



LIBERATION

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WORKERS AND OPPRESSED, UNITE!

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Organize a militant rank and file movement in the TUC!

Report from the Trade Union Congress – A Congress of the bureaucrats which offers no perspective

Statement by the RCIT-Britain, 13 June 2016

I attended this Congress and as usual on the first day the centrist Socialist Party of England and Wales under its trade union arm organised a Lobby of the TUC. The SPEW is the largest of the centrist organisations in Britain and always manages to bring 400-500 people to its Lobby and Rally. As usual they always invite the Left Trade Union leaders to speak at their rally. What was important this year was that they invited some Youth and Junior Doctors to the rally that made some important contributions.

The First speaker was from the Tamil Solidarity campaign. She said *“There is right wing anti migrant Racism in the EU Campaign, Bombing Syria and other countries Arms dealers we need to establish Refugee rights and refugees need rights to work in Britain. Racism has been used to divide the working class in Britain.”* She said Corbyn represented a new type of politics.

“Young people Black and Asian are supporting Corbyn for Leader. Young people need to be involved in Politics, change the Labour Party into a Democratic Party and defy the Tory Government”. [1].

The next speaker was Helen Patterson from Youth Fight for Jobs. She spoke about the crisis in the Labour party. *“Young people who support Corbyn are being purged from the Labour party and prevented from voting in the Leadership Election. We need democratically elected MP’s. We should be supporting the £10 an hour campaign for young workers on Zero hour contracts. We have nothing to fear from Austerity and the anger and solidarity in defence of the NHS to stand behind the junior doctors and call for the TUC to call a National demonstration on the 19th November”.* [2]

Two Junior Doctors spoke next. They were Mona and



What we need to secure our rights is determined and militant struggle, like our brothers and sisters in France.

Ashlyn. They were speaking in a personal capacity and did not represent the official views of the BMA. *"There has been 6 years of austerity by the Tories which has left the NHS in ruins. The context of the dispute is that we are both fighting austerity. Our rejection of this contract means that thousands of junior doctors are being smeared and slandered by this government. The new contract is dangerous for patient care none of us wanted to go on strike but we were forced to through the imposition of the new contract. Junior Doctors have been turned into militants it is not us who are the problem but the government. This government has vandalised and sold our most important public services. We can stay silent no more, but political decisions by government are hounding our patients and the NHs. It is being sold to Virgin care and Serco. The NHS needs to be brought back into Public ownership. We need a TUC day of action in support of the junior doctors. We are both supporting John McDonnell and Jeremy Corbyn. Hunt Secretary of state for Health) he lied to the public. 98% of doctors are now fighting. The stakes are high and we are all very angry and we will fight this contract .We will not compromise". [3]*

The TUC-leadership wants no struggle

On the Monday afternoon Francis O'Grady the General secretary of the TUC gave her address. She said "we are proud of our campaign over the trade union act we beat them back she said yes they got the trade union act through and it is now law but we won important concessions. Talking about the EU Referendum O'Grady said the majority of trade unionists voted to remain. Workers must not pay the price of the Brexit and we in the TUC will insist that migrant workers remain. She then went onto to say that we could put a halt on austerity and get people to support our industrial strategy. She then went onto attack Chinese steel workers over what she termed was the dumping of Chinese steel". [4]

The truth of the matter is that during the EU Referendum campaign David Cameron needed the support of Labour to support the remain campaign. A deal was done with Labour and Cameron agreed to a few concessions. This is how British party politics is carried out. O'Grady like all the TUC Bureaucrats represents the layer on the top of the trade unions and the workers movement who above all wants to protect their privileges during this period. She represents British exceptionalism in this global world. Even many economists who are serving the capitalists are recognising that we are heading for a global financial crash. Figures show that China's Economy is heading for a serious financial crisis, which will affect other imperialist nations like America, Japan, Russia and Europe. O'Grady makes the following admission in her report to the General Council. "The Conservative Party's government majority meant that we could not defeat the bill outright. (...) We will argue for the next Government to repeal the Trade Union Act in its entirety". [5].

The TUC-bureaucrats' loyalty to the capitalist state

Jeremy Corbyn has already pledged to repeal the act if a Labour Government is elected under



O'Grady maneuvered herself to the right of Corbyn

his leadership. O'Grady ignores this fact believing that the Tories will repeal the act.

The campaigning that O'Grady referred to means simply for the trade union leadership to organise a lobby in Parliament which serves the bosses and nothing else. The TUC should have organised Industrial action coordinated with action committees of people in the communities and towns to defend jobs and living standards. This was not done. As usual the Bureaucrats are intent on hoping for a few crumbs from the masters table but in this period of capitalist crisis there will be very little for the labour bureaucracy who remains tied to capitalist interests. Nowhere in her speech did O'Grady mention the election of a Labour Government or support for Corbyn. At last year's congress Corbyn was invited to address the congress - not this year. This shows the rightward direction of the bureaucracy and labour aristocracy who are desperate to protect what they have got and to continue to peddle reformist illusions that an economic recovery is on the way. They believe that they are in a position of strength which can negotiate with the Teresa May Government.

"We are ready

to work with employers and the UK government to this end promoting British Businesses around the world, while campaigning for the investment needed to create the high-wage high-skilled economy necessary for the UK to remain as a global economic force".[6].

Membership is decreasing

The figures produced by the TUC of their Trade Union membership is very illuminating

"Number of affiliated unions: 51
Membership: Male 2,712,724 Female: 2,883,080: Gender split not available 64,192. Total: 5,659,996". [7]

This shows yet again that Membership of trade unions affiliated to the TUC



has dropped again. It is now shows that less than 6 Million workers are members of trade unions. They represent a minority of the working class in Britain and this shows the political bankruptcy of the official-reformist leadership of the working class in Britain.

We need a revolutionary leadership!

Leon Trotsky in the transitional programme pointed out "The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterised by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat". [8]. Trotsky wrote this in 1938 when the membership of the TUC was far greater than it is today. The most exploited sections of workers like migrants and the lower level of the working class remain outside the trade unions but constitute the vast majority of the masses who refuse to be part of a diminishing bureaucratic clique that follows the dictates of capitalism. The Bureaucrats surprise at the Brexit vote shows their inability to comprehend the world political crisis and they all remain fixed upon is their narrow reformist outlook believing that they can negotiate with capitalism in this situation.

As we wrote in in Liberation 11 " Both the National shop Stewards network , the industrial arm of the SPEW and Unite the resistance the industrial arm of the SWP regularly invite bureaucrats to sit and speak on their platform. Their orientation is not to Migrants and the more exploited sections of the working class residing in in these lower strata but to the labour aristocracy". [9].

The RCIT in Britain is building a revolutionary organisation in Britain. We need to organize communist fractions to be built under the discipline of the revolutionary party's leadership which should coordinate and direct the activity of the fractions working in trade union organisations. We put forward the following slogans for the work of the revolutionary communist fractions and call on who agree with our programme to become supporters of the RCIT.



- *Fight to change the composition of trade unions by recruiting the mass type of militant workers. Migrants and the most exploited should be brought into the mass organisations and trained as revolutionary fighters. This means that by recruiting the lower and middle strata of the working class we will reduce the influence of the reformist and aristocratic type of worker with all his narrow craft prejudices.*

- *Build action committee independent of the Bureaucracy fighting against the bosses and government attacks. Build workers defence guards to protect workers in Occupations or are on Strike. Defend occupations of factories and workplaces from attacks by the police and fascists.*

- *Organise an Indefinite General strike to remove the Trade Union act and other Anti-Union laws which prevent workers exercising their democratic rights.*

- *Build rank and file organisations which genuinely represent the most exploited workers in opposition to the bureaucracy and labour aristocracy and whose aim should be to remove and expel the bureaucratic apparatus from a position of power. Rank and file organisation must genuinely represent the workforce.*

Footnotes

- 1) Speech at NSSN Rally by a Tamil Solidarity Speaker
- 2) Speech at NSSN Rally by Helen Patterson Youth Fight for Jobs
- 3) Speech at NSSN Rally by Mona and Ashlyn two Junior Doctors
- 4) Address to TUC Congress by Francis O' Grady TUC GENERAL SECRETARY 12th September 2016
- 5) TUC Congress 2016 General Council Report Introduction Francis O'Grady General Secretary pg.vi. TUC Campaign Plan 2016-17. Pg. 10
- 6) TUC Congress 2016 General Council statement .pg.12
- 7) Congress Guide 2016 .pg.39
- 8) The death agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the 4th International the Transitional Programme. Leon Trotsky.pg.11
- 9) <https://RCITBRITAIN.wordpress.com//Liberationno.11september2016.pg.3>

RCIT Britain

Web: <https://rcitbritain.wordpress.com>

Email: officercit@gmail.com

Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

Web: www.thecommunists.net

Email: rcit@thecommunists.net

Tel.: +43-0650-4068314

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT). The RCIT has sections in Pakistan (Revolutionary Workers Organisation, RWO), Sri Lanka (United Lankan Workers Party, ULWP), Brazil (Corrente Comunista Revolucionária, CCR), Mexico (Agrupación de Lucha Socialista, ALS), Turkey (Sınıf Savaşı), Israel/Occupied Palestine (Internationalist Socialist League, ISL), and Austria (Revolutionär-Kommunistische Organisation BEFREIUNG, RKOB). In addition the RCIT has members in Yemen, Tunisia, Germany, Venezuela, New Zealand and Britain.

Solidarity with Aleppo! Hands off Syria!

Joint Statement, 4 October 2016

In recent days, the people of Aleppo are once again suffering unspeakable horror. They are living under siege and are daily experiencing devastating bombardment by the air forces of Assad and Russia.

We stand with the people of Aleppo in their heroic efforts to defend the city against occupation by Assad's army!

Furthermore, we reiterate our support for the Syrian people in their ongoing liberation struggle which will continue as long as the dictatorship of the Assad clan continues to exist!

We denounce the murderous war against the Syrian people by the Russian and the Iranian states.

Likewise we denounce the so-called "War on Terror" in Syria by the US as well as a number of European powers! In fact, the terrorist war is being waged by them, among others, against the Syrian people!

We also denounce the military intervention of the Turkish state in northern Syria being directed against both the Kurdish people and the Syrian people fighting against As-

sad's dictatorship.

We warn that the Great Powers – with the help of regional powers – are preparing another Sykes-Picot Agreement (better called the Kerry-Lavrov Agreement). This conspiracy aims to divide Syria, liquidate the Revolution, and retain the Assadist state apparatus.

We say: "Great Powers – Hands off Syria!"

Finally we denounce Daesh (the so-called "Islamic State") which is waging a reactionary war against the people of Syria.

We call for a militant international campaign in solidarity with the heroic Syrian people defending Aleppo against the terrorist Assad regime. Such a campaign should be directed simultaneously against intervention by the Great Powers in Syria.

** Solidarity with Aleppo!*

** Down with Assad!*

** Great Powers: Hands off Syria!*

** For the arming of the Syrian people to defend themselves against Assad and imperialist aggression!*



Signatories:

Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Israel/Occupied Palestine, Yemen, Tunisia, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, New Zealand, Britain, Germany and Austria), www.thecommunists.net

Sınıf Savaşı (Turkey), <http://dorduncublok.blogspot.com/>

Workers International Vanguard Party (South Africa), <http://www.workersinternational.org.za/>

International Revolutionary Workers (Zimbabwe), <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100013062453108>

Solidarity with Jackie Walker!

Statement of Jewish members and supporters of Momentum

As Jewish members and supporters of Momentum, we do not believe that what Jackie Walker said during a training event at Labour party conference was antisemitic (Walker stripped of Momentum role, 4 October). You report Jackie as saying that "she had not found a definition of antisemitism she could work with". This is not surprising – there isn't one. The Jewish Labour Movement, which ran the event, states that the EU Monitoring Centre on Racism's working definition on antisemitism is the standard definition, despite the fact that its successor body, the Fundamental Rights Agency, has junked this definition, which equates criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism. Jackie also stated that Holocaust Memorial Day should be more inclusive of other acts of genocide. Why is this antisemitic? It has always been a principle of the Zionist movement that the Nazi Holocaust was exclusive to the Jews. Yehuda Bauer, professor of Holocaust studies at the

Hebrew University, Jerusalem, has argued that "the Nazis only attempted to annihilate one people, the Jews". According to Bauer, "the Holocaust is very much a unique case".

Jackie's arguments were made in good faith. They may be right or they may be wrong. What they are not is antisemitic. The decision of Momentum's steering committee and its chair Jon Lansman to remove Jackie Walker as vice-chair is a betrayal of the trust of thousands of Momentum members. Momentum's grassroots members overwhelmingly support Jackie.

Tony Greenstein, Professor Haim Bresheeth, Professor Emeritus Jonathan Rosenhead, Leon Rosselson, Ruth Appleton, Rica Bird, Mike Cushman, Dr Merav Devere, Mark Elf, Sylvia Finzi, Ken Fryde, Leah Levane, Claire Glasman, Selma James, Michael Kalmanovitz, Helen Marks, Elizabeth Morley, Diana Neslen, Ilan Pappé, Martin Parnell, Roland Rance, Dr Brian Robinson, Amanda Sebestyen, Glynn Secker, David Selzer, Sam Semoff, Sam Weinstein, Naomi Wimborne-Iddrissi