



LIBERATION

BULLETIN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL TENDENCY (RCIT) IN BRITAIN

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED, UNITE!

No. 18

Oct/Nov 2017

<https://rcitbritain.wordpress.com>

Price: £0,90

Corbyn and BREXIT: The Crisis of British Imperialism

'Soft Brexit' and 'Hard Brexit' versus the Revolutionary Perspective

Article by Joseph Adams, RCIT Britain, <https://rcitbritain.wordpress.com/>, 15.09.2017

On Monday 11th 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 XVIII' 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.

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.

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WORKERS AND OPPRESSED UNITE!



LIBERATION is a Bulletin published by the RCIT Britain. The Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) has sections and activists in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Tunisia, Israel / Occupied Palestine, Turkey, Brazil, Mexico, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Britain, Germany, and Austria.

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 deselected.*

** 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.

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

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/>

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/>

LIBERATION#3, Bulletin of the RCIT Britain, Issue No.3 (August 2015), <https://www.thecommunists.net/publications/liberation-3/>

Footnotes

1) Corbyn on Brexit: UK can be better off out of the EU, by Anushka Asthana, The Guardian, 10 January 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/jan/09/jeremy-corbyn-uk-is-better-off-out-of-eu-with-managed-migration>

2) Tony Blair defends call for EU migration curbs, BBC, 10 September 2017, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-41216679>

3) Europeans need not apply: evidence mounts of discrimination in UK, by Alan Travis, The Guardian, 11 September 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/sep/11/no-europeans-need-apply-growing-evidence-discrimination-uk-brexit>

4) Corbyn prompts confusion over Brexit position, SKY News, 12 September 2017, <http://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/corbyn-prompts-confusion-over-brexit-position/ar-AAArVa?li=BBopWjQ&ocid=SK2MDHP>

Pamphlet on the China-India Conflict

*** Background of the Tensions in the Sikkim Border Region**

*** Tactical Conclusion for the Liberation Movements**

Written by Michael Pröbsting
(International Secretary of the RCIT)

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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 algebric 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 Social." 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.

Sources:

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<http://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2017-05/frankreich-amnesty-international-bericht-missbrauch-ausnahme-zustand>

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

Mexico: In Face of Disaster and Negligance of Government From Spontaneous Solidarity to the Organization of the Mexican people!

Statement of Agrupación de Lucha Socialista, <https://agrupaciondeluchasocialistablog.wordpress.com/>, 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 thousands of 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 begun, 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 become 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 disinformation 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 Ayotzinapa 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!*



Catalonia: Support the Democratic Right for Independence! For an Independent Workers Republic of Catalonia (and the Basque country)!

Statement by the European Bureau of the RCIT, www.thecommunists.net 26.09.2017

1. La Diada 2017, the celebrations of the Catalan 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 Catalan 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 Catalan 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 Catalan people by the reactionary Spanish state. The Catalan people have a long tradition of struggle for independence against the Spanish oppressors. In the 8th 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 Catalan shires freed themselves from the signiory 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 Catalan 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 Catalan 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 Catalan 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 Catalan 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 Catalanian people as well. The dictatorship of Franco denied the existence of Catalanian nationality, and outlawed every aspect of Catalanian identity, including its language. It is mainly due to the Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian people and have declared that they will prevent the referendum. The Spanish state is planning criminal proceedings against the entire Catalanian 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 Catalanian independence. Demonstrating how serious the threat is for the Catalanian 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 Catalanian newspaper *El Vallenc* was searched by police bearing an official search warrant. It has even become illegal for the bourgeois Catalanian 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 sug-

gested, 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 Catalanians 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 Catalanians have become critical of the Spanish state for its arrogance, including those who actually oppose independence from Spain. Even among the ranks of Catalanians 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 weakening 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 Catalanians 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian correspondent, Esquerra Unida i Alternativa, supports the referendum as is, as it, according to them, reflects the will of the clear majority of the Catalanian people. However, the initiative "Communists For The Yes," including activists from the Poble Lliure, Joventuts 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian people, but also openly supports the demand for an independent state. In our opinion, such a state should be a workers' republic.

11. The past and the present of the Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanians, must be organized nationwide. Only the combination of an organized struggle by the Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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 Catalanian 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!

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Authentic revolutionaries need to argue in favor of an independent Workers Republic of Catalonia as well as for the support of the Basque people, the Galician, the Valencian people and others in their struggle for self-determination. Joint forces of the working class and the oppressed together with all discriminated people in Spain will shatter the reactionary imperialist Spanish state. The time has come to organize a constitutional assembly in order to elaborate new laws of an independent Catalan state irrespective of the plans of the current bourgeois parliament. If the CUP really wants to fulfill the will of the working class and oppressed in Catalonia, they need to implement all of these steps now. Otherwise they are just the more radical, stuffed animals of the bourgeois Catalan government.

5. The weekend of the 7th and 8th October has shown the right-wing threat against the independence movement. A huge demonstration with more than 350.000 people took place in Barcelona on Sunday. Although it was declared as a Catalan protest, many participants were mobilized from other parts of Spain. The organizing force was the Societat Civil Catalana (SCC), a platform of supporters of Spanish unity against the independence movement. Although the SCC received in the past support by the one or the other politician from the social-democratic PSOE respectively its Catalan branch PSC, this support never lasted long. The reason for this is that the SCC has been dominated by right-wing and even semi-fascist forces since their foundation in 2014. Their leaders came from political traditions like the Fuerza Nueva (supporters of the Franco dictatorship) and the Movimiento Social Republicano (an openly Neonazi group). No wonder, that the SCC was the main sponsor of a book presentation by the publishing house Galland books (named after Adolf Galland, a Nazi pilot who served also Franco), which is also currently promoting to commemorate of the División Azul, the fascist Blue Division of voluntaries from Spain serving the Nazi regime in WWII.



6. The biggest demonstration on Sunday the 8th October was therefore unsurprisingly supported by a dozen of right-wing and fascist organizations like Democracia Nacional, VOX, Falange and many others. The PP also supported the mobilization officially. Likewise, no trade union respectively workers organization called for the participation at the demonstrations of the SCC. However, smaller demonstrations (approx. 5.000 people) were held by the initiative "Parlem-Hablemos" (Let's Talk) which want to mediate between the Catalan state and the Spanish state on the matter of autonomy and independence. All in all it became very clear that there is a clear polarization between an active and progressive pro-independence camp and an active, right-wing, bureaucratic centralist, pro-Spanish unionist camp. Authentic revolutionaries need to support the pro-independence movement as well as to defend it against the repression apparatus and the (semi-)fascists. All authentic revolutionaries should struggle for a revolutionary perspective inside the independence movement and therefore argue in favor of an independent Workers Republic of Catalonia. Such a republic must not be part of the imperialist European Union. Instead revolutionaries fight for such a republic being part of a Socialist Federation of Iberian Workers Republics as well as a United Socialist States of Europe.

7. The Vaga General in Catalunya (general strike in Catalonia) on the 3rd October was an impressive signal of the militant working class. Although the bureaucratic leaderships of the biggest trade unions CCOO and UGT didn't support the strike and even tried to demobilize it, more than 700.000 people participated in Barcelona alone according to police estimations (which are always way smaller than the real number of participants). Additional 60.000 people participated in Girona (population of approximately 98.000), more than 30.000 in Terragona (population of approximately 131.000), and others. The firefighters were mobilized to defend the general strike in case of police attacks as they have also defended the mobilizations at the referendum on 1st October. The 3-O strike has shown the potential but it was not enough to really challenge the Spanish state.

8. As important as the Vaga General 3-O has been, more is necessary. Another, and for this time indefinite, general strike is urgent in order to drive forward in the struggle for independence. Hence, the trade union Intersindical-CSC called for a general strike between the 11th and 16th October, but the call was declared illegal by the Supreme Court of Justice of Catalonia (TSJC). Furthermore, the pro-independence and left-wing Alternative Interunion Committee of Catalonia announced a general strike for 18th October. All authentic revolutionaries should demand from the leaderships of the trade unions, including the CCOO and UGT, to organize an indefinite general strike irrespective of any prohibition by the bourgeois state. Such a general strike must be based on strike committees and workers assemblies. Self-defense units must be active in order to protect the general strike. Given recent experience, such self-defense units should be led by the firefighters, the dockers and other workers of the transport sector. The latter are able to obstruct the paramilitary Guardia Civil to enter Catalonia during such an indefinite general strike. However, at a certain point the self-defense units

will need to arm themselves to be able to really defend the general strike against the repression apparatus. Authentic revolutionaries need to explain the importance of such a step, to actively participate in the self-defense units and to warn against pacifist illusions.

9. The right-wing and fascist forces are an additional threat to the independence movement. It is more than obvious that the polarization goes on between two main camps of which one is progressive, in favor of independence and the other one reactionary, against independence. All workers and oppressed in the whole of Spain need to take side with the Catalan independence movement and to defend it against both the Spanish state as well as fascist forces. Otherwise the attacks of the fascists against progressive forces like it happened in Valencia at the reactionary mobilizations on Monday, 9th October will increase massively. The reactionary forces are mobilized nationwide, so the anti-fascist forces need to answer with nationwide mobilizations. It should be clear to everyone: A victory of the Catalan independence struggle will weaken the most reactionary, militarist and imperialist forces. A defeat of the Catalan independence struggle, on the other hand, is a defeat for the working class and all discriminated people in the whole of Spain. In addition, the people of Catalonia need to join forces with all other oppressed and discriminated people in Spain like the Basque people, the Galician, the Valencian people and

others. The working class in Spain needs to fight for the unity of our class and the solidarity with the struggles of the oppressed and discriminated people. Our unity is not the bureaucratically enforced unity of the Spanish state on the ground of territorial lines but rather the class unity of the workers and oppressed on the ground of joint struggle against oppression and exploitation. All authentic revolutionaries must fight for the right of self-determination including the right of separation.

10. All above mentioned tasks are both important and urgent. They must be implemented if the people of Catalonia should have a chance to succeed in their struggle. For this the workers and oppressed in Catalonia and all other parts of Spain need a revolutionary leadership. It is therefore highly urgent for all authentic revolutionaries to join forces and to form a revolutionary party of the workers and oppressed. Only such a party is able to elaborate a revolutionary strategy to lead the masses in a successful fight for independence of Catalonia on a socialist base. This is what the RCIT is fighting for! We call all authentic revolutionaries to join us in this struggle!

International Secretariat of the RCIT

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Catalonia: Puigdemont fears Consistent Struggle for Independence

Only Mass Actions of the Working Class lead to Independent Workers Republic

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), www.thecommunists.net, 11.10.2017 (UTC: 12.00)

1. Millions of people in Catalonia expected the declaration of independence on the eve of the 10th October. More than 30.000 activists gathered in front of the parliament of Catalonia in Barcelona, as well as in Girona. Banners were held saying "Defensem la República Catalana" ("We defend the Catalan Republic") and "No Passaran" (the famous anti-fascist slogan "They will not pass"). Militant activists were mobilized to form self-defense units in order to stop police forces storming the parliament after the declaration of independence. The anarcho-syndicalist trade union Coordinadora Obrera Sindical (COS) practically coordinated the mobilization and argued for self-defense units of the working class to defend independence. On the other side the police forces were mobilized with armored cars and heavy firearms. However, nothing happened in the end of the day. Puigdemont signed the declaration of independence together with the MPs of the Candidatura d'Unitat Popular (CUP) and the Together for the Yes (JxSí) campaign, but postponed its implementation to an unknown future date. Any illusions in the Catalan government as well as in Puigdemont are dangerous as they hinder the class-independent organization of the workers and oppressed. Authentic revolutionaries need to warn the workers and oppressed not to trust Puigdemont and the bourgeois Catalan government, which would like to have an independent imperialist Catalan state but is also willing to suppress any militant struggle for independence in order to keep control over Catalonia.

2. In this very moment, important decisions are made. The imperialist Spanish state still evaluates the implementation of the article 155 which means the dissolution of the Catalonia's government as well as its autonomy rights. Although it is not certain that the Spanish state will escalate the situation after Puigdemont withdrew the plans for immediate independence, it is still on the table. The reactionary Spanish state has demonstrated once more its arrogance and determination to oppress any attempt towards Catalan independence. It might see Puigdemont's decision to postpone independence as a sign of weakness and therefore an invitation to solve the matter once and for all. The Spanish state might also be furious about the signed declaration irrespective of the postponed date of its implementation. However, any aggressive strike by the Spanish state will lead to a massive escalation as millions of people might be mobilized in defense. It is therefore highly urgent to prepare self-defense units of the workers and oppressed on a broader scale in order to be ready to defend the Catalan people against the aggression of the Spanish state.

3. The CUP is also discussing in this very moment how to proceed with their MPs as they are considering resigning from parliament. They are under strong pressure by their militant rank and file to protest against the Catalan government's rejection to immediately declare independence. Indeed it would be a vivid act of protest

to turn away from parliamentary work and to focus on mobilizations on the streets. However, it is not likely that the CUP will resign and it is even less likely that the CUP will take all the necessary steps after resigning from parliament. These steps should be to organize mass mobilizations including an indefinite general strike in order to defend Catalonia against the aggression of the Spanish state and to organize the vanguard of the working class independently of the bourgeois nationalists. An indefinite general strike is the nightmare of the Catalan government as it wants to have the ultimate control over the independence movement.

4. Furthermore, public popular meetings in the districts and neighborhoods, the workplaces and schools must be held in order to build action committees of the workers and oppressed. These committees should decide on the next steps on the road to independence.

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Firefighters defending Voters, Catalonia 01.10.2017