



LIBERATION

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WORKERS AND OPPRESSED, UNITE!

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No-Deal Brexit Is Imminent

Reject both the Imperialist EU and Imperialist Britain!

For the United Socialist States of Europe!

by Joseph Adams, RCIT Britain, 09.10.2018

At a recent EU Council of Ministers meeting in Salzburg (Austria) Teresa May's plan for Brexit, which has been agreed at Chequers, was rejected. Prime Minister May took a very aggressive stance and replied to their rejection of her hastily conceived plan. The Tory Party which is split and divided showed that this was May's last throw of the dice. Both the hard Brexiteers Rees-Mogg and Boris Johnson reject the plan. May has very little negotiating room left. Effectively Britain is very close to a no deal Brexit.

"Jacob Rees-Mogg, the chair of the European Reform Group of hard Brexit Tories, said that Salzburg was a failure and repeated

that it was time to abandon Chequers. "There is still no reason to suppose that Chequers can work either for the UK or the EU. Chequers proposes that the UK shares a common rulebook for goods and food after Brexit in an attempt to prevent a return of customs checks for goods crossing the Irish border, a plan so unpopular on the right of the Tory party that Boris Johnson and David Davis resigned rather than support it". [1]

The Tory Party Conference meets this week in Birmingham and there are sure to be demands from the Tory right and hard Brexiteers that May should resign and a new leader appointed. There is no doubt that Boris Johnson is the favoured choice of the hard Brexiteers to replace May



Demonstration in Solidarity with Refugees (Contingent of the Austrian Section of the RCIT, Vienna 19.03.2016)

in the event of an election for a new Tory Leader.

Since the Meeting of Council ministers in September the European Union has now rejected May's proposals formally.

"European Union diplomats have rejected Teresa May's Conference Pitch that Brussels must move first to break the deadlock over Brexit negotiations While the British government insists the ball is in the EU's court, European diplomats speak of a more complex diplomatic dance, in which both sides publish papers during an intense negotiating period leading up to a crunch summit on 18 October. Officials also repeated warnings that the EU will not accept the economic part of May's Chequers plan, fearing it would hand British business a permanent competitive advantage, over EU rivals". [2]

Meanwhile the Labour Party was in Conference last week and confusion reigns over their Brexit position. Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of the Labour party, initially accepted the result of the referendum for Brexit with a Customs Union but the Blairite right are opposed to Corbyn and will do anything to remove him. So far they have organised several coups against him because of his opposition to war, austerity and partial nationalisation. This is anathema to the Blairites who represent the undisguised capitalist and imperialist elements in the Labour party and are pushing for a second referendum. They are desperate to stay in the EU for the defence of Sterling and the single market. They are totally contemptuous of the workers, oppressed and migrants. Blair while in government advocated strict immigration policies which are no different from the Tories racist and chauvinist policies against migrants and refugees. Corbyn has unfortunately capitulated to these elements. His shadow Brexit secretary Keir Starmer is a Blairite and did his best to placate those on the right of the Party.

Tony Blair, the war criminal and former Prime Minister, interviewed in the *Evening Standard* reiterated his support for a second referendum in defence of the Single Market as the only way to defend British capitalism.

"Brexit is going to be 100 per cent owned by the Tories. I don't believe Labour will vote for the Tory deal on Brexit, and it will allow Labour to say we would have got you a better deal than these guys," he said, adding: "I have a feeling the 17 million who voted to leave are going to be short on gratitude, and the 16 million who voted to remain are going to be long on memory." Speculating about what would happen if the PM's Brexit deal was defeated by MPs, he said: "If it's defeated in the House of Commons, she doesn't need to resign and there doesn't need to be an election. "She can simply say, OK, I put the deal before Parliament and they rejected it. Now it's right that the people have the vote... they should have the final say. It's actually perfectly rational. It's to say... no let's decide whether we like the deal or not." [3].

It is obvious in this statement by Blair who completely identifies with capitalism that he is even prepared to prop up May while the majority of Labour party members want her gone. The Blairites are desperate to turn the party into a undisguised pro-capitalist party, split the party and unite with the pro-European Tories and Liberal Democrats. As far as they are concerned the working class and the oppressed are an irrelevance.

The Labour party conference in the end passed a compromise solution on Brexit both Corbyn and McDonnell were persuaded to go along with this compromise supported

by the Blairites and in particular Starmer.

"Labour's Brexit resolution, freshly adopted at conference 2018, is already subject to divergent interpretations. Let's look carefully at what it says. First, it states that Labour must vote against the Tory Brexit deal unless it meets Labour's six tests, which now seems extremely unlikely. If the deal is rejected by the House of Commons, and if this government defeat doesn't trigger a general election (obviously a fervent hope of all Labour members, but one that is far from certain given the Fixed-Term Parliaments Act), Labour is keeping all options open – including a popular vote". [4]

The RCIT in BRITAIN and its supporters advocated an abstention vote at the 2015 Referendum. We reiterate our position that neither imperialist option – imperialist Britain outside or inside the imperialist EU – is a solution for the workers and oppressed. There is no "lesser evil" – both options are bad for the working class! In our response to the centrist group "Red Flag"/L5Iwe again confirmed our internationalist perspective over Europe and Brexit.

"Basically, the comrades of RF/L5I fail to understand that the European Union – like the British nation-state – is first and foremost a political project of the imperialist ruling class. It is not a project to advance the productive forces or to increase migration (see the barbaric Frontex regime at the borders of the EU). It is a project to improve the conditions for the European imperialist monopolies to exploit the working class and oppressed and to give them more leverage against other Great Powers like the U.S., Russia or China. The key task for Marxists is to help the workers vanguard taking an independent class position. Hence the RCIT steadfastly defends the orthodox Marxist position – which until 2015 was also supported by the L5I itself – to reject support either for the imperialist EU or for the imperialist nation-state. We stand for an independent position of the working class and, therefore, refuse to support both the pro-EU faction and the anti-EU faction of the imperialist bourgeoisie." [5]

The RCIT in BRITAIN puts forward the following demands to unite all sections of the working class and oppressed:

* For a campaign inside the labour movement and the trade unions to reject both imperialist camps – Remain and Brexit!

* No to European or British Imperialism. For an indefinite general strike to bring down this Tory government!

* Reject reactionary Immigration Laws being proposed by the Tories to restrict EU migrants coming to Britain!

* For Open Borders all migrants and refugees! For the right of migrants to speak their own language, to wear their own dress and follow their own customs. For self-defence guards to protect migrants and the oppressed from fascist or police provocation!

* For a Workers Government!

Footnotes

(1) <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/sep/21/theresa-may-demands-respect-from-eu-in-brexit-negotiations>

(2) <http://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/brexit/brussels-rejects-plea-from-theresa-may-to-break-brexit-deadlock/ar-BBNNTM-k?li=BB0PWjQ&ocid=SK2MDHP>

(3) <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/second-brexit-referendum-would-be-perfectly-rational-says-to-ny-blair-a3802176.html>

(4) <https://labourlist.org/2018/09/richard-corbett-what-does-the-brexit-motion-passed-by-labour-conference-mean-in-practice/>

(5) <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/is-a-socialist-transformation-of-the-imperialist-eu-possible/>

The Reformist Pipe Dream of a “Socialist” European Union

Is A Socialist Transformation of the Imperialist EU Possible? A Marxist Analysis on the L5I’s Latest Opportunistic Adaptation to Labour Reformism

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 01.10.2018

Introduction

“Red Flag”, the paper of the British supporters of the “League for the 5th International” (formerly known as “Workers Power”), has published an, let’s put it this way, odd article. ¹ Titled “The workers’ answer to Brexit”, the article polemicizes against various Stalinist and centrist proponents of Britain leaving the European Union. ²

Red Flag (RF) and the League for the 5th International (L5I) rightly reject the backward illusions of sectors of the left that leaving the EU and returning to the imperialist nation-state would be a step forward for the working class. As the RCIT and its British supporters have explained in numerous documents, socialists must not lend support to any imperialist form of rule – neither the “sovereign” imperialist nation state (like Britain or other Western European countries) nor the imperialist European Union. Likewise, socialists can not support any camp in an inner-imperialist conflict – like e.g. the current Global Trade War ³ or in military conflicts between such powers. ⁴ And it is equally impermissible for socialists to lend support to any faction of the imperialist bourgeoisie when they are competing at elections – like e.g. the Republicans vs. the Democrats in the U.S. ⁵

Consequently, RCIT and its British supporters call upon workers, socialists and revolutionaries to cast neither a YES nor a NO vote in referenda on EU membership, but to actively abstain. ⁶

While RF/L5I correctly criticize those reformists and cen-

trists who are calling for Brexit and who are thereby adapting to the imperialist nation state (like e.g. Stalinists CPB, the CWI or the SWP/IST), they unfortunately fall into the other, no less opportunistic, extreme. They defend their revisionist position that joining an imperialist alliance like the EU would represent a progressive step forward for the working class which must be supported. Here is what the comrades say:

“The interests of the working class includes not just our pay and conditions today, but the impact of any given event on our ability to fight in the future, and in particular our ability to free ourselves from capital once and for all, by creating an international commonwealth of socialist republics in which production is planned democratically for need not greed. Viewed from this perspective, socialists should oppose Brexit 100% and use any principled means to stop it. Why? Because:

1) *It imposes massive restrictions on the previous freedom of workers from EU countries to travel to and work in the UK, and vice versa. This is against the interests of the working class now and in the future*

2) *It imposes further barriers to capitalist trade between the UK and EU countries, which in turn mean:*

a. *Higher prices and job losses arising from tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade that will definitely ensue should Brexit take place on anything other than ‘Norwegian’ terms ie Single Market membership. There is and will be no tariff-free access to the single market for non-members of it*

b. *More limited interaction and integration of the working class of Britain with the working class of Europe, weakening the de-*

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WORKERS AND OPPRESSED UNITE!



LIBERATION is a Bulletin published by the RCIT Britain. The RCIT has sections and activists in Zambia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Tunisia, Israel / Occupied Palestine, Brazil, Mexico, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Britain, Germany, and Austria. The RCIT has fraternal relations with the Economic Liberation Association (Zambia), the Alkebulan School of Black Studies (Kenya), the Marxist Group ‘Class Politics’ (Russia) and Sınif Savaşı (Turkey).

velopment of a Pan-European fightback against capital and a pan-European movement of workers for socialism.”

RF/L5I also claims, once again, that “the principal issue [of Brexit is] a massive disruption to trade and economic life that turns countries against each other, pushes our culture backwards instead of forwards, harms working class living standards and sets back the fight for socialism.”

Adapting to EU Imperialism

All these arguments of the L5I are demonstrably wrong as we have shown in detail in several pamphlets and articles.⁷ At this point we limit ourselves to summarize our main arguments. We have demonstrated extensively on a factual as well as theoretical level that the formation of the European Union has not led to a growth of the productive forces (let alone cultural progress!). We have shown that the rise of free trade in the epoch of imperialism does not lead to the advance of the productive forces not to mention the living conditions of the working class. Likewise we have demonstrated that increase and decline of migration is basically not related to the existence of the European Union. All these phenomena – with their inner contradictions and dynamics – are a result of the fundamental laws of the political economy of capitalism and not specifically related to the EU or a free trade treaty.

Nevertheless, the RF/L5I “critically” supports the creation and advance of imperialist federations like the EU or of free trade agreements as a “lesser evil” than national states. This contrasts sharply not only with the program of the RCIT but also with the position of the Marxist classics. As we have shown in detail in past pamphlets, the leading Marxist theoreticians – from Rudolf Hilferding (in his groundbreaking work “Finance Capital”) to Lenin, Lux-

emburg and Trotsky – repudiated support for imperialist free trade over imperialist protectionism, for imperialist federations over national states.

Consequently, they all rejected any form of support – however critically – for the imperialist unification of Europe. In the words of Lenin: “From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e., the export of capital and the division of the world by the “advanced” and “civilised” colonial powers—a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary. (...) A United States of Europe under capitalism is tantamount to an agreement on the partition of colonies. Under capitalism, however, no other basis and no other principle of division are possible except force. (...) Of course, temporary agreements are possible between capitalists and between states. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the European capitalists . . . but to what end? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty against Japan and America, who have been badly done out of their share by the present partition of colonies, and the increase of whose might during the last fifty years has been immeasurably more rapid than that of backward and monarchist Europe, now turning senile. Compared with the United States of America, Europe as a whole denotes economic stagnation. On the present economic basis, i.e., under capitalism, a United States of Europe would signify an organisation of reaction to retard America’s more rapid development.”⁸

It is not surprisingly that until today RF/L5I has made no effort to prove their claims about the progressive character of the EU in real life. Limiting themselves to silly polemics against the RCIT, they have not even dared to refute the numerous arguments, facts, and quotes which we have provided.⁹

Basically, the comrades of RF/L5I fail to understand that

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Greece - A Modern Semi-Colony

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

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

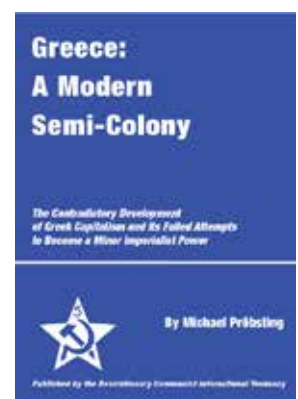
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which gives an overview of its content.

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

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

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

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



the European Union – like the British nation-state – is first and foremost a *political* project of the imperialist ruling class. It is not a project to advance the productive forces or to increase migration (see the barbaric Frontex regime at the borders of the EU). It is a project to improve the conditions for the European imperialist monopolies to exploit the working class and oppressed and to give them more leverage against other Great Powers like the U.S., Russia or China.

The key task for Marxists is to help the workers vanguard taking an *independent class position*. Hence the RCIT steadfastly defends the orthodox Marxist position – which until 2015 was also supported by the L5I itself – to reject support either for the imperialist EU or for the imperialist nation-state. We stand for an independent position of the working class and, therefore, refuse to support both the pro-EU faction and the anti-EU faction of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Unfortunately, RF/L5I is defending and even deepening its social-imperialist adaption to the European Union.

Is “Neoliberal Globalization a Lesser Evil”?

In this article we want to limit ourselves to two new arguments, or rather, more explicitly articulated arguments which the RF/L5I comrades are advancing in defense for their pro-EU position. First, they openly state now that they consider protectionism as “worse” than neoliberal globalization:

“Neoliberal globalisation was a phase in the imperialist epoch in which its principal powers sought to create and administer a rules-based international order based on nominally free trade in which the US and its allies were dominant. That rested on the rule of a coalition of centre-right neoliberal politicians who lost their electoral base after the effect of the 2008 crisis finally filtered through, allowing rightwing populists to win mass support around a new programme of protectionism and economic nationalism. That is Trump. And that is Brexit. What we are talking about is not a progressive challenge to neoliberal globalisation, but its decay and collapse into something even worse, into the nationalism of ‘America First’ and the dystopian project of a Hard Brexit complete with tariffs, price hikes, job losses,

deportations and heightened rivalry between states as the ideologues of nationalism look for someone to blame for the disasters their own policies bring.” (our emphasize)

This outrageous statement comes as no surprise to us. We have already warned in our past critique that the logic of their arguments forces the L5I to “critically” support all forms of transnational imperialism compared with the nation-state. *“The same opportunistic logic would then also lead the L5I to support the various free trade agreements between the EU and the US (TTIP), between the EU and Canada (CETA), between the US and several Asian and Latin American countries (TPP), or between China and a number of Asian countries (RCEP) – of course extremely “critical” support and naturally in conjunction with their call for “international class struggle.””*¹⁰

The latest article of RF/L5I proves that our warning was absolutely justified. We repeat that Marxists must not fight against imperialist protectionism and nationalism by “critically” supporting imperialist globalization and imperialist supra-national institutions like the EU, WTO, IMF, etc. Both represent reactionary forms of imperialist exploitation. How can the RF/L5I comrades ignore the fact that imperialist globalization has created the socio-economic conditions which, in turn, generated the climate for right-wing nationalists to spread their chauvinist poison?! Do they really believe that siding with the pro-EU liberal urban middle class and the majority of the big bourgeoisie supporting membership in the EU can advance the struggle and the consciousness of the working class by a single inch?!

Imperialist nationalism is only one form of the inherent drive to expansion of imperialist monopoly capital. Imperialist globalization and creating of empires (like the EU) is another form. But socialists can not lend support (not even super-critical) to any of these forms of imperialist expansionism. Supporting Brexit or Remain is equivalent to supporting one of these two forms of imperialist political rule. Both are impermissible for revolutionaries. This is why the RCIT has always advocated a revolutionary, independent, defeatist position directed against both political forms of imperialist rule.

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)



Can a “Socialist Government” Transform the EU?

The second, to put it mildly, “unorthodox” argument of the RF/L5I comrades is that they not only “critically” prefer membership in the EU compared to leaving it. They also claim now that even a “socialist government” should have no desire to leave the imperialist European Union! It would rather, according to the new pro-EU gospel of the RF/L5I, try to transform the EU!

“A socialist government would swiftly set out a programme of nationalisations, taxes on the rich and controls on capital that would enable a massive redistribution of wealth. It would immediately be attacked by capitalists at home and abroad. That would definitely include attacks from the imperialist ruling class in Britain and the imperialist ruling class in the EU.

The EU would of course rush to point to various treaties and rules against expropriations and state aid – not just EU rules, by the way, but pretty much every one of Britain’s 110 bilateral investment treaties and of course also – dun dun daaaaaa – the WTO’s rules. So, we’d have a choice. Comply or defy. We could comply like Syriza did in Greece and end up administering horrible austerity and cuts. Or we could defy.

We propose the latter course. Defy all these rules and fight. Appeal to the working class movement in the EU and every other country. Say ‘look, this is what the rules are designed to do, let’s rise up and defy them together.’ Build an international movement around an international programme of socialist measures and international defiance of the capitalists.

What could the EU do then? Well, they could sue us in the EU courts. So what, we could still defy. They could try to expel us. But guess what. There is no expulsion mechanism provision in the treaty, no Article X that says ‘Get Out’.

So they’d be left with their only weapon: renegotiate the treaty and impose trade restrictions on us. They’d need a unanimous vote of all member states, including all the Belgian regional parliaments, some of which are controlled by the left. But it’d be a real threat. Remember, trade embargos are what have impover-

ished Cuba, and are causing chaos in Venezuela today. Remember: the early Soviet Republic fought for years precisely to secure trade agreements with other countries against a world embargo.

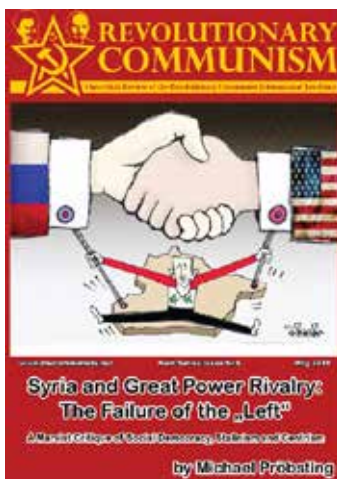
*Er – so why on earth would we want to walk out of a trade bloc. Why make it easier for the bosses to embargo us? Syriza’s mistake was not that they stayed in, it’s that they *caved* in and carried out austerity.*

*We don’t propose giving in. We propose staying in and fighting. Fighting alongside the victims of austerity in France, Germany, Spain, Italy and yes Greece. Fighting not to break it up and walk out one by one into a hell of competing national capitalist blocs, nor for some milquetoast programme of ‘reforming’ the EU, but fighting together to OVERTHROW the Commission, the Council of Ministers and the institutions of the EU *and the Member States* and to replace them with a Socialist United States of Europe.”*

An Opportunist Pipe Dream!

This is certainly one of the most bizarre statements of the L5I in the last years! Basically, the comrades transform the classic Marxist conception of seizing power by the working class into a legalistic vision of wrangling inside the EU in order to abolish the EU institutions and to transform it into a Socialist United States of Europe.

As a matter of fact, a socialist government can not expropriate the bourgeoisie in a peaceful way. Marxists have always insisted that this will trigger a violent response from the ruling class and open a civil war. The imperialist bourgeoisie – both in Britain (or any other state) as well as in the EU – will resort to all political, economic and military means in order to defeat the insurrectional working class. A socialist government can not help but to closely control the border so that it knows who wants to enter the country. It can not help but to impose a foreign trade monopoly in order to stop imperialist attempts of economic sabotage. It can not help but to mobilize its Red Army in order to



NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

Syria and Great Power Rivalry: The Failure of the „Left“

By Michael Pröbsting, April 2018

*The bleeding Syrian Revolution and the recent Escalation
of Inter-Imperialist Rivalry between the US and Russia –
A Marxist Critique of Social Democracy, Stalinism and Centrism*

Introduction * The liberation struggle of the Syrian people against Assad retains its just character * Against all imperialist aggressors! * Old and new Great Powers * The Ex-Stalinist turned social democrats: “God save the United Nations” * The Stalinists (and some caricatures in Trotskyist camouflage): social-imperialist servants of Assad and Putin * The Morenoite LIT, UIT and FLTI: the heart on the right place but not their brains * CWI and FT: failure to understand the imperialist nature of China and Russia * CWI / SWP(UK) / FT: refusing to support the Syrian Revolution * Conclusion * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 24 pages, A4 Format

fight back the imperialist invaders (or to support insurrections of the workers and oppressed abroad).

The leading Marxist theoreticians of the 20th century have been unambiguously clear on this issue as we have elaborated many times.¹¹ Let us, at this point, give just one quote from Trotsky in which he dealt with the revolutionary strategy for Britain:

"In preparing to take state power it is thus necessary to prepare for all the consequences that flow from the inevitable resistance of the possessing classes. It must be firmly understood: if a truly workers' government came to power in Britain even in an ultra-democratic way, civil war would become unavoidable. The workers' government would be forced to suppress the resistance of the privileged classes. To do this by means of the old state apparatus, the old police, the old courts, the old army would be impossible. A workers' government created by parliamentary means would be forced to construct new revolutionary organs for itself, resting upon the trade unions and working-class organizations in general. This would lead to an exceptional growth in the activity and initiative of the working masses. On the basis of a direct struggle against the exploiting classes the trade unions would actively draw closer together not only in their top layers but at the bottom levels as well, and would arrive at the necessity of creating local delegate meetings, i.e. councils (Soviets) of workers' deputies. A truly Labour government, that is to say, a government dedicated to the end to the interests of the proletariat would find itself in this way compelled to smash the old state apparatus as the instrument of the possessing classes and oppose it with workers' councils. That means that the democratic origin of the Labour government – even had this proved possible – would lead to the necessity of counterposing revolutionary class force to the reactionary opposition."¹²

Needless to say, that one can find hundreds of such statements in the writings of the revolutionary *Communist International* and later the *Fourth International*. Only stubborn right-wing centrists like the Peter Taffees' CWI or Alan Woods' IMT have always claimed that a peaceful road to socialism would be possible. It seems that the ex-revolutionary L5I is adapting to such revisionist nonsense. Could this be related to the fact that they are now already entrenching themselves inside the reformist Labour Party for more than three years?!

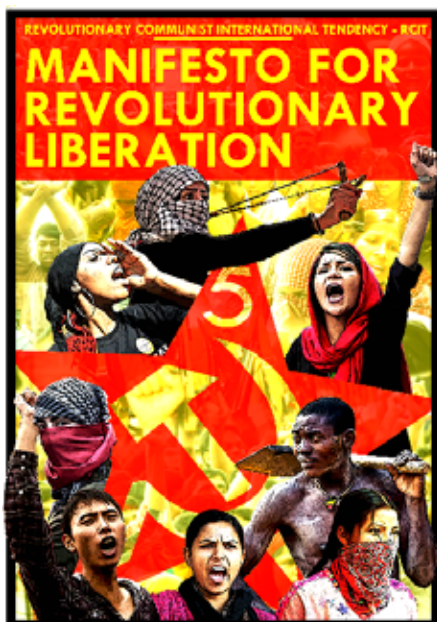
How is it possible to imagine such a silly scenario like the one outlined by RF/L5I in which a socialist state would not decisively break with the imperialist states which are waging economic or military war against it?! No, such a pacifist pipe dream is impossible in real life! It is unavoidable for a socialist Britain (or any other European state) to break with the imperialist EU!

Unfortunately, the RF/L5I is trapped in its new centrist method and "forgets" all this fundamental truth of Marxism. Instead it starts silly reformist speculations about defying the EU while remaining part of it. It claims that the EU would have basically no means to bring down a socialist government! You see, the expropriation of the capitalist class, can be a simple affair: When the EU wants to destroy the socialist government, just "defy all these rules and fight. (...) What could the EU do then? Well, they could sue us in the EU courts. So what, we could still defy. They could try to expel us. But guess what. There is no expulsion mechanism provision in the treaty, no Article X that says 'Get Out'. So they'd be left with their only weapon: renegotiate the treaty and impose trade restrictions on us."

How silly were we orthodox Marxists when we imagined the expropriation of the capitalist class as a violent affair! No, according to the new theory of RF/L5I, it is simply a question of putting pressure on the imperialists and entering negotiations because the EU has no legal mechanism to expel a socialist member state! Meanwhile, one could undisturbed appeal to the working class inside the EU and to help bringing one socialist government after the other into power!

At the recent UN General Assembly, Iran's Rouhani (rightly) accused Trump of a "weakness of intellect". Unfortunately, Trump seems not to be the only one with such a deficit!

No, this new theory is nothing but a reformist pipe dream of the RF/L5I! A socialist Britain and an imperialist EU are antagonistic entities with diametrically opposed class interests. The working class in power must immediately break with the imperialist institutions (like the EU, the WTO, the IMF, etc.) in order to cut all political, economic or military means which could be utilized by the imperialists to sabotage and defeat the working class in power! The



NEW RCIT PROGRAM!

Manifesto for Revolutionary Liberation

Adopted at the 1st 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

imperialist ruling class – both in Britain as well as in the EU – will always find ways to throw its might against the insurrectional working class. They will do so irrespectively if this is legally allowed by the EU de-facto constitution (the so-called *Treaty of Lisbon*) or not.

The iron logic of opportunist adaption to the liberal pro EU middle class (inside and outside the Labour Party) pushes the RF/L5I deeper and deeper into the direction of social-imperialism. Initially, they “only” advocated a “critical vote” for Britain remaining in the EU. Later they claimed that the EU would represent “*bourgeois democratic progress*” and that it would objectively help in the “*development of productive forces and of the international consciousness of the working class.*” Now, they claim that imperialist protectionism is “worse” than imperialist neoliberal globalization, i.e. indicating that they would “critically” defend all institutions representing imperialist globalization against the threat of protectionism. And they fantasize about a socialist government in Britain which would stay inside the imperialist EU, block their counterrevolutionary attempts (as the latter supposedly lacks legal means for this) and transform it into a Socialist United States of Europe.

Would Communists have “Critically” Defended the Existence of the British Empire? Surely Not!

The idea of such a socialist transformation of imperialist institutions is not new. In 1920, Sidney and Beatrice Webb – internationally renowned proponents of revisionism at their time – wrote a whole book about “*A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain*”. This famous Fabian couple outlined, in 400 pages, a detailed conception how the British Empire could be transformed towards socialism.¹³

Of course, today the British Empire exists only in the nostalgic dreams of some English aristocrats. However, instead, there exists another imperialist Empire called the European Union. The communists in the time of Lenin and Trotsky never desired to keep the British Empire and transform it towards socialism. They rather desired to smash the British Empire in order to open the road to the liberation of the working class and the oppressed people and the creation of a federation of workers (and peasants) republics. This view was reflected, for example, in an article by the British communists in 1923. It attacked the revisionist vision of the Webbs and called for an anti-imperialist strategy. Instead of striving to keep the Empire (today we would say European Union), the communists called to “*repudiate the bonds of Empire and liberate the exploited masses!*”

“*What, then, is the Communist answer to the questions arising out of the existence of the Empire? If the workers come to power in this country what ought they to do? The answer is clear and definite. Repudiate the bonds of Empire and liberate the exploited masses and join in the fight to crush their enemies by helping to form workers’ and peasants’ Governments in the liberated countries. But the imperialists would attack? Then join in the defensive fight and use the situation to spread the revolution in the camp of the attackers. To hold aloof in the class war in the name of “self-determination” may be good pacifism. In our opinion, it is rank cowardice and certainly not the way to win victory for the workers.*”

But it may be asserted that by the act of liberation from the Empire it may not follow that the workers’ and peasants’ Government would come to power. Very well, the workers’ Government of Britain would have to use its economic, political and agitational power to ripen the conditions to secure such a consummation whilst being prepared to defend the liberated nation from the attacks of external forces. (...) The Communist alternative which can be put to that of the Imperial Conference and their understudies of the Labour Party and I.L.P. briefly stated is as follows:

(1) *Support every measure to organise the workers of the countries within the Empire, that will enable them to struggle for improvements as a means to developing their forces to secure self-government by the seizure of power.*

(2) *To conduct strenuous agitation in this country in support of these workers and peasants with a view to exposing the ramifications and implications of imperialism and uniting the workers of this country with the exploited workers throughout the Empire.*

(3) *To aid by every possible means, whether in the colonies or here, in securing the liberation of these countries from the control of the Empire and assist in their struggle against all the imperialists.*

*These are the tasks which provide the workers in the Empire with their answer to the Imperial Conference and the special obligations which history places upon the working class in Great Britain in the revolutionary struggle against international imperialism.”*¹⁴

What a gulf between the British communist politics in the time of Lenin and Trotsky and the politics of the British L5I supporters today!

Communists *always* oppose the existence of imperialist Empires – in the past as well as the present! Following the new social-imperialist logic of the L5I, Marxists would have had to view the British Empire (renamed into *British Commonwealth of Nations* in 1931) as a step forward compared with the existence of Britain as a nation state only. Consequently, they would had to “critically” defend the survival of the British Empire against its dissolution since, in the logic of the comrades, such an Empire represented a much larger entity than the British nation state alone and, hence, it would allow much better conditions for the development of the productive forces.

Naturally, such a reactionary position has nothing in common with Marxism. It has rather everything in common with Labourite social-imperialism. But with the new centrist logic of the L5I such a conclusion is the only possible one! They must “critically” support all forms of imperialist expansionism – starting from free trade agreements like NAFTA, TTIP, CETA, etc. up to the existence of the EU – as they allegedly constitute “progress” in relation to the nation state.

Conclusions

As we have already warned in past works, it is only a small step from such a social-chauvinist position to the support for imperialist wars (albeit very “critically”)! Lenin often cited the famous principle of the Prussian military theorist von Clausewitz according to which the “*war is nothing but the continuation of politics by other means.*”¹⁵ If the alleged advantages of larger imperialist countries and business associations for the development of productive forces and of the international consciousness of the work-

ing class are actually so important for the L5I leadership, so much so that they are in favor of EU membership – then why not support achieving such greater political and economic state organizations by military means?

Surely, the L5I comrades currently oppose such conclusions. But the inner logic of such an approach is merciless: if one supports or defends the creation of larger imperialist entities (like the EU) why not supporting it also via military means?! We repeat: anyone who extends even a little finger to the program of social imperialism is inevitably caught in the net of its political chasms.

Communists must defend a consistent, revolutionary, internationalist and defeatist position when it comes to projects of imperialist expansionism. They must oppose imperialist free trade agreements and they must oppose the imperialist European Union. At the same time they must also oppose the imperialist nation state as it basically represents only a smaller version of the same beast: reactionary institutions of the imperialist ruling class.

Therefore, the RCIT considers the EU, like the British state, as an imperialist enemy and calls the workers vanguard not to support either of them. In the past, when the L5I was a revolutionary organization, it shared this outlook. Today, it has repudiated its own tradition and program without openly explaining why it threw its traditional position over board.

We repeat our conclusion written two years ago: *“All these examples show that the new position of the L5I on the EU and its justification inevitably drive them in the direction of social-imperialism. Despite their anti-imperialist rhetoric, they would support the concrete central projects of the EU and other imperialist powers – in the name of the “development of productive forces and of the international consciousness of the working class.” Ultimately, the group would degenerate to becoming “critical” (of course) cheerleaders for the imperialist powers and their expansionism. What a sad end for a group that once embodied a proud revolutionary tradition!”*¹⁶

Authentic revolutionaries must revolt against such a pro-EU social-imperialist orientation! It is crucial break with such centrism and to unite on the basis of a consistent Marxist program. It is more urgent than ever to build an international revolutionary organization in order to fight

against all forms of social-chauvinism – both pro-EU as well as pro-UK! Only a strong revolutionary force can effectively combat centrist confusion! This is the task of the RCIT and we call all authentic revolutionaries to join us!




Footnotes

1 The founding cadres of the RCIT were bureaucratically expelled in 2011 by the majority of L5I leadership for their opposition to the centrist degeneration of this erstwhile organization. Since then, there has been an acceleration of the L5I’s right-wing shift. The RCIT, founded soon after our expulsion, continues to defend the revolutionary tradition of our predecessor organization. Today the RCIT has sections and activists in 13 countries and fraternal organizations in several other countries. On the history of the RCIT as well as the L5I, see our book by Michael Pröbsting: *Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice. Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism*, December 2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/rcit-party-building/>. For our critique of the L5I’s centrist degeneration see in particular chapter III. In addition reader should refer to our letter to the L5I in which we critically analyze its degeneration away from revolutionary Marxism: *RCIT: Where is the LFI drifting? A Letter from the RCIT to the LFI comrades*, 11.5.2012, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/centrist-degeneration-of-lfi/>

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3 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: *The Global Trade War is Escalating. Trump’s new Tariffs on about \$200bn worth of Chinese Imports Reflect the Accelerating Rivalry between the Great Powers*, 19 September 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-global-trade-war-is-escalating/>; *Global Trade War: No to Great Power Jingoism in West and East! Neither Imperialist Globalization nor Imperialist Protectionism! For International Solidarity and Joint Struggle of the Working Class and Oppressed People! Joint Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), Marxist Group ‘Class Politics’ (Russia), Alkebulan School of Black Studies (Kenya), Pan-Afrikan Consciousness Renaissance (Nigeria), Courant des Jeunes Penseurs Congolais (Democratic Republic of Congo), and Sınıf Savaşı (Turkey)*, 4 July 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/joint-statement-on-the-looming-global-trade-war/>; Michael Pröbsting: *The Global Trade War has Begun. What is its*

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7 See Michael Pröbsting: Marxism, the European Union and Brexit. The L5I and the European Union: A Right Turn away from Marxism. The recent change in the L5I's position towards the support for EU membership represents a shift away from its own tradition, of the Marxist method, and of the facts; August 2016, in: Revolutionary Communist No. 55, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/eu-and-brexit/>; Michael Pröbsting: Does the EU Represent "Bourgeois Democratic Progress"? Once again, on the EU and the Tactics of the Working Class – An Addendum to our Criticism of the L5I's Turn to the Right and Its Support for EU Membership, 16.09.2016, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/eu-brexit-article/>; Manfred Meier: Nachbeben des Brexit - Zur Rechtswende von L5I: das „JA“ zum Verbleib in der EU, August 2016, <http://www.thecommunists.net/home/deutsch/gam-brexit/>; Michael Pröbsting: The British Left and the EU-Referendum: The Many Faces of pro-UK or pro-EU Social-Imperialism. An analysis of the left's failure to fight for an independent, internationalist and socialist stance both against British as well as European imperialism, Revolutionary Communism Nr. 40, August 2015 <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/british-left-and-eu-referendum/>; see also (in German language only) Michael Pröbsting: Die Frage der Vereinigung Europas im Lichte der marxistischen Theorie. Zur Frage eines supranationalen Staatsapparates des EU-Imperialismus und der marxistischen Staatstheorie. Die Diskussion zur Losung der Vereinigten Sozialistischen Staaten von Europa bei Lenin und Trotzki und ihre Anwendung unter den heutigen Bedingungen des Klassenkampfes, in: Unter der Fahne der Revolution Nr. 2/3 (2008), <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/marxismus-und-eu/>

8 V. I. Lenin: On the Slogan for a United States of Europe; in: LCW Vol. 21, pp. 340-342

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Continued from p.12

We live in a multi-cultural society and as such should respect customs and practices of all peoples. Migrants and refugees are the most exploited section of the working class often working in low paid employment and bad housing conditions. The RCIT campaigns for Open Borders and for migrants to have the right to wear their own dress and speak their own language. We emphasize the importance of supporting the organizing of such layers and of winning them to the revolutionary party (resp. pre-party organization).

In the RCIT's book on the united front tactic we stated our position quite clearly.

"We think that, in principle, revolutionaries should encourage and support the formation of new political forces which reflect the struggle of migrants against racism and for their rights. Furthermore, revolutionaries should contribute to such a process a revolutionary perspective, focusing on the most burning issues of the struggle of the oppressed. They should also try to widen the list to integrate progressive sectors of the workers' movement who are prepared to accept migrants as equal partners.

All these experiences demonstrate that it is truly possible for communists to engage in systematic united front work with migrant organizations. Furthermore, our orientation to these sectors of the working class has also helped us to recruit a substantial share of migrants to our organizations.

Such an orientation is crucial for us as Bolshevik-Communists since we consider it of utmost important to build an organization which is not solely fighting for the working class interests but which is also fighting together with the workers and through the workers. Naturally, when we speak about the workers, we don't mean the upper, privileged strata – the labor aristocracy

– but rather the class' huge majority, i.e., the "mass proletarian elements" as the Comintern called it.

In other words, an authentic revolutionary organization must orientate itself to the lower and middle strata of the working class among which the migrants constitute a crucial sector in imperialist countries." [4].

The RCIT in Britain calls on all workers and youth and the oppressed to join us in a concerted campaign to root out all forms of racism and Islamophobia in the working class and put forward the following demands to unite all sections of the working class.

* *Muslims must have the right to wear their own dress and speak their own language!*

* *Protect Muslim communities with self-defence guards against fascist or police provocation!*

* *For Open Borders and free movement for all throughout imperialist countries!*

* *Form Action Committees as a precursor to the formation of a Constituent Assembly where issues on racism and Islamophobia can be discussed!*

* *For a General strike to bring down the May government!*

* *For a Revolutionary Workers Government!*

* *Build the 5th International in order to unite all sections of the working class and the oppressed!*

Footnotes

(1) <https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/boris-johnson-apologise-burka-comments/>

(2) <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/aug/10/boris-johnson-burqa-misogyny-bigotry-eton-oxford>

(3) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/14/unsafe-muslim-women-fear-abuse-boris-johnson-burqa>

(4) <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/book-united-front/chapter-8/>

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: World Perspectives 2018 - A World Pregnant With Wars And Popular Uprisings

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – WORLD PERSPECTIVES 2018: A WORLD PREGNANT WITH WARS AND POPULAR UPRISINGS. The book's subtitle is: Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries.

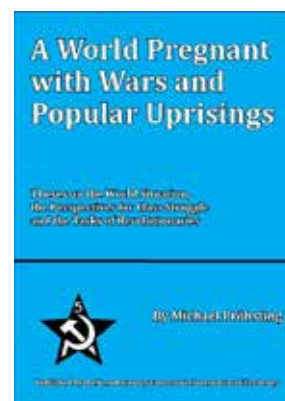
This book is a major contribution of our organization to keep the Marxists' analysis of the world situation and its accelerating contradictions updated. As we emphasize in the document, we consider it as crucial for revolutionaries to understand the nature and the inner dynamics of the current historic period. Without such an understanding it is impossible for socialists, indeed for all liberation fighters, to possess the necessary political compass on which they can base their program, strategy and tactics.

Since several years does the RCIT publish annual studies on the world situation in which it analysis its most important developments and changes. This book updates the Marxist analysis of the state of the world economy, of the relations between the Great Powers, of the struggle between the classes and the tactics of revolutionaries. We also deal in depth with new issues respectively extend our theoretical analysis on several questions. In particular we have deepened in this book,

among others, our understanding of the nature respectively the transitional character of the present world political phase, of the nature of different types of wars and the tactical conclusions arriving from this, of the complex nature of the conflicts in the Middle East, of the capitalist restoration in North Korea and, finally, we have elaborated a new proposal for an international platform for the unification of revolutionary forces in the present phase.

The book contains a preface, introduction and seven eight chapters plus an appendix (118 pages) and includes 23 figures , 9 tables and 2 maps. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

You can find the contents and download the book for free at <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2018/>



Boris Johnson Instigates Racial Hatred!

Defend Muslim Women from Racist and Islamophobic Attacks!

By Joseph Adams, RCIT Britain, September 2018

Boris Johnson, the former foreign secretary in the May government, recently launched a vicious racist attack on Muslim women who wear the niqab or hijab. Johnson is a hard brexiteer in the Tory party and much admired by the racist and misogynist Donald Trump. He used his comments on Muslim migrants and refugees to stake his claim to be Prime Minister and help to depose Theresa May.

"Boris Johnson is at the centre of a Tory race row after Theresa May urged him to apologise for "offensive" comments claiming that Muslim women in burkas look like letterboxes and bank robbers. He said it was "weird and bullying to expect women to cover their faces" and described the burka as "ridiculous". He added that women wearing them looked like letterboxes or bank robbers". [1]

"Boris Johnson's comparison of women to inanimate objects such as letterboxes betrays a kind of misogyny that has become an all too familiar feature of his alpha-male politics. And in March this year, he was forced to apologise to Emily Thornberry (Shadow Foreign Secretary) for misrepresenting her as "the learned lady, the Baroness, whatever it is, of Nugee" in a dismissive reference to his rival's husband, Christopher". [2]

These attacks on migrants and refugees are symptomatic of British imperialism which is in a crisis. Because of this the Tory government is always seeking to divide the working class on racial grounds. The debate around Brexit shows the extreme chauvinism inherent in the ruling class and the bourgeoisie always seeks to shift the blame from themselves onto other people. The working class in Britain has always had a section in the upper sector – the labour aristocracy – which is heavily influenced by bourgeois ideology and therefore very conservative. It displays the most reactionary and racist views. Leon Trotsky referred to what he called the most backward layer.

Johnson and others are merely fuelling this racism and

extreme chauvinism. This is even reflected amongst the police force in Britain which displays every sympathy towards the fascists and racists. When masses of youth and workers protested against Donald Trump's visit to Britain the police sought to protect fascists of the *English Defence League*. There are many cases of attacks on Muslims by extreme right wing fascists who are often lauded in the capitalist press.

Sajid Javid the Tory Home secretary meanwhile is deporting plenty of migrants and refugees and refusing them a visa in Britain. This is similar to Donald Trump in the United States who imprisons migrants, separates parents from their children and also deports American nationals who have lived in the country all their lives.

Many Muslim women have spoken out against this racist attack explaining why they wear the hijab or niqab.

"That person is not educated. Part of British values is trying to respect and embrace the norms of all the faiths. Even if we don't understand it, we honour common ground. Every individual has a choice to live their life the way they want to, and we should respect that." Women have spoken of feeling vulnerable, and some have been abused. The anti-Muslim hate-crime monitoring group Tell Mama has reported a spike in abuse against Muslim women since Johnson's column appeared. In the week before the column was published, five women reported incidents against them (all were wearing the hijab, and none wore the niqab). In the week after the column, 14 women wearing the hijab and seven who wore the niqab reported abuse to the organization". [3]

Rupa Huq, a Muslim Labour MP for Ealing in West London, has been the recipient of hate mail denouncing Muslims and particularly Muslim women who choose to wear the hijab or the niqab.

The RCIT in BRITAIN has always fought against racism and Islamophobia amongst sections of the working class.

Continue reading on p.11



Source: Martin Foskett, <https://www.pexels.com/photo/211317/>