



# REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

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## **Catalonia: Defend the Right of National Self-Determination!**

\* Fight Macron's Labor Bill

\* Stop Ethnic Cleansing of Rohingyas!

\* Horrible Earthquake in Mexico

\* Brazil: Temer and the Amazon Reserve

\* Syria: Moment of Truth is Approaching!

\* Imperialist Exploitation in Zambia

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The picture on the cover shows Catalan firefighters confronting Spanish police on 1 October 2017  
Source: Twitter.com Hashtag Catalanreferendum

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# Catalonia after the Referendum: Forward to Independence!

## The national and democratic popular uprising of the 1st October demonstrates the categorical SÍ of the Catalan people to Independence!

*Emergency Statement by the International Secretariat of the RCIT, 02.10.2017 (10:00 GMT)*

**M**ove on to independence! Prepare the resistance against the repression forces of the Spanish state! Join the general strike on 3 October and transform it into an indefinite political general strike to support the struggle for independence! Build self-defense units in order to fight back the repression! Join arms with the Basque people and the Spanish working class! The perspective must be that of creation of an independent Workers Republic of Catalonia!

1. The people in Catalonia participated in the referendum with incredibly impressive mobilizations on the streets. Despite the massive and brutal intervention of the police forces mobilized by the Spanish state, including the paramilitary units of the *Guardia Civil*, three million people were on the streets fighting for their democratic right to hold the referendum. And they succeeded. 42.34% of all eligible voters got their votes counted despite the police repression and of them 89.29% voted "Sí" (Yes) for independence. The Catalan government stated that at least 777.000 votes were lost as the repression apparatus confiscated full ballot boxes and shut down approximately 400 schools who served as polling stations. Based on this number it would mean that 57.3% of all eligible voters tried to participate despite of the brutality of the police forces. It is most likely that the participation would have been even higher as many people were not able or willing to risk physical confrontations with the repression apparatus in order to vote. However, based on the outcome of the referendum an additional number of 777.000 votes would mean that 51.2% of all eligible voters were in favor of independence.

2. The Catalan people didn't only hold a successful referendum on the 1<sup>st</sup> October in Barcelona, Girona and all other parts of Catalonia. They made history! Three million people chanted that day "No tinc por!" (I'm not afraid!), "Votarem!" (We will vote!) and finally "Hem votat" (We voted!). They heroically resisted the rubber guns and batons of approximately 12,000 officers who injured at least 844 people, some of them way older than 65 years. More than three million people resisted against the police violence unarmed and mostly with their hands up. In addition there were solidarity protests in various other parts of Spain. In Santiago de Compostela, the capital of Galicia, demonstrations with 3,000 people (approx. 3% of the total population) took place. However, one of the largest demonstrations in solidarity with the Catalan people took place in Bilbao, the biggest city of the Basque province. More than 40,000 people (approx. 12% of the citizens) were demonstrating in Bilbao showing their solidarity with the Catalan independence movement. This was a national and democratic popular uprising! This event confirms the RCIT's call, in recently published statements, that all progressive forces need to mobilize for the referendum and vote for the Sí!

3. In the evening of the 1<sup>st</sup> October, the Spanish state

reacted to the successful referendum in a bizarre way. At a press conference of the PM Mariano Rajoy declared: "Today there has not been a self-determination referendum in Catalonia. The rule of law remains in force with all its strength. We are the government of Spain (...). And we have shown that our democratic state has the resources to defend itself from an attack as serious as the one that was perpetrated with this illegal referendum. Today, democracy has prevailed because we have obeyed the constitution." Such a rejection of the reality is no surprise as the Spanish state is both arrogant and highly aggressive towards the Catalan independence movement. However, the people of Catalonia remain unimpressed by this. It is symbolic that voters and activists at the *Escola Industrial* laughed the Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Saez de Santamaria out of court, chanting "Votarem, votarem!" after she had commented on the referendum that day: "Continuing this farce makes no sense, this does not lead



The Spanish State against the people  
Source: Twitter.com Hashtag Catalanreferendum

anywhere, they should stop it immediately!"

4. Any illusion in the so-called "Western Democracy" is misplaced, especially in the current situation, irrespective of the criticism on the repressive behavior of the Spanish state which has been expressed by several European politicians. Let us not forget that the spokesperson of the German government *Steffen Seibert* announced at a press conference a few days ago: "We're convinced it's important that with everything that's happening at the moment, to maintain the rule of law, both with regard to EU treaties and with regard to national law, i.e. the Spanish constitution." Unsurprisingly, at another press conference which was given by US President Donald Trump together with Spanish PM Rajoy seven days ago, Trump stated that the Catalanian people "love their country" and that they "would not want to leave Spain". Beside of the fact that *Donald Trump, the Psychic* is as incompetent as *Donald Trump, the President* it reflects how the self-proclaimed guardians of democracy in the *United States* as well as the *European Union* deal with authentic democratic mobilizations.

5. The imperialist *EU* might even support the repression apparatus of the Spanish state in near future in order to prevent the separation of Catalonia. An independent Catalonia might otherwise become a role model for other independence movements in Spain like the Basque people and other discriminated people in Europe. Obviously, this would be a nightmare for the *EU*. Successful separations would weaken the imperialist project of the *EU*. It is therefore important to be aware of the potential danger coming from the imperialist *EU* during the independence process of Catalonia. The European workers movement needs to consistently support the independence movement of the Catalan people (likewise also the Basque people). The Spanish and the European labor movement need to organize a large solidarity campaign including mass mobilizations *now*. In case of an acceleration of the conflict between the Catalan people and the Spanish (and *EU*) repression apparatus, the Spanish and the European labor movement should send solidarity delegations to help the Catalan people to organize themselves in self-defense units. In case of the Spanish state preparing a coup d'état in Catalonia, such self-defense units need to be turned into armed militias of the workers and oppressed which should be supported by the Spanish and the European labor movement.

6. The *RCIT* has supported not only the right to hold the Catalan referendum. We also called to vote at the referendum in favor of independence. The national and democratic popular uprising by the Catalan people on 1 October as well as the concrete outcome of the referendum prove us right. The discrimination of Catalonia by the Spanish state is obvious. The proletarian stronghold Catalonia demanding self-determination today and also in its whole history should motivate all authentic revolutionaries to support the independence movement. However, those organizations and activists of the labor movement, who oppose Catalonia's independence justify their positions by emphasizing the necessity of unity of Spain's working class. But as a *CUP* representative correctly stated: "The working class of Madrid and the working class of Barcelona are united not because they are both Spanish, but rather, because they are both working class." The unity of the working class in Spain can only be established by full

equality and democracy and this includes the defense of the right of the Catalan and likewise the Basque people to become independent from the Spanish state. Authentic revolutionaries should not argue against the more than understandable attempt of a discriminated people to become independent of the imperialist Spanish state. We rather unconditionally support the independence and combine it with the slogan of the *Workers Republic of Catalonia* (as well as the *Workers Republic of the Basque country*)!

7. The Catalan government wants to implement the independence in the next days via decisions of the regional bourgeois parliament. We have seen the Spanish state being already furious just because of the referendum. It is easy to imagine what they will do to stop the Catalan government to declare independence. In this situation it is clear what authentic revolutionaries need to do. The support of the independence of the Catalan people includes defending all activists and even the capitalist Catalan government against the repression apparatus of the Spanish state. However, we warn the workers and oppressed in Catalonia that they should not have illusions in the Catalan government. The capitalist politicians of Catalonia hope that they can turn the province into a small but still strong imperialist country. Their agenda is to have a better position as *rulers and exploiters* inside of the imperialist *European Union*. We defend them against the aggressions of the Spanish repression apparatus but we don't have any trust in them. It is therefore highly important to maintain class independence of the workers and oppressed. Our method to implement the independence of Catalonia as it was decided by the legitimate "referendum 1-O" (as it has been called in the Catalan media) is not to have bourgeois negotiations with the imperialists of Spain and the *EU*. We rather call to organize an *indefinite general strike* in Catalonia and mass actions of the workers and oppressed in the rest of Spain. The already announced general strike on 3 October should be used as a starting point for such a movement! Such a political general strike must be the prologue of an armed uprising of the workers and oppressed, a socialist revolution in order to create a *Workers Republic of Catalonia*.

8. A political general strike as well as a massive solidarity movement will undoubtedly provoke the Spanish state to mobilize all its forces in order to smash such a proletarian movement. Likewise, the capitalist politicians of Catalonia will react in panic to such mobilizations as they would correctly understand that they are losing control over the situation. They will put all energy into pacifying the labor movement and bribing of the bureaucrats of the trade unions and other workers organizations. The workers and oppressed of Catalonia as well as the rest of Spain need to fight on all fronts. This means to organize self-defense units of the workers and oppressed that can be turned into armed militias in order to defend the Catalan people against the police, against the paramilitary *Guardia Civil* as well as against the whole military apparatus of the Spanish state. At the same time the workers need to challenge the bureaucratic leadership of the trade unions and of the other organs of the labor movement. The reformist bureaucrats are open for bribery by the Catalan capitalists and the Spanish state. The official leadership needs to be controlled by

the rank and file workers which must include their right to expel those who are betraying us. Workers assemblies need to be organized to democratically discuss and decide on the indefinite general strike. Strike committees need to be created in the workplaces and schools in order to prepare and to implement a political strike. All decisions need to be made and all functionaries need to be elected and removed democratically at any time by the workers assemblies, respectively the strike committees.

9. The independence movement in Catalonia is strongly influenced by pacifist ideas of passive resistance. This has not hindered the Spanish state to mobilize its repression apparatus in order to attack hundred thousands of people. The strike action of the dockers in Barcelona and Tarragona reduced the number of forces of the *Guardia Civil* available for deployment because it made it impossible for thousands of armed officers to reach Catalonia in time. In case of future mobilizations of the repression apparatus by the Spanish state, it is the task of the workers of the transportation sector *in whole Spain* to boycott likewise any intervention for the repression forces. In addition, the workers and oppressed in whole Spain need to block the streets and all routes so that they obstruct the mobilization of the repression apparatus. This will probably provoke the *Guardia Civil* and all other repression forces to attack the solidarity movement brutally. The current struggle of the Catalan people has already inspired the Basque people to renew their struggle for independence and will continue to do so. Such a process will also provoke a violent reaction of the Spanish state. In other words, all steps that need to be taken in order to really implement the independence of Catalonia as well as the independence of the Basque country will unavoidably lead to militant confrontations with the repression apparatus. The working class and the oppressed need to prepare for this otherwise the independence movements will be smashed. The workers

and oppressed in Spain suffered for decades under the Franco dictatorship. It would not be a surprise if the current *constitutional monarchy* of Spain which arose out of the Franco regime, is willing to implement a dictatorship in Catalonia (and probably also in Basque country). It is life-threatening to underestimate the imperialist Spanish state and it shows how dangerous the current pacifist illusions are in reality. The only perspective for the independence movement is *Socialism or Dictatorship*.

10. The RCIT calls all authentic revolutionaries in Catalonia as well as in Spain to join forces in order to prepare for the upcoming developments. Class independence of the workers and oppressed is highly important. It is time to organize an indefinite general strike in Catalonia to ensure the creation of the independent Catalan state. Such a state should be a *Workers Republic of Catalonia* as part of a future federation of the *United Socialist States of Europe*. All authentic revolutionaries need to unite in order to build a *Revolutionary Workers Party* as part of a future *Revolutionary World Party* which can lead through the struggle. However, all authentic revolutionaries need also to collaborate in united fronts' with existing mass organizations of the workers and oppressed. The wrong leaderships of the reformist and centrist organizations and parties need to be challenged by authentic revolutionaries without being sectarian towards the workers and oppressed at the basis. Only a consistent revolutionary program *and* the ability to merge with the masses of the workers and oppressed empowers authentic revolutionaries to fulfill their historic task.

*All power to the workers and oppressed in Catalonia! Forward in the struggle for an independent Workers Republic of Catalonia! All authentic revolutionaries – fight together with the RCIT for the building of a Revolutionary Workers Party in Catalonia, in the Basque country and in Spain!*



The Spanish State against the people; Source: Twitter.com @aminahekmet

# Catalonia: For the Immediate Release of All Arrested Officials!

## Stop the Criminalization of the Independence Referendum and its Supporters!

### Participate at the referendum and vote "Yes" for independence!

### Organize immediate self-defense units!

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 21 Sept 2017*

1. On 20<sup>th</sup> September the imperialist Spanish state arrested 14 Catalan senior officials including *Oriel Junqueras*, the current vice president of Catalonia and his closest colleague *Josep Maria Jové*, the secretary general of the finance department as well as *Josep Lluís Salvadó*, the treasury secretary of Catalonia. With these means of outrageous oppression, the Spanish regime wants to stop the mobilization for the referendum on October 1 and threatens all supporters of the independence campaigns. The RCIT is in full solidarity with the independence campaign activists and the current protests in Catalonia. We demand the *immediate release of all arrested officials and the end of the prosecutions against the supporters of the referendum!*

2. Spanish foreign minister *Alfonso Dastis* attacked the Catalan politicians in an interview with *Bloomberg New York*, accusing them of having "Nazi-attitudes". It reflects very well the hypocrisy of the oppressing Spanish state that one day before the police has confiscated nearly ten million ballot papers and arrested the Catalan officials, *Dastis* dared to say about the independence movement: "That's something you don't see in a democracy". Instead

it is the Spanish state, a *constitutional monarchy*, which kept many elements from the fascist Franco-regime. The current reigning King of Spain and enemy to the Catalan independence, *Felipe VI* is the son of former king and chosen successor of Franco, *Juan Carlos I*. All authentic democrats, not to speak revolutionaries, have to reject the *constitutional monarchy* and to fight for its abolition. Facing this duty one has to sharply criticize the role of the *Partido Comunista de España* (PCE) who collaborated with former king *Juan Carlos I* in order to hinder the working class to take power in the looming revolutionary crisis in the late 1970's.

3. Without any political sympathies for the capitalist politicians of Catalonia and their program, all authentic revolutionaries still have to defend them against the Spanish repression apparatus. The arrested officials wanted to fulfill the will of the Catalan people by organizing the referendum and for this they get punished by the regime. The current behavior of the furious Spanish state could be the preface for implementing nothing else than simple *Bonapartism*. They need to be stopped immediately in order to prevent this massive attack on democratic rights.

## 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**

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.

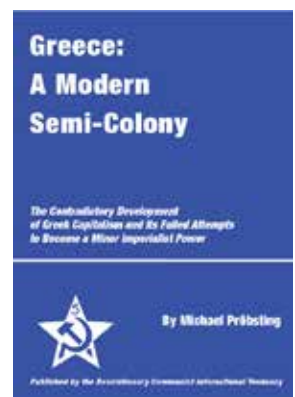
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which gives an overview of its content.

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. ■



Otherwise, more anti-democratic measures and attacks on the labor movement will inevitably follow soon.

4. Catalonia has a long, historic tradition of demanding independence from the Spanish rulers which was massively nourished during the era of the Franco-regime. About 80% of the people in Catalonia are in favor of having the referendum and nearly half of the Catalan people are currently for the separation. In addition, mobilizations of the supporters for the independence were impressively big in the last years and involved up to more than one million people (out of a population of 7.5 Million!). Last but not least, Catalonia as such is not only a traditional stronghold of the working class (likewise the Basque country) in Spain, it organized also the biggest pro-refugee protests in Europe. Therefore, there can be no doubt about the progressive character of the forces in favor of national self-determination as well as of the strength of the independence movement among the politically conscious workers and youth in Catalonia.

5. The planned referendum on the independence of Catalonia has to be supported by all authentic revolutionaries. The RCIT calls for *participation in the referendum and for a "Yes" vote for the independence of Catalonia*. In most cases, participation in a referendum is not a subversive act as it is part of the arsenal of bourgeois-democratic rights. However, the imperialist Spanish state persecutes the independence movement to such a degree that it is not enough to just call for the participation at the referendum. It is urgent to *build self-defense units of the workers and oppressed* in Catalonia to defend the independence movement.

6. Furthermore, the *labor movement in Spain needs to organize a nationwide solidarity campaign with the Catalan people*. It needs to support the right of the people in Catalonia to hold their referendum and to form an independent state if they wish so. The people in Catalonia need to organize a *Revolutionary Constitutional Assembly* in order to democratically develop new laws for an independent state. Authentic socialists should argue in favor of an independent *Workers Republic of Catalonia* (likewise for the Basque country as they also have a very militant and progressive tradition demanding independence).

7. The formation of self-defense units of the workers and oppressed in Catalonia will be used as a pretext by the Spanish imperialist state to escalate their attacks on the Catalan people. Although such an escalation frightens pacifist elements it should not hinder class-conscious workers and the oppressed to take such a step. The escalation is not avoidable without abandoning the plans for the referendum not to speak the independence. However, abandoning the referendum would be a massive defeat not only for the Catalan people but for all oppressed and discriminated nations in Europe who aspire national self-determination. In addition it would strengthen the self-confidence of the repression apparatus in Spain which would be encouraged to attack more brutally other mobilizations of the workers and oppressed like the pro-refugee protests. To all those who fear the escalation we say: *"It is better to fight now for a future of freedom than to obey the oppressors for your lifetime!"*

8. The mass parties and trade unions of the working class in Catalonia must organize mass demonstrations and a political, indefinite general strike. They should

*demand the immediate release of all arrested as well as for the right to hold the referendum in 1 October*. Likewise, it is also important not to let the Catalan people alone. There must be mass protests in solidarity with the Catalan people in the whole of Spain. They must support the right of the Catalan people to hold a referendum as well as to have the right to separate from the Spanish state. It is most likely that not only police but even military will be mobilized by the Spanish state against such a movement. An indefinite general strike needs therefore to be protected by its self-defense units, which, if necessary can be turned into armed popular militias. Likewise, such a solidarity movement must demand the same rights for the Basque people who have also shown a strong desire to become independent.

9. The Catalan people can only achieve real independence and freedom if they fight consequently for it and if they have the support of the workers and oppressed in the rest of Spain. Therefore only unity and solidarity can solve the current situation in favor of the workers and oppressed. Exciting times are ahead for the working class and oppressed in Catalonia and nationwide who should prepare to fight the imperialist Spanish state and its friends in the imperialist *European Union* by any means. Only a *Workers Republic of Catalonia* as a voluntary part of an *Iberian Socialist Federation* and the *United Socialist States of Europe* means both - real independence *and* unity. This goal can only be achieved by an armed uprising and a socialist revolution of the workers and oppressed in Spain and in whole Europe.

10. The RCIT calls all workers and oppressed in Europe to support the independence movement and to rally for the release of the arrested officials and prosecuted activists *now*. In addition to the above mentioned measures it is highly urgent to build a *new workers party* in Catalonia and nationwide. In our opinion such a workers party needs to be based on a revolutionary program for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. It should be built in combination with the formation of a *Revolutionary World Party*. We call all authentic revolutionaries in Catalonia, the Basque country and the rest of Spain to organize meetings and mobilizations in order to form such a *New Workers Party*. Now is the time to fight the rigorous repression apparatus of the imperialist Spanish state. Now is the time to achieve big victories by fighting consistently and united!

*International Secretariat of the RCIT*

# Catalonia: Support the Democratic Right for Independence!

## For an independent Workers' Republic of Catalonia (and the Basque country)!

Statement of the European Bureau of the RCIT, 26.09.2017

1. *La Diada* 2017, the celebrations of the *Catalonian National Day*, turned into an impressively large demonstration with up to one million people taking to the streets of Barcelona to display their desire for independence. It is not the first time that these celebrations, which take place annually on September 11, have been used to protest and demand the right for self-determination and the right to hold a referendum on this issue, like the one now planned for October 1. Five years ago, more than 1.5 million people took to the streets of Barcelona with the slogan "*Catalunya, nou estat d'Europa!*" ("Catalonia, new state of Europe!"); a year later, in 2013, more than 350,000 volunteers registered to participate in the event *Via Catalana cap a la Independència* (Catalonian Way towards Independence) to support and mobilize for the 400 km long human chain which was formed by at least 1.6 million people. The RCIT fully supports the protests of the Catalonian people and their right for self-determination. To their demand for independence we reply: Yes, it is time for an independent Workers' Republic of Catalonia (and the Basque Country)!

2. The Spanish, imperialist state entirely rejects the aspirations for independence of the Catalonian people and is attempting by all means to suppress the plans to hold the referendum on October 1. This is nothing but the continuation of the long history of national oppression and discrimination of the Catalonian people by the reactionary Spanish state. The Catalonian people have a long tradition of struggle for independence against the Spanish oppressors. In the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the shires of Barcelona, Girona and others were united by *Guifré el Pilós* who led the *Dynasty of the Earls of Barcelona*. About 200 years later the Catalonian shires freed themselves from the seigniorship of the West Franconian king. Later on, the *Corona de Aragón* was formed, a union of Aragonian kings leading the kingdoms of *Mallorca*, *Sicily*, *Naples* well as the duchies of *Athens* and *Neopatras*, the shires of *Barcelona*, the margrave of *Provence* and many others. During the *French-Spanish War*, the people of *Aragón* tried to gain their independence from the Bourbon ruler, *Philipp V*, without success and on the 11 September 1714 the besieged rebels of Barcelona capitulated. During subsequent years the Catalonians lost their self-governing bodies under the oppressive laws of *Philipp V*, the *Decretos de Nueva Planta*. Until today this historic defeat of Barcelona in 1714 is commemorated as the *Catalonian National Day*. However, Catalonia's history of struggle for independence was and is still not over.

3. In 1931 the Catalonians got the chance for a provisional autonomy by forming the *Generalitat de Catalunya*. In 1934, the reigning President of the *Generalitat*, *Lluís Companys i Jover* proclaimed the state of Catalonia, which triggered the arrest of the new Catalonian government by the Spanish army. All this happened while the revolutionary general strike in Asturia was going on, an heroic uprising of the workers, mainly miners, against the entrance into the *Spanish State Cabinet* of three ministers from the fascist *Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* (CEDA).

While the proclaimed Catalonian government only lasted for ten hours, the heroic uprising of the Asturian workers persevered for 20 days before it was finally crushed by the Spanish army under the leadership of the future dictator, *Francisco Franco*. However, in 1936 the imprisoned Catalonian government was released by the popular front. Barcelona was a proletarian stronghold, playing a key role during summer of 1936 uprisings led mainly by the anarchistic forces, the *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo* (CNT) and the *Federación Anarquista Ibérica* (FAI). Barcelona was also the site of a spontaneous worker uprising against the popular-front regime in May 1937. This mass protest was only supported by the Trotskyists and the "*Friends of Durruti*," and was eventually crushed brutally by the Stalinists. With the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939, which saw the final defeat of the working class militias by counterrevolutionary forces, the fascist, military dictatorship of Franco ruled Spain until his death in 1975. It was a bitter time, not only for the working class, but for all other segments of the Catalonian people as well. The dictatorship of Franco denied the existence of Catalonian nationality, and outlawed every aspect of Catalonian identity, including its language. It is mainly due to the Catalonian Diaspora that the Catalan language survived and is now spoken by at least 9 million people.

4. Today, Spain as a *constitutional monarchy* which does not recognize the right of self-determination for the Catalonian or the Basque peoples. Neither do the reactionary former king of Spain, Juan Carlos I, who was the chosen successor by the fascist dictator Franco himself, or his son, the reigning King Felipe VI, accept Catalonia's call for a referendum. Instead, King Felipe VI and the Spanish government are threatening the Catalonian people and have declared that they will prevent the referendum. The Spanish state is planning criminal proceedings against the entire Catalonian government and all volunteers who support the preparations for the referendum. They are even considering mobilizing the Spanish army in the event of further developments towards Catalonian independence. Demonstrating how serious the threat is for the Catalonian people, armed police forces were mobilized to confiscate more than 100,000 leaflets printed for the independence campaign and several newspapers and printers have been threatened. The Catalonian newspaper *El Vallenc* was searched by police bearing an official search warrant. It has even become illegal for the bourgeois Catalonian press to write positively about the referendum, let alone call for it.

5. Indeed, the independent Catalonia that is being campaigned for by the *Together For Yes (JxSí)* movement would involve huge troubles for the imperialistic Spanish state, which would be deprived of nearly 20% of its economic output and 16% of its population. Although Catalonia is indeed one of the wealthier parts of Spain, the gap in poverty levels between regions is not all that great. In Catalonia, the poverty rate is 19.2% compared to



22.3% for the rest of Spain. Last year's official unemployment rate was 15.7% for Catalonia and 19.6% for the rest of the country. These figures are not surprising, as the main part of Catalanian economy is not tourism, as is often suggested, but rather industry. At least half of the Catalanian economy is based on industry, including the chemical, automotive, metallurgical and textile sectors as well as the agricultural-food and pharmaceutical industries. Furthermore, the region of Catalonia accounts for 23% of Spanish industry, while covering less than 7% of the Spain's territory on the Iberian Peninsula. Even historically, Spain's industrial working class was, until the 1950s, almost exclusively concentrated in Catalonia and the Basque country. Catalonia's aspirations towards independence are not comparable to *reactionary* independence movements, like the *Venetian* nationalist movement, in which the extreme right-wing *Liga Veneta-Lega Nord* plays a key role. Quite the opposite is the case, as discrimination of the Catalanian people not only has a long history, but the struggle against it and for independence, now as in the past, also enjoy widespread popularity among the Catalanian working class and youth. This desire has been nurtured by the ongoing capitalist crisis which has brutally hit the working class throughout Spain. In addition, the Spanish state has provoked Catalanian resistance with its attempts in recent years to undermine the province's existing autonomous rights. This is to say nothing about the current atmosphere of hysteria fomented by the Spanish state in light of the planned referendum. It is most likely that the Catalonians would not prefer cessation from Spain to such an extent as they do, if there were real autonomy for them people within the state. However, the increasing discrimination of the Catalanian people in recent years, as well as attacks on their autonomy by the Spanish state, have changed the sentiments of the Catalanian people, including its working class.

6. *The Statue of Autonomy* for Catalonia was vastly reduced by the Spanish state in 2010, including the explicit refusal to recognize the people of Catalonia (or any other national minority, like the Basque people) as a nation within Spain. Protests of more than one million people demanding "*Som una nació. Nosaltres decidim*" ("We are one nation. We decide.") have taken place to oppose the resulting imposed limitations. Perhaps more significant consequences followed decisions, like new education legislation passed in 2013, which repealed the previous equality of both languages – Catalan and Spanish, in favor of priority for the latter. After Franco's regime, it became and remains a major project of the Catalanian people to restore their ancestral native tongue, Catalan. The enmity of the Spanish state towards this more than understandable aspiration strengthens the Catalanian wish for independence. As a result, the current situation is extremely tense and it appears that the Spanish state is not even willing to offer various smaller concessions involving increased autonomy for Catalonia. More and more Catalonians have become critical of the Spanish state for its arrogance, including those who actually oppose independence from Spain. Even among the ranks of Catalonians who voted for Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, 40% (compared to 82% of all Catalanian voters) are critical of the Spanish state's behavior towards the demand for a referendum, a fact which is strengthening rather than weaken-

ing independence forces.

7. The desire for Catalanian independence may even increase more after a comment by the German government's spokesperson, Steffen Seibert, at a press conference in which he stressed that Germany and the European Union have no interest in a divided Spain. Seibert argued that existing law has to be maintained, meaning that Europe's two major imperialist forces – Germany and the EU – oppose the ratification of the referendum by Catalonia's local government. This statement came as no surprise, as Germany, one of the two leading countries forming the imperialist EU, has calculated the potential loss of Spain's financial contribution to the union should Catalonia split from Spain. Furthermore, the imperialist project of the European Union, as an important competitor in economic, political, geo-strategic and military matters of the great imperialist powers (the US, Russia and China), is clearly threatened by the symbolism of such a referendum – in particular following the British decision on Brexit. A vote in favor of secession from the Spanish state by the Catalonians may encourage similar movements by *the Basque* people, *the Flemish*, *the Scots* and others. This is a nightmare scenario for the imperialists of the EU. In addition to many other problems that such a development would create, it would lead to increased tensions between the member states of the European Union, making it far more fragile than it already has become.

8. It is the task of *authentic Marxist revolutionaries* to support the demands of oppressed and discriminated against nations from the depredations of imperialist forces. In the case of the referendum on Brexit, it was and is obvious that both positions – the "*remain*" position as well as that in support of Brexit – were merely two *pro-imperialist camps* fighting against one other. No one with a clear mind can argue that Britain is, in any way, oppressed or discriminated against by the European Union. (No wonder, then, that both right-wing chauvinists and Stalinists make such spurious arguments!) However, even in the unlikely scenario of the complete secession of Catalonia from Spain and its transformation into an independent Catalanian state having its own *imperialistic* character, the issue here is still not comparable to the referendum on Brexit, as the Catalanian people are *demonstrably* discriminated against by the Spanish state. Furthermore, even if such an unlikely scenario were to develop in the future, and Catalonia would become an independent imperialistic state, it would nonetheless be wrong for Marxist revolutionaries to reject the *right* to self-determination for the Catalanian people, *including* their right to secede from Spain at this point in time. As Marxists, it is our task to win the workers and oppressed over to the idea of internationalism and the rejection of all nationalist sentiments. As such, we consistently fight against the influence of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist forces – including those within the Catalanian movement for independence. However, our struggle is *not* possible if we merely ruminate on internationalism instead of understand *and* respect the reasons that bring workers and oppressed of discriminated against nations to, in fact, mobilize under banners making nationalistic demands. Naturally, we prefer a unity of the working class and the oppressed that *transcends* borders and nations, and reject all separatist tendencies. However, we need to *prove* that not only do we oppose and truly

despise all chauvinistic tendencies and sentiments *against* the Catalonian people, but that, as revolutionary communists, we will never discriminate against peoples and nations who *justifiably* seek the right of self determination. Towards this end we must support demands for national independence if they are as authentic and widespread, as they certainly are in the case of Catalonia. Therefore, even if it is far more likely that a majority of Catalonians will prefer unity with the other peoples of Spain and oppose secession, it remains incumbent upon authentic revolutionaries to fight for the *right* of self-determination for Catalonia, including independence *today*.

9. The *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) – as is typical of social democrats – is against the holding of the planned referendum and unconditionally opposes the independence of Catalonia, as they attempt to send a message to the current regime about how useful they are for the imperialist Spanish state. Attacking the local government of Catalonia, the leader of the PSC (the Catalonian section of the PSOE) *Miquel Iceta* ranted: “*Saying you want to negotiate while putting on all types of activities to carry out an illegal vote has no credibility.*” In addition to the PSOE toadies, there is a joint platform of various forces that are now being accused of collaboration because of their respective positions on the referendum. *Catalonia Yes We Can* (CSQEP) is a parliamentary platform of *Podem Catalunya* and the *Catalunya en Comú* (a former electoral coalition that became a party last year, but now without its Barcelona branch) which has basically been split into three over the three possible options on the vote calling for a referendum: three MPs were in favor while its other eight MPs were divided between opposing the call for a referendum and abstaining from the vote deciding this matter.

10. No less, there are even organizations with obviously conflicting positions *within* their own ranks. For example, *Podem Catalunya* favors participation in the referendum, but doesn’t see the necessity of making this position binding, while its affiliated all-Spain organization, *Podemos*, is calling for a day of protest on October 1 and non-participation in the referendum. Leaders of the *Izquierda Unida* refused to call for participation in the referendum, explaining that the option for a federal solution is missing from

the question being posed to the voters, while its Catalonian correspondent, *Esquerra Unida i Alternativa*, supports the referendum as is, as it, according to them, reflects the will of the clear majority of the Catalonian people. However, the initiative “*Communists For The Yes,*” including activists from the *Poble Lliure*, *Juventuts d’Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (the youth organisation of the *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya*) and members who have resigned from the *Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya* (PSUC) – as the name of the initiatives makes clear – support the holding of the referendum and a vote for independence. An intense discussion is being conducted among all political forces of the Spanish left to clarify the characterization of the Catalonian nation and its movement for independence. An obvious tendency among the organizations and branches located *within* Catalonia is to at least support participation in the referendum, which in itself highlights a certain political insensitivity of these same forces *outside* Catalonia in contending with the notion of the province as a discriminated against nation. Recent developments also reflect an interesting difference between a very large and politically active part of the people of Catalonia who have been mobilizing for independence for years. It appears that one quarter of eligible voters actively participate in protests for independence while another quarter that is in favor of the movement and independence probably stays at home during the protests. The other half of the people of Catalonia would apparently vote against independence, but aside from this passive opposition are not really mobilizing to rally against it. This is in stark contrast to the Scottish independence referendum which witnessed strong mobilization on both sides of the issue. In any event, this broad analysis of political activism in Catalonia over the question of independence indicates an authentic favoring of independence among the politically conscious parts of the Catalonian people. Furthermore, it makes it far more likely that, if the referendum will actually take place, the result will be by far in favor of independence. For this reason, the RCIT not only defends the right of self-determination for the Catalonian people, but also openly supports the demand for an independent state. In our opinion, such a state should be a workers’ republic.

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11. The past and the present of the Catalonian people have been characterized by obvious discrimination by the Spanish state. Thus, the position of authentic Marxists should be to unconditionally support the right of self-determination for the Catalonian people (as well as the Basques) including the right to form an independent state. The RCIT maintains that only a *Workers' Republic of Catalonia* (and the Basque country) as part of a federation of *United Socialist States of Europe* will bring the Catalonian and Basque peoples what they demand: Full equal rights, freedom and the end of oppression and discrimination. In the words of the leader of the revolutionary movement in Russia and the revolutionary Soviet Union, V.I. Lenin: *"In all their propaganda and agitation — both within parliament and outside it — the Communist parties must consistently expose that constant violation of the equality of nations and of the guaranteed rights of national minorities which is to be seen in all capitalist countries, despite their "democratic" constitutions. It is also necessary, first, constantly to explain that only the Soviet system is capable of ensuring genuine equality of-nations, by uniting first the proletarians and then the whole mass of the working population in the struggle against the bourgeoisie; and, second, that all Communist parties should render direct aid to the revolutionary movements among the dependent and underprivileged nations (for example, Ireland, the American Negroes, etc.) and in the colonies. Without the latter condition, which is particularly important, the struggle against the oppression of dependent nations and colonies, as well as recognition of their right to secede, are but a false signboard, as is evidenced by the parties of the Second International."* (Collected Works, Vol 31, p.147-148)

12. The oppressive imperialist Spanish regime is threatening the local government of Catalonia, along with activists rallying for the referendum, with legal prosecution. The Spanish state has already mobilized its apparatus to hinder preparations for the referendum and threaten the Catalan people. It is, first and foremost, the duty of all revolutionaries and all authentic democrats to support the demand for independence, to practically participate and to defend both the activists as well as the local Catalonian government (despite its being a capitalist one) against any prosecution by the Spanish state. Instead, it is the absurd and demagogic constitutional monarchy that has to be abolished as it is a remnant of the fascist Franco regime. Real independence for Catalonia from the Spanish state can not be won via bourgeois-democratic means. Furthermore, it is most likely that a newly formed capitalist Catalonian state will drive parts of the working class into poverty and misery, as it will have a weakened and more isolated economy and still be threatened by Spanish hegemony. In addition, we can presume that both the Spanish state and the European Union may very well mobilize their reactionary forces (including the police and military) in an attempt to stop the secession of Catalonia by any means necessary. Such a scenario may make entirely feasible the establishment of a de facto police state / military dictatorship in Catalonia. In the wake of Catalonia, the Basques may also rally for independence and renew the operation of militant, armed groups which would invariably provoke the intervention of Spanish military forces in the Basque country. All such developments would have consequences for the entire Spanish state involving concrete moves towards strengthening and increasing

its Bonapartist structure. In any event, it is incumbent to organize the struggle for independence of Catalonia on a proletarian and revolutionary basis.

13. There is an urgent need to form nationwide action and solidarity committees, in order to defend and serve the Catalonian people in their rally for the referendum on October 1. The current repression of the mobilizations for holding the referendum by the Spanish state must be fought against wherever it appears. These action and solidarity committees, backed by the workers and oppressed of Spain, need to prepare for an escalation of the conflict with the Spanish regime. This includes preparing to fight back against all arms of the state's repression apparatus, including the Spanish army. As history and the example of the Basque people have shown, the willingness to turn such action and solidarity committees into armed militias of the workers and oppressed is crucial. This means the readiness to fight the imperialist Spanish state and its allies of the imperialist European Union by any means. Mass mobilizations, including general strikes in support of the Catalonians, must be organized nationwide. Only the combination of an organized struggle by the Catalonian people supported by the workers and oppressed of Spain, the willingness to organize mass demonstrations culminating in an indefinite general strike, and the readiness to form armed militias can lead to real independence from the oppressive imperialist state of Spain. In order to maintain the goal of real independence and equality, all steps towards the formation of the above mentioned *Workers Republic of Catalonia (and Basque country)* as part of the *United Socialist States of Europe* must be taken without delay. This includes armed insurrection and organized socialist revolution not only of the Catalonian and the Spanish workers and oppressed, but of the workers and oppressed of Europe.

14. It is extremely urgent to form of a nationwide *Revolutionary Workers' Party* as part of a *Revolutionary World Party* that is willing to consistently fight for the independence of the Catalonian and Basque peoples as long as they demand independence. Only such a revolutionary workers' party can successfully lead the struggle by giving it an internationalist orientation.

The RCIT says to all class conscious workers in Spain: *Mobilize for the referendum on October 1, participate and vote in favor of independence! Prepare a resistance and solidarity campaign with and for the Catalonian people in order to create joint forces against the reactionary regime of Spain that has mobilized to prosecute the organized supporters of the independence campaign! Fight for the abolition of the constitutional monarchy! Prepare to continue the struggle after the referendum, as the results need to be implemented which in turn will lead to massive confrontations with the Spanish state and almost certainly also with the EU. It is extremely urgent to prepare the formation of a revolutionary workers' party of Spain as part of an international workers' party to lead this struggle! Prepare for the possibility of a military coup in the event that Catalonia declares independence! Towards this end, create action committees of the workers and oppressed to organize the struggle and be able to transform them into militias to fight back a counter-revolutionary mobilization against the independence movement! Only with these measures can the way forward towards freedom, sovereignty and the end of all oppression and exploitation - the way towards socialism - be achieved!*

# 1 October 2017: Big Decision for Catalonia

## Statement on the referendum on the independence of Catalonia

Article by Manfred Maier (RCIT Germany), 21.09.2017

On 1 October, the Catalan government will hold a referendum on the independence of Catalonia. As you walk through the streets of Barcelona you can see the Catalan colors, flags, etc. on windows and balconies. Hundreds of thousands of people supported the demand for independence on the streets of Barcelona on September 11; it was not the first demonstration of this kind in recent years. The more the Spanish central government curtails the autonomy of the Catalans, the more intense become the demands for independence in Catalonia.

The Spanish government is up in arms against the decision taken on 6 September by the Catalan Parliament. The Spanish Constitutional Court suspended the decision. In doing so, the Spanish Government is fully responsible for the deterioration of the situation, since it has provoked opposition with the refusal to negotiate or offer any concessions.

The bourgeois press, including those published in Catalonia, largely repeats the government's propaganda against the movement of independence. The EU is clearly opposed to the independence of Catalonia and, therefore supports the Spanish central government.

There was also a massive interference by German corporations on the question of the independence of Catalonia.

The leaders of the multinationals such as *Volkswagen* (VW / SEAT), *BASF* and other companies operating in Catalonia are openly threatening the independence movement with loss of production and job cuts.

### The positions of the Catalan and Spanish political parties

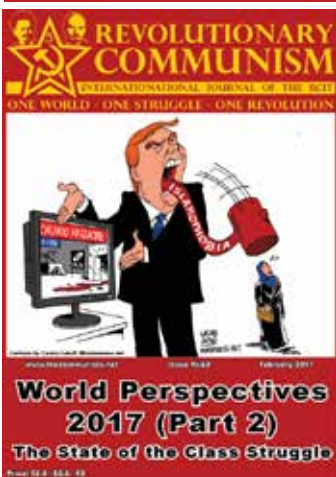
We do not want to analyze the positions of all parties in detail, but we briefly mention the most important ones. The results of the elections to the Regional Parliament of Catalonia in September 2015 are in brackets.

- The *PSOE* and its Catalan offshoot *PSC* want the conversion of Spain into a federal state (12.72%). The *PSC* rejects the independence efforts of the Catalans while the *PSOE* is even offending the planned referendum as such.

- The Catalan *UDC* (Christian Democrats) is for a referendum and for the right of Catalonia to decide itself (2.51%).

- *Junts pel SI*, an alliance of *CDC* (Liberals), Catalan *ERC* (left) and other forces: for referendum and for independence (39.59%).

- The *CUP*, an anti-capitalist, Catalan party, is opposed to the EU status of Catalonia and demands an independent Catalan state (8.21%).



## NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

# World Perspectives 2017: The Struggle against the Reactionary Offensive in the Era of Trumpism

Introduction \* I . A New Political Phase Has Opened: The Reactionary Offensive of the Ruling Class in the Era of Trumpism \* II. Some Theoretical Question about the New Political Phase \* III. The Great Power Rivalry and Its Consequences for World Politics \* IV. The Middle East and the State of the Arab Revolution \* V. Class Struggle in the US after Trump's Victory \* VI . The Reactionary Offensive of the Ruling Class and the Resistance in Latin America \* VII. Imperialist Interference and the Struggle for Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa \* VIII. Europe in the Era of Chauvinism, Militarization and Brexit \* IX. Russia: Victorious Outcome of NATO's Cold War \* X. China: Strengthened as a Great Power but Before a Serious Recession \* XI. The Class Struggle in Asia \* XII. Perspectives for Building of the Revolutionary World Party Today \* Footnotes

Published as two special issues of RevCom with altogether 56 pages, A4 Format

- „Catalunya Sí que es Pot“ (CSP) is an alliance consisting of the Catalan Podemos, Ecosocialists and the Catalan branch of the *Izquierda Unida*. The chairman of *Podemos* is in favor of the referendum, but against independence. The Catalan leading candidate of the alliance is however in favor of both (8.94%).

- The Catalan *PP* (Partido Popular) rejects the referendum and is against the independence (8.49%).

- The *Ciutadans* (neoliberal) is against the independence of Catalonia (17.9%).

### Which Way Forward?

Based on the vivid tradition of class struggle, the extent of both the political organization and mobilization of the Catalans, and the popularity of their independence movement, we call for participation in the referendum and a vote in favor of Catalonia's independence.

Our perspective for an independent Catalonia, however, is neither for a small capitalist nation state or EU membership similar to Spain.

The organizations of the working class must rather fight any chauvinism and advocate an *Iberian Socialist Union* within the *United Socialist States of Europe*. In such a socialist union, the Catalans (as well as the Basques) will have the full right to lead their own state free from any discrimination against other nations if they wish so.

The building of a revolutionary communist party in Catalonia, but also throughout Spain and in Euzkadi (Basque country) must be achieved. This is a central and indispensable task.

All organizations and activists who want to build such a party must join forces on the basis of a revolutionary program that includes:

- Fight against the EU austerity policy and, against the austerity programs in Catalonia. This austerity policy was supported and implemented by forces of the Catalan Parliament, including those who are now pro-independence.

- The government of an independent Catalonia must nationalize the banks under the control of the workers; money transactions must be placed under control of the labor movement.

- All big companies must be nationalized under workers control.

- The *Guardia Civil* and other police units must be dissolved and replaced by self-defense units of the workers and oppressed.

- The judiciary must be replaced by jury courts set up by the

workers' movement. The structures of the judiciary of the constitutional monarchy of Spain are deeply imbued with the influence of Francoism and the Spanish-Castilian central state, and cannot be adopted by an independent Catalonia.

- In Catalonia and the whole of Spain, a school system must be set up which makes it possible to learn the languages of the various ethnic groups of the country as well as all other languages of migrants on an equal and voluntary base.

- The state and the church must be rigorously separated from each other and all institutions of the monarchy must be abolished.

- In a free, Catalan workers state asylum seekers, who fled because of war or economic need, will find a safe home. In the last few years in Barcelona alone, hundreds of thousands have demonstrated for the refugees' right to stay. These were the largest pro-refugee demonstrations across Europe. The Spanish central government has also massively attacked this solidarity movement.

- After the declaration of independence, a constitutional assembly must be convened, where the most urgent questions about the further development of the independent state are discussed in open and democratic debates.

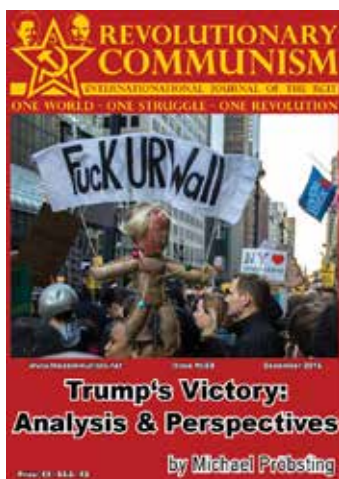
Revolutionary Communists advocate the construction of a workers state, allied with the oppressed of Spain.

### A serious situation

If the referendum really takes place on 01.10. deciding on the independence of Catalonia, violent attacks by the Spanish central government are most likely. Thus the mayors, who support the referendum, are invited by the Constitutional Court of Madrid, as „witnesses“ to the „Spanish constitution“. They are threatened with prosecution in case of support for the referendum.

The Spanish government will not be afraid to use the police and army against the polling stations of the referendum. The masses in Catalonia will have to answer that with the weapon of the political mass strike and powerful demonstrations, but will also have to defend their democratic referendum with armed defence guards. For the EU, the separation of Catalonia would be a disaster, so it will continue its support for the Spanish state against the Catalans by any means.

The Catalans who aspire for independence earn our full support!



## NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

# The Meaning, Consequences and Lessons of Trump's Victory

By Michael Prebsting, November 2016

Introduction \* I. The Election Outcome \* II. Where is the Trump Administration Heading? \* III. Global Consequences: The Beginning of a New Era \* IV. Lessons and Perspectives for the Struggle \* V. Summary Theses \* Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 40 pages, A4 Format

## Catalonia: This is what Democracy looks like

### The Spanish ambassador in Britain explains bourgeois democracy

Comment by Almedina Gunić, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, 23 September 2017

**Note of the Editorial Board:** The following comment refers to a letter of the Spanish ambassador in Britain on the planned referendum in Catalonia on the issue of independence. This letter can be read here: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/22/puigdemonts-accusations-about-spain-are-simply-untrue>.

\*\*\*\*\*

A referendum on the question of independence is planned for October 1 in Catalonia which led to a massive mobilization of all forces by the Spanish government including its police and the civil guard. Since the Catalan parliament decided to organize the referendum the furious imperialist regime in Spain tries to threaten the supporters of independence with prosecution. The repression apparatus of Spain arrested even 14 officials of Catalonia but was forced to release them after nationwide protests took place.

However, the Spanish ambassador of Britain, *Carlos Bastarrece*, wrote a letter to the British newspaper "*The Guardian*" defending the Spanish state's oppressive behavior as an authentic, and therefore legitimate, part of bourgeois democracy. The letter is of interest for us as class-conscious workers as it is a perfect example for the hypocrisy of the so-called democracy in Europe. It therefore makes sense to read it carefully and to learn from it.

*Carlos Bastarrece* defended the massive violations of

democratic rights by the repression apparatus with the *de facto* argument that a bourgeois democracy has the right to mobilize its police against the will of the people. "It was a judge in Barcelona who ordered the police operation," he explains and adds "More over the judge has the backing of the constitutional court."

What a perfect example for the logic of the capitalist class! There exists the formal division between legislative and executive forces and therefore it is perfectly fine to aim the smashing of a democratic movement of millions of people!

Further, *Bastarrece* explains that the *Guardia Civil* (Civil Guard) is a natural part of the Spanish police and rejects the characterization of them as paramilitary forces. Any link to the military is not mentioned so that the reader should believe that the civil guard is really just regular police force as he claims. In reality and by its own definition the *Guardia Civil* is indeed a military force with police duties. Here is how the *FIEP* (Association of European and Mediterranean gendarmeries and police forces with military status) describe the character of the *Guardia Civil*: "On the other hand, and under the authority of the Ministry of Defence, it conducts missions of military nature abroad and, as civilian police force, it also takes part in other missions carried out abroad by international bodies. Apart from that, they have deployed attachés and liaison officers in different embassies all over the world."

Imagine poor *Bastarrece* trying to find excuses and expla-

## Books 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.

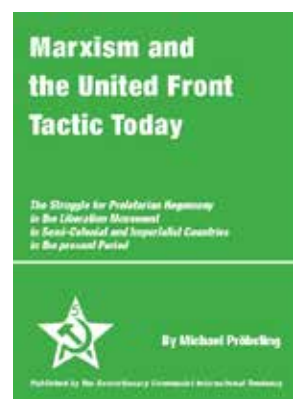
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

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.



nations with so little success, that he needs to make up lies about the simplest true every child in Spain knows! If this statement were not so foolishly stupid, one could almost have pity on him.

### What a dialogue means for the Spanish state

*"The government has attempted and is still offering dialogue",* the Spanish ambassador claims further. This assertion is quite interesting as the Spanish government claimed in September that they had not received an open letter by the Catalan government. The latter explained that they had indeed send the letter including the invitation for *"political dialogue, based on the legitimacy we all have, to make possible something that in a democracy is never a problem and even less a crime: listening to the voice of the people"*. We are not talking here about a greeting card on Christmas that may get lost! We are rather talking about a highly official document circulating between the Catalan government and the Spanish regime.

Whatever the truth is about the "lost" letter, it was the Spanish MP Mariano Rajoy who made clear in 2015 (and ever since): *"I am ready to listen and to talk, but not in any way to liquidate the law (...) I am not going to talk about either the unity of Spain, or sovereignty."* Well, than what was Rajoy thinking the discussion will be about? What kind of dialogue one has to ask *Bastarrache*, is offered by the Spanish state? Maybe it is an invitation to a kid's tea party but obviously not a serious dialogue about the demands of the independence movement.

Furthermore it is hard to believe that any real dialogue is possible given the extreme repressive behaviour of the Spanish state. Just two weeks ago, Rajoy said clearly: *"There won't be a self-determination referendum. I will do whatever is needed, without relinquishing anything, to prevent it."* As long as the law is a law of the oppressors it is implemented by the repression apparatus by all means including full force of violence against our class and all oppressed. The capitalist politicians are only "pacifist" if they are in a weak position but not if they have the full power to implement their interests.

No wonder that the capitalist government of Catalonia plays the role of appeasing the independence movement in order to prevent sharper clashes between the Catalan

workers and oppressed and the Spanish state as it has a weaker position in the conflict. They want to utilize the just cause of the Catalan workers and oppressed but without heading towards a revolutionary situation which may cut off their heads as well. As the prime minister of Catalonia, Carles Puigdemont wrote: *"In spite of provocations, overactions, rumors, false slogans ... we are calm and peaceful always. It is our great asset."*

The working class has showed one of its greatest assets: the Dockers in Barcelona and Tarragona voted to refuse service for those ships which accommodate more than 4000 members of the Guardia Civil sent by the central government in Madrid. The Dockers did so despite the fact that these two ports are under national, not regional, control. In addition the Catalan government who has the control over the port of Palamos claimed that the port's services were committed. Rumors of a planned general strike action in order to make the referendum possible are looming since weeks.

It is therefore somehow funny that *Bastarrache* wrote in his letter to the Guardian: *"Puigdemont says "all we want is to carry out the greatest expression of free democracy", but his projected referendum – that will not take place – is rather the result of a process that repeals constitutional democracy and their own charter of self-government."* It is up to the workers and oppressed in Catalonia supported by all workers and oppressed in Spain to shatter all lies on the referendum not taking place. In the interest of the working class of Catalonia it has to consequently fight for a Workers Republic of Catalonia. *Bastarrache* on the other hand should keep writing letters. We need a good laugh once in a while.

<http://www.fiep.org/member-forces/spanish-guardia-civil/>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34383386>

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-spain-politics-catalonia/catalonia-asks-spain-for-dialogue-as-independence-struggle-intensifies-idUSKCN1BQ146>

<http://www.politico.eu/article/mariano-rajoy-on-catalonia-there-wont-be-a-referendum/>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/09/21/boats-spanish-military-police-blocked-catalan-ports-unrest-grows/>

## Comunismo Revolucionario

### Spanish-language Journal of the RCIT

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## Fight Macron's Labor Bill: Time to shake France to its very foundations!

*Statement of the European Bureau of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 28th August 2017*

1. After both the French *Senate* and the *National Assembly* approved Macron's new labor bill, the massive attack by the new president against the French working class became visible for the first time. It was clear from the very beginning that the French president Emmanuel Macron and his newly-founded, bourgeois party *La République En Marche!* represent a severe threat for the workers and oppressed in France. The labor bill is the first, but surely not the last, attack against workers' rights that the new government intends to implement. The bill is scheduled to take effect by the end of September. On behalf of the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)*, it's European Bureau calls the workers and oppressed in France to organize massive protests, including a general strike to bring down the new bill.

2. The new labor bill was introduced by Macron with the goal of "liberalising and freeing up the labour market." This is nothing but bourgeois talk for "increasing the misery of the workers to increase the profits of the bosses." No wonder the labor bill includes the complete flexibilisation of working time. It gives nearly all power to the negotiations at individual workplaces, thereby weakening the influence of the negotiations across industries. The bill offers workers who are discharged without cause less compensation than before. Various organs of the labor movement will be fused together thereby making it far more difficult for more radical factions of the trade unions to operate successfully in concrete workplaces. Although not formally eliminated, the new labor bill opens the end of the 35-hour workweek.

3. Consequently, it is extremely important and urgent that the labor movement successfully fight back against this first huge attack, and put the full force of its resistance against the new government. We therefore support the nationwide day of strike planned by the militant trade union *CGT* for 12 September and call upon all other trade unions and labor organizations to participate and mobilize for it. The *RCIT* and its European Bureau condemns the refusal of the largest French labor union, *CFDT*, and the third largest, *Force Ouvrière (FO)*, to participate in the protests. No worker should forget that the *CFDT* opposed the mobilisation for the impressive and militant protests against the last reactionary labor law (*El Khomri Law*) implemented by the Hollande government in 2016. We call upon trade union activists inside the *CFDT* and *FO* to act against the intent of the bureaucrats and to mobilize for the planned day of action. However, the Macron government will not take back the new labor bill due to one day of mass strikes. Indeed, only an *indefinite general strike* has the potential to bring down the new bill. Such an indefinite general strike opens the way to bringing down the new government. However such a strike must be well prepared, well organized and adhered to by the working class.

4. The permanent state of emergency is already being used in France against strikes and demonstrations

and its use can now be expected to take off. Macron has seamlessly adopted the emergency measures of the predecessor government of François Hollande to include restrictions on strikes and assemblies. What were still exceptional measures under Holland have become permanent and normal features of the Macron presidency. The police have been granted extraordinary powers under the state of emergency, and these are also being used in the context of house searches and other violations of civil rights. The state of emergency has been extended five times since the Paris attacks of 13 November 2015. Macron won a further extension until 1 November this year. Therefore, it is vitally urgent that workers in the trade unions and workplaces begin preparing to protect and defend the 12 September mass strike by forming self-defense committees. We call upon all revolutionaries, all progressive organizations, as well as all militants from the labor movement to join forces in creating such self-defense units.

5. Aside from giving verbal support for the 12 September strike, Jean-Luc Mélenchon and his party *France Insoumise* have organized a day of action for 23 September. The programmatic base of *France Insoumise* cannot be characterized as anti-capitalist, but rather as *social-imperialist, petty bourgeois, and populist*. It has a number of progressive demands, including the strengthening of the health system, an increase of the minimum wage, and an increase of the minimum pension. *France Insoumise* also rejected the *El Khomri Law* of 2016, which is a progressive stance. However, its strategy for the labor movement is to include the latter into a new form of the French imperialist state, a "VI<sup>e</sup> République." This party fantasizes about a 6<sup>th</sup> Republic with Mélenchon as its new president. Aside from some progressive demands, *France Insoumise* is awash in French nationalism, which in the end makes it awash in the sea of imperialism. No wonder that they call for a separate day of action. While *France Insoumise* was founded by reformist-bureaucratic forces inside the labor movement, it is rapidly transforming itself into a left-wing petty bourgeois populist force outside of the labor movement.

6. Other forces like the *NPA (Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste)* are definitely taking the correct position by supporting and mobilizing for the mass strike on 12 September, while at the same time criticizing *France Insoumise* for not orienting themselves towards anti-capitalism, the working class, and the labor movement as such. However, all in all, the *NPA* has been far too uncritical of *France Insoumise* and has likewise failed to merge with mass elements as obviously became necessary after its weak results of the last elections. While the *NPA* correctly criticizes *France Insoumise* for their sectarianism towards organs of the labor movement, their undemocratic party system, their rejection of working class politics, and their main focus on electoral work instead of mobilizing in the street – the *NPA* doesn't condemn the chauvinistic, pro-imperialist stance of *France Insoumise* and other related core elements of the latter's political agenda. This constitutes a fatal blindness



and far too pedagogic criticism of a party in a country that is leading the imperialist *European Union*, that has a history as a colonial power, and that is not only exploiting and occupying a number of semi-colonial countries, but which is also over-exploiting a great number of migrants. The inconsequential, chumming-up approach of the *NPA* brought the party to erringly call its supports to vote for the candidates of *France Insoumise* (and the *CPF*) in the second round of the elections, as they were supposedly candidates with a “clear position against future attacks on labor law, pensions, social security and those who will support them.” Without consistent criticism of *France Insoumise*, the *NPA*’s illusions of attracting mass elements into their ranks cannot be achieved. Rather, in light of looming onslaughts by the Macron government, the labor movement must prepare for the struggle by joining forces with the organs of the oppressed like migrant organizations and others. An incorrect approach towards social-imperialists can only put labor at the risk of breaking its neck.

7. A very dangerous situation exists for the French working class, for the youth, for all those of an immigrant background: the parties to which the workers’ movement has moved are all in bad shape, some of them will not recover from the disaster of the elections of 2017. Macron has profited from the fact that many did not want *Marine Le Pen* and the *Front Nacional* to win the elections, and thus either entirely abstained from voting or purposely voted by casting invalidated, slogan-bearing ballots. The resulting Macron government is a government of the multinational corporations and financial capital. While its form is ostensibly new, the Macron government in fact is a political continuation of the policy of the government of Hollande. After all, Macron was at one time a part of the Hollande government. The historic defeat of the Social Democratic Party at the French elections was entirely justified based on its all to blatant politics against the interests of the working class and the migrants.

8. Directly after the presidential elections, a “*Front Social*” was formed by activists coming from the initiatives against the El Khomri Law, *CGT* trade unionists such as *Goodyear* and other trade union groups of the *CGT*, the *SUD/Solidaires*, *NPA*-related groupings and others. They were able to carry out a series of demonstrations and hold meetings around the country to discuss the formation of a mass “*Front Social*,” but the numbers of supporters remained quite small. In Paris, between 1,000 and 3,000 activists came together. These numbers will not be enough to stop Macron’s politics and his implementation of the interests of the multinational corporations and financial capital by weakening workers’ rights. However, the “*Front Social*”

initiative was an important first step that has to prove its militancy in the upcoming mass strike of 12 September.

9. Revolutionaries in France should argue for an *indefinite* general strike against the new labor bill. Such a strike is extremely threatening for the ruling class, as it has the potential to deal a death blow to the new government. It is crucial that revolutionaries apply the united front tactic in the period ahead. They should call the trade unions and various left-wing parties (e.g., *PCF*, *France Insoumise*, *Front Social*, *NPA*, *LO*, etc.) to form a united front to coordinate the struggle against Macron’s austerity offensive. To force the government not only to take back its labor bill, but to also smash the neoliberal government, the indefinite general strike must be well-organized and protected by self-defense units of the workers and oppressed. It is most likely that the capitalist state apparatus and its forces of repression, i.e., police and probably even the military, will be mobilized rather sooner than later against an indefinite general strike.

10. At a certain point the general strike will face a decisive phase at which revolutionaries need not only argue for the transformation of the self-defense units into armed militias of the workers and oppressed, but to rather organize this transformation. This is the only way forward to succeed while still preventing unnecessary bloodshed. An indefinite general strike, if successful, could lead to the downfall of the Macron government. Under present conditions, with no mass revolutionary party existing, socialists should call for a government based on the (mostly reformist) mass organizations of the workers’ movement like the *CGT* and other militant trade unions, as well as parties like the *PCF*, *NPA* and others. However, in order to end the capitalist offensive, the working class must take power and overthrow the ruling class. In other words, it must create a workers’ government based on action councils and armed popular militias which will open the way towards socialism. Only an organized uprising of the masses, a socialist revolution, can end the era of permanent exploitation and oppression of our class whether by a government of Macron or someone else. Only an armed uprising can achieve a government of the workers and oppressed that leads to a socialist society. Only such a road can end the days of oppression and exploitation. A socialist France as part of a European federation of socialist states – the United Socialist States of Europe – this is the revolutionary answer to the ideas of a “*VIe République*” of Mélenchon and *France Insoumise*! For this the formation of a revolutionary leadership inside a new workers party is vital. This is not only in the interest of the workers and oppressed in France, but also internationally.

## O Comunismo Revolucionário

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# Down with the decrees of the Macron/Philippe government!

## An indefinite general strike is the correct answer!

Article by Manfred Maier (RCIT Germany) on the situation in France after the elections, 17.08.2017

The elections in France have not only ended in a simple defeat for the workers' movement, they were a total disaster for the working class which has been hit hard in the parliamentary elections. Only a very small number of candidates from the Socialist Party (SP) and the CPF have been elected to the parliament, something comparable to a situation in which the Social Democrats (SPD) in Germany would receive fewer votes than the 10% threshold, something which is already close to the reality in Saxony and Baden-Württemberg.

The working class, the youth and the migrants either boycotted the elections or were prevented from voting. Macron's movement "En Marche" is far from having majority support in society at large, but wields its power as if it does in the institutional bodies of bourgeois parliamentary democracy.

### SP in crisis and a new born star of the bourgeoisie: "En Marche"

The French party system has been thoroughly mixed up. However, though its outer form is ostensibly different, the new Macron government is actually a continuation of the policy of the government of Hollande, only with a stronger neo-liberal nucleus. Macron himself was formerly part of the Hollande government. Essentially, the Macron government remains one of the large corporations and finan-

cial capital.

It should be noted that the existence of the Socialist Party (SP) as a bourgeois workers' party is now at stake. The SP only received just over 5% of the total votes cast, the number of their deputies shrank to one-tenth of that in the previous legislature. The SP is in the midst of a serious existential crisis: part of their squad has defected to Macron; three are even now ministers in his cabinet.

Macron organized a personal movement with hand-picked candidates for the parliamentary elections. Increasingly we are witnessing such personal movements, like the 5-star movement in Italy or the Kurz movement in Austria. However these movements are also different when compared to "En Marche."

In France, Macron directly implements politics for the benefit of corporations and financial capital, which is also seen in the makeup of his government team. The cabinet list of the Macron/Philippe government consists in part of experts from the French economic, financial and administrative branches and comes directly from the management of companies such as *Areva*, *Danone* and others.

### Crazy electoral circus

Several politicians have also left the traditional bourgeois parties (LR, PRG) to join Macron's movement where the latter offered them leading positions, the most prominent,

# Books of the RCIT

## 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.

You can find the contents and download the book for free at <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/rcit-party-building/> ■

### 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

perhaps, being the case of his Prime Minister, Philippe.

In the elections, an all time record was set for the large number of blank and invalid ballots cast. Macron's victory was based only on about a quarter of the eligible voters. The small parties like the *Green Party*, like *LO* and *NPA*, have lost a significant number of voters. Only Mélenchon's movement "*France Insoumise*" maintained a stable electoral base.

The PCF, the other bourgeois workers' party now has only 10 parliamentary representatives and has lost ground against Mélenchon's movement.

### On Macron and his imperialist agenda

Macron aspires for France to play a leading role in the EU, with him as the head of state, and in close collaboration with Germany. To meet this goal, Macron intends to rebuild France so that it completely serves the interests of monopoly capital by attacking labor rights, cutting wages and damaging the social system as much as possible.

To achieve this goal, Macron can use the same path that the former Holland government previously laid out.

However, Macron also wants to increase the military strength of France within the framework of the EU, which in particular means increased military interventions in Africa, including joint imperialist interventions. Significantly, the French Ministry of Defense has been renamed the Ministry of Armies. The military intervention in Mali is a central project of French and German imperialism. But also in countries like Libya, Central Africa and others, French imperialism is a giant beast. France supports Libya's "government," which is currently favored by the West. Macron wants to construct so-called "hotspots" (actually internment camps) for refugees in Libya and other African countries. France's "*Minister of the Armies*" also maintains the closest of contacts with Egypt's dictator Al-Sisi and other African despots.

Despite a slight reduction this year, Macron wants 2% of France's gross domestic product (GDP) to be invested in armaments by 2025. He also wants to rebuild the EU budgetary policy, which is still partly in contradiction with that of France's German "partner".

In order to be able to undermine France's current labor laws, Macron passed a so-called "law of competence" by 13 July of this year, which enables him to make changes to these laws by decree (*ordonnance*), which Parliament can only then confirm as a package, all or nothing. His first foray in this direction is his new labor reform, which represents a massive attack on the workers' movement.

### Attack on the democratic rights in France

What has become a permanent "state of emergency" in France is being used against workers' strikes and demonstrations. Macron has seamlessly adopted the emergency measures of Hollande's predecessor government that include restrictions on the right of workers to strikes and the right of assembly. What were still exceptional measures under Holland, have become the norm under the presidency of Macron. France's state of emergency legislation grants the police very extensive powers, which has led to an increase of house searches and other undemocratic and repressive measures.

In light of the strengthened apparatus of repression, proletarian forces throughout France must organize by forming self-defense committees that will defend strikers and demonstrators and protect migrants, particularly Muslims, against the attacks by the state.

The French state of emergency legislation goes back to laws adopted at the time of the colonial war against Algeria. Accordingly, in exceptional circumstances, bourgeois authorities may prohibit assemblies that disrupt the "public order."

When demonstrations took place more recently during the current state of emergency, security forces have already "*partially promoted undue hardship against individual demonstrators*".

"*Batons, rubber bullets and tear gas have been used against peaceful demonstrators who did not seem to endanger public order,*" a report said. Since the attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015, 155 decrees have been issued against public assemblies. In 2016, 574 people were prevented from participating in demonstrations against a planned labor reform ("*Law El Khomri*").

In the meantime, the so-called exceptional state of emergency has been extended five times since it was introduced in November of 2015. Macron has authorized a further extension active until 1 November 2017. The state of emergency provides security authorities with special powers: prohibiting assemblies, declaring curfews, searching houses without judicial authorization, and placing people under house arrest, who -- according to the police -- may constitute a danger for "security and the public order."

### Who can lead the resistance against Macron's policy?

This situation in France today is very dangerous for the proletariat, the youth, and anyone from an immigrant background. These sectors of society, with whom the workers' movement is bound, are all in bad shape. Some of them may not recover from the disaster of the 2017 elections. Macron profited from the fact that many voters didn't want *Marine Le Pen* and the *Front National* to win the election. Many refused to vote or cast an invalid ballot, and the absence of a revolutionary party resulted in a dangerous vacuum.

Representatives of the trade unions have met individually with the Minister of Labor during the last few months. During such meetings behind closed doors, Macron's new labor reform was presented to the "labor leaders." An official and final version of these reforms is still not available for public scrutiny. While the CGT and SUD/Solidaires are organizing a day of general strike for 12 September, the CFDT, FO and other trade unions are not mobilizing for it. One of Macron's weapons is to divide the trade union movement, along with other organizations of the workers' movement, in order to undermine it systematically. Macron has partially neutralized the FO. He gives the union bureaucrats what they love: lucrative political posts, especially in the *Ministry of Labor*.

### What is about Mélenchon and France Insoumise?

In the presidential elections Mélenchon was not so far behind *Marine LePen*. The agenda of *France Insoumise* is to create a new French republic, the so-called 6e République,

with Mélenchon as its president (something which he greatly desires). Such a new French republic would create constitutional reform more or less based on the program of *France Insoumise*.

Aside from the very progressive, general demands against cuts in the health and education systems, the rejection of CETA, TISA and CO trade agreements, concrete progressive demands like the increase of the minimum wage to €1,326 and a minimum monthly pension of at least €1,000, the manifesto of *France Insoumise* is nothing more than a bourgeois fantasy construct. The “fair” tax system that it requires is based, among other things, on an additional taxation for people with an income greater than €33,000 per month (!). The EU is envisioned as being transformed into a more social and ecological project. And if this algebraic concoction cannot be implemented, a Plan B, consisting of controls of capital and commodities at the national borders, shall come into force.

All of the above doesn't include, of course, the openly pro-imperialist agenda, which demands inter alia the formation of a joint “peacekeeping” force in Syria and Iraq. Populism and the popularity of Mélenchon, in combination with radical changes in the established parties -- which also found expression in the meteoric coming to power of *En Marche* - have led to an unbelievable and probably not repeatable 2017 electoral success for *France Insoumise*, despite its crude program.

### Just as new: Front Social

Shortly after the presidential elections, activists from the initiatives against the “*Al Koudri Law*,” CGT trade unionists such as *Goodyear* and other trade union groups of the CGT, the SUD/Solidaires, as well as NPA-related groups formed a *Front Social*. They were able to carry out a series of demonstrations and have held meetings around the country to discuss formation of the “*Front Social*” as a permanent political force, but their mobilization was weak: in Paris, for example, only between 1,000 and 3,000 activists rallied together. These numbers will clearly not be enough to stop Macron's attacks against the labor movement for the benefit of the French corporations and financial capital.

### What about the “radical left”?

France has an historic Trotskyist movement, but in the elections this year the Trotskyists of LO and NPA received only 1-2 percent of the vote. In the past, they have received around 10 percent. One can watch the decline of these forces as they intensify their already existing rejection of revolutionary Marxism. The same is true of *POID*, which can be attributed to the tradition of *Lambertism*.

The NPA is only partly within Mélenchon's orbit; partly it is involved in the “*Front Socia.l*” There is also an anarcho-syndicalist left in France, which will play a definite role in any resistance movement, but is far too sectarian for the formation of a revolutionary party, i.e., it opposes the formation of a revolutionary party.

The “*Social Front*” acts fast and is action-orientated, but is not fulfilling the task of building a vital united front against the Macron government. French revolutionaries have to prepare for the creation of a new workers' party based on a revolutionary program and a successful strat-

egy. Some small groups are already raising revolutionary demands, but they are currently quite isolated.

### Solidarity with the workers, the youth, the women and the migrants in France

As already mentioned, the CGT, together with SUD / Solidaires is mobilizing for a nationwide day of general strike on 12 September. Mélenchon and *France Insoumise* are organizing their own day of protest for 23 September. We currently don't know whether these different dates in fact will remain as planned, which surely would be unfortunate for honest activists at the base of the *France Insoumise*. Instead, they should fight within their party for close collaboration with the more radical trade unions and other organs of the labor movement, instead of separating themselves from these forces. It is in no way surprising that a party like *France Insoumise*, which tends towards petty-bourgeois-populism, does not focus on a common day of action with a combative CGT.

A bitter defeat of the French workers, of the trade unionists in their struggle against the new labor reform, may have a serious impact on all workers and trade unionists throughout Europe. This is to say nothing of what this would mean for future proletarian struggles. The international workers' movement should therefore organize a solidarity campaign in Germany and in other European countries. Ultimately, the French working class must answer the attacks with an indefinite general strike. Such a general strike must be protected by self-defense units which will have to fight against attacks by the repressive state apparatus and right wing activists.

At the same time, the *indefinite general strike* also poses the question of power: Which class is embodied in the government? The only answer in favor of the workers and oppressed is a revolutionary workers' government which has to be won by a proletarian revolution. Ultimately, the path leads to a socialist government if the workers and oppressed want to end the rule of profit, the oppression and exploitation by the capitalist class, once and for all.

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<https://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2017/05/france-unchecked-clampdown-on-protests-under-guise-of-fighting-terrorism/>

## Britain: Corbyn and Brexit

### The Crisis of British Imperialism

Article by Joseph Adams, RCIT Britain, 15.09.2017

On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017 the *Brexit Bill* passed its second reading in parliament by 311 votes to 296 votes, which is a majority of 36 for the May minority government. As well as starting the process of separation from Europe, the bill gives enormous executive powers to ministers through 'Henry VIII' clauses. Jeremy Corbyn, the left wing leader of the *Labour Party* has continued to twist and turn changing his position on Brexit. Originally he was an opponent of the *Common Market* in the 1970's but now like the rest of the party he remains a committed supporter of the EU at the time of the referendum.

Corbyn accepting the result of the referendum has argued for what is termed a 'soft Brexit' position as opposed to the Euro sceptic's including Teresa May who supports a 'hard Brexit position'. Corbyn was hoping through amendments to May's *Great Repeal Bill* to soften the impact of Brexit hoping to continue to support the *European Single Market*.

*"Jeremy Corbyn will use his first speech of 2017 to claim that Britain can be better off outside the EU and insist that the Labour party has no principled objection to ending the free movement of European workers in the UK". [1]*

The pro-European Blairites who oppose Brexit are now demanding more immigration controls for all EU nationals. This was revealed in an interview given to the BBC by Tony Blair, the indicted war criminal and ex-leader of Labour.

*"Tony Blair has defended his call for new controls on EU migration as a cabinet minister accused him of a belated "epiphany" on the issue. The ex-PM said the UK could stay in the EU after all with new curbs in place. He claimed this would address people's "grievances" without the "sledgehammer" of Brexit. Critics have pointed to his Labour government's decision not to apply transitional controls to eastern European migrants in 2004". [2]*

Blair's call for restriction on immigration is confirmed by the most extreme racist elements in Britain coupled with islamophobic attacks against both migrants and EU nationals. The Blairites are by far the most reactionary, social-imperialist wing inside of Labour. Their racist politic

serves the interests of the ruling class as it disunites the working class and weakens its potential to fight back successfully against austerity measures. It also pushes away a number of militant migrants and blacks who would be willing to organize themselves in the trade unions and the labour movement as such. This is especially problematic as racist attacks increased in the recent past in a particularly aggressive form. There has been a recent spate of acid attacks against migrants since the referendum.

*"The government equalities office is to examine growing evidence that EU nationals in the UK are being illegally prevented from renting or buying properties, getting jobs and booking holidays. Rental properties advertised for UK citizens only or outlining different terms for EU nationals.*

*Travel agencies declining to take bookings from non-British or non-Irish citizens and cancelling the holidays already booked by EU nationals from other countries.*

*A law firm advising that employment contracts incorporate clauses that specify that the loss of right to work will result in immediate dismissal" [3].*

#### *No support to any of the to imperialist camps*

Corbyn has now changed his position and advocates a *Customs Union* within the EU citing the examples of Norway and Iceland who are not in the EU but enjoy some advantages from the EU. It shows Corbyn's way of thinking as he obviously tries to comfort the interests of imperialist Britain. This has nothing to do with an authentic socialist position. In the history of revolutionary socialism the tasks of revolutionaries living in imperialist countries is to fight mainly against the ruling class of their country. Like it was formulated by the German revolutionary Karl Liebknecht: *"The Main Enemy is at Home!"*

*"Jeremy Corbyn has provoked confusion over Labour's Brexit position by suggesting the UK could remain a member of the EU's single market indefinitely after leaving the bloc.*

*The Labour leader appeared to soften Labour's stance on the issue, saying he wanted the UK to "trade within the single market" after Brexit.*



## 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**

He said it was "open for discussion" as to whether this should involve formal membership.

"I want a relationship which allows us to trade within the single market," said Mr Corbyn, when asked about the UK's long-term arrangements with the EU. Norway, Iceland and Lichenstein are all outside of the EU but are inside the single market". [4].

Corbyn, the left reformist is continually changing his position because of his adaptation to the Blairites. He has capitulated to their position although they have organised several coups to remove him and his supporters from the Labour Party.

The RCIT has taken a principled stand on Brexit and the way forward for workers and the oppressed. Instead of heading towards Brexit or arguing in favour of Remain (which means to argue in favour of staying in a imperialist structure, the RCIT maintains that authentic Marxists must refuse to support either of these two equally reactionary Imperialist Camps.

The political independence of the working class and the oppressed means independence of both Imperialist camps. It means to mobilize against racist politics and to fight for a socialist perspective, not trying to get imperialist Britain in a better position outside or inside the imperialist EU. Joint forces of the migrant, the black, the Asian and white working class and youth is highly important in the class struggle against Britain's rulers. This multinational class struggle must include the participation of these workers and oppressed in a unified international struggle, with the European working class against the EU bosses.

The RCIT in Britain advances the following transitional demands to unite the oppressed and working class in a common struggle against both camps of imperialism. Corbyn and the lefts must lead a struggle in the Labour Party to expel the pro-austerity and pro-war Blairite wing.

\* Call on Corbyn and the TUC to organise and lead an indefinite general strike to bring down this weak and unstable May Government.

\* Expel and purge all Blairites from the Labour Party.

\* For open borders for all refugees, full equality for all migrants, equal wages, full citizenship and the right to speak their own language.

\* Call on all Labour MPs to vote against austerity, racism,

chauvinism and war, those failing to do so should be immediately reselected.

\* For self defence guards of workers and migrants to defend their communities from police or fascist provocation.

\* For the right to Self-determination for Scotland.

For a United 32-County Irish Workers' Republic as part of a federated section of the United Socialist States of Europe.

We call on all workers and youth as a first step to join the RCIT in Britain and help build a pre-party formation. Our goal is the building of a new World Party for Socialist Revolution, the Fifth International.

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For our analysis and perspectives of Britain, BREXIT and the EU, see, among others, the following articles:

1. The European Union and the issue of the accession of semi-colonial countries, Oct 2012, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/eu-and-semi-colonies/>

2. Boycott Cameron's Trap: Neither Brussels, nor Downing Street! For Abstention in Britain's EU-Referendum!

August 2015, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/eu-referendum-in-uk/>

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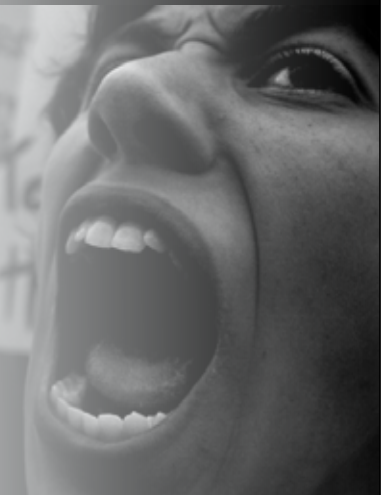
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Written by Michael Pröbsting  
(International Secretary of the RCIT)

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# Zambia: 2018 National Budget, Whom Does it Benefit?

## The Mechanics of Robbing the Poor

By Mainda Simataa, General Secretary of the Economic Liberation Association (Zambia), 29.09.2017

### **Z**ambian 2018 Budget: Squeezing the Poor to Pay-Off Loans of the Few

The theme of this years' budget should be: "Sacrificing Social Service Delivery for Debt Servicing".

Any other high-sounding technocratic theme like 2017's *Zambia Plus* which did nothing, and does not reflect the present state of economic affairs would be a blue lie; because the Zambian Patriotic Front government is now spending over 50% of our tax monies, or what we collectively generate domestically (GDP) to pay debt obligations to international money lenders (IMF, Euro-bond, China-Aid). These are debts ordinary Zambians have never benefited from mind you! As a result, critical service delivery and social services for Zambians suffers!!!

### **Sustaining Poverty – Worsening Social Service Delivery**

And so, the meaningless ritual and charade parade of the National Budget presentation by the IMF trumpet-man, Felix Mutati, is on yet again this year today; and it is not too presumptive and pre-emptive to state that this 2018 budget, just like last years' budget, and many others before it, is a hopeless cause for the majority of Zambians because it does not impact their lives for the better, but certainly makes it worse! Service delivery in Zambia – education, health, housing, water etc, can best be described as pathetic wherever it exists!

### **Designed to Profit the IMF, Not the Poor**

The 2018 budget will cater to the dictates and tastes of the foreign funders IMF, it will line the pockets of the ruling political elites and foreign investors and local big capitalist classes! It is a budget that will be 30% – 40% donor funded, it is a budget that will squeeze the poor a little more than last year; it is essentially a budget that sacrifices service delivery for debt-servicing!

On top of that, whatever monies have been collected via tax the poor; most will be looted through corrupt tenders, single-sourced contracts, and all the other open-ended loop-holes that exist to rob the poor!

### **Budget Does Not Interest or Impress the Poor**

Traditionally, the national budget is an instrument which never fails to disappoint, as it continues to apportion more and more wealth to the privileged classes – the few and well-to-do foreigners and Zambians, and continuously takes away more and more from underprivileged Zambians (via rising inflation and taxes) living in the low income brackets; and in abject poverty on less than US \$1 dollar a day!

### **The Budget Designed Not to be Understood by Anyone**

The excitement and anticipation that precedes the National budget is superficial because generally, poor Zambians – the very poor people the budget claims to serve, are living in dire poverty. 70% of Zambians are too illiterate (including the nominally educated) to understand the mechanics of robbery encapsulated in the budget – a budget that is further shrouded in secrecy and mystical high-sounding complex terminologies, all intended to confound the listeners and cover up the scam of robbing

the poor while seeming to help them!

The great majority of Zambians however, simply have no interest in listening to the budget because they are busy looking at the practical needs of life: for employment, busy on the street trying to make something for a meal, for rent, for bills, and so forth; things that the government refuses to help them with!

The ordinary and average Zambian, man and woman, is first of all, concerned about means and ways of earning an income, to put a roof over their heads, and food on the table for their family. Then they are concerned about social service delivery – in hospitals, schools, water, housing, civic centres and community improvement. Then they are concerned about social security – job and pensions.

### **Ever Diminishing Wages, But Rising Unemployment and Cost of Living!**

The truth is that many Zambians who work can barely survive on the low income they earn because the cost of living (ever driven by inflation and high taxes, levies, tariffs, etc) is ever on the rise and their salaries/wages cannot match up. And so, the workers wages are ever lagging behind, hence reducing the quality of life of the people, reducing even the working people to poverty!

### **The Forgotten and Exploited Rural Farming Population!**

The rural person survives on peasant farming, yet there is no more subsidies for him for farming inputs – seed, fertilizer etc. And worse, the state does not guarantee the purchase of his grain at a profitable price. Result is rural poverty!

The poor rural Zambian dweller, the peasant farmer, is doubtless the most isolated and forgotten Zambian, for these people do not have any of the basic social urban town amenities which the budget pretends to address – they have no clean water, virtually no education and health facilities, no roads, no industries, no income and no relief from poverty. They are totally forgotten, only to be remembered when voting time is near.

For the rural poor, and the urban poor, the budget is strange National ritual; for the economists, its a confounding complexity, and for the majority, it is pure nonsense right out of the pits of inequity and injustice.

A new generation must, and is on the rise to right all the wrongs that past generations continue to inflict on we the youth of today!



## Zambia: Who is Stealing our Gold?

By Mainda Simataa, General Secretary of the Economic Liberation Association (Zambia), 25.09.2017

### The Best Kept Secret – Where there is Copper there is Gold

The best kept secret in the copper mining industry that the looters of our natural wealth do not want us to know is this: namely that all copper production always produces two by-products – cobalt and gold! Cobalt which fetches 10 times more than copper on the world market, and gold which fetches infinitely more!!!

#### Every Copper Mine is 10% a Gold Mine

We must realize that for as long as Zambia has been producing copper, there has always been a percentage of gold produced from that copper, roughly 10% more or less, and it is never reported, declared nor accounted for in government revenue books or even recorded in the books of the mining companies!

#### Where does Zambian gold go?

Apparently, one of the first things First Quantum Minerals FQM, the robbers of Kansanshi mine did was build an 'airport' before the mining infrastructure was even completed. For what? To airlift the gold in its raw form to Johannesburg where it was refined and later exported to Belgium. By the admission of Kansanshi Gold Mines foreign owners, in North Western Province, Gold is certainly being produced in ever larger quantities and accounts for more than 20% of the mine's revenue!

### So who is Stealing Our Gold

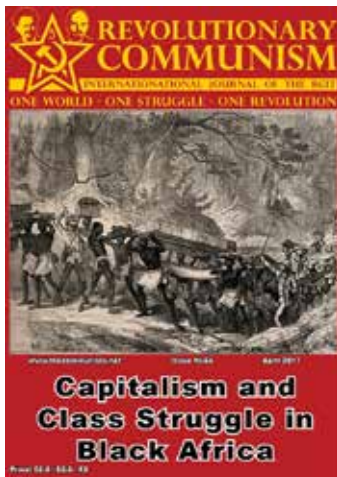
There has always been a cover-up on the production/export of Gold and Cobalt in Zambia, especially after the privatization of the mines. The fact is that every copper mine, MCM, KCM, CCM et al, have all been SECRETLY PRODUCING and EXPORTING OUR GOLD and sharing the profits secretly with sell-outs within the country, among them top government officials, private capitalist diggers and looters and other mining bureaucrats, among them, former Vice President, and business man, Enoch Kavindele!

#### Counting the Losses to the Nation

There is no way of telling how much the Zambian people have lost in terms of dollars to this scam of exploitation and exportation of our Gold and Cobalt in secrecy, and the private pocketing of the proceeds, but the losses are astronomical, in the billions of dollars.

#### The Final Solution

One day, these mines will nationalized, and the current foreign owners and their local collaborators must pay compensation to the Zambian people for all the theft and robbery our nation has suffered at their hands!



### NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

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## Stop the Ethnic Cleansing of the Rohingya Muslims!

Recalling the war in Bosnia and the genocide in Srebrenica,  
we need to stop the ongoing war against our Rohingya brothers and sisters!

*Comment by Almedina Gunić, Revolutionary-Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 15.09.2017*

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Bosnian War*, a cruel and bitter part of the Bosniakian identity. Up to 300,000 people (mainly Bosnian Muslims) were killed during the conflict and more than 2 million were displaced. The war was nothing less than a systematic ethnic cleansing committed by Serb paramilitaries in order to create a „Greater Serbia.“ Unbelievably vile and inhuman methods were used during the war to eradicate the Bosniaks or at least force them to flee the country, including the mass slaughter in Srebrenica.

For us as Bosniaks, it is extremely painful to see how our brothers and sisters from the Rohingya people are currently facing the horror of ethnic cleansing and genocide. It brings back all the horrors that we still have to deal with. However, far worse than our bitter past, which is at least safely locked up in our heads, is the insecure and cruel present for the Rohingyas.

As one Rohingya source reported, *“Only Muslims are being targeted by the Myanmar army. Buddhists, Christians and other ethnic groups living in Rakhine have been spared from much of the violence. There is a clear plan to wipe out Rohingya Muslims.”* (1)

The so-called detention camps in Myanmar, into which hundred of thousands of Rohingyas are being forced to live are little more than concentration camps. For years, a number of reports and pictures from these camps have shown how the Rohingya, including many children, live cooped up in pitiful shanties. Disease and starvation are

so rife in these camps that many of the internees look like images of death itself, with their ribs painfully visible. Compare these pictures with those from the internment camps during the Bosnian war and you will see no difference.

Rohingya women have reported incidents of systematic and repeated gang rape at the hands of Myanmar's soldiers. Like in the rape camps in Bosnia, in particular young Rohingya women between the ages of 12 and 25 are victims of such brutal systematic rape. The Rhakine state lawmaker and commission chairman Aung Win responded to the reports of the rapes by laughing and saying that this cannot be true as Rohingya women are too „dirty“ to be raped by the soldiers. (2)

Our brothers and sisters in Bosnia were shot in the back, were burnt alive, were decapitated... that happened in Bosnia during the war there and it is happening today in Myanmar. Our brothers and sisters were not seen as human beings by those who killed them. The *Global New Light of Myanmar*, a newspaper published by the governmental Ministry of Information, called Rohingyas *“human fleas ... loathe for their stench and for sucking our blood.”* (3)

Some 313,000 Rohingyas have fled to Bangladesh during the last three weeks. More than a thousand of our Rohingya brothers and sisters have been killed during the same time. Today, it is completely accurate to classify the Rohingya people as *“world's most persecuted minority”!*

In the face of the horror of ethnic cleansing that is hap-



Rally in solidarity with the Rohingya people in Vienna on 8.9.2017

pening again, it is absolutely crucial to give unconditional support to the struggle of the Rohingya for self-determination! It is time to oppose the Buddhist chauvinist regime of Myanmar! It is of the utmost urgency that the international workers' movement organizes a campaign in solidarity with and of practical support for the Rohingya!

Revolutionary, multi-ethnic joint forces of workers and oppressed fighting for a socialist federation of the Balkans could have saved the Bosniak people from being massacred by the Serb nationalist militias and being invaded by the imperialist forces of the United Nations. Today, we should learn from the past to prevent the recurrence of such crimes.

The liberation of the Rohingya people is a key question in the struggle for the liberation of all workers and the rural and urban poor in Myanmar. The chauvinist regime of Myanmar complains about the *Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA)* because they allegedly attacked their oppressors with sticks. What they should really fear is a

joint, revolutionary force of Rohingya people and all other workers and oppressed in Myanmar and the entire region of Southeast Asia; a joint force that is willing to take power via an armed insurrection and build a socialist workers' government based on the urban and rural poor.

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## Austria: Rally in Solidarity with the Rohingya

*Report from the RKOB (Austrian Section of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency), 10.9.2017*



Marek Hangler (Spokesman of the RCIT section in Austria) at the rally in solidarity with the Rohingya

More than 100 people assembled on Friday, 8 September, in front of the United Nations' headquarter in Vienna in order to express their outrage against the ongoing massacre of the Rohingya people in Myanmar. (See pictures of the rally below). As it is well known, hundreds of thousands of Muslim Rohingya are currently massacred, raped and murdered by the regime of Myanmar.

Militants of the RCIT section in Austria participated in the rally to show their solidarity with the resistance of the Rohingya people. Marek Hangler, a spokesperson of the section, called for international solidarity with the Rohingya people. He warned in his speech against any illusions in the imperialist Great Powers or the United Nations and emphasized the need for an organized liberation struggle. (See the link to the speech of Marek Hangler below.)

\*\*\*\*\*

*Link to the speech of Marek Hangler:*  
<https://youtu.be/B7zd78edEXc>

*On the RCIT stand in solidarity with the Rohingya people see also:*

RCIT: Myanmar: Solidarity with the Uprising of the Rohingya Muslims! No to the Regime's Buddhist Chauvinism! For the Rohingya's Right of National Self-Determination! 27.08.2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/solidarity-with-rohingya-muslims/>

Michael Pröbsting: [VIDEO] Myanmar: Solidarity with the Rohingya Muslims! 04.09.2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/multimedia-1/solidarity-with-rohingyas/>

## IN FACE OF THE DISASTER AND THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT, WE MUST GO FROM SPONTANEOUS SOLIDARITY TO THE ORGANIZATION AND MOBILIZATION OF THE MEXICAN PEOPLE!

*Statement of Agrupación de Lucha Socialista (Mexican Section of the RCIT), 23 September, 2017*

September 19 has become a date of double mourning for the Mexicans as a result of the earthquakes and the ambition of the government and real estate companies. Thirty-two years after the earthquake of 1985, Mexico City-CDMX, now, along with Morelos, Puebla and Edomex tremble with a seism of 7.1 degrees, which so far resulted of 295 people deceased, the majority in the capital of the country, but also thousandsomes and buildings devastated in all affected states.

Although the earthquake this year was 10 times less strong than that of 1985 and caused less damage than the last one, it continues to show that we are not prepared in terms of infrastructure to withstand this type of disaster due, mainly, to the corruption of the authorities which allowed the buildings which were damaged in 1985 to be occupied again without restoration or this was done without complying with the norms. At present, we see how the corruption of civil servants of all levels increases, which, in collusion with the big real estate companies, builds with the people's money works that endanger the population, such as *Guardería ABC*, the hole in the ground as it is in *Paso Expres de Cuernavaca* and, now the *Primaria Enrique Rebsamen*.

The cynicism has reached such a point that the governor of Morelos, *Graco Ramirez*, stated in Jojutla that the people rescue phase was over and the debris removal and reconstruction phase has began, less than 24 hours after the earthquake! Surely they already have business dealings with the real estate companies - who are urged to collect insurance and leave no trace of their corruption. The head of government, *M. Angel Mancera* along with the federal government, is doing the same in the CDMX; in the third day of the earthquake has menaced to putting machinery for the removal of debris regardless of the statements of rescuers and relatives that there were still people under the ruins and that probably many of them were still alive. The federal government, instead of helping the victims, has only dedicated itself to repressing the solidarity of the people through the navy, the army and the local police to isolate the affected areas, to evict the volunteers, even by force, as they intended do it in the *Obrera* colony where a textile factory where women - mostly migrants - labored, but where the volunteers managed to stop the repressive forces and continue the rescue work. We called to resist reinforcing the guards, the disaster sites where police and other law enforcement bodies were trying to move to civilian volunteers and impose "order" by force and even put heavy machinery in places where there is still chances of finding people alive, or where it is necessary to remove the bodies, likewise, the places where they intend to demolish buildings without the consent of its inhabitants!

At *Rebsamen School*, the pressure from rescuers, volunteers and the general population also succeeded in getting

the government to reverse the machines to continue the rescue work. However, in the colony *Roma* and other parts of the city, the government had already put its machines in front of the astonished eyes of relatives and friends of the victims trapped. It was a murderous act of these governments in cleaning the affected areas for the real estate companies that intend to raise their buildings on the bodies of the victims!

Together with the government, the television stations have had a deplorable role, first with calling the people to stay in the house in the day of the tremor, a kind of message that, fortunately, was not complied by the population and then, putting a *show* with the non-existent *Frida* little girl in the *Rebsamen* primary school to distract the population, and the media also has hidden the solidarity of the population and tried to rebuild the disastrous image of the government and its military forces. This did not manage to calm down the rage of the population against the officials of all levels who were not offering any support, or on the contrary, as is the case of the presidency of the *Desarrollo Integral de la Familia del Estado de Morelos-DIF* that retained the provision of solidarity that was to go towards the communities of the entity but the population was organized to rescue this essential goods provisions and to take control of its distribution!

In several places, volunteers and affected residents has expelled out the authorities when they only came to take the photos, like the Secretary of the Interior, *Osorio Chong*, in the *Obrera* colony, and the delegate of *Xochimilco* by MORENA, *Avelino Méndez*. In its voracious ambition, the government is provoking even more the anger of the people who, by itself, already distrust the government and its parties. Undoubtedly, the cynical performance of the rulers authorities and the parties are putting all the conditions so that the elections of 2018 occur in an atmosphere of high tension, instability and complete discredit to the regime and its institutions. People are asking that the money budgeted to the parties and electoral institutions for the campaigns is intended for the thousands of families of the victims, otherwise, the political cost will be high! Also ask the electoral campaigns that were canceled, since the citizenship has already known in its own flesh the action of each of the parties before this tragedy!

In short: what immediately revealed this disaster were two things: a) once again the enormous inability and disinterest of government institutions to deal with the disaster and b) the massive and solid solidarity of the population that had became millions of volunteers for the rescue, gathering and distribution of collection, most of these young enthusiasts who from the minutes after the earthquake and for 4 days, continue in the work of support. Exemplary and combative youth fighting for their people! However, there is also a great disorganization and dis-

information resulting mainly from the inefficiency and secrecy of the government and that even they have promoted themselves through false messages and the diversion or retention of support through *Civil Protection* in the municipal head offices. On the other hand, because there is no central local that centralizes information and organization for a better distribution of supporting the brigades according to the specific needs of each disaster area. In contrary to the case of *Oaxaca* where *section 22* has played a fundamental role due to its moral weight and the strategic presence of the teachers that has allowed them a better attention of the earthquake of 7 of September. For example, there are places like the capital CDMX center that overflowed with aid and food; while other more remote areas or states such as Morelos and Puebla lack of support. The magnitude of the disaster requires us to move from spontaneous solidarity to organized and continuous support as reconstruction work will take weeks or months!

It is necessary to convene a *General Coordination of Brigadistas and Settlers Affected* of the metropolitan area that elaborates a general diagnosis by colony, municipality and affected state to detect the primordial necessities and distributes thus the specific brigades. It requires the formation of committees or neighborhood assemblies in the affected areas that participate in this diagnosis that administer food and resources for contingency and participate in the reconstruction of their communities.

In the middle of the disaster, the government intends to return to "normality" and is already calling for a return to class students from next Monday, 25 September, as well as many companies whose establishments have visible damage have irresponsibly forced their workers to back work

in these buildings, under penalty of dismissal, violating clearly the minimum security conditions. Faced with this as *Agrupación de Lucha Socialista* we demand that there be no return to school until all schools at all levels have been reviewed by independent commissions of experts and the safety of school communities is guaranteed. Likewise, workers should form assemblies in their work centers to oppose the return of work until safety conditions are guaranteed in their work centers and to oppose unjustified dismissals for absenteeism!

Also, three years after the disappearance of the *Ayotzina-pa* normalists, let us turn the mobilization of this September, 26, into a great protest for the humanitarian, social and economic disaster provoked by this neoliberal political-economic regime as well as the whole of its institutions and parties that have been overtaken and have shown signs of paralysis, ineptitude and shamelessness in face of the tragedy that shakes our country; extend the claim to the government!

**\* OUT WITH EPN AND INCOMPETENT GOVERNORS OF CDMX, MORELOS, EDOMEX AND PUEBLA AND ITS DELEGATES AND MUNICIPAL PRESIDENTS!**

**\* JAIL ALL OFFICIALS, OWNERS OF REAL ESTATE COMPANIES AND CORRUPT BUILDING COMPANIES GUILTY OF THIS TRAGEDY!**

**\* ALL CAMPAIGN MONEY TOWARDS REPAIRING THE DAMAGE AND COMPLETE RECONSTRUCTION OF THEIR HOUSES TO ALL DAMAGED FAMILIES!**

**\* FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A GOVERNMENT OF THE RURAL AND CITY WORKERS THAT TRULY ATTEND AND RESOLVE THE NEEDS OF THE MEXICAN PEOPLE!**

## Books of the RCIT

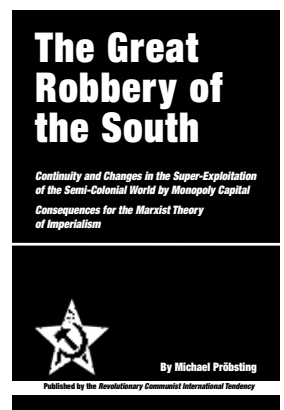
### Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

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)



## Brazil: No to President Temer's Decree Eliminating the RENCA Amazon Reserve!

*Statement from CCR, Brazilian section of the RCIT, 9. September 2017*

On August 23, President Michel Temer eliminated an environmental reserve of 46,450 sq km (17,800 square miles) – an area equivalent in size to Denmark – in the border area between the Brazilian states of Pará and Amapá, known as the National Reserve of Copper and Associates (RENCA).

The region holds mineral reserves including gold, iron and copper. Disingenuously, the government is attempting to hide the significance of its decree by asserting that the elimination “does not rule out the application of specific legislation regarding protection of native vegetation, nature conservation units, and indigenous lands.”

The day following the government decree, the BBC website reported that in March 2017, five months before the official announcement by the government, the Minister of Mines and Energy, Fernando Coelho Filho, told the country's businessmen that this Amazonian reservation area would be eliminated, and that its exploration and exploitation would come up for auction among private companies.

Announced during a public event which took place in Toronto, The Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC), the end of RENCA comes in conjunction with a package of measures to reformulate the Brazilian mineral sector, which includes the creation of a National Mining and Initiatives authority to stimulate this branch of the economy.

One week after the elimination of the reserve, President Temer and his entourage flew to China to discuss improving Brazil's foreign trade with the East Asian giant. China is a huge buyer of mineral and other commodities throughout the world, and Temer clearly intended to utilize his visit in Beijing to announce the “good news” in person.

### **The Negative Impacts**

In contrast to the government's enthusiasm, environmental experts strongly oppose Temer's decree. Luiz J. Wanderley, a researcher from the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) and a member of the National Committee for the Defense of Territory against Mining, declared that the elimination of RENCA will, first and foremost, have a political impact, and will place more pressure on those indigenous lands and UCs (Conservation Units). By opening up another area to mining, the Temer government is signaling that it intends to relax restrictions in additional environmental reserves.

Mariana Napolitano, coordinator of the science nucleus of WWF Brazil, has stated that the growing interest in mining in the area would lead to a reduction in protected areas and a wave of gold rushes, and these in turn would result in a demographic explosion in the region, more deforestation and the contamination of water resources with heavy metals, in addition to threatening the lives and livelihoods of traditional indigenous populations.

### **Social Movement Resistance**

Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) linked to the environment protested on August, 30, in the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies against the decree which eliminated RENCA. NGOs such as Greenpeace, WWF-Brazil and SOS Mata Atlântica were present and participated in the protest. A number of organizations, feminist, black and environmental, from the state of Amapá, prepared a manifesto on the potentially devastating impact of the elimination of the national reserve, with the aim of denouncing such a move in the national and international media.

### **The position of CCR**

Brazil is a semi-colony and is therefore subject to the dictates of the imperialist countries. Our bourgeoisie is directly dependent on the great capitalist powers. Capitalism is not driven by love for the environment. The implacable search for profit not only causes misery, hunger and wars, but also the destruction of the planet's natural resources, threatening future generations and even possibly leading to the extinction of the human species.

Only in a socialist system, where there are no exploiters and exploited, where there is no need to destroy natural resources, with a planned economy, with an end to social inequality, will humanity be able to survive. The 2016 coup d'état that put the Temer government in power in Brazil clearly demonstrates that not only are social rights and democratic rights being thrown out in the trash. The government is eager and ready to implement a land policy that will devastate the environment for the benefit of large landowners and transnational corporations.

Therefore, we from the CCR strongly reject the government decree that eliminates RENCA reserve in the Amazon. We call upon all workers and oppressed, all social movements and progressive parties, to join this struggle. The fight for the environment must be linked with the struggle for society.

*\* For the annulling of the decree which eliminates RENCA!*

*\* For the protection of all forest reserves in Brazil!*

*\* For the sustainable, socialist management of the forests in Amazon region and throughout the entire world!*

# Syrian Revolution: The Moment of Truth is Approaching!

## Rally to defend the Syrian Revolution against the Imperialist conspiracy called the "Astana Deal"!

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 20.09.2017

The noose is tightening. The sixth round of the so-called Astana talks have ended with an agreement between Russia, Iran and Turkey on the extension of the so-called "de-escalation zones." The three have decided to widen these zones to include Idlib, the last remaining stronghold of the Syrian Revolution where two million Syrians are living.

According to reports, the powers agreed to divide Idlib into three zones each of which is occupied by one of them. While they have declared that the zones are temporary, their timeframe can be extended beyond the initial six-month period. There are rumors that each power would contribute at least 1,500 troops to policing their respective zone. (1) Furthermore, there are reports that the Turkish army is already assembling troops along its border with Syria in order to invade Idlib and liquidate the Syrian Revolution.

US imperialism, which regularly attends the Astana negotiations as an observer, seems to agree with these decisions. As we have pointed out many times in the past, contrary to the bizarre claims of the Stalinist and centrist friends of Assad and Putin, US imperialism has a strategic interest in the liquidation of the Syrian Revolution and ac-

cepts the continuity of Assad's regime (even though they would prefer their own lackey in power instead of Moscow's puppet.)

It is obvious that Assad, with the help of Russia, Iran and Turkey, wants to gain time. As his regime does not have sufficient troops of its own, given the widespread hatred against it, the army's resources are currently being stretched beyond capacity by its efforts to regain the eastern province of Deir-ez-Zor from ISIS/Daesh's control. During the current period, the Syrians are interested in pacifying the areas under rebel control. When they have succeeded in the east, they will go on to liquidate the remaining liberated areas and slaughter the last of the freedom fighters.

This picture is clear enough for anyone with two eyes in their head. (2) In fact, the regime has already openly announced its aggressive intentions. Bouthaina Shaaban, a senior aide to Assad, said on 15 September that the government will try to "take back the entire country," including "Idlib and other areas." Assad's news agency SANA cited a foreign ministry source on 16 September: "The deal for Idlib is temporary. Its main goal is reviving the old Damascus-Hama-Aleppo road...and for all kinds of traffic to flow to Aleppo." (3)



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This, however, does not stop the treacherous leaderships of various rebel factions (e.g., FSA units, Jaish al-Islam) to accept the Astana Deal. In fact, we are witnessing various factions attacking those who vow to continue the liberation struggle against the regime and against the imperialist aggressors.

It is to the credit of *Hayyat Tahrir al-Sham* (HTS) that they have repeatedly and publicly denounced the Astana Deal. They have rightly stated that the Astana process amounts to the surrender of rebel-held pockets, and what had started with a ceasefire would “end with restoring Bashar’s rule to the areas.” They also justifiably criticized FSA rebels for attending the Astana meetings: “We fear the day will come when those factions will line up alongside Russian warplanes and fight those who reject Assad and his regime,” HTS said in its statement. (4)

Naturally, this statement is of importance as the HTS represents the largest and most dedicated force which is continuing the struggle against the genocidal Assad dictatorship and the imperialist aggressors, Russia and US as well as their local lackeys (SDF/YPG, Iran, Turkey). As a result, it controls the still free part of the province of Idlib.

As we have repeatedly said in past statements, we have no illusions about the nature of the HTS leadership, which follows a petty-bourgeois nationalist-Islamist agenda. Currently the pro-Astana powers, in particular the Erdoğan regime, are working round the clock to bribe rebel factions to break with the HTS. (As examples of this treachery, we can cite the split of *Jaish al-Ahrar* from HTS or the resignation of Abdullah al-Muhseni and Musleh Olayan, the most prominent former members of its Shura committee, from this body.) (5) Likewise, a number of assassination attempts against HTS commanders have taken place.

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) repeats its call to double the efforts for international solidarity with the Syrian Revolution and to rally in support for the ongoing liberation struggle in Idlib. The moment of truth is approaching! The international workers’ movement and popular mass organizations should defend the anti-capitulationist liberation forces which are continuing the struggle against the Assad regime and the Great Powers and their allies. This includes, but is not limited to, the

defense of Idlib and the liberation forces deployed there (including HTS) against any assault of the US, Russian or Turkish armies or their local allies.

Let’s be clear: Without a defense of the limited achievements of the Syrian Revolution – like the liberation of Idlib – there can be no future for the liberation struggle! The RCIT calls upon Syrian revolutionaries to unite the defense of Idlib with a socialist perspective – the organization of the popular masses in independent councils and armed militias fighting for a consistent democratic and socialist program.

\* *Down with the Astana Deal! Support the Syrian Revolution!*

\* *Defend Idlib against the Great Powers and their allies!*

\* *For a multinational, independent workers’ and peasants republic in Syria – free of sectarianism, foreign occupation and dictatorship!*

\* *For international mass mobilizations and strikes of workers, migrants and youth to stop the imperialist aggression of Russia and the US against the peoples of the Middle East!*

**Footnotes**

(1) <https://twitter.com/MorocanArab/status/908689977994866689>; see also Al Jazeera: Assad forces advance against ISIL in central Syria, 2017-09-15, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/09/assad-forces-advance-isil-central-syria-170915153845236.html>

(2) This point has also been alluded to by Bilal Abdul Kareem in his article “Astana 6: No Justice Today” (September 16, 2017, OGN, <http://ogn.news/a6n/>). Kareem, a black US Muslim currently living in Idlib, runs the news agency OGN which provides numerous informative reports. Obviously, as communists, we don’t share his ideology. However, in contrast to all those most shameful Stalinists, centrists and liberals, Islamists like Kareem have not betrayed the Syrian Revolution and this reflects on them in a positive light when compared to the pseudo-communist scum.

(3) Reuters: Ex-Nusra vows to fight on in Syria, denounces de-escalation deal, September 16, 2017, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-nusra/ex-nusra-vows-to-fight-on-in-syria-denounces-de-escalation-deal-idUSKCN1BR0GH>

(4) *ibid*

(5) The Separation of the third largest bloc of HTS Organization, 13 Sep, 2017, <http://www.aldorars.com/en/news/1597>; see also Mustafa Harrington: Shaykh Muhaysini Resigns from HTS Amid Controversy, OGN News, September 12, 2017, <http://ogn.news/smr/>

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