



LIBERATION

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WORKERS AND OPPRESSED, UNITE!

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

**For international Unity and Struggle of the Workers and Oppressed!
Fight against both British as well as European Imperialism!
Forward to the United Socialist States of Europe**

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) and the RCIT Britain, 2 August 2015

1. The Tory Government will hold a referendum on Britain's membership in the European Union before the end of 2017 (probably in mid-2016). In this referendum people will be asked to vote for whether the British imperialist state should remain inside the European Union or leave this imperialist federation. In fact, such a pseudo-alternative is a political trap set up by the Tory government. Socialists have to explain that it is in the interest of the working class and the oppressed of Britain to oppose *any form* of imperialist state. They should refuse to be dragged into giving their support as gullible voters to *either* of these alternative forms of imperialism. Consequently, the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) and its supporters in Britain call upon workers and oppressed to vote neither YES or NO to UK membership in the EU. Instead, they should write on the ballot: "*Neither Brussels, nor Downing Street! For international Unity of the Workers and Oppressed*", i.e., effectively casting a vote of abstention.

2. What is the background for Cameron's decision to schedule such a referendum? The deep-seated cause is the general crisis of capitalism, which began in 2008 and which has greatly accelerated the economic as well as political tensions of the polity both in Britain as well as throughout the EU. In Britain this has led, on the one hand, to both the August Uprising of 2011 and the recent mass demonstration of 250,000 people against the austerity offensive of the government as well as, on the other hand, the rise of the right-wing racist UKIP party. Likewise, the EU faces increased internal tensions in light of its need to move towards a pan-European proto-state (in order to form a united European military force) so as not to perish in its confrontations with the power of imperialist rivals like the US, China, and Russia, in addition to its being able to contend with the increasing instability in key areas like the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. At the same time, Britain's ruling class loathes the thought of playing a subordinate role to German imperialism which would be the only possible leader (in conjunction with

France) in such an EU proto-state.

3. The huge majority of Britain's ruling class wants to stay in the European Union as this is consistent with their political and economic interests. In contrast to its role in the 19th and early 20th centuries, British imperialism is far too weak to have any global influence as an isolated state. Its only real options are acting as a junior partner to US imperialism or to a European Union led by Germany and France. While the British bourgeoisie have and will continue to maintain special relations with Washington (especially militarily), its economic interests are closely aligned with the EU. 51.2% of UK's Outward Foreign Direct Investments are concentrated in the EU (2010), compared with only 17.5% for the US. (49% of the UK's Inward FDI originates in the EU while the source of 30% of these investments is the US.) Similarly, the EU is by far Britain's biggest trading partner: In 2013, 44.5% of UK exports went to other EU countries, while the EU contributed 52.2% of total imports to the UK. (The US accounts for only 17.6% of UK exports and 9% of its imports.)

4. It is therefore hardly surprising that the UK's ruling class wants the country to remain within the EU. This is the only realistic way for British imperialism to continue playing a role in world politics and the global market. This is why the majority of the Tories, Liberal Democrats, Labour, and the Confederation of British Industry (the TUC, etc.), are all united in keeping UK in the EU. However at the same time the British bourgeoisie want to have more power and be more independent of the German-French center. This is what Cameron hopes to gain by announcing the referendum and holding negotiations with Brussels beforehand. Characteristically, the pro-Zionist and social-imperialist centrist, Alliance for Workers' Liberty (AWL) also supports a pro-EU vote, claiming that this would be a vote for more "democracy" and against racism. This is a rather bizarre position of for this so-called "Trotskyist" group, given the fact that the EU doesn't even have an elected government and in light of the EU's standing aside while thousands of migrants drown in the Mediterra-

near Sea every year. (We note with regret, too, that *Workers Power* recently dropped its former revolutionary position of abstention in such referendums and humiliated itself by calling for a YES vote in a referendum on Britain's membership in the EU.) In short, the pro-EU camp is dominated by the big imperialist bourgeoisie, trailing in its wake the social-imperialist labor bureaucracy.

5. The main social basis of the NO-camp i.e., those who advocate Britain's exiting the EU, is the backward sector of the bourgeoisie (represented in the "*Business for Britain*" campaign) and the middle class, who are in danger of going to the dogs in an increasingly unstable social and economic order in which the big fish are devouring the little fish. This is the same camp which hopes to garner support from among the labor aristocracy and the backward sectors of the white working class by whipping up a racist campaign of hatred against migrants and ethnic minorities. This camp's main political forces are Nigel Farage's UKIP and the right-wing of the Tories which also receive support from the fascist BNP as well as the English Democrats. As a secondary force, the anti-EU camp is also supported by the "*Little England*" remnants of British Stalinism (the Communist Party of Britain, etc.) as well as the main centrist groups (the Cliffite SWP/IST and Peter Taffee's SPEW/CWI). This is hardly surprising given the fact that the SPEW played a leading role in the reactionary "*British Jobs for British Workers*" strike at the Lindsey Oil Refinery in 2009. In short, the anti-EU camp is dominated by the most reactionary, backward sectors of the (middle and petit) bourgeoisie and the country's middle layers, while left-reformists and centrists serve as their "left-wing" fig leaf.

6. The RCIT maintains that authentic Marxists must refuse to support either of these two, equally reactionary, imperialist camps. The most important task now is to fight for the political independence of the working class and the oppressed vis-à-vis either of these imperialist camps. There is no lesser evil for the working class: On one side are those British imperialists who advocate membership in the war-mongering EU which universally imposes austerity, the plunder of Greece being the most recent and prominent example, and wages colonial wars in North Africa and Iraq, in addition to waging its policy of aggressive expansion in Eastern Europe at the door of Russia. On the other side are those British imperialists who advocate the country's exit from the EU in order to effectively become the little poodle of the world's greatest imperialist power, the US, and who call for a chauvinistic hunting down of migrants and ethnic minorities.

7. A particularly important issue for the current situation in Britain and an internationalist campaign against Cameron's referendum trap is the struggle for the rights of migrants and refugees. As the RCIT has stated numerous times in the past, we oppose immigration control and stand for open borders, equal wages for native and migrant workers, and equal rights for all. Recent developments confirm the need for socialists to equally oppose both British and European imperialism. The Eurosceptic right-wing racists oppose the EU precisely because the latter is ostensibly responsible for "too many migrants" in Britain. The EU itself however is no better. British and French police terrorize refugees at the Chunnel crossings. The EU is currently building a wall – like that of US imperialism along its border with Mexico or Israel in the West Bank – along the Hungarian border with Serbia. And the EU is trying its best to stop refugees crossing the Mediterranean Sea and, in these efforts, recently adopted a plan for military attacks against refugee boats along the

North African coast. The struggle for the rights of migrants and refugees must reject *all variations of imperialist fortresses* – be they British or European! Such a perspective is incompatible with voting for either of the two imperialist alternatives that will be offered in the referendum.

8. The only way forward for the white, black, Asian, and migrant working class and youth is the joint, multi-national class struggle against the Britain's rulers in conjunction with the participation of these workers and oppressed in a united international struggle together with the European working class against the EU bosses. The mass multi-national anti-war movement in Britain after 2001 and the global day of action on 15 February 2003 with 15–20 million demonstrators marching against the Iraq war have been and will continue to be a source of inspiration for such a perspective, alongside the combined struggle of black, Asian and poor whites during the August Uprising of 2011. Similarly inspiring are the international solidarity movement with the Greek people and the global BDS movement in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance against the Zionist Apartheid state. Naturally, these examples show to what extent a multi-national and international movement of the working class and the oppressed is far from being utopian, but rather is the *only* realistic perspective of resistance against the corporate plunder of the British and European imperialist butchers.

9. At the same time the RCIT advocates the perspective of the *European Revolution*, i.e., the armed insurrection of the workers and oppressed in each country with the goal of expropriating the local bourgeoisie and nationalizing the core industries and banks and placing them under workers' control. The aim is to foment revolution throughout the entire continent (and beyond) in order to found the *United Socialist States of Europe*. This is the *only* viable alternative to both British and EU imperialism. The continent can only prosper and provide wealth for all if it is united on the basis of a planned economy and the democratic rule of the working class and the oppressed who will organize themselves in mass action councils and popular militia.

10. In Europe's semi-colonial countries, i.e., those countries which are dominated and super-exploited by imperialist monopolies and great powers, the RCIT combines such an internationalist perspective of class struggle with the tactic of calling for an exit from the European Union. We do so because we support every small step which weakens the grip of the imperialists on such countries. However such a tactic is *only* applicable to semi-colonial countries like Ireland, Greece, Cyprus, and the countries of Eastern European. It is not relevant for imperialist states like Britain, France, Germany, the Benelux countries, Austria, Sweden, Finland, etc.

11. The RCIT bases its revolutionary, internationalist tactic on the programmatic tradition of the Marxist classics. Lenin famously stated that "*a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary*". Likewise he stated that in the imperialist countries "*the national movement is a thing of an irrevocable past, and it would be an absurd reactionary utopia to try to revive it.*" Later, Trotsky developed the slogan of a European-wide struggle for workers' power and the *United Socialist States of Europe*, a slogan which was adopted by the Communist International in 1923 (only to be dropped by the Stalinist bureaucracy in 1928). This Marxist tradition is the *only* possible alternative in conflicts between two imperialist bourgeois camps. Similarly, Marxists don't support one (smaller or larger) corporation against others in capitalism's market competition. Nor do we support one imperialist state

against another. Doing so would be adopting a position of treachery appropriate to the class-collaborationist tradition of social democratic reformism and Stalinism.

12. Our movement has a long-standing tradition of calling for abstention in referendums on questions of entry into or exit from the EU. This is also the case in Britain. Our predecessor organization – the *League for a Revolutionary Communist International* (whose British section was Workers Power) – called for abstention in all such referenda because we stood for an internationalist perspective and for the political independence of the working class from all imperialist camps. When the left-wing of the Labour Party called for Britain's exit from the EEC (as the EU was called at that time) in a referendum held in 1975, we called upon workers to oppose *both* the pro-EU as well as the anti-EU camp of the bourgeoisie and to abstain in the referendum. The RCIT continues this tradition, which is the *only* revolutionary and internationalist alternative for the working class and the oppressed in such situations.

continued from page 4

activists who are willing to fight against the austerity plan of the government. It makes no sense to condemn, as the KKE did, the activists who had or even still have illusions in SYRIZA. Rather, we call upon all honest supporters of SYRIZA who are disappointed by the outcome of the parliamentary vote to organize themselves in a mass movement against the austerity program and to fight the Tsipras leadership on the street.

9. In addition, we call upon all honest supporters of SYRIZA to form a radical left wing based on an *anti-austerity* program to fight against the capitalist crisis. Such a radical left wing must also challenge the current inappropriate leadership of SYRIZA. In this fight for the leadership it is vital that the radical left wing be willing to break with SYRIZA if it proves impossible to get rid of Tsipras' betraying leadership, and to build a new authentic revolutionary party of the workers and the poor. In our opinion, such a new workers' party should be based on a revolutionary program which calls for smashing the capitalist system via a socialist revolution. This is the only way out of the capitalist crisis. It is important to open the doors to all workers and activists who are now willing to build a revolutionary alternative but who are not organized in SYRIZA. This is especially important because we cannot trust the MPs of the left-wing to join us in the subsequent fight against the leadership of SYRIZA. Yesterday we witnessed this yet again: Only two MPs of SYRIZA voted against the austerity plan, eight of them abstained, and seven didn't even bother to show up for the vote. This is the demeaning behavior exhibited by a so-called left-wing when it confronts a massive betrayal by the Tsipras leadership! All activists of SYRIZA must now organize themselves, convene assemblies to discuss all the issues at hand, and vote democratically on all decisions to be made by the party, including the opportunity to replace the current leadership who betrayed the cause with new leaders whom they trust. But it is important that the new leaders be recallable at any time by the assemblies and conferences of the delegates of these assemblies.

10. It is time to topple the new austerity program, to form a radical left opposition in SYRIZA, to prepare the break with the Tsipras leadership, to unite the forces of all workers, youth,

13. The fact that the ostensibly Marxist organizations in Britain either join the anti-EU or the pro-EU camp of the bourgeoisie underlines once again the serious crisis of revolutionary leadership. How will these organizations be able to lead the working class struggle in any future political crisis if they have already capitulated to one of the two imperialist camps in such a referendum?! (In fact, we already witnessed the bankruptcy of such "Marxist" organizations during the August Uprising of 2011 at which time they either openly denounced the spontaneous insurrection of the oppressed or in practice boycotted it.) It is the chief task of British socialists to build a serious revolutionary organization which stands in the proud internationalist tradition of Lenin and Trotsky. The RCIT calls upon all revolutionaries in Britain who support the slogan "*Boycott Cameron's Trap: Neither Brussels, nor Downing Street! For Abstention in the EU-Referendum in Britain!*" to join forces in order to develop an internationalist campaign.

and poor no matter whether they support the KKE, PAME, SYRIZA, ANTARSYA or other organizations of the labor movement. It is time to join forces and prepare the implementation of an indefinite general strike to prevent the shifting of the entire capitalist crisis to the backs of the workers and the poor. We call upon all Greek workers and poor to fight for:

* *The immediate cancellation of all cuts and austerity measures against the workers and the poor! The immediate cessation of all negotiations and payments to the financial sharks of the IMF and the institutions of the European Union! Break with the EU and prepare the Grexit as a means of getting rid of the imperialist parasites! Cancel all Greek debts!*

* *The abolition of all indirect, regressive taxes such as VAT! The institution of massive taxation on profits, on the property of the rich, and the expropriation of the superrich! Cessation of all ongoing privatizations and cancellation of all those conducted during the past several years! Nationalization of the banks, large corporations, and wholesale trade and transport, social services, health services, education, and the communication media, without compensation and their placement under workers' control!*

* *Bring a halt to tax evasion of capitalists who even now are transferring their wealth to other countries! Complete expropriation of all funds associated with fake companies! Abolish all opportunities for multinational corporations to move their profits and losses within their business group across countries for the purpose of tax benefits! Confiscation of capital in the so-called tax havens!*

* *Build action committees and self defense units of the workers, the youth, and the poor to organize and protect an indefinite general strike! Such action committees can later be transformed into popular councils (soviets) and become the basis of a new workers' government! A new workers' government based on popular councils will end the capitalist crisis and open the road towards Socialism!*

* *Workers of Europe: Join the fight of your Greek brothers and sisters against the capitalist crisis! Build international solidarity actions with the Greek people to fight together against the imperialist bloodsuckers and their lackeys! Put pressure on the MPs of the labor movement in your countries to vote against the Greek bailout program as well as vote against any other austerity measures!*

We call upon all workers and poor in Greece and internationally to fight together with us for these demands and to join us in building a new revolutionary world party of the workers and the poor, a Fifth Workers' International!

SYRIZA betrays Greece's Workers and Poor!

"OXI" was not meant as a "YES" to another austerity program! For the organization of mass resistance against the betrayal of the Tsipras government! Left wing in SYRIZA: Fight against the party leaders who are lackeys of the EU-Bosses!

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 11th July 2015

1. In an historical vote, more than 61% of Greek voters gave a clear response of "OXI" ("NO" in Greek language) to the bailout program proposed by the European Union in the referendum held on 5 July. Yet, despite this great victory, it took the Greek government just 5 days to agree with the EU bosses on a huge austerity program which is now presented as a compromise between the wish of the Greek people and the demands of the EU. The bitter reality is crystal clear to the Greek masses: The Tsipras-government has betrayed them in record time.

2. This betrayal was being prepared well before the referendum was even conducted. On 28 June Tsipras wrote a letter to the IMF, the European Central Bank, and the European Commission in which he agreed on the general line of the demands from the imperialist bloodsuckers. The referendum was just a tool to calm the Greek workers and poor and to strengthen the position of the Greek government in their negotiations with the EU Bosses. The result of this pre-planned betrayal is a new bailout program, developed by the EU Bosses and the Tsipras Government and passed by the Greek parliament with 251 votes in favor and just 32 votes against.

3. The €13bn austerity measures for one year and the €53bn for three years are mainly composed of massive attacks on the living standard of the Greek workers and poor. The bourgeois media presents the increase in VAT as a measure mainly hitting the restaurants for which the tax rate is being increased from 13 to 23%. In reality the VAT is being doubled on vital products like water, energy, and basic foodstuffs from 6.5% to 13%! This is a huge attack on the working class and the poor who will be the main victims of the increase of this regressive tax!

4. In addition, the measures of the new traitorous bailout deal will entirely phase out the solidarity grant for poor pensioners by 2019 and the retirement age will be set at 67 for all workers. Furthermore, the privatization of the former public telecom giant Hellenic Telecoms (OTE) will be completed. The largest part of the bailout program is a slap in the face of all workers and poor.

5. The leadership of SYRIZA characterizes the austerity

program as an achievement because it also includes a ridiculous increase of corporate taxes from 26 to 28% in addition to its paying lip service to a fight on tax evasion. These pseudo measures against the rich are nothing compared to the soaking of the Greek people. No wonder that we already witnessed the first protest during the parliamentary session on Friday night when more than 8,000 people demonstrated against the ongoing betrayal by SYRIZA. The activists were mainly organized by the trade union PAME and some left wing supporters of SYRIZA.

6. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) condemns the Tsipras-led government and the SYRIZA leadership for their betrayal of the interests of the Greek working class and poor. In the past we have warned the Greek people that the leaders of SYRIZA will get down on their knees before the imperialist EU institutions and kiss the shoes of the financial sharks. The massive mobilization during the referendum showed the power and the will of the Greek people. It is now urgent to use this power and willingness to get rid of the imperialist parasites and their Greek lackeys.

7. We call upon the Greek labor movement to give a resounding response to the new austerity program by immediately beginning mass protests and strikes. An indefinite general strike must be organized to successfully fight back against the new bailout plan. The Greek workers, youth, and poor need to organize themselves in action committees in the proletarian districts, the villages, the workplaces, and the schools. These action committees have to form self-defense units to protect the strikes and especially the general strike against attacks which will inevitably follow by the fascist organizations and the repression apparatus, i.e., the police and the army.

8. We support the first demonstration against the new bailout plan which was organized by the trade union of the KKE, PAME, on Friday night. We call the members of the Stalinist KKE to break with their sectarian approach towards the supporters of SYRIZA and to join forces with all

continued on page 3

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