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**WORKERS AND OPPRESSED, UNITE!**

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## Grenfall Tower Fire: When a Poor Man's Life Isn't Worth £8

**Fight back against the terror of the rich over the poor!**

*Article by Almedina Gunić, Revolutionary-Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 18.06.2017*

The number of dead from the Grenfall Tower fire is continually rising and will most likely reach more than 100. This was no simple accident or tragedy. We're not talking about some everyday local news item which is covered by a short article and which is already forgotten while we're still reading it. In the case of the Grenfall Tower fire, we are talking about a tragedy that, beyond its terrible reality, is also symbolic of something that shapes the life of our entire society: The oppression of us, the working class.

Read the articles about the reasons for the Grenfall Tower fire. Read the explanations why, outrageously, highly flammable material was used during the building's refurbishment instead of investing £2 more per square meter for safe, inflammable material. Calculate that we're talking about £5,000 of extra cost that wasn't invested in a building housing 600 people, an expense that would have come to a little bit more than £8 per person (1). Read the

statements of the fire fighters who warned, years ago, about the building's being unsafe as it had no working fire alarms and no sprinklers, infractions that were repeatedly ignored by officials. Examine the map of Kensington and Chelsea and locate where the most and the least deprived parts are, and you will discover that Grenfall Tower is situated in the poorest area not only of London but of the entire country. Last but not least, if you live too far away to speak personally with the poor people living in the area in the vicinity of the Grenfall Tower, then watch the videos of them on the internet, read their comments, listen to the interviews with them. They know why this happened to them or to their neighbours and why it would never have happened just few kilometres away in the wealthy areas of South Kensington and Chelsea. This, they know, is because of class differences. In the eyes of the wealthy classes, the poor man's life is not worth another £8.



### Cosmetic improvements instead of concerns for safety

The non-fire resistant cladding of the Grenfell Tower was obviously used when refurbishing the building to make it look less shabby for the wealthier elements in Kensington. Besides the suspicion that the cladding of the tower was used illegally, its use shows the priorities of the *Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea* council and the company with which it worked, the *Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (KCTMO)*.

The *Grenfell Action Group*, a local initiative that has been struggling for many years to improve the workers' living standards wrote: „In May 2013 a serious electrical fault causing multiple power surges at Grenfell Tower posed a major fire risk to residents many of whom witnessed smoke coming from light fittings and other electrical appliances, some of which actually exploded.“ (2)

Instead of investing the £10m refurbishment budget allocated to upgrading the building's clearly deficient safety standards, it was spent on superficial, cosmetic repairs to make the tower look better from outside and to create the *illusion* of improvement. To economize, the work on the infrastructure of the building was of very poor quality. The building firm *Leadbitter* made a bid to improve insulation and replace the defective heating and water system, but the price set for this offer was £11.27 million, which was £1.6 million over the allocated budget. Instead, the KCTMO accepted the bid made by *Rydon Ltd.* to do the job for £8.7 million, which ultimately involved fitting boilers in the middle of hallways, laying exposed pipes across carpets of residents, and so on. (3)

### They want to get rid of the poor

The poor people in North Kensington are a hindrance for the prosperous wealthy areas which are in the process of systematically expanding throughout Kensington. The capitalists who are investing in Kensington real estate are doing their best to get rid of the working class character of the area, i.e., they want to get rid of the poor people currently living in the northern part of the borough. Real estate prices in North Kensington have increased since last year by a staggering 17.93% (4), more than double the average increase of 7% for all of London. (5) Social benefits for public, local projects have been cut, with the result being that the number of private structures has increased, despite many local initiatives having been launched to save public housing. As the Labour MP Emma Dent Coad summed up: „There are groups supporting the community sta-

bles (hanging on), the sports centre (partially privatised), the nursery (closed), the construction training centre (closed), the day centre for people with dementia (closed), Citizens Advice bureau (relocated), Acklam Village community space (under review) and, not least, a group dedicated to tackling the vile and toxic air pollution that kills more than 80 people a year in the borough and causes the early onset of dementia.“ (6)

However, the heroic, hard work of local proletarian initiatives to improve the living standard of the working class in the area, instead of reaping rewards, turns out to be like the task of Sisyphus battling against the will of the rich gods. These proletarian initiatives are doing their utmost to stop the social cleansing of the workers and poor that is taking place in Kensington. As one resident, *Peaky Saku*, put it in a BBC live interview: „They want more reasons to knock these blocks down. There is two options: Regenerate the blocks or they can knock them down. And after that I am not so sure that this (the fire) was totally an accident. (...) The way they don't want us here, that there's rich man's block over there (...) these fires have never happened before.“ (7)

### The rich, anti-social behaviour and capitalism

This is the law of evolution written by capitalism. It is not the survival of the fittest as Darwin proclaimed; it is the survival of the richest. And the richest don't need to fit in as they can buy themselves into everything.

Their social behaviour is not one that fits into the needs of humanity. „We have now done 12 separate studies measuring empathy in every way imaginable, social behavior in every way, and some work on compassion and it's the same story,“ the social scientist *Dacher Keltner* said, „Lower class people just show more empathy, more prosocial behavior, more compassion, no matter how you look at it.“ (8)

Otherwise it would not be the case that unintelligent children with a wealthy background are 35% more likely to earn more money in later life than extraordinarily intelligent children from among the poor. (9) Similarly, it would not be that the average working household is £345 a year worse off than before the capitalist crisis started in 2008 (10), with the poor being 57% poorer than before and the rich being 64% richer (sic!) than previously. (11)

The mentality of the super-rich who are cleaning their shoes with a £50 note to remove the „peasant dirt“ (not a cliché but something that is really happening! (12)) is much more representative of the reality of the capitalist class than what they generally want to admit in public. In Kensington they don't just remove the „peasant dirt“ from their shoes, but are obviously doing their best to remove

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the cause of the „peasant dirt,“ i.e., the working class people from Kensington as such. No wonder that the Grenfall Tower fire triggered protests of outrage by the working class.

### Protestors and politicians

Theresa May has proved completely inept in this situation as she hid from the tenants and their working class neighbours, and instead praised the few policemen who used their riot equipment to support the fire-fighters. It is typical that her sympathies go with the repression apparatus and its weapons, even though, atypically in this case, the police violence was used to defend the heroic fire fighters instead of their normal brutally beating down of protestors. May is the authentic public face of the Tories who are arch enemies of the working class and who are working overtime to play at the empathy game with the victims of the fire. No wonder she didn't show up at the scene of the fire -- she would have been attacked by the protestors within seconds.

Work for the Labour Party is much simpler, as its ambiguous nature as a bourgeois workers' party helps their officials to a certain degree to relate to the Kensington workers and poor. Jeremy Corbyn arrived after one hour in North Kensington to talk with people there. He criticized the local council for not using the unoccupied houses of the rich in Kensington to provide the victims of the Grenfall Tower fire with shelter in the same area. Corbyn also backs the demands of the *Grenfall Action Group* and the *Radical Housing Network* to have public investigations of the causes of the fire. (13)

As a result, the Labour leader's general political agenda is viewed as radical and socialist by many of his enemies who hysterically warn against a Corbyn-led government: „*The Labour Party and the country need rescuing from his dangerous campaign!*“ (14)

Indeed the progressive ideas in his agenda, like the nationalisation of the railways and the energy sector, Britain's leaving NATO and the Trident (nuclear weapons) programme, the building of one million homes and others justify critically supporting him in the elections and against the Blairites in the Labour Party. (15) However,

we should not forget that we most likely lost more than 100 of our class brothers and sisters in the Grenfall Tower fire because of the system Corbyn, at the end of the day, supports. Not to speak of the untold millions of dead class brothers and sisters who have lost their lives as a result of the crimes of capitalism.

### Kill the rabid wolf

This is a war against us and our lives that has been going on since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, since the very beginning of capitalism. In this class war we are losing our health and, in the end, our lives and the lives of our loved ones. The location, type and quality of our dwelling places are just one front in this war. According to statistics, disease and injuries (all of them avoidable) caused by poor housing cost the NHS at least £600m per year (16) and 3.8 million workers are in poverty because of high rental housing costs. (17) Studies show that the *bedroom tax* led to „*increased poverty and had broad-ranging adverse effects on health, wellbeing and social relationships*“. (18)

When we were kids, it was fun to play „*Which animal do you see?*“ as we looked at the black mould on the walls of the tiny bedroom the three of us shared with our parents. Respiratory illness was the less funny part of the mould game. As adults, we witnessed the painful death of our class brothers and sisters in the Grenfall tower fire and become angry as hell. No wonder, protestors stormed the Kensington town hall to confront the RBKC council, chanting „*No justice, no peace!*“ Which brings us exactly to the point: There is no justice and there should not be any peace until we end this war being waged by our rulers against us by overthrowing them!

It is like a rabid wolf attacking a village, killing most of the villagers. The Tories and Theresa May are the owners of the wolf, and enjoy watching him attacking the village and say „*Sorry, folks! We hadn't planned it this way.*“ The left wing of Labour headed by Jeremy Corbyn is merely trying to become the new owners of the rabid wolf, and their plan is to hypnotize the beast and to transform it into a calm, healthy and happy bunny rabbit. But somehow, this just won't work out.

## Two Pamphlets on the EU and Brexit

\* **Marxism, European Union and Brexit**

\* **The British Left and the EU-Referendum**

Written by Michael Pröbsting  
(International Secretary of the RCIT)

Price for one pamphlet: 2 Pound (plus delivery charges)



### The wealthy wolf

For more than a century, Social Democrats are trying to convince our class to come to an arrangement with the oppressors. South Kensington's Labour MP, Emma Dent Coad, uses this tack when she says:

*„South Kensington has stepped up for North Kensington with donations, love and expert help. Kensington has come together to grieve and to help and to show it cares. This is a huge first step and over the next weeks, months and years we will work together, with honesty and transparency, to address and resolve the issues around the horrendous and frightening event that has revealed Kensington's true face.“* (19)

What is true is that many of the people from the wealthy areas of Kensington offered their help, donated money and even worked as volunteers during the days since the fire. But at the end of the day, *they* don't go back to shabby houses and have to struggle to meet the basic needs of life. At the end of the day, they need nearly a hundred dead around the corner to bring them to the notion that they should somehow help their poor neighbours. But this is cynical hypocrisy, because the affluent of Kensington, like the well off everywhere, live with poorness in front of their eyes every single day and consistently ignore it. Not because they were born bad but because they were born well-off.

If the median annual income in Kensington is over £100,000 (20), why don't the "enlightened" prosperous of Kensington, those who felt so moved to help following the fire, voluntarily cut down their own standard of living to a more moderate one and donate the rest to the poor families? For a couple with two children who are among those living within the lowest 10% of UK incomes, the average annual income is only £19,700. (21) In other words, the median income of a Kensington household is equivalent to that of 5 poor families in UK.

The answer why the rich and well-off don't share their wealth with us is that they are not wealthy despite our being poor - they are wealthy *because* we are poor. Their wealth is not a gift of fate. The profits of companies and multinational cooperation are stolen money from us, the workers. The way those companies and multinational corporations generate profits must, by necessity, harm our health, our lives and the nature in which we *all* live in. Not only in case of the murderous *profit-thought* which killed our brothers and sisters in the Grenfall Tower fire, but in *all* areas of our lives as working class persons.

### A side-note on the Grenfell Tower fire and the Daesh terror attacks

Finally, let us note that the Grenfell Tower fire cost about as many lives as the combined number of *all* victims of *all* so-called Islamist terrorist attacks in Britain *since* 2005 (92 dead). (22) But while the ruling class whipped up public hysteria about the danger of "Islamist extremism," they didn't give a damn about the deteriorating living conditions of the working class and the accompanying danger to our lives!

Naturally, this does not diminish the vile, reactionary nature of the terrorist attacks by Daesh against innocent civilians. (23) But it is revealing that such terrorist attacks are exploited by the ruling class in order to drum

up hatred against Muslims and to invest many millions of pounds in expanding the domestic repression apparatus, including increasing the surveillance of the people. Compare these sums to what they are doing now! How much money will they now invest, after the Grenfell Tower fire, in better and safer housing?! How much will they actually and effectively increase the regulation of all the companies involved in construction and public safety?!

### Fight back the rich people's terror

The anger and the hate against all of those people who are directly or indirectly responsible for the cruel death of our brothers and sisters in the Grenfall Tower fire is exploding, as the protests in its wake have demonstrated. This is a very important step towards ending such tragedies for good, but it is only a very small first step on the path of doing so.

Those guilty for the tragedy of the Grenfall Tower fire must be held accountable. Let us fight for:

*\* Immediate public investigations organized and led by local structures of the working class in Kensington like the Grenfall Action Group, the Radical Housing Network and others and with the participation of the fire fighters union! These public investigations should be conducted together with the victims of the fire and their families and friends!*

*\* For a tribunal of the workers and poor of Kensington, including the victims of the fire, to decide on the punishment for those guilty and the compensation for the victims!*

*\* Open the books of KCTMO and all the companies that have worked with it in the past and present -- their bookkeeping ledgers, bank accounts, tax returns, etc. -- to the public investigation organs and the tribunal of the workers and poor of Kensington! There must be an end to their "business secrets"!*

*\* Investigation of each and every tower building and other project initiated by KCTMO by the fire fighters of Kensington and local action groups of the workers and the poor to prevent another tragedy. Every measure that the fire fighters and local action groups demand for the security and the health of the tenants of each building run by KCTMO must be met immediately and completely!*

*\* All unoccupied houses in Kensington and Chelsea must be opened for the victims of the Grenfall Tower fire, as well as for the homeless and the poor who are living in overcrowded, unhealthy flats and houses! Why should those houses be unoccupied for the profit of the speculators and landlords while people lack an intact and healthful home?!*

*\* Stop the closure of fire stations! Re-open modernized fire stations (including those, which were closed during the last years) and massively increase the number of firefighters and pay them a higher wage for the heroic job they are doing!*

*\* Social Housing is not a privilege that can be taken away -- it is rather a basic human right that we fight for! For the expropriation of the wealthy landlords and the housing companies to organize a decent living standard for all!*

*\* Immediately end the bedroom tax and every other housing law that harms the poor! For public control of rent, organized by local, regional and nationwide organs of the workers and the poor!*

*\* Massive investment in all public structures that the workers and poor of Kensington and Chelsea demand, including nurseries, sports centres, schools, etc. This should be financed by the expropriation of the super-rich of Kensington and Chelsea and by a massive increase in taxes for the rich! Why should we con-*

tinue to tolerate that the average annual income in Kensington is over £100,000 while the workers and poor in Kensington are crowded in small and shabby flats and can't afford enough food and medicine?

Activists inside as well as outside the Labour Party, in the trade unions and in local initiatives, should fight for such a program aimed at a massive improvement in housing conditions all over the country. We urge all Labour MPs, including Jeremy Corbyn and Emma Dent Coad, to support all of these demands, to fight for their implementation and to express solidarity with and participate in the people's protest actions. You say that you are willing to fight for the interests of the poor. Now prove it! Of course, these steps need to be taken even if Corbyn is not willing to take them.

The storming of the Kensington town hall showed the militant spirit of the workers and poor. We need a mass movement throughout the entire country for the massive improvement of the housing conditions, paid for by the rich. It is urgent that we organize local people's assemblies in all working class and poor estates nationwide and bring together all local housing initiatives. These assemblies should elect delegates and hold a national conference in order to build a national housing movement that will fight for our rights.

Activists must fight inside the trade unions and local initiatives as well as inside the Labour Party for official support and the active participation of their organizations for such movements.

All class-conscious activists inside Labour should put pressure on their MPs to prove in deeds their solidarity and loyalty towards the poor in Kensington. The Blairites and their friends in Labour will do whatever they can to stop such a consistent proletarian politic. Every class-conscious activist inside Labour should fight for the expulsion of the Blairite party apparatus from Labour.

Whatever the concrete steps now taken, it is clear that we need a new workers' party that authentically fights for the interests of the working class and the poor, not only in Kensington or London but throughout all of Britain. We believe that such a new workers' party should be based on a revolutionary program. We need to kill the rabid wolf. We need to smash capitalism via a socialist revolution!

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## Second Terror Attack Comes to Britain

*Statement by the RCIT in Britain, 5th June 2017*

**O**n Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June at approx. 10pm at night 7 people were killed when a van mowed people down on London Bridge near Borough Market. 48 people were also reported to be injured as the assailants started stabbing people on or near the Bridge. The attackers are purported to be members of the Daesh. The three attackers were shot dead by police.

The Guardian reports: "At least seven people have been killed and 48 injured after three attackers drove a van into crowds on London Bridge and then went on a stabbing rampage in nearby Borough Market. Police said armed officers shot dead all three attackers within minutes of receiving reports of the terrorist attack unfolding in central London. The three men appeared to be wearing suicide bomb vests that were later confirmed to be fakes." [1]

This second terrorist attack must be understood because of the years of imperialist interventions in the Middle East generally. Not content with invading and occupying Afghanistan and Iraq using overwhelming military power, they now continue their barbaric aggression. In Iraq, Syria and other countries like Somalia and Yemen, the Great Powers rain down missiles, drone strikes and the rest of imperialist armaments on defenseless civilians killing, maiming and mutilating entire families, young, old, men, women and children. Is it any wonder given these circumstances that young men, and they have all been young men who have become alienated and bitter and feeling that they need to hit back, that they do and as they carry out these barbaric acts they in fact mirror the barbarity of the imperialist powers?!

With only 4 days left until the result of the British General Election the Daesh or Daesh inspired militants have struck causing maximum publicity during this heightened period of electioneering. There has been an immediate response on social media for the General Election to be suspended in light of these attacks.

"Politicians are coming under pressure to suspend the General Election after the latest terrorist outrage. Within hours of the attack on London Bridge, there were calls on social media for Thursday's poll to be postponed. The call for political activity to be put on hold was made by Mark Oxley in a petition he posted on the Change.org website His views were shared by many on Twitter". [2]

The RCIT in Britain denounces unreservedly this cowardly and reactionary attack on people enjoying a night out, including migrants and ordinary workers and their families. In our statement after the Manchester attack at the Aria Grande Concert we made clear our position on the role of the Daesh.

"The Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) unequivocally condemns these attacks as utterly reactionary. Like the Paris attack, indiscriminate deadly violence was directed not against a military target but against ordinary civilians. The ruling class of the imperialist powers will use these attacks to justify and intensify its reactionary offensive against the oppressed peoples of the Middle East, as well as its repressive policies domestically targeting the working-class in general and Muslim migrants in particular.

This attack clearly demonstrates yet again the reactionary character of Daesh/IS. This hateful organization wages war mainly against oppressed people, not against imperialism or reactionary regimes. The RCIT repeats that it is the task of the workers and peasants organized in popular militias to wage the struggle against Daesh/IS. Workers and the oppressed must oppose any actions by the Great Powers and their allied butchers, like Assad, since it is the imperialists and their dogs who are the biggest terrorists of all, and they are cynically using the struggle against "terrorism" only as a pretext to advance their own interests. We say: Fight Daesh by fighting its causes – the exploitation and wars of the Great Powers and their crony dictators in the Middle East!

This attack must not be used by the capitalist state to increase its dictatorial attacks on migrants and refugees. The RCIT Britain reiterates its principled opposition to all forms of racism and oppression and for the defence of democratic rights. We will continue to campaign for open borders and defend the democratic rights of migrants and other oppressed sections of the working classes.

The RCIT Britain reemphasizes the absolute necessity for European workers, migrants and youth to unite in the struggle against racism, state oppression, and attacks on democratic and social rights. Furthermore, it is urgent that we mobilize in order to drive the Great Powers out of the Middle East. We also call upon the workers and oppressed to support the Arab Revolution against the dictatorships and the refugees of the Middle Eastern wars who wish to come to Europe.

We warn against May and the Tories using this terrible event to shore up her struggling campaign for the 8<sup>th</sup> June election with racist propaganda. The workers movement must make sure that she cannot utilize this as a kind of Thatcher's Falklands/Malvinas moment". [3]

The RCIT in Britain puts forward the following demands to unite the working class, migrants and youth.

\* No to Daesh and its terrorist attacks!

\* Against any "State of Emergency" regime and mobilization of the army!

\* Fight racism and repression directed towards Muslim migrants in Britain and the whole of Europe!

\* Drive Britain and all other Great Powers out of the Middle East! Support the Resistance against the imperialist aggressors!

\* Support the Arab Revolution against the region's dictatorships!

\* Open the Borders of Europe! Down with the EU's Iron Wall against refugees!

\* Forward in the building of a revolutionary World Party!

### Footnotes

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# Terror Comes To Manchester - War Comes Home

Statement of the RCIT Britain, 23.05.2017

On Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> May at 10.35 pm, while Ariana Grande a pop singer was giving a performance at the Manchester Arena, a lone suicide bomber suspected of being a member of Daesh caused an explosion. He killed himself and 22 other people who were attending the performance. 59 innocent bystanders were injured among them several children. [1]

The British supporters of the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) unreservedly denounce this cowardly and reactionary attack on innocent people including migrants and refugees from Muslim countries. Daesh/IS never select military targets but attack innocent victims who have no connection to the imperialist bombing campaign in Syria and other Arab countries like Libya, Iraq and Yemen.

This is not the first time that Daesh have brought the terror campaign back home to Europe. We reemphasise what our international organization already said in its reaction to the attacks in Brussels in March 2016:

*"The Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) unequivocally condemns these attacks as utterly reactionary. Like the Paris attack, indiscriminate deadly violence was directed not against a military target but against ordinary civilians. The ruling class of the imperialist powers will use these attacks to justify and intensify its reactionary offensive against the oppressed peoples of the Middle East, as well as its repressive policies domestically targeting the working-class in general and Muslim migrants in particular.*

*This attack clearly demonstrates yet again the reactionary character of Daesh/IS. This hateful organization wages war mainly against oppressed people, not against imperialism or reactionary regimes. The RCIT repeats that it is the task of the workers and peasants organized in popular militias to wage the struggle against Daesh/IS. Workers and the oppressed must oppose any actions by the Great Powers and their allied butchers, like Assad, since it is the imperialists and their dogs who are the biggest terrorists of all, and they are cynically using the struggle against "terrorism" only as a pretext to advance their own interests. We say: Fight Daesh by fighting its causes – the exploitation and wars of the Great Powers and their crony dictators in the Middle East!"* [2]

This attack must not be used by the capitalist state to increase its dictatorial attacks on migrants and refugees. The RCIT Britain reiterates its principled opposition to all forms of racism and oppression and for the defense of democratic rights. We will continue to campaign for open borders and defend the democratic rights of migrants and other oppressed sections of the working classes.

The RCIT Britain reemphasizes the absolute necessity for European workers, migrants and youth to unite in the struggle against racism, state oppression, and attacks on democratic and social rights. Furthermore, it is urgent that we mobilize in order to drive the Great Powers out of the Middle East. We also call upon the workers and oppressed to support the Arab Revolution against the dictatorships and the refugees of the Middle Eastern wars who wish to come to Europe.

We warn against May and the Tories using this terrible event to shore up her struggling campaign for the 8<sup>th</sup> June

election with racist propaganda. The workers movement must make sure that she can not utilize this as a kind of Thatcher's Falklands/Malvinas moment!

We put forward the following demands to unite the working class against all forms of racism and Imperialism.

\* *No to Daesh and its terrorist attacks!*

\* *Against any "State of Emergency" regime and mobilization of the army!*

\* *Fight racism and repression directed towards Muslim migrants in Britain and the whole of Europe!*

\* *Drive Britain and all other Great Powers out of the Middle East! Support the Resistance against the imperialist aggressors!*

\* *Support the Arab Revolution against the region's dictatorships!*

\* *Open the Borders of Europe! Down with the EU's Iron Wall against refugees!*

\* *Forward in the building of a revolutionary World Party!*

## Footnotes

1) See e.g. <http://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/suspected-attack-in-manchester-live-updates/ar-BBBq69L?ocid=SK2MDHP>

2) <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/brussels-attack/>

## On our position on recent terrorist attack in Europe see:

RCIT: Terror in Brussels: The War comes Home. Daesh-Terror is the Result of Imperialist Terror! Oppose any State of Emergency and Repression against Muslim Peoples in Europe! 23.03.2016, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/brussels-attack/>

RCIT: Terror in Paris is the Result of Imperialist Terror in the Middle East! Stop France's and other Imperialist Powers' Warmongering! No Mobilization of the Army inside France! Defend the Muslim Peoples against Chauvinist Hatemongering and State Repression! 14.11.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/terror-in-paris/>

RCIT: World Perspectives 2016: Advancing Counterrevolution and Acceleration of Class Contradictions Mark the Opening of a New Political Phase, Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries (January 2016), 23 January 2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2016/>

RCIT: Increasing Instability and Militarization in the European Union. On the Tasks of Revolutionaries in the New Political Phase which has Opened in Europe after the Terrorist Attack in Paris, 08.12.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/militarism-in-eu/>

RCIT: France after the Attacks in Paris: Defend the Muslim People against Imperialist Wars, Chauvinist Hatemongering, and State Repression! 9.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/statement-paris-attacks/>

Michael Pröbsting: France: "Communist" Party fails to Vote in Parliament against Imperialist War in Iraq! 15.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/french-pcf-iraq-war/>

Michael Pröbsting: After the Paris Attack: Socialists must Join Hands with Muslim People Against Imperialism and Racism! Reformist and Centrist Forces try to derail the Workers Movement by Failing to Stand up for Solidarity with the Muslims and Against Imperialist War-Mongering! 17.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/france-defend-muslims/>

Michael Pröbsting: The Racist Character of Charlie Hebdo and the pro-imperialist campaign "Je Suis Charlie". Solidarity with Muslim People! NOT Solidarity with Charlie Hebdo! 17.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/racist-charlie-hebdo/>

# G20 Summit: A Symbol for Global Capitalism and its Crisis

## Imperialist Leaders Maneuver amid Accelerating Rivalry between the Great Powers and Mass Protests on the Streets

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 10.07.2017*

1. The G20 Summit in Germany's port city of Hamburg and the events surrounding it represent an accurate picture of the present world situation. During their 7-8 July meeting, the imperialist leaders desperately negotiated behind closed doors in an attempt to reach a compromise that would bridge the gaps between their conflicting interests. While they succeeded in doing so for issues on which they share common interests, they glaringly failed to do so for other matters. At the same time as the conference was being held, militant mass demonstrations on the streets of Hamburg reflected popular outrage towards the arrogant "leaders" of the world.

2. We are living in a world of drastic upheavals. Among other things, this is reflected in the fact that, for the first time in the history of such summits, the imperialist leaders of the world's biggest powers were forced to formally admit in their official communiqué issued at the end of their negotiations that they failed to reach an agreement on the issue of climate change. US President Donald Trump – in contrast to all other heads of states – insisted that the world's biggest imperialist power, as well as its second-largest emitter of carbon, will formally leave the so-called *Paris Climate Accord*. The significance of this is that the US will now see itself free to increase its greenhouse gas emissions which, to a large extent, are responsible for a large portion of global warming. Furthermore, in the recent G20 summit, the Great Powers could only thinly conceal their profound disagreement on the issue of global trade. Again, in particular it was Donald Trump who adhered to his chauvinist-protectionist "America First" policy.

3. Of course, behind this lack of consensus there are no ideological differences between the various parties, arising from the adherence of one side or another to some more "progressive" goals. Rather, while still the biggest power, albeit a rapidly declining one, US imperialism is both in a position to take a more aggressive protectionist stand against its rivals, as well as simultaneously being forced to do so. The other imperialist powers – like the European Union, China, Russia or Japan – are by no means more progressive than the North American aging giant.

4. On issues where the interests of the imperialists coincided, they were able to make "progress" – to the detriment of the oppressed peoples. Trump and Putin, together with their respective foreign ministers, held a long meeting where seem to have reached a significant amount of agreement on how to liquidate the popular uprising in Syria. They formally agreed to impose a cease-fire and to create a "de-escalation zone" in the regions of Deraa, Quneitra and Suweida. US Secretary of State Tillerson emphasized the joint reactionary interests of these two imperialist powers in smashing the armed popular struggle against the Assad dictatorship and pacifying the country by a settlement imposed by the Great Powers (in

the template of the so-called "Astana-Deal"). Reporting on the meeting of the world's two biggest robbers, Tillerson said: "And I would tell you that, by and large, our objectives are exactly the same. How we get there, we each have a view. But there's a lot more commonality to that than there are differences. So we want to build on the commonality, and we spent a lot of time talking about next steps." Tillerson even openly admired Russia's aggressive support for the Assad's barbaric war which has claimed the lives until now of at least half a million persons: "Maybe they've got the right approach and we've got the wrong approach," [!] said the former CEO of ExxonMobile, US Secretary of State (New York Times: U.S., Russia and Jordan Reach Deal for Cease-Fire in Part of Syria, 7.7.2017)

5. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) and its sections in the Middle East restate their support for the ongoing Syrian Revolution. We call upon all activists around the world to continue their solidarity work with the workers and peasants of Syria in their heroic fight against the Assad regime and encourage them to reject any counter-revolutionary settlement initiative like the *Astana Deal*. We similarly express our support for the right of national self-determination for all oppressed peoples – including the Kurdish people in Turkey and Syria. Long live the socialist revolution!

6. The G20 summit also approved German chancellor Merkel's misnamed "Partnership for Africa" initiative. While ostensibly designed to aid the impoverished African peoples, this initiative in fact only serves the interests of the imperialist monopolies by letting them buy up Africa's raw materials, while they avoid paying taxes to the governments of these nations, and instead repatriate their huge profits back to their home countries. Furthermore, the initiative openly serves the imperialist agenda – in particular that of the European Union – by strengthening its political and military grip on northern and central Africa in order to put down armed resistance and to prevent millions of Africans migrating to Europe (see, e.g., the French president Macron's recent initiative to create a 5,000 soldier-strong regional anti-terror force for the Sahel region).

7. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) and its Zimbabwean section condemn the imperialist "Partnership for Africa." We once again emphasize our solidarity with the popular resistance against imperialist exploitation and oppression on the African continent. We support popular uprisings against reactionary dictatorships and austerity attacks. Likewise, the RCIT calls upon the working class and the oppressed of Africa to expropriate the imperialist monopolies and expel the troops of the Great Powers along with their local auxiliaries. For a socialist federation of Black Africa!

8. The G20 summit also impressively demonstrated the wide-spread popular outrage against the imperialist leaders who are destroying the social and ecological living



conditions of humanity. For three days more than 100,000 people protested in the streets of Hamburg, expressing the rejection of the agenda of the Great Powers by the workers and oppressed around the world. These protests were also a vivid demonstration that the world-wide popular struggle against the attacks of the ruling class around have not receded – contrary to various predictions of doomsayers among the reformist and centrist left.

9. The brutal attacks against the demonstrators by a force of German police numbering 21,000 cops equipped with numerous anti-riot water cannon vehicles – and including at one point the presence of special police units openly wearing machine guns on the streets – showed once more that the state apparatus is a tool of repression in the service of the ruling capitalist class.

10. Naturally, such a positive evaluation of the mass protests against the G20 summit should not allow us to ignore some obvious weaknesses in its organization. Among them was the counter-productive role of some sectors of the so-called Black Block anarchists who senselessly attacked and, in several instances, even set alight small shops and ordinary cars. It was also very problematic that a large contingent of the Kurdish PKK/YPG marched at the head of the huge demonstration of 100,000 on Saturday. This sent a very wrong signal to the world and in particular to the Syrian people given the utterly reactionary role of the petty-bourgeois Stalinist-nationalist YPG as foot soldiers of US imperialism in their offensive to conquer northern Syria. All these weaknesses reflect the still influential role of Stalinist and anarchist forces among the so-called “left” in Germany.

11. In the light of the mass protests against the G20 summit, the RCIT reemphasizes the conclusions of its “Urgent Call for Revolutionary Unity” as well as other programmatic documents: We call upon all organizations and activists honestly striving towards the creation of a new Revolutionary World Party to join forces on a joint programmatic basis. The RCIT is committed to serious discussions and the closest possible collaboration with all forces who share such an outlook.

*International Secretariat*

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For the RCIT analysis of the current world situation and the acceleration of capitalism’s contradictions, we refer readers to our numerous articles and documents accessed on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/>. In particular we refer readers to the following documents:

RCIT: World Perspectives 2017: The Struggle against the Reactionary Offensive in the Era of Trumpism. Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries, 18 December 2016, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2017/>

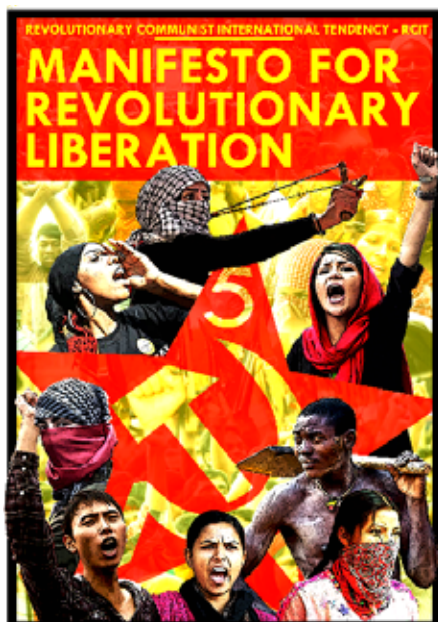
RCIT: Theses on Capitalism and Class Struggle in Black Africa, 13 April 2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/africa-theses/>

RCIT: Syria: Condemn the Reactionary Astana Deal! The so-called “De-Escalation Zones” are a First Step towards the Partition of Syria and a Conspiracy by the Great Powers to Defeat the Revolution, 7 May 2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/astana-deal/>

Michael Pröbsting: Is the Syrian Revolution at its End? Is Third Camp Abstentionism Justified? An essay on the organs of popular power in the liberated area of Syria, on the character of the different sectors of the Syrian rebels, and on the failure of those leftists who deserted the Syrian Revolution, 5 April 2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/syrian-revolution-not-dead/>

RCIT: Urgent Call for Unity and a Joint Struggle on a Revolutionary Platform. An Open Letter to All Authentic Revolutionaries for an International Conference on the 100th Anniversary of the October Revolution to Advance the Building of a Revolutionary World Party, 09.01.2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/urgent-call-revolutionary-unity-1/>

Michael Pröbsting: The Meaning, Consequences and Lessons of Trump’s Victory. On the Lessons of the US Presidential Election Outcome and the Perspectives for the Domestic and International Class Struggle, 24.November 2016, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/meaning-of-trump/>



## NEW RCIT PROGRAM!

# Manifesto for Revolutionary Liberation

*Adopted at the 1<sup>st</sup> World Congress of the RCIT in October 2016*

**Introduction \* I. Decaying Capitalism \* II. Today’s Worldwide Historic Revolutionary Period \* III. The Reactionary Offensive of the Ruling Class \* IV. A Program for Socialist Revolution to Halt Humanity’s Collapse into Barbarism \* V. The Crisis of Leadership and the Construction of a Revolutionary World Party \* VI. Work in Mass Organizations and the United Front Tactic \* VII. The Semi-Colonial South \* VIII. The Emerging Imperialist Great Powers of the East: China and Russia \* IX. The Old Imperialist Great Powers: The EU, North America and Japan \* X. Conclusion**

*A RCIT Pamphlet, 36 pages, A5 Format*

## Continued from p.12

than for Labour if they want Corbyn to have a chance their open war against the popular demands of Corbyn harmed them a lot. Furthermore it has not been helpful for the Blairites that Jon Cruddas explained the growing support for Corbyn inside Labour with strange conspiracy theories about a "Trotskyist invasion" of Labour led by Corbyn. The arch war criminal Tony Blair has had nothing to say since the result of the general election.

Michael Roberts a Marxist economist made this comment on his blog about the effect on British capital and their jitters at a weak conservative government. *"The UK election result is a personal disaster for the Conservative leader Theresa May. She called the snap election to get a big majority and crush the opposition Labour party and its left-wing leadership. But instead the Conservatives lost seats and its majority in parliament and Labour under leftist Jeremy Corbyn increased its share of the vote dramatically after a vigorous campaign. The turnout was 69%, the highest since 1997, when the figure was 71.4 per cent. It seems that young people turned out for Labour, particularly in the big cities. Labour gained 10% to reach 40%, while the Conservatives also increased their share by 5% to 42%. The big loser was the anti-EU anti-immigration party UKIP which collapsed".* [3]

Most of the centrist groups like the British affiliates of the IMT (Socialist Appeal), L5I (Red Flag), CWI (Socialist Party) and the SWP opportunistically tied themselves to Corbyn's coat tails without realizing and openly stating that he is a left reformist and ultimately a defender of British capitalism. Corbyn has always had a close relationship with the labour aristocracy and the labour bureaucracy. He even stated that he will put 10,000 extra police on the street which is against the aspirations of class consciousness workers, blacks and migrants as well the youth in Britain. Corbyn argued against the sharp oppression of young activists who were on the streets in the London uprising in August 2011. However defence of the youth in words and an increase of police forces in deeds demonstrate the ambiguous character of Corbyn. It shows the danger of following blindly and uncritically the left reformist Corbyn instead of openly challenging his politics.

The RCIT in Britain in its most recent statement on critical support for Corbyn pointed out the weaknesses of the centrists and their attitude to the united front.

*"Centrists either of the ultra-left variety or the opportunist's variety has never being able to understand the role of the Marxist united front as practiced by Vladimir Lenin or Leon Trotsky. The RCIT in a major study of the Marxists classics explained our attitude to the United Front and our tactics towards reformist parties like the British Labour party."* [4]

*"However, opposite trends cannot be excluded – at least temporarily. Under certain circumstances such parties can even experience an initial rejuvenation (see, for example, the British Labour Party under Corbyn) In contrast to such an opportunistic approach, as Bolshevik-Communists; we would work inside such a party while openly advocating our independent program. While cooperating with other forces within the party, we would uncompromisingly fight against reformist and centrist tendencies. We would try to patiently convince the majority of the party to adopt a revolutionary perspective. If this fails*

*and the party degenerates into an ossified reformist formation, revolutionaries would draw the conclusions and split from such the party, taking with us all amenable militant workers and oppressed, and found an authentic revolutionary party".* [5]

Of course, as we have argued in several documents, social democracy and the Labour Party in particular have a history of betrayal and cowardice and will betray as soon as they will have the opportunity to do so.

*"Of course, as we have indicated above, no one should have any illusions about these new reformist or populist parties. Ultimately they will betray the working class and the oppressed either when they have the opportunity to enter a government or when they play the leading role in a mass struggle. It is for this reason that revolutionaries must warn the masses in advance about the true nature of the leaderships of these parties. But at the same time, Marxists must not ignore the politicization and radicalization of sectors of the working class and the youth which currently find their expressions in support for these new parties. Any sectarian abstentionism against this process would only guarantee the isolation of revolutionaries. This is why critical electoral support for such parties, in addition to entryism under certain circumstances, can be a legitimate instrument for Marxists in the current period."* [6]

However, the RCIT in Britain when advocating critical support for Corbyn in the recent election recognized that under his leadership the party had rejuvenated and attracted a huge swathe of youth.

*"However, with the successful campaign of the left-reformist Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn in summer 2015, this decline has been turned around. Despite open hostility by the pro-Blairite party establishment, Corbyn's campaign was based on an anti-austerity and anti-militaristic platform which created huge enthusiasm among young people. In the space of a few months, the Labour Party's "membership jumped from 201,293 on 6 May 2015, the day before the general election, to 388,407 on 10 January 2016. This development is an important indicator that bourgeois workers' parties, even after a long period of decline, can revive and be rejuvenated if newly-radicalized youth and workers see no alternative to them to politically express their desire for change. Labour's membership comeback also demonstrates how wrong numerous centrists (like, for example, the CWI) were when they declared in the early 1990s that the Labour Party (and social democratic parties in general) is no longer bourgeois workers' parties. We authentic Marxists have always rejected this assumption while, at the same time, having also consistently denounced the opportunistic adaption to Labourism and never-ending entryism as practiced by the CWI's former comrades, the IMT of Ted Grant and Alan Woods".* [7]

The RCIT in Britain emphasises the necessity for activists in the Labour Party to organize and accelerate the struggle against the treacherous Blairite wing in the party bureaucracy. [8] The task must be, now more than ever, to expel the Blairites as the most open and aggressive agents of the ruling class inside the party.

Furthermore the CLPs and branches must demand from their Labour MP's to vote in Parliament consistently against all austerity attacks as well against all racist, anti-democratic and militaristic bills.

Finally, it is urgent to prepare a general strike to bring down this Tory minority government. Obviously Corbyn and the left-reformist bureaucrats in Labour will not support voluntarily a general strike because this demand is an attack on capitalist society and neither Corbyn nor

his left-reformist friends are willing to go down this path. However such a general strike is crucial for the working-class in Britain in order to advance the struggle against the capitalist class, for jobs for all, for an end of racism and chauvinism, for an increase in social benefits, and a marked improvement of the NHS, etc.

This general election has produced a hung parliament with a very weak and discredited minority Tory government. This crisis is reflected in all the major metropolitan imperialist nations.

The RCIT in Britain puts forward the following transitional demands and proposals for workers and the oppressed who want to join the fight and overthrow this hated Tory Government.

*\* For an indefinite general strike to bring down this discredited weak Tory minority government!*

*\* Kick out the Blairite wing of the Labour Party!*

*\* Demand from all Labour MP's to oppose all austerity attacks as well against all racist, anti-democratic and militaristic bills!*

*\* For self-defence guards of workers and migrants to defend our communities against fascist and police provocation!*

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

*\* Self-Determination for the people of Scotland!*

*\* For a unified Ireland as a 32 County workers republic as part of a United Socialist States of Europe!*

*\* For a workers government pledged to bring down capitalism and for the destruction of British imperialism!*

We call on all workers and the oppressed to join the RCIT in Britain as the first step and help to build a new World Party of the Socialist Revolution which will be the Fifth International.

#### Footnotes

(1) <http://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/general-election-2017-live-coverage/ar-BBCfgRt>

(2) <http://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/almost-300000-people-sign-petition-against-the-tory-dup-deal-in-just-12-hours/ar-BBCnJGj?li=BBopWjQ&ocid=SK2MDHP>

(3) <https://thenextrecession.wordpress.com/2017/06/09/uk-election-british-capital-in-disarray/>

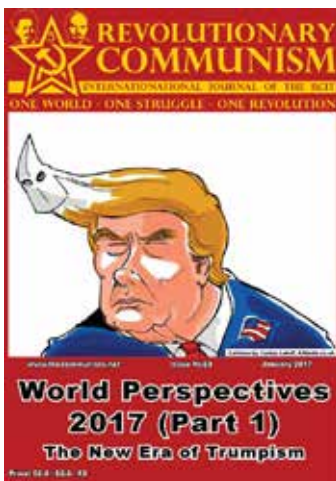
(4) <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/uk-general-election-6-2017/>

(5) <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/book-united-front/chapter-4/>

(6) <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/book-united-front/chapter-6/>

(7) <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/book-united-front/chapter-6/>

(8) <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/uk-general-election-6-2017/>



## 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-Sahara 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

# Britain: Elections are a disaster for Theresa May and the capitalists!

Now is the time to strike! Bring down this weak and discredited minority Tory coalition!

Statement of the RCIT Britain, 14 June 2017

The British general election of 8<sup>th</sup> June produced not the overall victory for May and the Tory government that they hoped for. May who called the elections in the hope of pushing through a hard Brexit which was aimed directly against working-class interests, hoping to politically destroy Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour party has made a grave-mistake - she failed to get a majority in the parliament! The British ruling class is now in deep crisis.

Furthermore the results show that the right-wing-populist UKIP has been wiped off the political map. We have already seen a disastrous result for UKIP during the local elections last month as well as the fact that they have continuously been losing ground since autumn 2016. The collapse of the far right-wing UKIP saved the Tories at the general elections as the overwhelming amount of former UKIP voters swung to the Tories. It is the concrete policy of Theresa May with her aggressive approach against immigrants, her determination to cut ties with the EU by a hard-Brexit strategy, her anti-liberal sentiment that attracted UKIP voters to come back to their rightful home i.e. the Conservative party.

The Scottish Nationalists did badly losing seats to the Tories as well as Labour. Nicola Sturgeon's call for a second referendum on independence did not go down well with voters. Beside the harsh alienation of the Scottish Labour Party bureaucrats against Corbyn caused many working class voters who supported SNP until now to return again to Labour *because* of Corbyn. The more nationalist sectors who are in favour of the Brexit support the Tories and the hard-liner May (we shouldn't forget that a third of the SNP voters backed Brexit).

The tactic of the Tories to push for new elections was obviously based on the hope to win more seats by the sympathy of Brexit supporters of various political backgrounds for the hard-liner May. However the result is a loss of 13 seats and a massive gain for Labour led by Corbyn gaining 30 seats.

Hence "Britain has a *hung parliament*, with no party holding an absolute majority in the House of Commons. After 650 results out of 650 in the snap General Election the state of the parties is:  
Con: 318 Lab: 262 SNP: 35 Ukip: 0 LD: 12 Others: 23 (326 needed for a majority)

*Theresa May* has said she intends to form a government, with the support of the DUP (the North Irish loyalist party), and guide the country through Brexit talks.

*Jeremy Corbyn* called on Mrs May to resign and said the Conservatives should stand aside for a Labour minority government". [1]

May has cobbled a coalition together with the extremely reactionary *Democratic Unionist Party* led by Arlene Foster from Northern Ireland. It is doubtful whether the May Government will last long and it is a probable chance that new elections will have to be called.

"An online petition demanding that the Conservatives scrap plans to form a government with DUP support, gained nearly 300,000 signatures in just 12 hours. Signed by 278,843 people

at the time of writing, it also calls for Theresa May to resign after she lost her parliamentary majority. Speaking outside No 10 after the result became clear, the prime minister said she would seek to form a minority government with a "confidence and supply" agreement with the Northern Irish party". [2]

Although Corbyn and the Labour Party failed to win more votes than the Tories he is the political victor in this election. His anti-austerity and anti-war campaign found resonance among large sections of young and working people who despise the Tories because of their austerity policies, including zero hour contracts, privatisation of the NHS, food banks, cuts in social care and welfare benefits as well as for their racism and chauvinism towards migrants and their families.

The Blairites have been keeping their heads down and have made no comment on how close Corbyn came to being elected Prime Minister and forming a minority Labour government. At the moment they are keeping their powder dry and waiting for an opportunity to attack and eventually remove him as leader. They are bitterly disappointed that Corbyn did so well and confused about the outcome of the elections. Even though the Blairites managed to win the support of the Scottish Labour Party which goes so far that the SNP even tried to convince Corbyn supporters in Scotland to vote rather for the SNP

**Continue reading on p.10**



March in Defence of the NHS, London 4.3.2017