopia* has become one of the most important local allies of the imperialist powers. The dictatorship of Hailemariam Desalegn has created fertile conditions for multi-national corporations – many of Chinese origin – to buy up land and to build factories in order to super-exploit the cheap labor force of the country. Furthermore, the regime has sent thousands of soldiers to Somalia as an occupation force, to secure the country on behalf of the Great Powers against the rebellion led by Al-Shabaab. However, the regime is currently facing a popular domestic uprising which has led to many demonstrations and violent clashes with the police resulting in hundreds of dead. Desalegn was forced to declare the state of emergency in order to crush the resistance. He has also had to begin a process of bringing back his troops from Somalia.⁷⁰ Revolutionaries fully support the mass protests against the dictatorship and the fight for a government of the workers and poor peasants which will expropriate the bourgeoisie and lead the country out of its domination by the imperialist Great Powers.

116. The popular uprising in Ethiopia has tremendous implications for the civil war in *Somalia* itself. Since 2007, the occupation forces – called “*African Union Mission to Somalia*” (AMISOM), with more than 20,000 troops – have been able to slowly push back the petty-bourgeois Islamist *Al-Shabaab* militia. This foreign intervention against the Somali people has always been supported by US drones as well as covertly acting US and French Special Forces. However, Al-Shabaab has held substantial areas of the country and has retained popular support. Since the beginning of the withdrawal of the Ethiopian troops, Al-Shabaab is again advancing and expanding its influence. If their advance continues, it is quite possible that the Great Powers will consider a direct military intervention (as the US already did in 1992/93 which resulted in a humiliating defeat, depicted in the movie “*Black Hawk Down*”). In all conflicts between the Islamist *Al-Shabaab* militia and the imperialist forces and their local allies, revolutionaries stand for the defeat of the latter, while giving no political support to the Islamists.

117. *South Africa* continues to experience a political crisis as the Zuma government, a popular front led by the ANC in alliance with the Communist Party and the

COSATU trade union. The government faces massive protests both on the streets as well as inside the ANC itself. As a result, there have been important mass protests by students in defense of free education. A number of trade unions – among them the biggest single union NUMSA (metal workers) – have split from COSATU and are discussing the formation of a new political force to the left of the ANC. In recent local elections, the ANC lost tremendous support while the *Economic Freedom Fighters* of Julius Malema – a petty-bourgeois-populist party which emerged out of a split from the ANC youth organization – achieved electoral gains. The most important task for revolutionaries in South Africa is to win over the trade unions and other mass organizations for the creation of a *Mass Workers Party*. Against the Stalinist-reformist perspective of the NUMSA leadership, revolutionaries will propose a program of action based on the transitional method for such a party, without making its adoption a precondition for participation.

118. The Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe also faces a new upsurge of protests. The country is in the midst of a deep economic crisis characterized by mass impoverishment and an unemployment rate of 85%. This is, to a large degree, the result of the economic sanctions which have been imposed by US and EU imperialism, which are demanding the rescinding of the limited land reform which was undertaken in Zimbabwe and, effectively, want to replace the Mugabe regime with a more loyal lackey. As a result, the Mugabe has aligned himself closely with China, which has become the biggest destination for the country’s exports. However, this must not deflect our attention from the fact that the Mugabe regime has stupendously enriched itself, is thoroughly corrupt and anti-democratic, and for many years has been willing to implement neoliberal programs of the IMF. Revolutionaries support the democratic protests of the people against the Mugabe regime, and call for a government of the workers and poor peasants. At the same time, we call for an immediate end of Western sanctions against Zimbabwe, and oppose any interference of the “Orange Revolution” type by Western powers.

VIII. EUROPE IN THE ERA OF CHAUVINISM, MILITARIZATION AND BREXIT

119. As we have already elaborated in past documents, the accelerating economic and political contradictions of the new historic period are increasingly pushing the European Union to a point of “make it or break it.”⁷¹ The exacerbated rivalry between the Great Powers pushes the larger European imperialist powers to impel the creation of political and economic pan-European institutions. Such a deepening of the EU integration can only take place under the leadership of German imperialism in alliance with France. However, this would also mean the loss of sovereignty for the bourgeoisies of other European nations. In light of the deep social and economic crisis and the utter corruption of the official workers’ movement which uncritically supports the imperialist EU project, this has resulted in the rise of right-wing populist parties in most European countries. In Britain, UKIP has managed to win the referendum on Brexit. In France, the National Front is currently the most popular party, as is the FPÖ in Austria. In Germany, the AfD is also increasing its electoral support as is the Lega Nord in Italy.

120. One of two possible directions of development is possible for the EU: On the one hand, it can continue towards closer political, economic and military integration. This is obviously the desire of the majority of the monopoly bourgeoisie of the main European powers, as is indicated by the plans for the creation of a separate EU army – independent of the national armies. On the other hand, it is also possible that the dominant ruling class will fail in this integration. Britain might be already out of the EU, even though its ruling class is still trying to undermine the Brexit process. If Le Pen wins the presidential election in France in 2017, it is also difficult to imagine a successfully deepening of EU integration. In such a situation, it is possible that the EU in its present forms will be disbanded and replaced by a smaller version which would probably include Germany, the Benelux countries and some other European states.

121. The dynamics of this crisis is clearly accelerated by the obvious impotence of the imperialist EU as a political power. It is incapable of handle wars and crises next door. During the crisis in Syria and the Ukraine, the EU has had to leave the initiative to the US and Russia. Similarly, it has been incapable of handling the so-called “refugee crisis.”

122. Whatever the exact scenario will be, it is certain that Europe will undergo a fundamental political crisis in the next few years. Under such conditions, revolutionaries must, first of all raise the banner of working class solidarity with refugees, as well as that between migrant and domestic workers. They must oppose all steps towards the creation of a Fortress Europe and fight for *Open Borders* – contrary to the Stalinists and the CWI, which oppose such a perspective. Revolutionaries must fight for full equality of migrants (equal wages, full citizenship rights, right to use one’s native language in the education system and in public administration, etc.)⁷²

123. Furthermore, revolutionaries must call for an independent working class position and oppose, in the imperialist countries (like Britain), both imperialist-chauvinist positions. Their rallying cry must be: “*Neither for Brexit nor for the EU, but for an international working class struggle! For the United Socialist States of Europe!*” They must therefore fight against the Stalinist and centrist forces which advocate the imperialist nation state as a step forward, as an alternative to the EU (as do the CPB, the SPEW/CWI and the SWP/IST in Britain); But they must also fight against the Labour Party, social democrats, and centrists like the AWL and RF/L5I which advocate support for remaining in the imperialist EU.

124. *Italy* has been another flashpoint in the political crisis in Europe. The bourgeois-liberal Prime Minister Matteo Renzi tried to implement a constitutional reform, but lost the vote by a large margin in a popular referendum. The opposition against the constitutional reform was particularly strong among the low and middle strata of the proletariat, including many unemployed and youth. As a result, he resigned, which may lead to a prolonged crisis with a weakened PD-led government or to early election. Revolutionaries in Italy correctly called to vote *NO* in the recent referendum. Social democrats criticized the radical left for voting *NO*, and argued that the right-wing opposition also opposed the constitutional reform. However, their argument is completely incorrect. In cases where workers have to choose between two qualitatively equal reactionary options, revolutionaries advise to vote for neither of the two. This was, for example, the case in the Brexit referendum and in the 2016 presidential election in Austria where a bourgeois Green Party candidate stood against a right-wing populist. However, the Italian referendum was about an anti-democratic constitutional reform. The fact that the right-wing opposition supported the *NO* vote for tactical reasons (in order to weaken the Renzi government) is not reason for revolutionaries to change their own tactic. Similarly, revolutionaries will not change their support for protests against an austerity law by a liberal government, just because a right-wing opposition party might also oppose this law for opportunistic reasons.

125. In the coming period, it will be crucial for revolutionaries in Italy to fight for the CGIL to break with the bourgeois-liberal PD party and to advance the struggle for a new Workers’ Party. However, such a new Workers’ Party must *not* be created by orienting towards an opportunistic “unification of the left,” which would mean diplomatic maneuvers to bring together the petty-bourgeois left and the minor bureaucrats who failed to make a career in the PD. No, the struggle for such a party must be oriented towards the militant workers, the migrants and the fighting youth!

IX. RUSSIA: VICTORIOUS OUTCOME OF NATO'S COLD WAR

126. As we have noted on numerous occasions, there has been an acceleration of the rivalry between the Western Great powers and Russia, particularly around the civil war in the Ukraine following the conquest of power by the Western-supported, extreme right-wing opposition in February 2014. As a result, the US and EU imposed economic sanctions against Moscow, which in turn retaliated. It appears that this Cold War may come to an end in 2017. Leading circles in the West increasingly recognize that they have failed to bring the Putin regime to its knees, forcing him to give up the Crimea and the Donbass region. Today, an increasing number of European politicians advocate an end of the sanctions against Russia. Among them are the German foreign minister and soon to be president, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, as well as the currently leading contenders in the French presidential elections, François Fillon and Marie Le Pen. And US president-elect, Trump, also advocates reconciliation with Putin.

127. Not only did Russia succeed in withstanding the pressure from the Western Great Powers, but her foreign policy position was also improved by the recent victory of the pro-Russian politician Igor Dodon in the presidential election in Moldavia (running against a pro-EU candidate). In a similar fashion, the pro-Russian candidate Rumen Radev won the Bulgarian presidential election. All these developments amply confirm the RCIT's thesis that Russia has become an imperialist power capable of withstanding the combined pressure of US and EU imperialism. (As an aside, we note that – in contrast to many so-called "Trotskyists" – even Russian Stalinists like the *Russian Communist Workers' Party* are capable of recognize the imperialist nature of "their" state!⁷³)

128. Of course, the Western sanctions hurt the Russian economy. They pushed the Putin regime into a closer alliance with China – an alliance in which Russia plays the role of the junior partner. This alliance has led to a number of strategic economic treaties between Russia and China.

It also drove Moscow to diversify its economy, making it less dependent on imports. This has led, among other things, to some important changes in agriculture, but also to Sibur's construction of a huge, \$9.5 billion petrochemical facility in Tobolsk – the biggest constructed since the end of the USSR.

129. After the Minsk agreement between Russia and the EU in February 2015, the civil war in the Ukraine has been completely pacified. This, too, proves the analysis of the RCIT as correct, when we stated in the autumn of 2014 that the Donbass Republics – which initially represented an antifascist and progressive popular reaction to the reactionary developments in Kiev – had degenerated and become completely controlled and subordinated by Russian imperialism. As the last two years have demonstrated, the Donbass Republics can't act independently in any way, but are simply lackeys of Russian imperialism. These developments have disproven those Stalinists and centrists (e.g., the IMT, L5I) who proclaimed that the Donbass Republics continue to represent an independent, progressive factor in the class struggle. (However, these groups have recently become far more reticent given the clearly visible corruption and degeneration of the Donbass republics.)

130. Revolutionaries in Russia unequivocally oppose the chauvinistic opportunism of the official Communist Party – the KPRF – which is a purely parliamentary party that indirectly collaborates with Putin, and praises both the market and the "spiritual power" of the Russian Orthodox Church, while opposing immigration. Revolutionaries in Russia must support all efforts to build a new Workers' Party. Such a party will advocate primarily orienting the class struggle to the streets and the workplaces, instead of elections, and will intransigently fight against Russian imperialism which means, among other things, supporting the national liberation struggle of the Chechen people and the anti-Russian resistance of the Syrian rebels.

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*Written by Michael Pröbsting
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X. CHINA: STRENGTHENED AS A GREAT POWER BUT BEFORE A SERIOUS RECESSION

131. As we have elaborated above as well as in past documents, Chinese imperialism has been able to substantially increase its global position. However, this doesn't mean that it is free of internal contradictions. Quite the opposite. After the stock market crashed a year ago, the regime was only able to avoid a recession by resorting to a massive state-capitalist investment program. Furthermore, it has now imposed new restrictions on outbound foreign investments in an effort to curb capital outflows which put downward pressure on its currency, the Renminbi, and drains China's foreign exchange reserves.⁷⁴

132. The rapid increase of social inequality and the deplorable working conditions for most workers have resulted in an exponential increase in the number of workers' strikes. According to data from *China Labour Bulletin*, a Hong Kong-based rights group, there were 2,774 strikes and labor protests across the country in 2015 – more than the number which took place during the previous four years together.⁷⁵ As we have stated in the past, these struggles are focused on economic issues, the most common grievance in these protests has been unpaid wages. Naturally the Stalinist-capitalist regime tries to suppress this unrest as much as possible. One instrument for doing so is the ban of any independent trade union outside of the official *All-China Federation of Trade Unions* which is completely controlled by regime. Furthermore, there a number of clashes in smaller towns and villages have also taken place. For example, in the second half of 2016, repeated mass protests and street battles between villagers and the police occurred in Wukan, a village of 13,000 people, after a democratically elected local leader, Lin Zulian, was jailed by authorities on charges of corruption.⁷⁶

133. On the backdrop of a looming global Great Recession, which would have strong repercussions on China's economy and the growing domestic class struggle, Xi Jinping, who is both the country's president as well as the "Communist" Party's general secretary, is increasing his efforts to consolidate his grip on power. Since coming to power in 2012, Xi has launched a massive anti-corruption

campaign which led to the purge of numerous officials, military officers and state-sector business executives. He has also replaced a dozen provincial party chiefs with his own allies.⁷⁷

134. Xi's efforts to bolster his position as the unquestioned Bonapartist leader met with success when, in the the latest meeting of the Central Committee in October 2016, he was officially endorsed as the "*core of the party centre*." This will undoubtedly strengthen his position in the power struggle with Premier Li Keqiang.⁷⁸ While Xi is calling for "*stronger, better, bigger*" state corporations, with a central role for the Communist Party in their management, Li stresses the need to "*slim down*" state companies and to "*follow market rules*" in remaking them.⁷⁹ It is clear that the Stalinist-capitalist regime in Beijing is preparing for tough times ahead, including a slowing economy, mounting social and class tensions, and the accelerating rivalry with US imperialism.

135. Revolutionaries in China must fight for working class independence. While work inside the official trade union may be legitimate for tactical reasons, the goal must be to build unions which are independent of the regime. While supporting all struggles for elementary economic demands, as well as fundamental democratic rights, revolutionaries should advocate a program to unite these struggles on the basis of a transitional program. This means integrating slogans against the ongoing privatizations as well as for worker control in workplace struggles and combining the struggle for democratic rights with slogans like the call for a *constituent assembly*. Likewise, revolutionaries support the struggle for national self-determination for East Turkestan (which the Han chauvinists call Xinjiang) and Tibet. The goal must be to prepare the working class for the overthrow of the Stalinist-capitalist regime and the creation of a workers' government. Such a workers' government would renationalize the privatized sectors under workers' control, expropriate the super-rich, and smash the entire state bureaucratic apparatus.

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XI. THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN ASIA

136. *South Korea*, an imperialist state, is currently undergoing a major political crisis. Its president, Park Geun-hye, leader of the extremely conservative *Saenuri* party and daughter of the country's former dictator, who ruled between 1961 and 1979, has been involved in a major corruption scandal making her the country's most publically despised person. After a series of mass protests of up to one million participants, Park was suspended by the parliament and – depending of the decision of the constitutional court – may be impeached in the next three months. While revolutionaries obviously support these mass protests, they had to explain that corruption in South Korea is not the personal flaw of of President Park Geun-hye, but is systemic in a country dominated by the large *chaebols* – the huge monopoly capitalist conglomerates.

137. The reactionary offensive of the right-wing BJP government of *India* has provoked several important political conflicts. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push for greater privatization was met with a massive one-day general strike in which about 180 million workers participated. Another attack has been the governments' demonetization reform which removed all 500 and 1,000 rupee notes from circulation. This has lead to public outcry, as it is a frontal attack on India's poor who face enormous difficulties in exchanging their money at banks. Another important mass struggle in India is the protests of the Dalit – the lowest caste in the country – against their outright discrimination. In response, the Dalits have stopped picking up the carcasses of dead animals and cleaning the city's sewers. Furthermore, the killing of Burhan Wani, a guerilla leader in Kashmiri, by the Indian army has provoked the outbreak of another Intifada with the Kashmiri youth in the vanguard.⁸⁰ Revolutionaries in India must advocate the organization of the masses in action committees so that they can control their leadership and continue the struggle when the latter betray it. Furthermore, it is crucial to unite the struggle of the workers, the Dalit, women and the Muslim minority into a political struggle for a workers' government.

138. The mass unrest in Kashmir has provoked a skirmish along the border of *India and Pakistan*. The government in Delhi accuses Pakistan of lending financial and military support to guerilla organizations in Kashmir. As India's only province with a Muslim majority population, the Kashmiri people have fought for many years against the Indian occupation and for independence. Revolutionaries in India and Pakistan support the national liberation struggle of Kashmir, but oppose the war-mongering of both governments. In any war between the two states, revolutionaries in either country will take a defeatist position, calling for the defeat of the state in which they themselves live.

139. As mentioned above, the *Philippines'* new president, Rodrigo Duterte, has initiated a rupture in the decades-long status of the country as a loyal ally of US imperialism and has re-orientated the country towards closer collaboration with China. At the same time, Duterte is attempting to create a semi-Bonapartist rule

by launching a campaign of vicious reactionary killings against alleged drug-dealers and drug-addicts – modeled on his campaign of deploying extra-legal death squads against suspected drug dealers and Maoist guerillas when he was mayor of Davao City. Duterte also initiated peace negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), headed by Jose Maria Sison, and even unofficially offered the CPP cabinet posts. While revolutionaries do not join the hypocritical campaign of the West in ridiculing Duterte, they also reject the organic opportunism of the Maoists who have already expressed their willingness to join a government with this right-wing Bonapartist. The task of revolutionaries is to build a mass workers' party independent of *all* factions of the bourgeoisie – both the liberals as well as the populists.

140. The appointment of Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun as the new king of *Thailand* after the death of his father, Bhumibol Adulyadej, in October 2016 has been accompanied with a reactionary upsurge of extreme monarchism by the state apparatus and the media. The regime has initiated public demonstrations of loyalty to the monarch, and people who supposedly do not express sufficient admiration for the king are beaten up in the streets. The new king has also named an 11-member council of advisers, bringing in three new officials, including a former army chief and two representatives of the ruling junta. In short, we see a consolidation of the reactionary military dictatorship which took power in a coup in 2014, ousting Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra's elected government. The RCIT reaffirms its assessment from that time that this coup had a thoroughly reactionary character and revolutionaries had to side with the bourgeois-populist Red Shirt movement dominated by workers and poor peasants which opposed the coup without giving political support to its bourgeois-populist leadership.⁸¹

XII. PERSPECTIVES FOR BUILDING OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WORLD PARTY TODAY

141. The defeats which the workers and oppressed have suffered in recent years are the result of the terrible betrayal by their leaders who have led the struggles into a dead-end. The left reformists (like SYRIZA in Greece, the French Communist Party, and the Brazilian PCdoB) and the *Castro-Chavistas* in Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, etc., have exchanged governmental posts and financial subsidies for the interests of the workers and poor. Various Islamist forces have either revealed their bourgeois nature when they saved the rule of the capitalist class in the midst of the Arab Revolution by demobilizing the popular masses (e.g., *Ennahda* in Tunisia or Morsi's *al-Ikhwan* in Egypt), or they showed their petty-bourgeois populist character as they led the popular struggles into a sectarian and guerrilla-elitist dead-end (e.g. *Jabhat al-Nusra* and *Ahrar al-Sham* in Syria). And the centrists have proven their role as an appendix of the labor bureaucracy and the petty-bourgeoisie intelligentsia, as they usually lend support to the reformists and, in numerous cases, even to outright anti-democratic reaction and imperialist aggression.

142. The only way out of this dead-end is the creation of a new Revolutionary World Party on the basis of a Transitional Program adapted to the requirements and challenges of the present international class struggle. While such a party cannot be created out of the blue, without necessary preparation, there can be no doubt that revolutionaries must work energetically for its quickest possible formation. To be more precise, all authentic revolutionaries should, *as soon as possible*, hold an *international conference* in order to discuss close and systematic collaboration and, if possible, unification into a single organization on the basis of a program for the world class struggle during the current period. Such unification would represent a significant step forward for the authentic Bolsheviks and thereby enable a strengthening of those forces which are the sole ones capable of playing the role as the *driving force* in the future creation of such a Revolutionary World Party.⁸²

143. As the RCIT has repeatedly stressed, the struggle for the formation of a new world party must avoid all

the strategic failures which are so widespread among the centrist left. We must not opportunistically strive towards the "*unification of the left*" (i.e., of reformists, centrists and revolutionaries) or the "*unification of the Trotskyists on the basis of the Transitional Program of 1938*" (i.e., of those who support the Syrian Revolution against Assad and those who don't; of those who lend support to the military struggle of Afghan people against the imperialist occupiers and those who don't; of those who side with Russia and China against the US and those who don't; etc.). Such unification could only be unprincipled in character, as it would represent agreement not on the central issues of the international class struggle, but only on some abstract general formulae which cannot provide any guidance for the struggles today. It is hardly accidental that all the "left unity" projects of past years ended in failure and tears.

144. No, instead of looking to "*the left*," i.e., the labor bureaucracy and the petty-bourgeoisie intelligentsia, authentic revolutionaries orient themselves towards the new, militant layers from the working class and the oppressed who are looking for a program and a strategy that will enable them to effectively and consistently fight exploitation and oppression. As we noted in a past document: "*Those who wish to develop in a revolutionary direction must break from an orientation towards the centrist and left-reformist swamp and look to root themselves in the healthy, militant proletarian milieu. This does not mean that revolutionaries should ignore the reformist parties or the centrist groups. The policy of the united front tactic remains in full force as well as the need for a hard struggle to remove these revisionists' influence in the workers vanguard. But in the first line the RCIT orientates towards new militants and initiatives from the ranks of the workers and the oppressed. From these layers only, new promising forces and a new dynamic will come. And such developments might affect healthier elements from the ranks of left-reformism and centrism and help them to break with the revisionists' rotten method. Revolutionaries have to understand in depth that not only has capitalism entered a new historic period of massive instability and sharp turns, but the international workers' movement has done so too.*"

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stone is left unturned. Those forces, who don't understand the character of the period and its corresponding tasks, are doomed to degenerate more and more and get pushed to the right. For those forces, however, who are coming closer to an understanding of the sharply antagonistic nature of the present period, who are willing to join the masses in their struggles – in particular the lower strata of the working class and the oppressed – without arrogantly sneering about their "backward consciousness" and who are at the same time determined to fight intransigently for the revolutionary program and who ruthlessly attack the reformist and centrist traitors – those forces can revolve themselves and play a healthy and utterly positive role in the struggle to build the new World Party of Socialist Revolution. Being aware of the limitations of historic analogies, one has to see that to a certain degree the present period bears similarities to the years after the outbreak of World War I in 1914. In this period the workers' movement went through sharp crises, splits and transformations. In this period the rottenness of the centrist majority of the Second International – which already existed before 1914 but was less obvious – came to full light. The orientation and tactics of Lenin and his supporters are highly instructive for the Bolshevik-Communists today." ⁸³

145. Building a revolutionary world party today demands breaking with any orientation towards the petty-bourgeoisie intelligentsia and the labor aristocracy which – particularly in the imperialist metropolises – are connected via numerous material and ideological bonds with the capitalist system and which makes them infested with all possible anti-revolutionary prejudices. No, the revolutionary party can and must be built amongst the non-aristocratic mass of the proletariat or – to put it in Trotsky's words – „the unprivileged working masses“ who have nothing to lose but their chains. ⁸⁴ This has always been the strategic orientation of Bolshevism as Trotsky explained: „The strength and meaning of Bolshevism consists in the fact that it appeals to oppressed and exploited masses and not to the upper strata of the working class.“ ⁸⁵

146. As crucial as Marxist theory and program is for a revolutionary organization, it does not replace the importance of exemplary mass work and participation in the struggles of the popular masses. Only such fusion of theory and practice will enable revolutionaries to demonstrate their program to the fighting workers vanguard. Such an understanding is not only relevant for full-fledged parties but also for small pre-party communist groups.

147. Likewise, one of the chief tasks of revolutionaries today is to openly name and attack the obstacles for the class struggle which operate inside the working class movement, i.e. those forces which mislead the working class and its vanguard – the labor bureaucracy, reformists, centrists, official leadership of the oppressed, etc. The victory of the proletariat in its struggle for liberation against the capitalist exploiter class will be impossible to achieve if the revolutionary party does not first defeat the influence of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces inside the working class and among the oppressed. James P. Cannon, the historic leader of American Trotskyism, once stated: „The strength of capitalism is not in itself and its own institutions; it survives only because it has bases of support in the organizations of the workers. As we see it now, in the light of what we have learned from the Russian Revolution and its aftermath, nine-tenths of the struggle for socialism is the struggle

against bourgeois influence in the workers' organizations, including the party.“ ⁸⁶ Numerous reformists and centrists condemn the Bolshevik-Communists' approach of openly attacking erroneous programs and deceptive leaderships as "sectarian." In contrast to them, we draw the lesson from the Bolsheviks' successful building of a party which could lead the working class to victory that such a clear demarcation of what is right and what is wrong is the imperative precondition for organizing the workers' vanguard on a solid communist program. Hence, the task of the revolutionary party is to fight politically against the reformist and centrist forces in order to push back and finally liquidate their influence.

148. Of particular importance today is the determination of revolutionaries to think and to act as internationalists not only in terms of program but also in terms of organization. Hence, our movement has always acted on the basis of Trotsky's understanding that a revolutionary organization – particularly in the epoch of imperialism – can only exist as an international organization. Like the founder of the Fourth International we insist on the principle that a Bolshevik organisation must be an international organisation from the beginning. This principle is rooted in the nature of capitalism and of the working class which both are international in their essence. Only as an international organisation we can develop a truly internationalist outlook, internalise international experience and work as internationalist revolutionaries. If a group exists for too long as a national organisation it runs into serious danger to develop a national-centred experience and viewpoint. Hence we strongly reject the understanding of numerous nationally isolated organizations who put a priority of first building a strong national organization and only later to turn towards building an international organizations. Such an understanding unavoidable leads to national-centred deformations and programmatic deviations. Trotsky emphasised such an understanding many times. „It is necessary to understand first of all that really independent workers' parties – independent not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of both bankrupt Internationals – cannot be built unless there is a close international bond between them, on the basis of the same principles, and provided there is a living interchange of experience and vigilant mutual control. The notion that national parties (which ones? on what basis?) must be established first, and coalesced only later into a new International (how will a common principled basis then be guaranteed?) is a caricature of the history of the Second International: the First and Third Internationals were both built differently. But today, under the conditions of the imperialist epoch, after the proletarian vanguard of all countries in the world has passed through many decades of a colossal and common experience, including the experience of the collapse of the two Internationals, it is absolutely unthinkable to build new, Marxist, revolutionary parties, without direct contact with the same work in other countries. And this means the building of the Fourth International.“ ⁸⁷

149. In another article Trotsky wrote: „From its very first steps the Opposition must therefore act as an international faction – as did the Communists in the days of the publication of the 'Communist Manifesto', or in the Zimmerwald Left at the beginning of the war. In all these cases the groups were for the most part small numerically or it was a matter of isolated individuals; but they nevertheless acted as an international organization. In the epoch of imperialism such a position is

*a hundred times more imperative than in the days of Marx. Those who believe that the International Left will someday take shape as a simple sum of national groups, and that therefore the international unification can be postponed indefinitely until the national groups "grow strong," attribute only a secondary importance to the international factor and by this very reason take the path of national opportunism. It is undeniable that each country has greatest peculiarities of its own; but in our epoch these peculiarities can be assayed and exploited in a revolutionary way only from an internationalist point of view. On the other hand, only an international organization can be the bearer of an international ideology. Can anyone seriously believe that isolated Oppositional national groups, divided among themselves and left to their own resources, are capable of finding the correct road by themselves? No, this is a certain path to national degeneration, sectarianism, and ruin. The tasks facing the International Opposition are enormously difficult. Only by being indissolubly tied together, only by working out answers jointly to all current problems, only by creating their international platform, only by mutually verifying each one of their steps, that is, only by uniting in a single international body, will the national groups of the Opposition be able to carry out their historic task."*⁸⁸

150. The centrist conception of building a new World Party via the road of long-term alliances of different national Trotskyist organizations without a common program and

without an internationalist democratic centralist modus operandi is hardly any better. Such a conception might enable the different organizations to pretend acting as Trotskyist internationalists. Such *international federalism* is in fact just another version of national Trotskyism. In fact, behind such international federalism usually disguises deep differences on theoretical and programmatic issues. A practical example for such a conception is the *Coordinating Committee for the Refoundation of the Fourth International* (which includes the Argentinean PO, the Greek EEK, the Turkish DIP and the Italian PCL). Despite its long existence since 2004 it lacks until now both a joint program as well as an acting international leadership. In fact it hardly organizes any international conferences at all which is the only way to avoid the clash of numerous political differences between its various components. Trotsky was also faced with similar political formations in the person of the so-called "London Bureau" which included a number of national parties like the German SAP, the British ILP, the Norwegian NAP and later also the Spanish POUM. He strongly condemned this international federation as thoroughly unprincipled and centrist: "*As a matter of fact, the wretched balance sheet of the conference is to be explained not by lack of time but by the heterogeneity of its composition, with its preponderance of right-centrist combinationists. The very same heterogeneity distinguishes*

New Book!

Michael Pröbsting: Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *BUILDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE*. The book's subtitle is: *Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*. The book is in English-language. It contains four chapters on 148 pages and includes 42 pictures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

A few months ago, our movement commemorated its 25th anniversary. In the summer of 1989 our predecessor organization, the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) was founded as a democratic-centralist international tendency based on an elaborated program. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) continues the revolutionary tradition of the LRCI. Below we give an overview of our history, an evaluation of its achievements as well as mistakes, and a summary of the lessons for the struggles ahead. This book summarizes our theoretical and practical experience of the past

25 years.

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Bolshevik- Communists' theoretical conception of the role of the revolutionary party and its relation to the working class. In Chapter II we elaborate on the essential characteristics of revolutionary party respective of the pre-party organization. In Chapter III we deal with the history of our movement – the RCIT and its predecessor organization. Finally, in Chapter IV we outline the main lessons of our 25 years of organized struggle for building a Bolshevik party and their meaning for our future work.

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**Building the
Revolutionary Party
in Theory
and Practice**

*Looking Back and Ahead after
25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

"some" of the parties that adhere to the IAG. Hence flows the internal need for not touching upon the most acute, i.e., the most important and undeferrable questions. The sole principle of the IAG is to keep mum about principles. Let us recall that the international plenum of the Bolshevik-Leninists in its resolution of September 13, 1933, made the following evaluation of the previous IAG conference held in August 1933: "There cannot be even talk, of course, that the new International can be built by organizations that proceed from profoundly different and even antagonistic bases ... As regards the decisions that were passed by the variegated majority of the conference and that are utterly pervaded with the seal of this variegated assortment, the plenum of the Bolshevik-Leninists deems it impossible to assume any political responsibility for these decisions." *Whoever cherishes no illusions does not have to lose them subsequently!*"⁸⁹

151. Naturally, the alternative to these variations of national Trotskyism is not organized international centrism like the Morenoite LIT or UIT, Alan Woods IMT, Peter Taaffe's CWI, the Cliffite IST or the Mandelist FI which have all once again demonstrated their rottenness in the face of the class battles of the past years. Authentic Bolsheviks must rather wage an intransigent political and ideological struggle against these organizations as they represent an obstacle to the creation of a Revolutionary World Party. The path of building such a party must be on the road of the method which Trotsky elaborated in the *Transitional Program* in 1938: "The Fourth International declares uncompromising war on the bureaucracies of the Second, Third, Amsterdam and Anarcho-syndicalist Internationals,

as on their centrist satellites; on reformism without reforms; democracy in alliance with the GPU; pacifism without peace; anarchism in the service of the bourgeoisie; on "revolutionists" who live in deathly fear of revolution. All of these organizations are not pledges for the future, but decayed survivals of the past. The epoch of wars and revolutions will raze them to the ground."⁹⁰

152. Trotsky once observed, when putting together a balance sheet of his struggle to build the Fourth International, that the old generations have been mostly exhausted because of the series of defeats of the proletariat and the repeated betrayals of the social democrats, Stalinists and centrists. He concluded that the future of the World Party rests on new generations and the youth in particular.⁹¹ This is even truer today, as the past decades have witnessed unprecedented defeats for workers struggles along with various forms of ideological confusion and distortions in the name of "Marxism." We confirm our statement in the RCIT's program: "Strictly speaking, our class has not possessed a vanguard party since the middle of the 20th century. In this deep crisis of leadership - combined with the possibilities of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the systematic bribery of the labour bureaucracy and aristocracy - the ultimate cause can be found in the extraordinary bourgeoisification of the labour movement and the De-revolutionisation of Marxism, as is has been distorted by left reformism, centrism and the left-wing academics in recent decades."⁹²

153. In our opinion, revolutionaries all over the world should immediately start collaborating in laying the

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Greece - A Modern Semi-Colony

The Contradictory Development of Greek Capitalism, Its Failed Attempts to Become a Minor Imperialist Power, and Its Present Situation as an Advanced Semi-Colonial Country with Specific Features

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – *GREECE: A MODERN SEMI-COLONY*. The book's subtitle is: *The Contradictory Development of Greek Capitalism, Its Failed Attempts to Become a Minor Imperialist Power, and Its Present Situation as an Advanced Semi-Colonial Country with Some Specific Features*. It contains six chapters (144 pages) and includes 12 tables, 35 figures and 4 maps. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

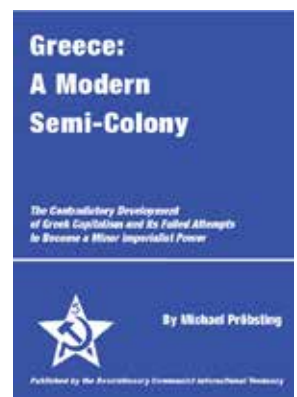
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which gives an overview of its content.

Greece is at the forefront both of the capitalist crisis in Europe as well as of the class struggle. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that what the Arab Revolution has been for the world in the past few years, Greece has been for Europe.

Subsequently, the question of the class character of Greece is of crucial importance both for the domestic as well as for the international workers movement: Is it an imperialist

state, a semi-colonial country or something else, and what are its specific features?

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Marxists' theoretical conception of imperialist respectively semi-colonial states. In Chapter II we give a brief historical overview of the development of Greek capitalism. In Chapter III we deal with Greece's failed attempt to become a minor imperialist power. In Chapter IV we outline the historic crisis of Greek capitalism from 2008 until today. In Chapter V we elaborate the most important programmatic conclusions and in the last Chapter we present a summary in the form of theses. The book contains 12 Tables, 35 Figures and 4 Maps. ■



foundations for a principled unification so that we drive forward the process of creating a new World Party with stronger forces. The starting point for the creation of such a party has to be agreement on the most important issues of the global class struggle. The RCIT considers the following issues as such programmatic keystones in the present political phase:

a) *Recognition of the accelerating rivalry between the imperialist Great Powers – the US, EU, Japan, Russia and China.* It is only possible to understand the driving dynamic of the present period of capitalist crisis and to take a correct position if one recognizes the imperialist character not only of the US, EU and Japan but also of the new emerging powers, Russia and China. Only on such a basis is it possible to arrive at the only correct program on this issue – *revolutionary defeatism*, i.e., the perspective of consistent struggle against all imperialist powers. This means that revolutionaries refuse to lend support to any Great Power in inter-imperialist conflicts under the slogan “*The main enemy is at home!*”

b) *Consistent struggle against imperialism.* Revolutionaries stand for the *defeat* of imperialist states in any conflict with forces representing oppressed people and for the *military victory* of the latter without, at the same time, giving any *political* support to the non-revolutionary leadership of the oppressed (e.g., petty-bourgeois Islamists, nationalists). This is true both in domestic conflicts (e.g., against an oppressed nation like the Chechen people in Russia) as well as in wars abroad (e.g., Afghanistan, Syria, Mali, Somalia). Likewise, revolutionaries have to fight for *Open Borders* in the imperialist countries and for *full equality for national minorities and for migrants*. Furthermore, revolutionaries refuse to lend support to one imperialist camp against another in any given conflict (e.g., Brexit vs. EU; Clinton vs Trump).

c) *Continuing support for the Arab Revolution.* The mass popular uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen and other countries have been the most important and progressive class struggle development so far since the beginning of the new historic period in 2008. True, given the lack of a revolutionary leadership, the masses have

suffered a number of terrible defeats – like the coup d’état of General al-Sisi in Egypt in July 2013, or the ongoing slaughter of the Syrian people at the hands of Assad and his foreign backers. However, the revolutionary process is continuing, and this is reflected in the ongoing popular resistance in Syria, Yemen, Egypt, etc. Authentic revolutionary forces must give unconditional support to these popular struggles against dictatorships and reactionary forces, without giving any political support to their non-revolutionary leaderships (e.g., petty-bourgeois Islamists).

d) *Participation in all mass struggles against austerity programs and against reactionary attacks on democratic rights.* Revolutionaries oppose *all* forms of sectarianism which refuses participation in mass struggles under the pretext of their non-revolutionary leaderships. Instead they apply the united front tactic in the struggles of the workers and peasants led by reformist or populist forces against austerity program (e.g., trade unions, mass organizations of the peasants and the urban poor, but also political parties like MORENA in Mexico, SYRIZA in Greece before 2015, PODEMOS in Spain) or against anti-democratic coups and dictatorships (PT, CUT, MST in Brazil; Islamists in Egypt; rebels in Syria). Such an orientation must be combined with a consistent struggle against all forms of popular-frontism and petty-bourgeois populism, and for the breaking of workers and peasants away from these non-revolutionary leaderships and to advance the formation of an independent and revolutionary Workers’ Party.

154. Hence we call upon all organizations which honestly strive towards the creation of a new Revolutionary World Party to join forces on the basis of these programmatic keystones. Concretely, the RCIT proposes that revolutionaries constitute a *Joint Contact Committee* in order to politically prepare and organize an *International Conference* which will discuss concrete steps to advance the formation of a Revolutionary World Party. The RCIT is committed to serious discussions and the closest possible collaboration with all forces who share such an outlook. We will in the near future address revolutionaries around the world in an *Open Letter* on this issue.

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FOOTNOTES

51 See Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South, Chapter 13

52 See e.g. RCIT: Revolution and Counterrevolution in the Arab World: An Acid Test for Revolutionaries, 31 May 2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/theses-arab-revolution/> as well as the corresponding chapters in our past World Perspectives documents.

53 On the Syrian Revolution see e.g. The Syrian Revolution and the Assassination of the Russian Ambassador to Turkey, Joint Statement of the International Secretariat of the RCIT and Sınıf Savaşı (Section of the RCIT in Turkey), 21.12.2016; Michael Pröbsting: The Looming Kerry-Lavrov Agreement – A Great Power Conspiracy against the Syrian Revolution, 06.10.2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/syria-kerry-lavrov/>; Joint Statement: Solidarity with Aleppo! Hands off Syria! 4 October 2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/joint-statement-aleppo/>; Syria: For an Independent Revolutionary Road! Down with the Bombing and Siege against Aleppo! Stop the Turkish Invasion and Occupation! No to the Imperialist Conspiracy against the Syrian Masses! Joint Statement of the RCIT and Sınıf Savaşı (Turkey), 25.09.2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/defend-aleppo/>; Yossi Schwartz: The Revolution in Syria won a Tactical Victory! Down with Assad the Butcher! 21 August 2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/aleppo-victory/>; The Imperialist Counterrevolution Threatens the Syrian Revolution! Down with the Great Powers' Wars! Solidarity with the Syrian Revolution against the Assad Dictatorship! For a Socialist Federation in the Maghreb and Mashreq! Joint Statement of the Agrupación de Lucha Socialista (ALS) and the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 07.12.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/imperialist-counterrevolution-syria/>; RCIT: Great Powers Aim to Liquidate the Syrian Revolution! Mobilize for International Solidarity with the Syrian Liberation Struggle against the Assad Dictatorship! Stop the US, Russian and French Air Strikes! No to Daesh/IS-Terrorism! 18.11.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/great-powers-syria/>; RCIT: Revolution against Russian Imperialism! Stop the US, UK and French Air Strikes! Smash the Assad Dictatorship! 9.10.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/defend-syria-against-russia/>; RCIT: Revolution and Counterrevolution in the Arab World: An Acid Test for Revolutionaries, 31 May 2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/theses-arab-revolution/>; RCIT: The Arab Revolution is a central touchstone for socialists! Open Letter to All Revolutionary Organizations and Activists, 4.10.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/open-letter-on-arab-revolution/>. For many more RCIT documents on the Arab Revolution see on our website: <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/>

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63 To give just one example of the fanatical hatred of some centrists against the Syrian liberation fighter we quote from a recently published article of the IMT's leader Alan Woods: "This means that a small group of jihadi fanatics are holding the population of East Aleppo for ransom, using them in effect as human shields in the face of attacks by the regime and its Russian allies." (Alan Woods: Syria: Aleppo, Mosul, and imperialist hypocrisy, 21 October 2016, <http://www.socialist.net/syria-aleppo-mosul-and-imperialist-hypocrisy.htm>)

64 See e.g. Foreign Backers and the Marginalization of the Free Syrian Army, 19 November 2016, <http://notris.blogspot.co.at/2016/11/foreign-backers-and-marginalization-of-hftml>

65 Leon Trotsky: Anti-Imperialist Struggle is Key to Liberation. An Interview with Mateo Fossa (1938); in: Writings of Leon Trotsky 1938-39, p. 34.

66 See the RCIT's pamphlet by Michael Pröbsting: The Meaning, Consequences and Lessons of Trump's Victory. On the Lessons of the US Presidential Election Outcome and the Perspectives for the Domestic and International Class Struggle, 24.November 2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/meaning-of-trump/>; Michael Pröbsting: US Presidential Election: The Victory of Donald Trump is a Historical Turning Point, 09.11.2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/north-america/trump-victory/>

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68 See our book by Michael Pröbsting: *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out? The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism*, RCIT 2013, <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/>

69 See on this the chapter on Latin America in our resolution *Sisters – Let Us become Heroines of the Liberation Struggle of Our Gender, as Well as of All Oppressed!* This resolution was adopted at the First World Congress of the RCIT in October 2016 and will be published soon.

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73 See e.g. Statement of RCWP CC’s Political Council: Terrorism is a weapon of Imperialism, 25.11.2015, <http://inter.rkrp.ru/articles/statement-of-rcwp-ccs-political-council-terrorism-is-a-weapon-of-imperialism/#more-516>. Naturally this must not deflect attention from the RCWP own opportunist adaption to Russian imperialism.

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