

# REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM



English language Journal of the Revolutionary  
International Communist Tendency (RCIT)

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June 2013

**\* Intifada in Turkey!**

**\* Perspectives for Alter Summit**



**plus: Britain, Sweden,  
Israel/Palestine, Syria  
EU, Brazil, Chile, ...**

**WORKERS AND OPPRESSED UNITE!**

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# Revolutionary Communism

No. 11, June 2013

Editorial	p.3
Open Letter for Revolutionary Unity	p.4
'Yaşasın Taksim direnişimiz!' – 'Yaşasın halkların kardeşliği!'	p.7
Turkey: Down with the repressive Regime of AKP/Erdoğan!	p.10
Istanbul intifada of May 31	p.12
Victory to the Revolution in Syria!	p.13
Israel: Hands Off Lebanon and Syria!	p.14
Syria: Urgent appeal to Free Ali Shihabi	p.15
Growing Trade Union Support for Boycott Actions against Israel	p.16
The Nakba Day	p.19
Reports about the social protest movement in Israel	p.20
Declaration on the Alter Summit in Athens, 7th – 8th June 2013	p.21
After the Woolwich attack in Britain: Stop imperialist war-drive and racism!	p. 24
Sweden: Long live the Uprising of the Migrants!	p.27
The EU Reform Treaty: What it is and How to Fight it (2008)	p.28
Brazil: Solidarity with the Teacher's Strikes in São Paulo!	p.37
Chile: Hands Off the Colectivo "Revolución Permanente"	p.38
<i>FROM THE ARCHIVES OF MARXISM:</i>	
Leon Trotsky: For Grynszpan (1939)	p. 41
Leon Trotsky: Disarmament and the United States of Europe (1929)	p. 42
RCIT: What do we stand for	p. 47

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The current issue of the RCIT's English language journal *Revolutionary Communism* (number 11) – as it is the central purpose of our journal – outlines a Marxist analysis and programmatic response to central questions of the world class struggle. In particular we deal with the spontaneous mass Uprising in Turkey – which the Turkish comrades of *İşçi Cephesi* (Workers' Front, Turkey) call the "*Istanbul Intifada*". In our statement we elaborate a strategy which seems to us necessary in order to avoid a decline of the movement as we saw it with the "*Occupy*" movement in the USA or the *indignados* in Spain. In our opinion an orientation towards the working class as well as the organizing of the spontaneous mass movement is the task of the day. From this flows the centrality of the slogan of the "*genel grev*" – the general strike. In order to fight for such a perspective and to combine it with the strategic goal of the working class seizure of power, the timely building of a revolutionary party is absolutely urgent.

However there are huge obstacles for the implementation of such a strategy. Naturally, any revolutionary organization in Turkey has to struggle against the repression of the semi-bonapartist state machinery. However in addition to this there are also numerous forces inside the mass movement which hinder the development of the working class to reach revolutionary conclusion. This is first and foremost the still existing influence of Kemalism but also various misconceptions of Stalinism and Maoism. It is one of the big misfortunes of the Turkish left that it comprised and still comprises so many heroic and dedicated fighters – who all shame the mostly decadent, and academic Western centrist left – but at the same time they are grossly misled by such terrible wrong strategies!

International solidarity with the Turkish Intifada is hugely important given the danger of the brutal repression by the AKP/Erdoğan regime. The Austrian section of the RCIT participates actively in the solidarity movement since the beginning (see on this the reports on the sections website [www.rkob.net](http://www.rkob.net)).

The workers movement – not only in Turkey but also in Europe – is confronted with the problem of facing not only the enemy of the ruling class but also the enemies within their mass organizations. This will be a major issue for revolutionaries at the *Alter Summit* in early June – a congress initiated by the *European Left Party* (ELP) with the official purpose to elaborate alternative strategies against the neoliberal Europe. However, as we explain in our statement, this congress runs the danger of being just a prop-up for the electoral projects of the ELP for the elections to the European Parliament in May 2014 as well as a "militant" cover for the appeasing trade union bureaucracy which formally supports the *Alter Summit*.

The bankrupt of the reformist and centrist left has become obvious in Greece where the unions – often with the support of the main reformist parties SYRIZA and KKE – organized already more than 20 one or two day general strikes since 2010. The bureaucracy however utilizes these protests only to let off steam of the radicalized masses and to enhance their position for negotiations with the bosses and the governments. They however avoid any serious organization and mobilization of the masses to challenge the power of the capitalists. As a result their domination continues and hence the misery for the working class and the popular masses increases.

The failure of the reformist and centrist left in Europe also

became visible in two important political recent events – the killing of a British soldier by two black Muslims and the Migrant Uprising in Sweden. Most of the British left capitulated to the chauvinist wave and expressed their condemnation of this misguided individual terrorist act. They however "forgot" that this attack expressed the legitimate hatred of the oppressed against the British army which is one of the biggest imperialist killing machines of the world. Similarly in Sweden the left failed to side with, take part and carry a revolutionary line into the migrant youth rebellion.

In addition to our statements dealing with current issues of the class struggle in Europe, we also reprint a longer article from *Michael Pröbsting* on the question of the European Unification. The article was originally published in 2008 and deals with the EU Reform Treaty.

A consistent internationalist and anti-imperialist program is not only important in Europe but also in Syria and Israel/Occupied Palestine. The *Internationalist Socialist League* (RCIT-Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine) is fighting for such a program in words and deeds as readers can see from the statement as well as the reports from *Yossi Schwartz* and *Shmuel Yerushalmi* in this issue.

We remind our readers in this context to the issue No. 10 of this journal which we published just recently. In this issue of *Revolutionary Communism* we printed two substantial theoretical documents which deal with historical and actual question of the revolutionary program in Israel/Occupied Palestine. *Yossi Schwartz* elaborates the revolutionary position in the 1948 War between Israel and the Arab states which led to the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homelands. He also shows the serious political failures of the Trotskyists in Palestine in the 1930s and 1940s. The other document – written by *Michael Pröbsting* – deals with a number of central questions of the program of Permanent Revolution in Palestine today. He elaborates the specifics of Israel as a colonial settler state which has become a small imperialist power and its consequences for the revolutionary strategy. This issue of *Revolutionary Communism* can be ordered via our contact address.

International class struggle and the need for solidarity of course are not limited to Turkey and the Middle East. In Brazil a militant strike of the teachers in São Paulo took place which in the end was sold out by the pro-PT union bureaucracy with the support of various centrists. We have issued a statement of solidarity together with Brazilian revolutionary teachers. We also republish in this issue a call for international solidarity with a group in Chile – the *Colectivo "Revolución Permanente"* – which faces serious repression by the bourgeois state.

The timely formation and unification of revolutionary forces around the world is therefore more urgent than ever. The RCIT has therefore issued an "*Open Letter for Revolutionary Unification*" which already has been translated into several languages. In this letter we outline a series of important question of the world class struggle and which in our opinion are decisive for the revolutionary program today. Hence we consider a serious discussion and hopefully agreement on these issues as necessary to move forward in unifying and strengthening the authentic Bolshevik forces internationally in the present period. We urge our readers to study our *Open Letter* and let us know their agreements and disagreements.

4<sup>th</sup> June 2013, Editorial Board

# Revolutionary Unity in the Struggle for the Fifth Workers International!

## Open Letter to All Revolutionary Organizations and Activists

*Issued by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 15.5.2013*

**W**e are living in such contradictory times! Capitalism has sunk in its deepest crisis since the 1930s and even bourgeois media have to admit that many of Marx's analyses and predications turned out to be true. The USA – the biggest imperialist power for more than half a century – is about to lose its colonial war in Afghanistan after it was already forced to leave Iraq in 2011. We see a wave of popular revolutions sweeping the Arab world for more than two years, militant mass struggles in Greece, Bulgaria, South Africa, and India as well as the heroic and successful resistance of the Palestinian people in Gaza against one of the most modern armies in the world.

But all these heroic mass struggles have not resulted in any serious attempt of the working class to take power. Why? Because the masses “*are not ready*”? Nonsense! The masses are ready but the most heroic mass struggle cannot win if it is not led by a steeled revolutionary combat party as the Bolsheviks were in Russia. So, while the masses are ready, the official leaderships of the workers movement as well as most of the so-called “Marxists” are not ready. To be more precise, these leaderships *cannot* be ready because they are inextricably linked with capitalism. They are linked due to their domination by and orientation towards the labor bureaucracy and aristocracy as well as the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. In opposition to the mass of the world working class which indeed “*has nothing to lose but their chains*”, these privileged layers have something to lose with capitalism's demise. Those, who do not break with such an anti-revolutionary orientation both in theory, program as well as praxis, are politically trapped in the ghetto of reformism and centrism and hence politically lost.

We must choose a different path. As long as the working class and the oppressed do not possess a revolutionary combat party – nationally as well as world-wide – they cannot succeed in their liberation struggle. **Therefore the most urgent task in the present period is the timely building of revolutionary parties and a new, Fifth Workers International.** Such new revolutionary parties are built in the class struggle as well as in the struggle against the official leaderships – the treacherous labor bureaucrats, Social Democracy, Stalinists, petit-bourgeois Nationalists and Islamists – who consciously or unconsciously mislead the workers and oppressed.

To make significant progress in this task, the unity of revolutionaries all over the world is highly desirable. Such a unity can achieve building a strong international Bolshevik organization which shares a common program as well as common understanding of the methods of party building and thus serves as a pre-party formation for the Fifth Workers International.

The RCIT calls all sincere revolutionary organizations and activists around the world to unite in the struggle for au-

thentic Marxist – which means Bolshevism applied for the conditions of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – international organization. Such an international organization needs theoretical and practical clarity. It must be based on a joint understanding of the application of the revolutionary program to the main question of today's international class struggle. They must not only proclaim the road to liberation, but must also name and fight against all the obstacles. In other words it must take up the struggle against the numerous left-reformist and centrist forces which disorientate and mislead the working class under the banner of “Marxism” – which is a “Marxism” without its revolutionary arrowhead, a “Marxism” conveniently opportunistically adapted to all possible non-working class leaderships (reformists, populists, Islamists etc.) or a “Marxism” which vegetates in sectarian retirement from the class struggle.

### Programmatic clarity on the burning issues of world class struggle

Programmatic clarity and unity has to be examined on the basis of the most important issues of world class struggle such as the following.

\* *Victory to the Syrian Revolution!* Reject the Stalinist's (e.g. KKE Greece) and Chavezista's support for the Assad regime!

\* *Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, and Libya: Down with the pro-imperialist Islamist regimes! For a Workers Government allied with the Peasants and Poor!* No popular-frontist political blocs with bourgeois forces (like the IST's *Revolutionary Socialists* electoral support for Mursi and its participation in the *National Salvation Front* together with Mohamed ElBaradei, Wafd etc. in Egypt or the *Workers' Party's* - the former Hoxhaist PCOT – participation in the *Popular Front*)

\* *Smash the imperialist Apartheid State Israel! For a Democratic, Palestinian, Multinational and Socialist Workers and Fal-lahin Republic from the River to the Sea!* Reject the reactionary support for a Two-State Solution by the *European Left Party* (ELP) or the CWI. *Victory to the Palestinian Resistance!* Marxists must support the Resistance struggle and not fail in taking its side (as the CWI, IMT etc.) Condemn the *Linkspartei* (ELP in Germany) slander of the Boycott campaign against Apartheid Israel and the Gaza Freedom Flotilla as “*anti-Semitic*”! No to the Menshevik concept of a class-less “democratic” Palestine state by the Morenoite LIT.

\* *Down with imperialist aggressions and wars! In Afghanistan, Mali, Somalia, Iran, North Korea: Defeat the imperialist NATO forces and their local allies! Defend those resisting the imperialist invaders! No political support for nationalist, Islamist or Stalinist forces!* It is significant for the social-imperialist character of the *Parti Communiste Français* (ELP in France) and the *Front de Gauche* that they openly support France's imperialist intervention in Mali. Many centrists fail to call for the defeat of the imperialist occupiers and the military victory

of the resistance (like the CWI or the Mandeliste NPA).

\* *For socialist revolution against the Stalinist-Capitalist Dictatorship in China! China has become an imperialist power. Support the independent trade unions and workers strikes as well as national self-determination for Tibet and East-Turkmenistan! Reject the various mischaracterizations of China as "socialist" (many Stalinists) or "degenerated workers state" (Spartacists). Instead of taking the side of one imperialist camp, socialists should oppose all expansionist plans of US, Japanese and Chinese imperialism in East Asia! In all possible conflicts between these Great Powers we say: The Main Enemy is at Home!*

\* *Pakistan: Support the workers struggle and the formation of independent trade unions as well as the struggle of the Balochi people for national self-determination! Down with the NATO war – Victory to the Resistance! Reject the popular-frontist policy of the IMT/Lal Khan group which opportunistically entrench themselves since decade in the bourgeois PPP. A similar dead-end is the road of the Awami Workers Party's leadership which adapts to liberal, pro-Western forces.*

\* *Russia: Down with the Putin regime! For independent working class struggle! Defend the protests for democratic rights! Equal rights for Migrants! National Self-determination for the Caucasian people! Reject the Stalinists denial of Russia's imperialist character which serves as a pretext for their social-chauvinist adaption to the regime. No to any political support for the bourgeois-liberal forces which dominate the democratic anti-Putin protests.*

\* *South Africa: Support the militant miners and their struggle for trade unions which are independent of the treacherous ANC/CPSA government! Condemn the support of Stalinist forces world-wide for the CPSA and the NUM and COSATU leadership.*

\* *Down with the reactionary Constitution in Zimbabwe imposed by the coalition government of ZANU-PF and MDC! For a revolutionary Constitutional Assembly based on Workers and Peasants Councils! No to the support for the Mugabe regime by Stalinist parties but also no to the political adaption to the popular frontist MDC by the IST Zimbabwe group.*

\* *For independent working class struggle in Latin America both against all bourgeois governments like Kirchner (Argentina) and Rouseff (Brazil) but also in Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia! No political support for the Bolivarian popular front governments! But defend them against right-wing coup d'états and imperialist intervention! No political alliance with the right-wing forces against Venezuela's PSUV government like Chirino and the Morenoite UIT are practicing in their*

trade union work. *Expropriate the multinational corporations from US, EU and China! Defend Argentina against British imperialism and kick Britain out of the Malvinas! No to political support for Bolivarism (e.g. Stalinism, Alan Woods' IMT), no to centrist failure to oppose imperialism (e.g. CWI and IMT support for the British occupation of the Malvinas).*

\* *Europe: Down with the reactionary austerity policy! Cancel all Debts! Expropriate the Banks and Corporations! No to the reformists support for capitalist governments (PCF/FdG for Hollande in France, AKEL in Cyprus). No alliance with right-wing nationalist party like SYRIZA's "front" with the Independent Greeks (ANEL). Instead of symbolic general strikes against the austerity policy – for indefinite General Strikes – nationally and European-wide – to defend Jobs, Wages and Savings! No trust in the trade union bureaucracy – for independent rank & file committees and action councils of struggle! Instead of the ELP's and SYRIZA's illusionary strategy to reform the European Union or the Stalinist's "National road outside of the EU" – Smash the imperialist EU by Socialist Revolution! For the United Socialist States of Europe! In semi-colonial countries like Greece, Cyprus and Bulgaria: Support the workers and popular struggles against the imperialist plundering! Exit the EU and fight for a Workers Government!*

\* *Workers, African-Americans and Migrants in the US: Fight for the Independence of the Trade Unions, the Black and Migrant Organizations from the capitalist Democratic Party! No to the CPUSA's support for the Democratic Party.*

\* *Support the struggle for Liberation of the Oppressed all over the world: For revolutionary working class movements of women, migrants and youth! For the right to caucus for the oppressed in the mass organizations of workers and its movements! Down with all forms of aristocracy – recognition of the important role of these layers in the liberation struggle of the working class! Equal rights for migrants! No immigration control in imperialist countries! Equality for migrants and national minorities' languages in the education sector and the public administration! Down with left-reformists and centrists capitulation to imperialist chauvinism (e.g. CPB, CWI, IMT etc. during the "British Jobs for British Workers" strike in 2009)! No to political adaption to feminism and nationalism. No to the misuse of feminism in order to capitulate to imperialism (like the demand of CWI, IST etc. to extradite Wikileaks founder Assange to Sweden)*

Revolutionaries must combine their participation in the class struggle with a program for working class power. This means the total renunciation of the ELP's, Stalinists and various centrists (e.g. CWI, IMT) pipedream of a



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peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism. *It means fighting for the building of Action Councils of the Workers, Peasant and Poor, of armed popular militias, for the expropriation of the capitalist class and for a Workers Government allied with the Peasants and Urban Poor and based on local Councils and Militias. It means preparing the working class for the armed insurrection, the civil war and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only means by which the proletariat can advance in the struggle for liberation.*

### **Unity on the methods how to fight for the Program**

These are some of the most important questions of today's world class struggle. Programmatic clarity on what to do and what not to do are basic for a sustainable revolutionary unity. However, it is not sufficient to agree on a program. One must know how to fight for the program. In short, what is necessary is a congruence on the kind of combat organization which is the tool to put the program into reality in the class struggle.

Currently it has become fashionable amongst many so-called "Marxists" to praise and call for "Left Unity". "Left Unity" represents the opposite of what the working class needs. "Left Unity" means the unity of bureaucrats and workers, of supporters and opponents of imperialist wars, of supporters of the peaceful, parliamentarian road as well as of the revolutionary road. In short, "Left Unity" is unity to paralyze revolutionary activities, hence it is a useless unity. What the working class needs is a revolutionary combat party and this has to be openly proclaimed.

This however does not mean that revolutionaries should ignore the emergence of new political formations. A new party which represents layers of workers and oppressed who are looking for a political tool to fight for liberation is an important step forward. This is true even if the leadership of such a formation consists of left-wing bureaucrats. Authentic revolutionaries could join such a new party, fight openly for its revolutionary program but argue pedagogically with their class brothers and sisters who might have many political deficiencies but who are honest and militant. They would try to save these workers from the useless maneuvers of their leaders.

It is however something completely different if a new party is announced which consists mostly of the old, moribund left-reformist and centrist left or libertarian university students. To acclaim such a "left unity" as a step forward for the working class is nothing but the worst possible stupefaction of the people. Instead of opportunistically adapting itself to such crooks, revolutionaries must sharply fight against such a sham.

Surely, we cannot simply found a truthful revolutionary party and international today. For this task, we are too small in numbers and not sufficiently rooted in the working class. But big accomplishments in the history of humanity are never gifts from heaven but are achieved by hard and systematic work. Forming an organized international unit of determined revolutionary workers and oppressed, based on a common program and a joint understanding of their practical and organizational methods is the most important prerequisite to build such a new, revolutionary International.

Such a new International will be the fifth attempt in the

history of the revolutionary workers movement. We have seen already four revolutionary Internationals in the past: the First International of Marx and Engels, the Second International until 1914, the Third International founded under the leadership of Lenin up to its Stalinist degeneration in 1924 and the Fourth International led by Leon Trotsky. However since the centrist degeneration of the Fourth International, the working class lacks a World Party of Socialist Revolution. Whatever will be the formal name and number of the future International, it must be based on the revolutionary program for the present historic period as well as the lessons of the past four Internationals.

A true revolutionary party as well as pre-party organization must exist as an *international formation from the beginning*. Such as the revolutionary program can only live, breathe and develop in an organization of revolutionary militants, so can the international program as well as proletarian internationalism and solidarity only exist in an international organization. Without it, national centeredness and finally nationalist deviations are unavoidable. There is no consciousness without matter, no spirit without a body.

Against the Anti-Leninist trend of Liquidationism which is currently so fashionable amongst the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia and the centrist left, the RCIT emphasizes the validity of the lessons of Bolshevism – the necessity of building vanguard organizations and parties which fight for a revolutionary program amongst the workers and oppressed and which are based on the principles of *Democratic Centralism*. Such revolutionary parties as well as pre-party organizations must orientate towards and must be formed from the middle of the lower and middle strata of the working class and the oppressed. We reject the orientation of the majority of the centrist organizations toward the middle class intelligentsia as well as the labor bureaucracy and aristocracy.

Comrades, we are living in such a complex, stormy period, which is so rich in changes and turns – it is a time to overcome routine and make bold steps forward! The RCIT calls all fighters for the liberation of the working class and the oppressed people around the world to join forces in the struggle to build new revolutionary parties and a new Fifth Workers International.

*No future without socialism!*

*No socialism without a revolution!*

*No revolution without a revolutionary party!*

For a more extensive overview of the RCIT's viewpoints we refer those who are interested to:

\* Program of the RCIT: *The Revolutionary Communist Manifesto*, [www.thecommunists.net/rcit-manifesto](http://www.thecommunists.net/rcit-manifesto)

\* *The World Situation and the Tasks of the Bolshevik-Communists* (March 2013), [www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-situation-march-2013](http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-situation-march-2013)

\* *Workers and Oppressed of the World, Unite in the Struggle for Liberation!* May Day 2013 Statement of the RCIT, [www.thecommunists.net/rcit/mayday-2013-greetings](http://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/mayday-2013-greetings)

\* Michael Pröbsting: *The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism*. More details of this recently published book at [www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net](http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net) ■

## ‘Yaşasın Taksim direnişimiz!’ – ‘Yaşasın halkların kardeşliği!’

‘Long live the Protest on Taksim Square!’ – ‘Long live International Solidarity!’

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 3.6.2013*

1. The protests which started at the *Gezi Park* and the *Taksim Square* have resulted in a *spontaneously mass movement* in the whole of Turkey and have even led to solidarity actions around the world. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)* fully supports these protests and calls for international solidarity actions. The protests should be advanced to stop the neoliberal offensive and the repression as well as to bring down the AKP-Erdoğan government. For this the activists need to organize in action committees and to form self-defense committees against the police repression. They should orientate the movement to build itself amongst the working class and to link it with ongoing workers struggle. The protests should be united in a general strike. The RCIT says that the only last solution is the revolutionary overthrow of the regime and its replacement by a Workers Government supported by the poor peasants and the urban poor and based on popular councils and militias.

2. The world working class is watching the developments that started several days ago at the *Taksim Square* in Istanbul and which rapidly spread around the whole country. More than 90 demonstrations took place since then and about 939 people have been arrested. The protest movement started very small, with just hundreds of activists gathering to protect the *Gezi Park* against the plan to destroy the green area in favor of building another shopping mall. Tens of thousands of workers, students and intellectuals have joined the protests since then. Although the starting point was the protection of the green area, the actual mobilizations are far away from being an “ecological” movement. The main reason for the development of

the demonstrations into a *spontaneously mass movement* is the police force which brutally attacked the protestors from the very beginning. Since then protests of migrants from Turkey as well as solidarity activists have been organized spontaneously around the world to show international solidarity with the demonstrations at *Taksim Square* and *Gezi Park*.

3. The movement, which is occupying the places with tents, is supported not only by protests in other parts of Istanbul, like the famous Bosphorus Bridge, but also in all in all 47 Turkish cities like Ankara, Izmir, Adana, Konya, Samsun and many others. The activists were even supported internationally by spontaneous protests in front of the parliament in Brussels, in several German cities like Bochum and Stuttgart, the Austrian capital city Vienna as well as in the famous Zuccotti Park in New York and many others. Such a fast proliferation shows the potential of international coordination of the workers movement across the borders also for future class struggle events. It also shows the importance of an orientation towards the organizing of the masses of migrants – especially in the imperialist countries – as they are obviously connected to political events in their homelands and often identify with the protests there. Migrants are mostly part of the lower and middle strata of the working class in Europe, the US and other, mainly imperialist states. They are therefore an important breeding ground to revive and strengthen the class struggle and to challenge the bad reformist traditions of the workers movement in the imperialist countries owing to its dominance by the labor bureaucracy and its principal supporter, the most privileged strata of the working



Source: <http://img3.allvoices.com/thumbs/image/609/480/98603188-turkey-protesters.jpg>

class, i.e. the labor aristocracy.

4. On 2<sup>nd</sup> June, the movement celebrated a first victory in form of the retreat of the police forces from the Taksim Square. The mood in the streets was victorious, which is not only understandable but also well deserved. However after a temporary retreat, the reactionary AKP-Erdoğan regime again sent their repression forces against the tens of thousands of demonstrators. In addition, the project itself, the destruction of Gezi Park and the building of a new shopping mall, is not defeated yet. There are strong indications that this movement is just at its beginning as it is already spreading nation- and worldwide. In addition it also has the potential to deepen its organized support amongst the popular masses. It has therefore the potential to break the relative calm of class struggle in Turkey of the last years which existed despite the fight for freedom and equality of Kurdish people and the heroic strike of the Tekel workers in winter 2009-10. Even more the mass protest could – if they continue and intensify – lead to the *emergence of a pre-revolutionary situation*. The reason for this is not the role of ecological demands amongst the mass of the protestors or the vanguard of the Turkish working class. The project around the Gezi Park and the reaction of the police forces, the media and the Erdoğan government itself was just the trigger which provoked the explosion of a longer existing deep disaffection of the popular masses in Turkey. This disaffection is nurtured by the aggressive neoliberal policy of the Erdoğan government.

5. The neoliberal policy of the AKP government is the result of the greedy strives for higher profits by both the Turkish capitalists as well as the imperialist monopolies. In fact the Islamist regime defends the interest of the Turkish big capital and governs the country in the service of the imperialists. Contrary to some leftist groups which characterize Turkey as a “sub-imperialist” country, it is in reality an advanced semi-colonial country which is super-exploited by imperialism. Turkey, for example, has to pay nearly half of its total export income to foreign financial institutes. Its runs a balance of payments deficit of about 8 to 10% of its annual Gross Domestic Product, which is nearly the same level as Greece had before its financial collapse. After Turkey’s economic crisis in 2000/01 the share of foreign banks in terms of total assets in the banking sector rose from around 3% to 33% in 2006 and 40% in 2010! These are just a few examples which demonstrate that Turkey is robbed by the imperialists and which show that Turkey is not in any kind of way near to the stage of an imperialist country.

6. The AKP government is a capitalist regime which combines elements of bourgeois, parliamentary democracy with elements of Bonapartism – reflected in the strong role of the military state apparatus which repeatedly threatens to undertake a military coup. In addition, it is suppressing the Kurdish people who are fighting since decades for national self-determination. It is however scientifically not correct to characterize the government as “fascist” – as it is routinely done by various Stalinist and Maoist groups since decades. History has demonstrated that fascism means the complete liquidation of the labor movement by a petty-bourgeois mass movement, the abolition of any elements of a bourgeois parliament and other institutions of bourgeois democracy, etc.

7. Since more than a decade the Turkish bourgeois

state is massively privatizing civil services, public places and institutions like several Parks and green areas. The Emek theatre was closed, coastal lines have been auctioned for more than \$700 millions, and the favorite project of Erdoğan – the “Istanbul canal” – causes not only massive ecological problems but also creates a \$350 billion investment market! One of the protestors, who was quoted in the media, correctly says: “*Where are the opera houses? The theaters? The culture and youth centers? What about those? They only choose what will bring them the most profit without considering what we need.*” In addition to this the permanent open state repression are strengthening the popular anger against the government. Against this background of mass dissatisfaction it is no wonder that bourgeois forces which are actually in opposition to the AKP government like the Kemalist CHP are trying to utilize the Taksim movement for their own interests.

8. One can characterize the movement, which is in its very beginning and which therefore can also fall apart very fast, as a spontaneous mass movement. It is supported by the vanguard of the working class but until now not it is neither linked with nor consciously orientated toward the working class. Until now it is influenced by mainly petit-bourgeois and Stalinist forces as well as bourgeois forces (like the Kemalist CHP). While there are some similarities of the Taksim Square movement with the petit-bourgeois-dominated and pacifist *Occupy Movement* in the US, it has much more in common with the early stage of the *militant mass movement at the Tahrir Square in Egypt*. The massive police repression, including the use of water cannons, tear gas, and even the police firing off warning shots at this early stage of the movement provoked popular outrage although the AKP still has substantial support amongst the population.

9. We as the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* stand in full solidarity with the occupation movement in Turkey. Comrades of our Austrian section actively participate since the beginning in the demonstrations of Turkish migrants in Vienna. An organized international solidarity movement with the protestors in Turkey is urgent. We therefore call the international labor movement to solidarize with the protests, and to help actively and immediately to protect it from any repression by the police and the state. It must support the Taksim Square movement in demanding the immediate release of the 939 activists who are in detention as well as the compensation of the nearly 1.000 activists who have been injured by police brutally.

10. In order to win, the Taksim Square movement must orientate itself towards the working class. Not the universities and the think-tanks of the intelligentsia will decide the fate of the movement but the proliferation of the movement into mass working class actions and organizations in the enterprises and popular neighborhoods. Therefore we say: Solidarize with the actions of the workers from Turkish Airline, the upcoming actions of the Metal workers and the public sector strike which is called for the 5<sup>th</sup> June by the Trade Union KESK! Call the leaders of the labor movement to support actively the movement! Linking the protests together can inspire the creation of a broad proletarian mass movement. A broad and militant mass protest of the workers culminating into a general strike can force the government to take back several priva-



tizations and give back *“the theatres, the culture and youth centers”*. More than this it can open the road for a victorious fight against the attacks on workers rights and the limitations of democratic rights, like the criminalization of women’s right to abortion. Most importantly, a general strike has the potential to shake the government. *Forward to a general strike to stop the neoliberal policy, the repression, and to bring down the Erdoğan regime!* The RCIT says that the ruling regime should be replaced by a *Workers Government supported by the poor peasants and the urban poor and based on popular councils and militias!*

11. In order to give the movement continuity and depth, the activists should move forward to build *action committees* at the occupied places and to coordinate the demonstrations. Such committees should be democratically elected at regular mass assemblies. They should also form *organized self-defence committees* in order to protect the movement against the police attacks. To build organized roots in the working class, the movement must strive to build *mass action committees in the enterprises, in the popular neighborhoods and the educational institutions of the workers and the youth*. Only in such a way will it be possible to broaden the movement and root it in working class. It is the experience of numerous occupation movements in the last years, that for most workers it is not possible to participate in the occupation the whole time. This is rather a possibility only for students and unemployed. But without the full participation of the working class, the movement can not have a decisive impact to stop the neoliberal offensive of the Erdoğan regime.

12. The movement has to prepare for the inevitable betrayal of bourgeois forces like the Kemalist CHP leadership which in the past supported the most reactionary dictatorships in Turkey. Many activists of the Stalinist and Maoist organizations are participating heroically in the movement. However, their leaderships provide them neither with a correct analysis of Turkish capitalism nor with a correct program for the liberation struggle. This is why the building of an alternative leadership is the most important task today. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* calls all militant activists from the working class and the oppressed and all communists to build a

revolutionary workers party. Such a revolutionary workers party should link the struggle against the neoliberal offensive of the AKP government, against the repression and for the national liberation of the Kurdish people with the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. It is pure utopia to believe that a free and peaceful existence is possible for the working class and the popular masses as long as the AKP government is in power and as long as the capitalist class is ruling. Therefore we say that capitalism must be overthrown. This can only be achieved by the militant, armed uprising of the proletarian masses, i.e. the socialist revolution, lead and organized by a revolutionary workers party. Such a revolution opens the door to building a socialist society where the mass of the working population will democratically control all political, economic and socialist decisions.

*\* Victory to the mass protests at the Taksim Square!*

*\* Immediate release of all activists who are in detention! For the immediate compensation of all injured activists!*

*\* Orientate towards the working class: Solidarize with the actions of the workers from Turkish Airline, the upcoming actions of the Metal workers and the sector wide strike which is called for the 5<sup>th</sup> June by the Trade Union KESK! Unite the struggles and direct them against the AKP regime! Forward to a general strike against the neoliberal policy, the repression and to bring down the Erdoğan government!*

*\* Build democratic mass action committees to coordinate and defend the protests! For organized self-defense committees! Build action committees in the enterprises, popular neighborhoods and the educational institutes!*

*\* Support the struggle of the Kurdish people for national self-determination – including the right to form their own state!*

*\* For a Workers Government supported by the poor peasants and the urban poor and based on popular councils and militias!*

*\* Build an international, proletarian solidarity movement with the protests in Turkey!*

*\* For of a new revolutionary workers party as part of the Fifth Workers International!*

**Join our international organization, the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, and fight with us for these goals! ■**



# Turkey: Down with the repressive Regime of AKP/Erdoğan!

## For a Workers Government supported by the Poor Peasants and the Urban Poor!

by Yossi Schwartz, 3.6.2013

Our sisters and brothers returned yesterday to Gezi Park to continue the struggle to remove the reactionary AKP-government of Turkey, the Robin Hood of the rich: Stealing from ordinary people to give the public green parks to the land speculators. The Taksim square, the focus of the demonstrations, was calm on Sunday morning, and the capitalist mass media rushed to inform us that the protest is already over.

The spark that ignited the fire was a project around Taksim Gezi Park in Istanbul, one of the few green areas left in central Istanbul. It began on May 28, when environmentalists protested against plans to remove the park and replace it with a shopping mall. They were confronted with a brutal police crackdown. On Friday dozen people were admitted to the hospital and more than 60 people detained as police and protesters clashed. (1)

Then on Saturday, thousands of demonstrators marched over the Bosphorus Bridge, which is connecting the Asian and European shores of Istanbul. They tried to reach the Taksim Square, which is not only the place of the incident but also a symbol of the labor movement in Turkey. Again the police fired tear gas and water cannon to defeat the protesters. Slogans from the demonstrators were *"Unite against fascism!"* and *"Government resign!"* as well as they demand the stop of the shopping mall project.

BBC News interviewed one Istanbul resident, who even reported about police helicopters dropping tear-gas canisters overnight. (2)

However the bourgeois media were wrong to tell the world that everything calmed down on Sunday. The opposite is the case: Protesters began reoccupying the Taksim Square and Gezi Park as the project to destroy the green area and to replace it with a shopping mall is still not defeated. In addition to this a big part of the movement demands also from Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to resign.

The Protesters build up barricades at the entrance to Taksim square and around Gezi Park after the Police forces back down awhile. Taksim Square has since decades a huge symbolic importance for Turkey's labor movement and the political parties and organizations of the left.

### Square with big history

On May Day 1977 more than 500.000 protesters gathered together on Taksim Square to celebrate the historical workers day of action. Suddenly shots were heard, coming from the building of the water supply company (Sular İdaresi) and the *Intercontinental Hotel* (today called *"The Marmara"*). Security forces intervened not only with shooting at the masses but also with tanks. At this day 42 people were killed and 220 were injured. Needless to say that none of the assassins were brought to trial as the bourgeois "democracy" sees this as a legitimate action. Some 20 snipers were detained by the gendarmerie and handed over to the police.

However, none of them even appeared in the records of the police as the whole incident was obviously led by army and police forces. At the same time more than 500 demonstrators were detained and 98 were indicted. Among the 17 defendants, who had been put in pre-trial detention, three were released before the first hearing and nine were released at the first hearing on 7th July 1977. The remaining prisoners were released soon afterwards. The trial ended in acquittal on 20th October 1989 - this means 12 years after the protest!

On May Day this year workers demand access to the Taksim Square in commemoration of the killed protesters from 1977. The Square was blocked during that day by nearly 20.000-strong police force which attacked the demonstrators with water cannons and teargas. To destroy Gezi Park and therefore to give away an important part of the historically significant Taksim Square to private shopping mall owner mobilized tens of thousands also after the pullback of the police forces on Saturday.

Clashes between protesters and police erupted therefore also in the capital, Ankara for a second day. Protesters had initially gathered in Kizilay Square on Sunday, chanting slogans, singing songs and calling for the government to resign. (3)

### The real reasons for the protests

The real reasons for the protests which started as a fight over environmental questions goes much deeper: It is the anger and fight back of the masses against the neoliberal attacks of the capitalist government, which was carried on in religious cloth very sharply against the workers, the lower middle class and the poor during the last years. The struggle against the reactionary government is part of the international waves of protests and revolutionary struggles. Waves that show the massive rise of the class struggle in this revolutionary period but which have not defeated the ruling classes until now because of the lack of a revolutionary working class leadership. The revolutionary struggle can not be victorious, can not really challenge the bourgeoisie without being organized by a revolutionary mass party of the workers and oppressed. Every victory is limited in this period if it is not bound together with the smash of the capitalist system by an armed uprising, a socialist revolution.

The waves of class struggle are now hitting also Turkey. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is a servant of the American and the European imperialists. The Turkish army generals are trained by US-Imperialism. The AKP-government is an oppressive regime that uses the ugly weapons of chauvinism against the oppressed Kurdish people. It is a government that has a long record of attacking the Turkish workers, the oppressed youth, women and the poor peasants. It is a government run by a ruling class that murdered workers in Çorum and in Sivas that provoked the Workers' Resis-

tance of June 15-16 as well as the struggles on May Day 1977 and May Day 1996.

Now we have a new wave of provoked resistance – one that answers the massive police brutality in more than 47 cities. The clashes started as the police fired gas and water cannons against the protesters throwing stones. This struggle between armed goons in uniforms and protesters that have only their fists and stones must be changed. It must be based on all the rich experiences of the labor movement in Turkey. Therefore the movement has to make steps to develop to a higher, better organized level of resistance.

### Action Committees and Self-Defense Units

It is necessary to organize real defense of the protests and the best way to do it is to build up self defense committees which can perceptively arm themselves and turn into workers militias.

Protests were already held in dozens of other cities on Saturday and since then. This shows the need for a nationwide struggle, led by the leadership of action committees at the occupied places as well as action committees at the work places, schools and universities.

The workers and youth have to build these action committees to coordinate the protest and to be independent of a traitorous leadership such as the labor bureaucracy. Action committees are a preform of soviets - organized cells at the work places and institutions of education which are the basis of a workers government.

Such committees have to organize the whole protest and have also to fight for certain demands, for a revolutionary program of resistance. To protect the movement from any sort of legal penalty or political prosecution of the protesters is a vivid part of this program.

### Release all detained protesters! Pay compensation to the injured activists!

Muammer Guler, the interior minister, said police had detained 939 protesters in more than 90 demonstrations across the country. Since then only some have been released. We therefore demand: *Release all political prisoners immediately without any penalty!*

The interior minister also said that 53 civilians and 26 police were injured. One of the injured civilians was in intensive care unit at an Istanbul hospital. According to records of the doctors in the hospitals more than 1.000 protesters have been injured nationwide until now. *We demand the immediate pay of compensation to these injured activists! We demand from the government to pay high compensation to the families of the killed protesters!*

It is the task of the movement to judge over the policemen who killed the protesters. *We therefore demand to judge the brutal policemen in a proletarian way and to put them in front of a workers tribunal. The bourgeois court will not even raise accusation against these murders! It must be done by the working class itself!*

### Link the movement with workers strikes

The protest movement today is strongly influenced by the middle class. It has to turn its focus now on becoming a proletarian movement. Therefore it has to organize itself at the work places of the working class. Already now the trade union KESK is calling to organize a militant strike for economic demands but to organize solidarity with the movement and to link it therefore with the movement. This is an important chance to turn in this way the workers strikes into political fights and the protests against the destroying of the Gezi Park into a proletarian movement. It is the chance to organize a general strike to force the government to resign.

The power of the working class in Turkey can shut down the entire economy by an indefinite general strike. What is needed now is a revolutionary working class perspective that includes:

- \* *Support for the right of self determination of the Kurds!*
  - \* *For an indefinite General strike to bring down the capitalist government! Force them to take back every neoliberal attack from the last years!*
  - \* *For the building of action committees and self defense units to organize such a general strike at the work and living places of our class!*
  - \* *Expropriate the capitalists without compensation and put the economy under workers control!*
  - \* *For a workers government supported by the peasants, the lower middle class, the oppressed women and youth and the poor!*
- Join the RCIT and help us building a revolutionary workers party in Turkey as well as a revolutionary International, the Fifth's Workers International!

(1) According to BBC News

(2) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22740282>

(3) Al Jazeera's Gonca Senay, reporting from the city. ■



Erdogan fears General Strike (Source: Carlos Latuff, <http://latuffcartoons.wordpress.com>)

## Istanbul intifada of May 31

by *İşçi Cephesi (Workers' Front, Turkey)* 1.6.2013

**Note by the Editorial Board:** We reprint a statement of *İşçi Cephesi (Workers' Front)*, a Trotskyist organization in Turkey, which the comrades sent us. *İşçi Cephesi* is actively intervening in the Taksim Square movement. Given the current class struggle events in Turkey, we consider it as important to enhance collaboration and discussion with comrades in this country. The RCIT's assessment of the Taksim Square movement can be read here.

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Istanbul had an overturning day on May 31. Brutal attacks of security forces on demonstrations against the capitalists' confiscation of Gezi Park from public have caused an unpredicted mass mobilization for the last four days.

The movement first started in Taksim, and within 24 hours, spreaded over the whole city spontaneously. This spontaneous movement structured people's demands; it got organized in order to maintain the fight and to provide means for it; and it defended itself. This extraordinary mobilization in Taksim represents an extremely wide social range of masses.

The nature of the struggle points out to a larger reaction that a mere protection of Gezi Park. The real victims of neoliberal policies and retrogressive regulations enacted by the AKP government — women, young people, workers who have been condemned to wretched wages under unsecured labor conditions, and the unemployed and functionaries who are concerned about future — formed a collective dynamic of struggle.

The accumulation of rage against the arrogance of Tayyip Erdoğan's government caused by a combination of the assassination of Hrant Dink, Reyhanlı attacks, Roboski massacre, the proposed abortion law and alcohol bans are in fact the main reasons behind of Gezi Park reactions.

While the struggling masses have been presenting a will-

power to maintain the mobilization, the ruling classes have been divided, too. The pen-holders of the bourgeois media have left the Prime Minister without support; Gülen's affiliated media organs, and even the former minister Günay have been harshly criticizing the government while the CHP and the MHP have been lying heavy on the government, talking pretentiously about lack of governance and control.

While the main responsible of this rage, Prime Minister has made no official comments throughout the day, Municipal Kadir Topbaş and Governor Hüseyin Mutlu lied shamelessly to public during the press conference they held. While Topbaş declared that a shopping mall will not be constructed at where Gezi Park is now, which entirely contradicts with Erdoğan's previous comments on the matter, Mutlu defended brutal police attacks as by trying to justify them as attempts to "block illegal acts."

The permanence and continuity of the mobilization has a great importance. In fact, it may bring about a historical defeat of the government. It is urgent and necessary to build a coordination committee which will be formed by the representatives of trade associations, unions, political parties, and others in order to collectivize and organize the struggle as well as to protect it.

The police chief Hüseyin Çapkın and Governor of İstanbul Hüseyin Mutlu must be dismissed immediately!

Interior Minister Muammer Güler who has proven himself to be the enemy of the working class and democracy, and who is the main responsible of the May 31 events should also be called unseated immediately.

A commission should be established in order to detect and expose the members of the police forces who commit violence against public, and this commission should force all high-level police officers who commit or command violence to leave their posts.

Protestors under custody should be released immediately and the Prime Minister should declare the cancellation of the Project of Gezi Parkı to masses. ■



# Victory to the Revolution in Syria!

*Leaflet of the International Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Occupied Palestine/Israel), May 2013*

In opposition to the slander that the Syrian revolution is an imperialist plot, by those who call to accept the American-Russian imperialist “peace” plan, the Syrian revolution is part of the Arab revolution that began in Tunisia and reached Syria on March 15, 2011, when a group of schoolchildren used a can of spray paint to write: “*Down with the regime*”. Syria’s Ba’ath administration reacted with cruel panics. The boys were arrested and disappeared. The residents of Deraa took to the streets to protest the torture of students who had put up the anti-government graffiti. The government responded with force, and demonstrations quickly spread across much of the country. Against the brutal force of the army, the revolution was forced to defend itself. We support the Syrian people’s resistance, whether peaceful or non-peaceful.

## **Lack of independent working class leadership of the rebel movement**

Various imperialists and local states are intervening in the civil war. Some to support Assad regime while others are trying to divert and subordinate the revolution to the interests of the imperialists. Those who claim that the imperialists are behind the rebels try to make us blind to the fact that the Russian and Chinese are behind Assad.

The ability of the Bashar al-Assad regime to survive is not only result of the support he gets from Russia, China Iran and Hezbollah, but due to the lack of working class independent mobilization as a class at the head of the opposition. There are many workers who participate in the struggle against the regime but as individuals. There are many local committees that could become workers’ councils and which are continuing to provide services. But they lack coordination and a revolutionary strategy. Equally, the resistance is still made up of countless formations of loosely connected armed militants, with no credible unified revolutionary command. The fractured character of this armed resistance is a result not only of the social segmentation and isolation policies enforced for decades by Damascus but also because of the class nature of the opposition’s leadership at the moment.

The seculars blame the Islamists while the Islamist are blaming the secularists. The simple truth is that the middle class organizations – whether they are secularists or Islamists – do not have the program, strategy or tactics to mobilize the masses workers and peasants to overthrow the bloody regime. If the leaders of the opposition hate Assad they are at the same time afraid of working class revolution. If there is a clear lesson to learn it is that without the working class women and men leading the masses including the lower middle class and without a revolutionary leadership of the working class the stalemate and the bleeding can continue for a longer period.

## **The Islamophobia of the left**

Various left groups refuse to defend the revolution because many of the fighters against Assad are Islamists that are getting weapons from Qatar, Saudi Arabia and

Jordan and claim either that the revolution is an imperialist plot (The Communist Party), or that the revolutionary struggle is over and it is now only a military conflict between equally two reactionary sides (CWI). We reject these claims. In 1936-39 the Palestinian revolutionary struggle against the British and the Zionists took place. At the head of the revolutionary workers and peasants stood an upper class reactionary leadership led by *Haj Amin al-Husseini*, the Mufti of Jerusalem. Only pro British imperialists and pro Zionists could claim that because of the reactionary nature of the leadership, the masses did not fight a revolutionary struggle. What was necessary was to be with the masses to form a military united front with the leadership of the struggle without giving the upper class reactionary leadership any political support and warn against their inevitable betrayal of the struggle. The same applies today in Syria.

## **Down with the imperialist “peace” Plans or military intervention-For a socialist revolution**

We, who call for *Free Red Palestine from the River to the Sea*, agree with the statement of the group “*From occupied Palestine ... Here is the Syrian Revolution*” that says: “*We firmly reject all forms of foreign intervention in Syria: Whether by the Arab regimes that didn’t fall in the revolutions, especially the Gulf states, which sought to derail the Syrians revolution, make it fail and control it; Or Iran and Russia, which promote their geopolitical interests in the region at the expense of the blood of the people and their rights; And the NATO countries, chattering a lot about support for the Syrian people, while standing by watching the collapse of the Syrian country and state, to ensure their interests and the interest of Israel*”.

To win the demands – freedom bread and democracy – we need a socialist revolution led by the working class and supported by the masses. Only a revolutionary working class leadership will be able to unite the masses regardless of their religious background and put an end to the sectarianism that characterizes the struggle today. There are supporters of the revolutions who are skeptical about the working class to them we say:

Any Government in power will try to force the working people to pay the cost of Assad’s criminal war which will bring higher and clearer forms of class struggle but in that situation the working class will be armed and use the lessons that the workers learn today as individuals. For this reason we advance the socialist revolutionary perspective and the demands:

\* *For expropriation without compensation of the main factories and the banks under workers control!*

\* *Organization of workers armed units to defend the workers and the masses!*

\* *Land to the peasants!*

\* *For the right of self determination of the Kurds!*

\* *Oppose the sectarian poison!*

\* *Total opposition to the imperialist intervention in Syria!*

\* *For a general strike to bring down the bloody regime!*

\* *For Soviets of workers, peasants* ■

# Israel: Hands Off Lebanon and Syria!

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 6.5.2013*

**1** . In the last few days we witnessed several Israeli military strikes in Syria and Lebanon. These reactionary Zionist attacks have been publicly condemned by the Syrian and Lebanese government as well as by leaders of the Syrian rebel forces. Already in the past did Syrian rebel leaders condemn the reactionary Assad regime for its inaction in opposing Israel's aggression.

**2.** From its beginning the RCIT supported the Revolution of Syrian workers and peasants against the bourgeois dictatorship of the Assad regime. We support the popular struggle – even if it takes place under non-working class leaderships – to bring down the dictatorship. We warn against any illusions in the secular and religious bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaderships of the opposition. We call for the formation of action councils and armed militias of the workers and peasants which should coordinate nation-wide. Our perspective is the struggle for a workers government allied with the peasants and urban poor and based on local councils and militias.

**3.** The imperialist Great Powers Russia and China as well as the bourgeois regime of Iran support the reactionary Assad regime. The Western imperialist Great Powers would like to see a regime in power in Damascus which is not dependent on Moscow and Beijing but on Washington, Berlin, Paris and London. On the other hand the Western Great Powers as well as the small imperialist power Israel fear that the civil war could result in a situation where popular forces hostile against imperialism and Zionism could gain massive influence and threaten their interests in the region. The highly instable situation in Libya since the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime is a cautionary tale for the imperialists. There the US consulate and the French embassy have been already attacked and US ambassador Christopher Stevens was killed in September 2012. In ad-

dition Israel, the US and the EU are also determined to prevent weapon transfers to Hezbollah which defeated the Zionist aggressor in 2006.

**4.** For these reasons the Western imperialist power try to get some influence amongst the rebel forces and find some willing lackeys amongst the official opposition leadership. However their influence on the ground is rather minimal. This is why the Western imperialists don't deliver any effective military support to the rebels but rather hope that the two sides in the civil war are bleeding dry. Similarly as during the Libyan Revolution in 2011 the Western imperialists hope for a regime change from within, i.e. they look for sectors of the Assad state apparatus which are ready to change their master and to form a new, pro-Western regime.

**5.** The RCIT and its Arab-Jewish section in Israel/Occupied Palestine reaffirm their revolutionary and anti-imperialist stance. We fight for the victory of the Syrian Revolution and side in the civil war with the rebel forces against Assad without giving the existing religious and secular bourgeois and petit-bourgeois leaderships of the opposition any political support. While we do not support politically Syrian's Assad regime, we oppose any military intervention by the imperialists including the Zionist imperialist apartheid state. The reactionary character of the Assad regime is once more demonstrated by the fact that it spends all its weaponry to slaughter its own people but refuses since decades to fire a single shot against Israel! We call on the Syrian opposition to fight not only the Assad bloody regime but also against any imperialist military intervention into Syria or Lebanon. We condemn Hezbollah military intervention on the side of Assad but we defend the right of Hezbollah to get any weapons it can get to defend Lebanon against Israel.



Source: <http://brattahlid.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/un-syria.png>

*Victory to the Syrian Revolution! Down with the Assad Dictatorship!*

*For a Workers Government allied with the Peasants and Urban Poor and based on local councils and militias!*

*Defeat the Zionist Aggression! No to imperialist intervention!*

For further reading on the RCIT's position on the Syrian Revolution and imperialist interference we refer readers to various statements and articles on the RCIT website at [www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/syria-solidarity](http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/syria-solidarity).

See also Yossi Schwartz: *Victory to the Revolution in Syria! The second anniversary of the uprising in Syria*, [www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa/victory-to-syrian-revolution](http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa/victory-to-syrian-revolution)

Michael Pröbsting: *Liberation struggles and imperialist interference*, [www.thecommunists.net/theory/liberation-struggle-and-imperialism](http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/liberation-struggle-and-imperialism) ■

## Syria: Urgent appeal to Free Ali Shihabi

By Budour Hassan, Israel/Occupied Palestine, published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)

**Note by the Editor:** We have been asked to publish this article by the Palestinian blogger Budour Hassan. We do so since we whole-hearted support this appeal.

On 7 April, 2013, the *Day of the Syrian political Prisoner*, Syrian activists launched an online campaign titled “*Behind Bars but Free*” to highlight the cases of tens of thousands of detainees languishing in Syrian regime dungeons. Palestinian refugees in Syria had their fair share of persecution and detention. Activists in Syria made a short YouTube video in an attempt at raising attention to their plight.

Ali Shihabi, a Palestinian-Syrian writer, communist political activist and former political prisoner, is among several Palestinian prisoners featured in the video along with software developer Bassel Khartabil, engineering student Salma Abdel-Razzaq, and others.

Shihabi has been detained by the Syrian regime since December 2012. The *Centre for the Documentation of Violations in Syria* (VDC) has expressed concern over the fate of Shihabi, whose whereabouts remain unknown. Several prominent opposition figures in Syria, including Yassin al-Haj Saleh, Khawla Dunia, Ammar Dayoub, among others, called for his release and tried to shed light on his case by writing about him on Facebook. In addition, a Facebook page calling for his release was launched following his arrest and it has over 600 fans.

Born in 1955 in the Palestinian refugee camp, Yarmouk, Ali Shihabi worked as an English language teacher in UNRWA-run schools and founded al-Khayam institute of education in the camp. Hisham Za'ouqi, a former student at Shihabi's English class, wrote on his Facebook page: “I asked him[Shihabi] once: ‘Teacher, Why is your hair so long?’ He replied with a smile: ‘Tomorrow is the Palestinian Land Day. There is a protest in Yarmouk Camp if you would like to come’. Ali Sa’id al-Shihabi: a complete revolution.”

Shihabi has a long and painful history with political persecution and arrests by the Syrian regime, both under Hafez al-Assad and Bashar al-Assad's reign. He was arrested for the first time in 1975, spending almost a year in jail, and continued his political activism after his release. He was arrested again in 1982 and sentenced to nine years in prison after being convicted of membership in the banned *Communist Labour Party* (*Hizb Al-'Amal Al-Shuyu'iy*; also known as the “*Party for Communist Action*”). Following his release, he published two major books, “*The New Structure of the World*” and “*Where is Syria Heading.*” In addition, he wrote numerous editorials and studies for several left-wing publications.

Inspired by the lived “*Damascus Spring*”, a short-lived reform movement initiated by left-wing and liberal Syrian intellectuals during the beginning of this century, Shihabi wrote a draft that was not published about the need for gradual and peaceful democratic transition in Syria, based on secularism, the rejection of sectarianism and the promotion of civil liberties. In the draft, he also proposed the establishment of a new political movement called “*Syria for all*” which led to his third arrest in 2006. He was severely tortured and charged with “*founding an opposition party*”.

Married with two sons, Shihabi was among the leftist intellectuals who vehemently supported the Syrian uprising from its start. He also helped organise humanitarian aid in Yarmouk camp.

Ironically, Shihabi was arrested by the notorious military intelligence branch “*Palestine.*” For only in Assad's Syria are Palestinians – and Syrians - imprisoned and tortured by “*Palestine.*”

Budour Hassan, originally from Nazareth, is a Palestinian blogger and Law graduate based in Jerusalem ■



Michael Pröbsting speaks at the Demonstration in Solidarity with the Syrian Revolution, Austria 15.3.2013

## Another Blow to Zionist Racism

### Growing Trade Union Support for Boycott Actions against Apartheid State Israel

By Yossi Schwartz, *International Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine)*, 12.5.2013

Every few weeks another important organization is joining the boycott of Israel. In April the Irish teachers union, and at the end of February, the Oxford student union joined the struggle against racism. Recently the *Association for Asian American Studies* (AAAS) passed a resolution during its annual conference. This resolution calls for the boycott of the Israeli academic institutions that will apply only to institutions, but not individuals who oppose the systematic discrimination against the Palestinians.

*"We are very aware that there are Israeli scholars who understand the difficulties that Palestinian academics and students have, and speak up in support of Palestinian rights," Srikanth the former president of the Association told Insider Higher Ed. "So we would absolutely be working with them and proving in them with whatever support they need to challenge their institutions."* (Erwin de Leon, *Asian American Academics Boycott Israeli Universities*, 29 April 2013, <http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/policysocial-context/22203-asian-american-academics-boycott-israeli-universities.html>)

*We support this resolution because indeed the Israeli educational system including in the higher education is racist and supports in many ways the oppression of the Palestinians.* At the same time we do not support a total boycott of all Israelis as there are some who oppose the oppression of the Palestinians and they join struggles like in Sheikh Jarrah, Jaffa, the *Nakba Day* (Land Day). Some Israeli academics are even involved in organizing the boycott of the Israeli universities.

This resolution by the AAAS is another step in the isolation of the Zionist apartheid state. Another nail in the coffin of the racist state. A step we support even though we think that the real effective way to boycott Israel is by working class actions known in American English as "hot cargo". These are actions of stopping the loading and unloading of Israeli goods on the ships, the trains, the trucks and the airplanes. Actions focusing in particular on the Israeli import and export of the products of the Israeli military industry where it will hurt them the most.

*This can be done as more unions are joining the struggle against the Zionist state. Our brothers and sisters in Spain are one of the latest trade unions that have joined the struggle against Israel.* In January 2013 five leading Spanish trade unions in the northern region of Galicia have called for a boycott of Israel.

The unions joining the campaign of *Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel* (BDS) are the *Unión General de Trabajadores*, the *Comisións Obreiras de Galicia*, the *Confederación Intersindical Galega*, the *Central Nacional de Trabajadores* and the *Confederación Unitaria de Trabajadores*. Of these, two are affiliates of the International Trade Union Confederation. (See 5 main Unions in Galicia in Spanish state adopt BDS, January 16, 2013, <http://www.bdsmovement.net/2013/5-main-unions-in-galicia-in-spanish-state-adopt-bds-10417>)

#### Zionists accuse (again) pro-Palestinian Solidarity as "Anti-Semitic"

As they begin to feel the heat under their seats the pro-Zionists say that boycotting Israeli academic institution is hypocritical and a form of avert Anti-Semitism, especially because the Israeli professors support a just solution of two states.

These pro-Zionists are hypocrites. Israel is the only country in the world that support US embargo on Cuba. Thus the pro-Zionists cannot say that they are in principle against boycott. What they are really saying is: do not boycott the apartheid state. Once upon a time the Zionists could use the weapon of calling those who oppose the Zionists crimes anti-Semites. Today this weapon is corroded. The ugly fat king is naked.

Secondly like most of the pro-Zionist crude propaganda this line is another lie. It is true that a very small minority among Israeli academics opposes the atrocities committed by the right wing settlers backed by the Israeli state. Among them we can count Adi Ophir (TAU), Hannan Hever (HUJ), Yehouda Shehav (TAU), Ariella Azoulay, Yair Auron, an expert on the Armenian genocide, Professor Moshe Zimmermann (HUJ) who compared the settlers to the Hitler-Jugend. These brave academics are facing various forms of persecutions.

Feras Hammami gives a few examples in a recent report: *"The right-wing government of Benjamin Netanyahu has sanctioned a series of repressive measures to deter domestic criticism from human rights groups, media and judiciary. Jewish students and faculty members police the academic environment, acting as watchdog over the courses of "dissident" professors. To avoid public vilification, job loss, imprisonment, or even death, staff members delimit the information that might provoke the authorities. Professor Ariella Azoulay of Bar-Ilan University was denied tenure because of her political associations. When Professor Neve Gordon at BGU announced his support for the boycott of Israeli universities in 2009 the extra-parliamentary group Im Tirtzu called upon the university to dismiss the professor and "put an end to the anti-Zionist tilt" (Haaretz, 9/30/2012). The Minister of Education Gideon Saar also criticized the Department of Politics and Government at BGU for its "post-Zionist" bias. Professor Ilan Pappé who supports the academic boycott of Israel was himself boycotted in Haifa University. After he had received several death threats and had been condemned by the Knesset, he moved his work to the University of Exeter in 2008. Nizar Hassan, director of several award-winning films, was condemned by the Knesset Education Committee for criticizing a Jewish student who arrived to class at Sapir College in the Negev wearing military uniform (Cook, 2008). There was no such condemnation of a Jewish lecturer at the same college who asked a female Bedouin to take off her veil when she came to class. Since the eruption of the second Intifada in 2000, the Israeli police and secret services have intensified the arrest and interrogation of Israeli-Palestinian students in Israeli universities. Yusef, a student of the University of Ben-Gurion, lost his life*



due to his political association with an Arab Student Committee on campus.” (Feras Hammami: Political Crisis in Israeli Universities, International Sociological Association (ISA), Global Dialogue, Newsletter, February 2013, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm, Sweden, [http://israel-academia-monitor.com/index.php?type=large\\_advoic&advice\\_id=8642&page\\_data\[id\]=178&cookie\\_lang=entudent](http://israel-academia-monitor.com/index.php?type=large_advoic&advice_id=8642&page_data[id]=178&cookie_lang=entudent))

### “Left” Zionists and a Palestinian Bantustan

A larger minority of Israeli professors have expressed in one form or another support for the idea of a mini Palestinians state a Bantustan alongside Israel on 80% of Palestine. The majority of the Israeli professors either openly support the new settlements in the lands Israel occupied in 1967 or at least do not oppose the settlements. Not only this but some of the “left” professors support the settlements as well.

On August 17, 2012 the Liberal Zionist daily *Haaretz* published an interesting article on this question of the “Left” professors.

*Several academics who teach at the Ariel University Center in the West Bank have distinctly leftist views. But they see no contradiction between their work place and their political positions, and some were even pleasantly surprised when they discovered what it was like.... [ ] Cohen, who always voted “between Meretz and Labor,” received an offer to teach at the college in Ariel eight years ago, when he was about to retire. To his surprise, most of the faculty are of Russian origin, and chose to live in the settlement of Ariel due to the lower cost of living.*

*“There are a few more skullcap-wearing people here, but no messianism,” he said. “...I think the conflict’s solution is two states for two peoples, but three large settlement blocs will remain - Gush Etzion, Ma’aleh Adumim and Ariel,” he added. “I’m very optimistic.”*

*...“Last year some 1,000 academics, including 18 Israel Prize laureates, signed a petition against establishing a university in the 1967 occupied territories, warning that it would undermine international academic cooperation and harm the existing universities. “The identification of Israeli academia as a whole with the settlement policy will put it in danger,” they wrote.*

*But a number of leftist academics who have chosen to teach at Ariel disagree. Prof. Yossi Goldstein, for example, said he sees no contradiction between having leftist views and working at Ariel, despite his initial misgivings.*

*An expert on Zionist history and Israel, Goldstein said his voting ranges from Meretz to “more radical” parties. Having written biographies of prime ministers Levi Eshkol and Yitzhak Rabin, he is very familiar with the history of West Bank settlement. But this hasn’t stopped him from teaching at Ariel University Center for the past four years.*

*“The term occupation is correct” as applied to Ariel, he said. “We’re in occupied territory ... But I’m in an academic institution.”*

*“All Israeli universities were established for political reasons,” he added.*

*“I don’t deny the politicians who founded Ariel wanted to divide the West Bank in two and quash the chances of creating a Palestinian state in the West Bank,” Goldstein said. “That’s not my responsibility ... My conscience tells me I’m a tenured history professor here. If it means my children and grandchildren can live in peace, I’d be ready to return every bit of land.”*

*Goldstein sees no contradiction between his work and his politi-*

*cal positions. He even looked into buying an apartment in Ariel for investment purposes, but the plan didn’t work out.*

*“My view is simple: Israel must stay strong until peace agreements are signed,” he said. “I don’t think an academic institution can prevent peace.”*

*Criminologist Mally Shechory-Bitton has been teaching at the college since 1997, as well as at Ben-Gurion University. She supports “territorial compromise. I’m not willing to die for any land.”*

*But she sees no connection between establishing the university in Ariel and territorial compromise.*

*“Ariel College was built to strengthen Ariel. That doesn’t interest me,” she said. “The state decided to settle people there. They didn’t come here out of the blue.” (Chaim Levinson: Leftist views don’t keep professors from teaching at Ariel. Part of the Israeli left sees the recent decision to upgrade Ariel University Center to a full university as a move that bolsters the occupation, Aug.17, 2012, <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/leftist-views-don-t-keep-professors-from-teaching-at-ariel-1.458869>)*

*These Professors may see themselves as left wingers, the Israeli state like to present them as left wingers and the pro-Zionists outside of Israel present them as left wing oppositionists but in reality judging not according what they say about themselves but what they do they are part of the racist crowd and deserved to be boycott.*

*While we do not support politically the bourgeois politics of Bishop Tutu in South Africa, he said the truth when he called to boycott the Ben Gurion University.*

*“It can never be business as usual. Israeli Universities are an intimate part of the Israeli regime, by active choice. While Palestinians are not able to access universities and schools, Israeli universities produce the research, technology, arguments and leaders for maintaining the occupation. [Ben Gurion University] is no exception. By maintaining links to both the Israeli defense forces and the arms industry, BGU structurally supports and facilitates the Israeli occupation.” (Desmond Tutu, talking shortly before the University of Johannesburg cut its ties with Ben Gurion University, quoted in BDS: Academic Boycott, <http://www.bdsmovement.net/activecamps/academic-boycott>)*

### The Complicity of Israeli Academic Institutions in the Oppression of the Palestinians

In 2009 the Center for Alternative Information published a research on the role the Israeli institution of high education play in the oppression of the Palestinians. The following are excerpts from this research already in 2009:

*“The Technion, like most other Israeli universities, takes pride in projects of research and development conducted for the Israeli security forces. Examples of the more brutal of these are the development of a remote-controlled “D9” bulldozer used by the Israeli army to demolish Palestinian houses<sup>5</sup> and the development of a method for detecting underground tunnels, specifically developed in order to assist the Israeli army in its continued siege on the Gaza Strip. The extent of cooperation between the Technion and Israeli military was demonstrated when the Technion opened a center for the development of electro-optics in complete partnership with Elbit, one of the biggest Israeli private weapons’ research companies which is also heavily involved in development for the Israeli military. Though the Technion is the most notorious and prestigious academic institution that cooperates*

with the Israeli military in developing military technologies, it is not the only Israeli university to do so. A recent report by the student Palestinian Society of the School for Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) revealed that Tel-Aviv University has participated in no less than 55 joint technological projects with the Israeli army, particularly in the field of electro-optics. It has hosted conventions about electro-optics and robotics in which weapons' manufacturing companies have participated. Bar-Ilan University has also participated in joint research with the army, specifically in developing artificial intelligence for unmanned combat vehicles. Other academic institutes such as the Weizman Institute have also been involved in development in the Economy of the Occupation vice of the Israeli army. Academic institutions such as the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya or Holon College take pride in the fact that their students later work in weapons manufacturing companies such as Elbit and RAFAEL. The Wingate Institute also has joint research projects with the Israeli security forces, although more related to physical fitness rather than to weapon development. An example of the deadly fruits of such cooperation was revealed during Israel's 2009 military attacks against the Gaza Strip, when at least 29 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli unmanned aircraft. One of the problems in estimating the exact extent of academic participation in military research is that much of it is done without formally labeling it as such. Private commercial companies have become an important part of the universities' structure by investing money into the universities and becoming directly involved on the academic level. Numerous Israeli students turn to academic studies in engineering or computer science, hoping for a career in the lucrative high-tech sector. In studying for advanced degrees it has become a common practice in several Israeli universities for M.A. and Ph.D. students to have a university professor as a formal instructor, but someone from outside the university as their practical, de-facto instructor. This external person is usually a researcher or manager in a commercial high-tech company who guides the student in research which is heavily connected to that of the company. Though it is difficult to detect this type of involvement, as it is rarely written or publicized in official documents, indicators of this process can be found in the cooperation and connections between academic institutes and companies such as Elbit, RAFAEL and other weapon developers. This is most apparent in the Technion, which, in addition to the aforementioned, has also trained engineers specifically for work in Elbit and RAFAEL and where students have even dealt directly in the development of complex weapons in the process of researching their academic theses. In June 2008 Elbit publicly announced that in each of the next five years it would be awarding half a million dollars in grants to Technion research students. This unusual publication of the research sponsorship indicates the special relationship between the Technion and Elbit." (Shir Hever, Uri Yacobi Keller: Economy of the Occupation. Academic Boycott of Israel and the



Complicity of Israeli Academic Institutions in Occupation of Palestinian Territories, Socioeconomic Bulletin, No. 23, October 2009, Published by the Alternative Information Center, pp. 9-11)

### Revolutionary Anti-Zionist Perspective

But even if most Israeli academics were in favor of a mini-Palestinian state, this would not have solved the right of self determination of the Palestinians. If such a Bantustan was the solution, would those who support such a "solution", accepted it for the Israelis? Of course not. Why should they accept such a small prison as a solution they will ask? But if it is not good for them why do they think it is good for the Palestinians? If they want it for the Palestinians and not for themselves it makes them racists.

The truth of the matter is that in this country you have to choose between the right of the self determination for the oppressed Palestinians or the imperialist oppressor settler colonialists. We in the *International Socialist League* have chosen the side of the oppressed Palestinians. For this reason against the Zionist apartheid from the river to the sea we advance the demand of a democratic one state from the river to the sea where the majority are the Palestinians and with the return of the refugees the Palestinian will be the large majority in this country. Thus we call for a Palestinian democratic state from the river to the sea.

Of course for this to happen it is necessary to win a revolution. The only force that can lead such a revolution is the working class. In this country, it means the Palestinian working class with those Jewish workers who will break with Zionism and the immigrant workers as well as with the support of the Palestinian Fallahin, the unemployed, the small businessman and the oppressed women and youth are the forces that can fight for such a solution.

For this reason we call for a workers and fellahin government. Needless to say this revolution can be won only as part of the victorious Arab revolution of the entire region. Thus we call for a Palestinian multi-national worker state as part of the socialist federation of the Middle East. This is also the reason why we want the international working class to lead the boycott on Israel. While we support all the actions that mobilize the masses including the lower middle class independently of the other imperialists, against the Israeli state, we firmly think that the middle class forces that are leading today the struggle do not have the strategy and the organizational method to win this struggle. Many of the supporters of the BDS see the goal as a Two-State Solution or at best one bourgeois state ruled by liberal pro imperialist class. Others want to pressure the other imperialists to boycott Israel rather than to rely on the workers and the masses. Those perspectives are similar to the perspective that happened in South Africa where the socialist revolution was betrayed by the South African Communist Party that blocked the socialist revolution and led to the present day capitalist South Africa where the huge majority of the Black workers and peasants are still living in poverty.

*For Workers-led Boycott of Israel's Economy, Military and Academic Institutions!*

*For a Free Red Palestine from the River to the Sea!*

*For a Workers Government supported by the Falahins from the River to the Sea! ■*

## The Nakba Day

By Yossi Schwartz (*International Socialist League, RCIT-Section in Occupied Palestine/Israel*), 18.5.2013

The 15th May marked the 65th anniversary of *Nakba*. Thousands of Palestinians throughout Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Palestinian Diaspora, rallied and demonstrated demanding the return of the Palestinian refugees that Israel removed in the ethnic cleansing of 1947-48.

In Jerusalem, where comrades of the *International Socialist League* participated, hundreds of young Palestinians, many of them women, participated in the march that began in the garden of the Rockefeller Museum and moved toward Damascus gate. The police attacked the march time and again; mounted police unit attacked the people using their horses trying to split the march to small groups. They wanted to scare us but they failed. The demonstrators united time and again chanting: "*With our souls and with our blood we will free you Palestine*", "*Palestine from the river to the sea*", "*Return of the refugees*" and "*We demand a new Intifada*". At the end of the march the brave crowd stood on the large stairs at the Damascus gate, chanting and raising the flags of Palestine and the flag of the return. We stayed there for more than an hour while the Zionist police and army charged time and again in the attempts to disperse the spirited demonstration. Then the Israeli repression forces brought army unit in addition to the police that used brutal force and water trucks spreading the demonstrators with high pressured water. The water tanks sprayed not only the demonstrators but the many small shops including food stalls and shops carrying clothes, vegetables and fruits. I myself was sprayed with water twice. The fact that we were able to keep up the struggle against the brute force for two hours shows the courageous determination of the masses to fight the oppression.

The liberal Zionist paper *Haaretz*, relying of course on the police as a source of information, reported that two policemen were wounded by Palestinian protesters who threw rocks at Israeli security forces. In reality some young people threw empty boxes and empty cans after they were attacked time and again. According to the same report in the West Bank near Hebron a fire bomb was hurled into an IDF jeep, destroying the vehicle and wounding four IDF soldiers. In the Gaza Strip Palestinian militants fired rockets at southern Israel. The rockets fell in the Eshkol Regional Council, causing no damage or injuries.

Other demonstrations took place in the vicinity of Jerusalem. About one hundred Palestinian protesters raised their voice in Bitunia, north of Jerusalem, and similar number of freedom fighters participated in Kalandia, north east of Jerusalem. In both cases the Zionist army fired tear gas and threw stun grenades at protesters. Similar reports came from Kfar Kadum and at in Bethlehem.

*Haaretz* also reports that in Ramallah, hundreds of Palestinians held a rally at Al-Manara square to mark the day. At noon, a memorial siren was sounded throughout the city. Commemorative events were also held in Hebron and Jenin. In Gaza, a demonstration was attended by both Hamas and Fatah members. In refugee camps throughout Lebanon, Nakba day commemorations were held since the morning hours. The right of return appeared frequently in calls made across stages there, with speakers urging the

Palestinian leadership not to give up on the right of the return. This shows once more that the "*right of return*" is a central element in the Palestinian struggle. They have a very good reason to call on the official leadership not to give up on this demand.

Unlike the past 16 years, the official and unelected leadership of the Palestinians of 1948 – the *High Follow-Up Committee for Arab citizens of Israel* – has not called this year for demonstration and rallies inside Israel. This has weakened the struggle against the oppression of the Palestinian nation which is one nation from the river to the sea.

A speech by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas was broadcast on the PA's TV channel. Abbas stated that Palestinians would not accept any proposal that would conflict with the creation of an independent Palestinian state, and "*would not give up on a just and viable solution for Palestinian refugees, based on UN resolution 194*". In spite of those carefully crafted words intended to create the impression that the Palestinian Authority will not give up on the right of the return, the reality is that by accepting the so called "*two states solution*", the PA has given up on the right of return. What is the meaning of the phrase "*viable solution for Palestinian refugees, based on UN resolution 194?*"

To begin with, the UN is controlled by the imperialists that supports the existence of Israel and Israel will not allow the return of the refugees. Second of all, resolution 194 is calling for the right of all the refugees who wish so to return to their homeland. Article 11 of the resolution reads: "*(The General Assembly) Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.*"

By saying "*viable solution for Palestinian refugees, based on UN resolution 194*", Abbas indicates that he will accept symbolic return of thousands of refugees that Israel will agree to accept. Already in the Lausanne Conference in May and June 1949, the Israeli delegation repeated Israel's standpoint that Arab refugees should be settled in other states and Israel would not allow their return to Israel apart from a limited number. In the Knesset, Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs *Moshe Sharett* declared, that Israel considered itself not responsible in any way for the problem of the refugees. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lausanne\\_Conference\\_of\\_1949](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lausanne_Conference_of_1949))

It is clear that growing number of Palestinian especially young Palestinian are ready to risk their lives to liberate Palestine, and that the revolutionary struggle can begin only as the struggle for national liberation under the demand liberated Palestine from the river to the sea. But for the revolution to win it has to be developed to a socialist revolution. However what is missing even now is a revolutionary leadership of the Palestinian working class that will be built in the fire of the struggle itself. WE of the ISL are committed to this task of building a revolutionary working class party that naturally most of the leaders and members will be Palestinians. ■

## Reports about the social protest movement in Israel

By Shmuel Yerushalmi, *Israel/Occupied Palestine*, 14. and 18.5.2013

Last Saturday (11.05.2013) an important protest demonstration took place in Tel-Aviv against the anti-social policy of the right-wing Netanyahu-Lapid Government. The demonstration started at the Habima Square with thousands of people taking part. (According to Israeli newspapers there were about 10.000 participants.)

The demonstrators expressed with slogans and stickers their opposition against the austerity measures and the privatizations of public enterprises announced by the pro-capitalist government. There were also calls for the nationalization of privatized companies.

Surely as socialists we support the protests against the reactionary austerity policy of the Netanyahu-Lapid Government. However, such a support must be critical. Why? Because these protests have a strong social-chauvinist basis. They totally ignore the Palestinian question and Israel's oppression against the Palestinian people. But it is this national oppression on which the whole existence of the Israeli state with all the relative privileges for the Israeli-Jewish population rests!

Therefore the Arab and Jewish revolutionaries of the *Internationalist Socialist League* (RCIT-Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine) intervene in such protests by supporting the opposition against the austerity policy and linking it with the unconditional support for the Palestinian national liberation struggle.

This differentiates us from left reformist and centrist forces like the *Da'am Workers Party* (a split from the Communist

Party in 1995) and the "Trotskyist" group *Maavak Sotzyalisti* (Socialist Struggle, CWI-Section in Israel). Both of them didn't raise the Palestinian question in any way. *Da'am* for example, speaks in a typically economist manner all the time about the rights of the workers and about social equality. They are however silent on the need for a socialist country on the whole territory of Palestine.

*Maavak Sotzyalisti* similarly distributed a leaflet in Hebrew language which didn't say a single word about the oppression of the native Palestinian people or about the criminal character of the Zionist regime! Such a kind of social-chauvinism is in full contradiction to the positions of the huge majority of Trotskyist groups in the world.

And one more important point: As I wrote above, the call for the re-nationalization of privatized companies and for the public control of all recourses and infrastructures played an important role in the demonstration in Tel-Aviv. In this context I want to say that we don't need nationalization with compensation for the owners of the companies. What we need is the confiscation of all property of the large capitalists under full control of the working class. This is what revolutionaries should argue for in all the anti-austerity protest movements in Israel and all other states.

Finally, in opposite to the reformists and centrists, we are for a socialist and internationalist solution – for the total national liberation combined with the socialist revolution. Therefore we fight for a revolutionary multinational workers and peasants republic in the whole territory of Palestine from the Mediterranean Sea to Jordan River. ■

Today, on Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> May, several demonstrations took place in Israel against the policy of the Israeli government. Activists from the *International Socialist League* (RCIT-Section in Occupied Palestine/Israel) participated in these demonstrations. I personally took part in the demonstration in my home town, Be'er Sheva, which is in the Southern part of Israel. About 500 activists took part in the demonstration, which was organized by students and social movements. Like the majority of the demonstrations in Israel, the one in Be'er Sheva did not deal with the class character of the social problems and also not with the rights of the Palestinian people. The reason for this is of course the orientation of the leading forces at the demonstration which are not standing on a proletarian, revolutionary base.

The main slogans and the general line of the demonstration was focused on demands like the one for "social justice", the abolishment of cut-backs in the social systems which were implemented by the Netanyahu-Lapid government, and also demands against the minister of finances, Yair Lapid. Although I support the demands, it is important to say more than this. Real social justice will in the end only be possible if the working class takes the power via a worker's revolution, the expropriation of the capitalist class by the armed uprising of the working class. To raise a revolutionary profile, I was holding a banner during the demonstration which says: "Take the property of the Rich! We need workers control over the society!"

At the beginning of the demonstration, speeches were

hold. I was one of the speakers. In my speech I explained the need of a revolution of the working class and the fight for the freedom for Palestine. I called the workers, the students and the poor to leave their homes and to take the streets. I called them to join the fight for a revolution against the capitalists and the capitalist exploitation.

The demonstration marched through some of the districts, all about 4-5 kilometers. Our conclusion from the demonstration today in Be'er Sheva (and from other demonstrations we participated in) is that the demands for social justice and against cut-backs are important and have to be supported but that they are not enough. Especially the strong connection to Zionism hinders the building of a true revolutionary struggle in our region. One can not fulfill the demands of the protesters without breaking with the Apartheid, with the Zionist state. The protesters in Be'er Sheva, Tel-Aviv and other cities and villages of Israel must understand that they can not fulfill their demands, the can not win their struggle without breaking with Zionism, without breaking with the Israeli Nationalism, without breaking with the Apartheid. To reach real social justice we need a worker's revolution. But if one is not ready to defend Palestinian workers and the rights of the Palestinian people one can and will not make a revolution in any part of (Occupied) Palestine. Just a revolution of the Palestinian and migrant workers together with Anti-Zionist Jewish workers, and with the support of the Palestinian Fellaheen (peasants) can really solve our economical, political and social problems. ■

# The Way Forward and the Obstacles for the Anti-Capitalist Fight Back in Europe

Declaration on the Alter Summit in Athens, 7th – 8th June 2013

*Statement by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 4.6.2013,*

1. On 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of June, the so-called *Alter Summit* will take place in Athens. This congress is supposed to “*be a first step towards the building of a real European social movement.*” The Alter Summit is formally supported by more than 150 organizations, amongst them various petty-bourgeois NGO’s like ATTAC as well as a number of important trade union federations like the German *IG-Metall*, the Spanish *CCOO*, the Greek *GSEE* and *ADEDY*, the Italian *CGIL* and *FIOM*, the British *TUC* and the European *ETUC*. The real initiator however is the left-reformist *European Left Party (ELP)*, which unites a number of ex-Stalinist parties like the French *PCF* and Melenchon’s *PdG* (who together form the *Front de Gauche*), the German *Linkspartei*, *Synaspismos* (the dominant faction of *SYRIZA* in Greece), and the Spanish *Izquierda Unida*. *AKEL* in Cyprus is one of the parties with observer status.

2. A congress of representatives of mass organizations of the workers movement and social movements in Europe is highly desirable given the endless wave of attacks by the ruling classes in Europe. Unemployment is rising, wages are decreasing, democratic rights are under attack and the racist oppression of migrants is accelerating. The ruling classes of the most powerful imperialist states of the European Union – first and foremost Germany and France – are striving to advance the formation of an imperialist EU super-state and to subordinate the poorer, semi-colonial countries in the South and the East. At the same time France’s colonial attack on Mali and the EU’s support for it demonstrate their aggressive imperialist policy in order to increase the super-exploitation of the South and to strengthen their position in the global rivalry against other imperialist powers like the USA and China.

3. There has been no shortage of class struggles against the ruling class’s offensive in the last three years. We have already seen general strikes in Portugal, Spain, Italy and other countries. In Greece there were already 29 days of national strikes since 2010! On 14.11.2012 we saw the first pan-European day of strikes and actions against the EU’s austerity policy. There have been mass mobilizations close to uprisings in Bulgaria, Cyprus and Slovenia. In addition we saw uprising of the migrant youth in Britain and Sweden. And there have been mass demonstrations against the austerity policy in France, Britain and other countries.

4. However, while the masses have repeatedly proven that they are willing to fight back, the official leaderships of the workers movement have equally proven that they are unwilling and incapable to lead the struggles to victory. In fact the existing leaders of the trade union and reformist parties do everything in their power to limit and derail the struggle. Their main interest is to keep their privileges and positions for which they need to maintain their close alliance with the bosses and the capitalist state. As a result the workers, youth and migrants suffer one defeat after the other.

## The ELP Program in Words and Deeds

5. Theoretically the *Alter Summit* could be an excellent opportunity to elaborate a program and perspective for the fight back against the EU’s capitalist offensive. This is however very unlikely given the dominance of the reformist bureaucrats of the ELP as well as of the trade union. Let us check the ELP leaders’ words and deeds. The *Draft Manifesto for the Alter Summit* is no guide to action but rather an instrument to sow confusion. In their deeds the ELP parties’ leaderships prove to act as a left cover for the capitalist austerity policy and imperialist colonialism.

6. The ELP leadership claims in the *Draft Manifesto* that it wants to “*end debt slavery*”. The only way to end debt slavery is to abolish all public debt as well as private household debt. But the ELP leaders flinch from such a demand because this would frighten the financial oligarchy and therefore minimize the chances of *SYRIZA* and other ELP parties to get a place in a capitalist government. Hence they only demand – like a number of realistic bourgeois economists – the cancellation of a part of the debt. A practical example how the ELP leadership is willing to serve the interest the banking capitalists could be seen in Cyprus. There *AKEL* was in power in 2008-2013 and promoted an economic policy which helped the bankers and shareholders to shove millions of Euro into their pockets. Through the *AKEL* government in Cyprus 2008-13 one could see left-reformism in practice as a servant of the capitalist monopolies.

7. The same type of sowing confusion is the central demand in the *Draft Manifesto*: “*For a democratic economy: make banks serve the public interest*”. The ELP leaders talk about “*strict regulations over the banks*”, “*Bailed-out banks must be socialized*” and that “*the shareholders of failed banks as well as their creditors must take their share of losses.*” This is Obama-politics with left-wing rhetoric. Again, *AKEL* in Cyprus demonstrated that in reality the ELP leaves the power and money of the capitalist banks untouched. There can be no “*democratic control*” of the banks as long as they are owned by the capitalists and their state. The only possibility to break the power of the financial oligarchy is the *expropriation of all banks and financial institutions without compensation and their merging into a single state bank under the control of the working class.*

8. Furthermore, the *Draft Manifesto* calls for a “*roll back of austerity*” and “*no to poverty and precariousness*”. Nice words! But how does it come that the French *Front de Gauche* supports the Hollande government which is now implementing the biggest national budget cuts since World War II! Even more, while Melenchon verbally denounces austerity, he volunteers to become prime minister under the same neoliberal Hollande! German workers and left-wing activists have also not forgotten that the *Linkspartei* in Berlin was part of the regional coalition government for eight years and undertook a whole series of neoliberal

privatizations – including of municipal housing – for the profit of financial oligarchs. Neither have we forgotten the shameful policy of AKEL in March this year, when the EU-Troika dictated Cyprus a brutal austerity program. The AKEL deputies in parliament, now as an opposition party, even failed to vote against the banking restructuring program. Their abstention saved the Troika/government austerity plan to close *Laika*, “restructure” the *Bank of Cyprus*, sack thousands of banking workers and endanger the pension and provident funds. With such friends, who needs enemies?!

9. Finally, the *Draft Manifesto* warns that “*democracy and peace are under threat*”. True, but leading forces of the ELP are part of this threat against peace! While these left-reformists preach peace, ELP president Pierre Laurent – who at the same time happens to be the French PCF’s national secretary – supports like the whole *Front de Gauche* the military assault of French imperialism in Mali! And Melenchon publicly advocates France’s nuclear armament. What a clear demonstration that these so-called leftists and “friends of peace” are social-imperialists and militarists!

10. All this shows that the ELP as well as the trade union leaderships cannot advance the fight back against austerity and war-mongering in Europe. Quite the contrary, they are an obstacle for this. They are enemies within the workers movement. They pretend to advocate the struggle for democracy and peace because they want to utilize the protests to enhance the electoral chances (remember the Elections to the European Parliament in May 2014) and their position as negotiating partners for the ruling class.

### A Program of Struggle

11. The workers movement and the oppressed must liberate themselves from these labor bureaucrats and their friends amongst the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. To win our struggle against the EU bosses we need a program of struggle which offers a way to overthrow the power of the rich and replaces it with the power of the working class. The RCIT proposes the following slogans as essential for such a program of struggle since they give answers to the most burning questions of the present situation and tackle the question of capitalist power:

\* *No lay-offs, no wage cuts! No social cuts!*

\* *No privatization of public enterprises and social services! Nationalize all big enterprises under workers control!*

\* *Immediate reduction of the working week to 35 hours as a first step towards the division of labor on all hands. This means that everyone should have a job and work with fewer hours at unchanged wages!*

\* *No eviction from housing!*

\* *For price control committees of the working class to fight inflation!*

\* *Cancel all debts!*

\* *Nationalize all banks under workers control and centralize them to one state bank!*

\* *Expropriate the super-rich and utilize their wealth to finance an immediate program of public works to renew and extend the infrastructure, housing, social services etc.!*

\* *Equal wage for women! Extend high-quality public child care under control of the working class parents!*

\* *Equal democratic and labor rights for migrants! For the right of mother language! Open the borders!*

\* *No cuts in education! Put the education system under control of the students, teachers and the workers movement!*

\* *French and EU troops – Out of Mali and Afghanistan! Defeat the imperialist invaders – Victory to the resistance struggle without political support for the Islamists!*

\* *Down with the EU commission and council! For a workers government – respective a workers and peasant government in Eastern Europe – based on workers councils and an armed popular militia!*

12. Working class activists should put such demands on the reformist trade union and party leaders to pressurize them into action. However no one should have any illusion. These treacherous bureaucrats will only fight under massive pressure and even then they will sabotage the struggle from the first minute onwards. The working class must organize itself independently were it works, lives and undergo education – in *factory committees, neighbourhood committees* etc. Such committees must meet regularly, elect delegates and build a nation- and European-wide coordination. They must organize *armed self-defence* to resist against fascist thugs and police violence. Such organizational steps would lay the basis for an independent struggle of the workers and oppressed. For a *pan-European coordination of militant rank and file organizations, trade unions and progressive movements* to organize a continent-wide struggle!

13. To take our unions back from the control of the corrupt bureaucrats, we must revolutionize them. We must fight to *open the unions to the masses* – in particular the lower strata, the migrants, the poor and precarious workers. We must build a *rank and file movement* to organize the struggle against the bureaucrats.

14. When the bureaucrats cannot contain the class struggle, they call for limited one day general strikes. While such a strike can be useful as a starting point, it is a cul-day-sac as a strategy as the workers in Greece see since two years. The RCIT says that the workers movement must organize *indefinite general strikes*. Only such general strikes could – at least temporary – halt the bosses’ offensive.

15. While such an indefinite general strike would be a tremendous step forward, it only shows the way towards a solution. But it is not the solution in itself. For this the class struggle must be transformed into an *armed insurrection* led by a revolutionary party rooted in the working class to overthrow and expropriate the ruling class and to smash the capitalist state apparatus.

### No to the utopia of “Democratizing the EU”! Forward to the United Socialist States of Europe!

16. The ELP emphasizes in numerous statements that their strategic goal is the “*democratization of the EU*”. In the *Draft Manifesto* they write: “*We are building a united movement for a democratic, social, ecological and feminist Europe!*”. Behind these phrases is in reality the ELP leaderships’ desire to have more power for the bourgeois national and EU parliament in which they are hoping to gain more influence. The RCIT says: A “*social, democratic and peaceful Europe*” and “*fair re-distribution*” via taxes for the rich is a hopeless utopia as long as capitalism exists. The parliament and all institutions of capitalism are thoroughly

bourgeois and will always – as long as capitalism exists – serve the monopoly capitalists. The practice of the ELP parties themselves demonstrates that they always are stooges for the ruling class wherever they come near governmental power. We can only escape the vicious cycle of poverty and crisis if we overthrow the capitalist system by a *socialist revolution*.

17. The social democratic and Stalinist view of transforming capitalism peacefully and via parliament was always a pathetic illusion which usually ended in a bloodbath for the working class. To imagine the transformation of capitalism in Europe via the EU institutions is a caricature of the already comedian hope to overcome the bourgeois power on a national level by reformist means.

18. The EU can not be reformed. As a matter of fact, the EU is an imperialist alliance. It is dominated by monopoly capital – the banks and corporations – and the imperialist states closely associated with them. They impose a coordinated offensive against the working class and the poor. Despite their conflicts and rivalry they strive – under the leadership of Germany and France – to build a closer economic, political and military union and a pan-European imperialist state apparatus. (see the recent fiscal and banking union, the ESM etc.) To bolster their rule they systematically build up a police state and the surveillance of the people.

19. The imperialist EU exploits not only the working class but also the oppressed people in the semi-colonial countries. This is true both for the semi-colonial countries which are members of the EU as well as those in the so-called South. The super-exploitation and national oppression of the migrants – who mostly come from these countries – is part of the imperialist system. In addition the ruling classes in the EU are also pressurizing its oppressed national minorities like the Basques and the Catalans in Spain.

20. The reformist trade union and party leaders support the discrimination of migrants and the negation of the national minorities rights of secession. In contrast to them the RCIT fight for full equal rights for migrants – including equal wages and equality of mother languages. We support the opening of the border for migrants. We support the oppressed national minorities struggle for self-determination. In Spain, for example, the RCIT says

*“For an independent Workers Republic of Catalonia and of the Basque Country!”*

21. The left-wing social democrats, the ELP and the Greek SYRIZA claim that the EU can be reformed. Various petty-bourgeois nationalists and Stalinists like the Greek KKE on the other hand call for leaving the EU and a retreat to the capitalist national state. Both are wrong. The EU was an imperialist alliance from the beginning. The system of EU institutions cannot be transformed into an instrument of the working class. Neither is the backward-looking perspective to the “good-old” capitalist national state of any use.

22. We however are aware that in semi-colonial countries like Greece or Cyprus the working class is fighting not only against the exploitation by the capitalists but – in addition to this – also against national oppression and super-exploitation by the imperialist monopolies, the “Troika” and Great power like Germany, France and Britain. In such countries revolutionaries should advocate the *Exit from the EU* – as part of the anti-imperialist struggle – and combine such a perspective with the struggle for a *workers government*.

23. The RCIT says: Neither imperialist EU nor capitalist national-state – our perspective can only be: *For the United Socialist States of Europe!* The road towards such a socialist Europe runs exclusively via the struggle for the socialist revolution with the goal of expropriation of the capitalist class and the construction of working class power. Only such a dictatorship of the proletariat will help us to suppress the resistance of the greedy rich. Such a revolution will most likely first succeed in one country and must then be spread towards other countries. *Permanent revolution* or degeneration and defeat – this is the lesson of the experience of Stalinist bureaucratic rule in the USSR!

24. The working class in Europe has shown in the past years that it is ready to fight against the bosses’ offensive and the austerity packages. But they are repeatedly betrayed and sold out by the existing treacherous leaderships in the trade unions and the reformist parties. This is why building authentic *revolutionary workers parties* and a *Fifth Workers International* based on a communist programme is the major task ahead of all true revolutionaries. In Europe and around the world. Join the RCIT to meet this challenge! ■



Greek Workers participated in more than 20 General Strikes since 2010. What is lacking is not Militancy but Leadership!

# After the Woolwich attack in Britain: Stop imperialist war-drive and racism!

## Socialists must not solidarize with Britain's professional army but with the anti-imperialist resistance!

Statement by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 24.5.2013,

1. In protest against the imperialist notorious "war on terror", a serving British soldier was attacked and killed by two Islamist black men near an army barrack in Woolwich (South London) on 22.5.2013. The professional soldier served between 2009 and 2011 as part of the British occupation forces in Afghanistan which leaves thousands and thousands of people dead. Since 2011 he was stationed in Britain. After the attack the two men spoke with passerby, and when the police came they were shot. Britain's ITV news channel broadcasted a video footage filmed by an onlooker, in which one of the two assailants, Michael Adebolajo, explained – with local accent – the political motive of this attack against the British soldier: "We swear by almighty Allah we will never stop fighting you until you leave us alone. Your people will never be safe. The only reason we have done this is because Muslims are dying by British soldiers every day. We must fight them as they fight us. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. I apologise that women had to witness this today but in our lands our women have to see the same. You people will never be safe. Remove your government, they don't care about you. Do you think David Cameron is going to get caught in the street when we start busting our guns? Do you think your politicians are going to die? No, it's going to be the average guy like you, and your children. So get rid of them. Tell them to bring our troops back so we, so you can all live in peace."

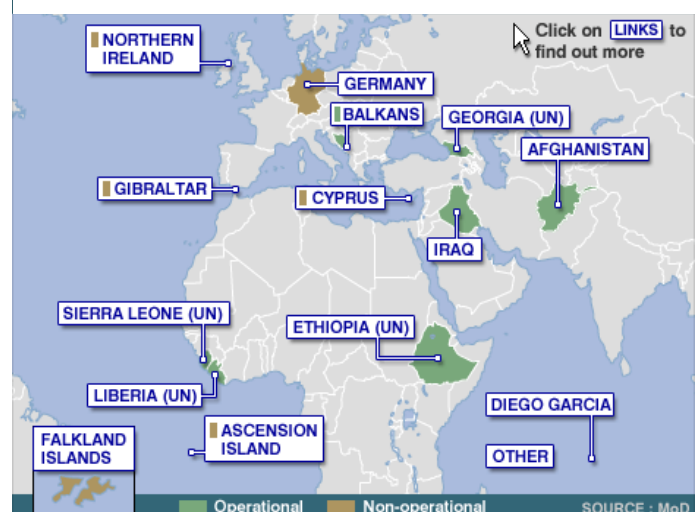
2. Unsurprisingly the right wing government, the Labour Party and the bourgeois media are weeping some crocodile tears about the "tragedy" which poses such a danger for "soldiers risking their lives in the name of freedom" (London Mayor Boris Johnson). The fascist *English Defence League* mobilizes for racist rally against Muslims and two mosques were already attacked.

3. Most of the reformist and centrist left – i.e. those who claim to be Marxist but adapt to the corrupt and privileged bureaucracy in the labor movement – fails to take an internationalist and anti-imperialist stand in this important situation. While criticizing the government policy of waging wars abroad, they cowardly adapt to the bourgeois media chorus and deeply regret the killing of a British soldier. To give a few examples: The pacifist Kate Hudson – a leading figure of the newly founded "Left Unity" project – writes: "We deplore the brutal murder of an unarmed British soldier in Woolwich yesterday. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family. Acts of violent retribution against individuals can never be justified as a response to the crimes of states and governments." (1) Similarly the right-wing centrist *Socialist Party (CWI)*: "The unprovoked, barbaric and vicious murder of an unarmed soldier in Woolwich yesterday is a horrific event which must have been profoundly traumatic for the people who witnessed it, and, of course, an appalling tragedy for the victim, and the victim's family and

friends. (...) The Socialist Party completely condemns this attack just as we condemned 7/7, 9/11, and all similar attacks aimed at indiscriminate slaughter." (2) The ex-revolutionary *Workers Power* leadership expresses too its sympathy for the British soldier's family: "This is undoubtedly a horrific act, committed in front of ordinary civilians, women and children. We sympathise with the family of the victim and those traumatised by witnessing such appalling scenes." (3) And Counterfire leader Lindsey German states: "There can be no justification for a murderous attack on an individual soldier in the streets of London." (4)

4. The first task of Marxist, of revolutionaries, is to speak out the truth. The truth is that the Woolwich attack is the inevitable result of a barbarous imperialist war-drive led by the United States in which Britain's ruling class is the most important ally. As a result the US, British and other imperialists have occupied Afghanistan, Iraq and wage countless terror acts with their drones in other countries in the Middle East and Africa. Just recently the British government sent hundreds of soldiers to help French imperialism occupying Mali and killing those they consider an obstacle to control the vast resources in Western Africa. As a result hundreds of thousands have been slaughtered by the hands of British soldiers and their US and other European allies on the behest of the imperialist ruling class. This imperialist war-drive is the result of the monopolies and Great Power's drive to rule and exploit the semi-colonial countries – i.e. the vast majority of the world's population. Another aspect of this imperialist domination is the national oppression and economic super-exploitation of a growing number of migrants and black minorities in the imperialist metropolises.

### Major British Troops Overseas



Source: BBC, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/4094818.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4094818.stm)



5. In response to this, the oppressed people in these countries are waging an anti-colonial, national liberation war against the imperialist occupiers since years. In addition there have been many anti-war mass mobilizations by sectors of the working class, migrants and youth in the imperialist metropolises themselves.

6. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)* states that it is the primary duty of every anti-imperialist and internationalist to support the resistance – including in its armed forms – in order to drive the occupiers out. We welcome the heroic struggle of the resistance forces in Afghanistan, Palestine, Mali and other countries against the imperialist occupiers and their local allies. We look forward that they will succeed to drive them out as they did already successfully defeat the US and British troops in Iraq. At the same time we oppose the bourgeois ideologies and leaderships which pre-dominate in the resistance movement. The RCIT calls the working class to organize independently, to strive for leadership in the anti-imperialist movement and to connect the struggle against the imperialist monopolies and Great Powers with the international struggle to overthrow capitalism world-wide.

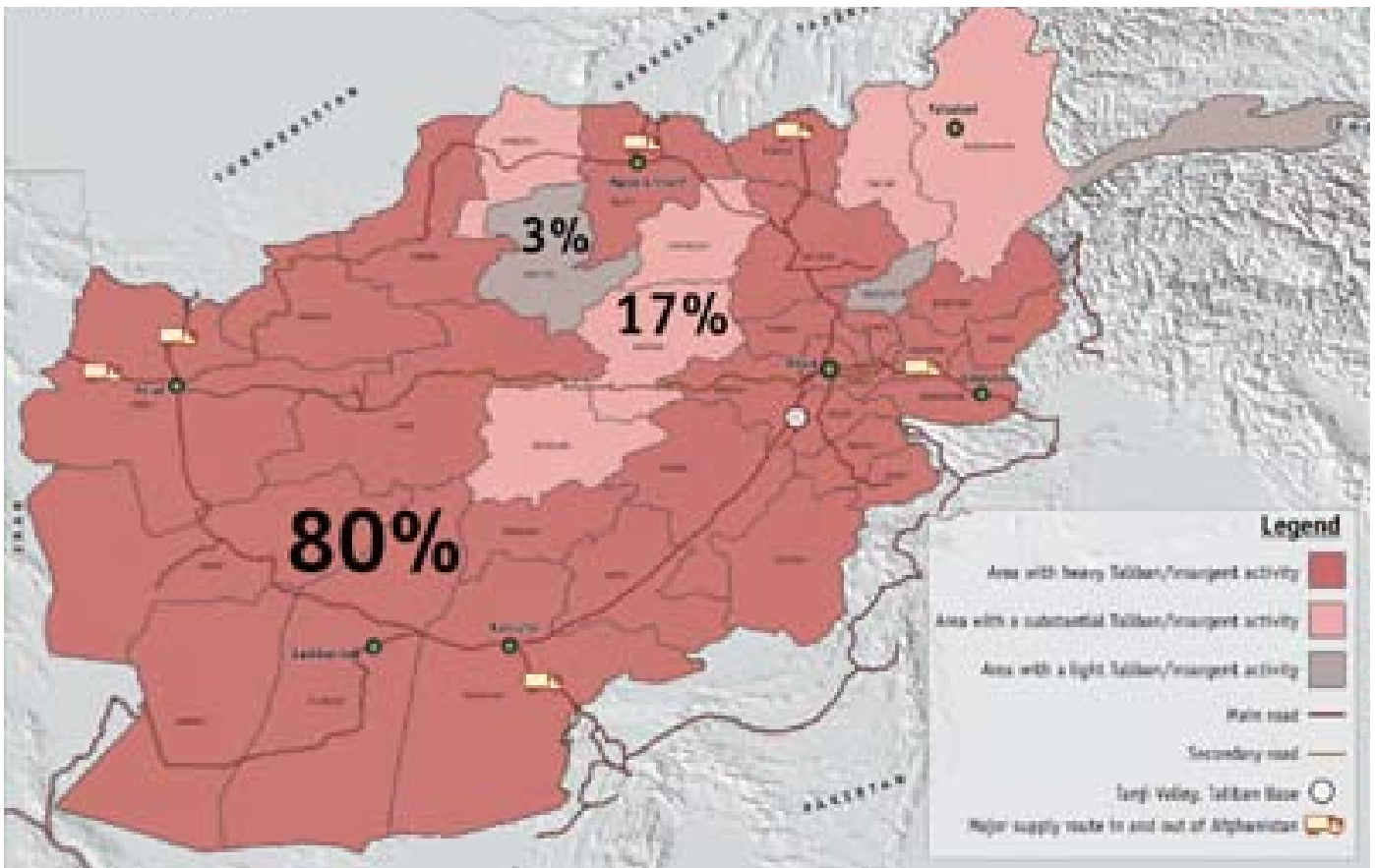
7. It is of course a blatant lie if arch-reactionary whips like Johnson claim that *“is wrong to draw a link between this (the Woolwich attack) and British foreign policy and soldiers risking their lives in the name of freedom.”* It is exactly the British foreign policy that kills so many people, which makes British professional soldiers abhorrent in most parts of the world.

8. Authentic British socialists must condemn all

the hypocritical outrage of the ruling class’s politicians, media and the agents in the workers movement about the “barbarian act” against the British professional soldier in Woolwich. True, the British and US soldiers usually don’t use knives and machetes when they slaughter hundreds of thousands of people but rather modern machine guns, bombs and drones. But since “terrorists” from oppressed people are usually poor, they are forced to use rather primitive, “barbaric” methods for their attacks. Surely, they would prefer to use the modern British means of killing. While cowardly Western leftists like the *Socialist Party* title *“No to terrorism!”*, even a left-liberal American columnist like Glenn Greenwald can recognize a simple truth in the British paper *“Guardian”*: *“The US, the UK and its allies have repeatedly killed Muslim civilians over the past decade (and before that), but defenders of those governments insist that this cannot be “terrorism” because it is combatants, not civilians, who are the targets. Can it really be the case that when western nations continuously kill Muslim civilians, that’s not “terrorism”, but when Muslims kill western soldiers, that is terrorism?”* (5)

9. Shamefully most of the British left fail to resist the pressure of the imperialist public opinion. They condemn the *“horrific event”* and promise to *“pray”* and to *“sympathise with the family of the victim”*. They – consciously or subconsciously – consider professional British soldiers who kill thousands of people in Afghanistan as *“our boys”*, with whom (respectively their families in case they are killed) they fully sympathize. In opposite to this reformist and centrist left, authentic British socialists do not consider Britain’s professional soldiers as *“our boys”* but as part of

## Afghanistan: Areas under Guerilla Control (2010)



the imperialist killing machine. They would call British soldiers to refuse carrying out their duty as part of this oppression apparatus. They would call British soldiers to fraternize with the Afghan resistance and to aid bringing down the British military machine. For authentic British internationalists, it is not the professional British army who are "our boys", but rather those men and women who resist the imperialist occupation and fight to defeat the forces of the modern British Empire. However, the majority of the British left is not capable of such an internationalist, anti-imperialist stand. They adapt to the imperialist camp and act as social-imperialists or social-pacifists.

10. The RCIT stands in the tradition of authentic communism associated with classic Marxist leaders like Lenin, Luxemburg and Trotsky. We condemn the capitulationist "left" which fail to support the resistance struggle when a member of "their" professional army is killed. The following statement of the Communist International's Manifesto – written by Trotsky in 1920 – has not lost its relevance: "*The Socialist who aids directly or indirectly in perpetuating the privileged position of one nation at the expense of another, who accommodates himself to colonial slavery, who draws a line of distinction between races and colors in the matter of human rights, who helps the bourgeoisie of the metropolis to maintain its rule over the colonies instead of aiding the armed uprising of the colonies; the British Socialist who fails to support by all possible means the uprisings in Ireland, Egypt and India against the London plutocracy – such a Socialist deserves to be branded with infamy, if not with a bullet, but in no case merits either a mandate or the confidence of the proletariat.*" (6) If we replace the words "Ireland, Egypt and India" with let us say "Afghanistan and Mali" this is a pretty contemporary statement to denounce most of the British left-reformist and centrist groups. Based on such an anti-imperialist program, British revolutionaries in the 1970s and 1980s defended military actions of the IRA on British soil as a legitimate part of the Irish national liberation struggle. (7)

11. As working class anti-imperialists, we differentiate between various tactics in the struggle against imperialist occupation. While the RCIT opposes terrorist actions which cause the death of ordinary working class people (like 9/11 in New York in 2001 or the 7/7 attacks in London in 2005), we consider armed actions directed against military targets of the imperialist occupation forces as legitimate. This does not mean that we promote actions like the Woolwich attack since they are used by the ruling class as a pretext to whip up racism and militarism. As Marxists we oppose petty-bourgeois strategies which don't orientate on mass mobilizations but rather individual armed attacks. In countries like Britain where the level of anti-imperialist struggle is so low, it is tactically absolutely wrong to undertake armed actions against the imperialist state apparatus. Needless to say that socialists have nothing in common with jihadist ideologies. But we recognize that the imperialists have waged a global war "against terror". In such a war, the oppressed have the legitimate right to attack the repression machine which is killing them. This is even recognized by a left liberal like the US filmmaker Michael Moore who commented the Woolwich attack sarcastically on Tweeter: "*I am outraged that we can't kill people in other countries without them trying to kill us!*" (8)

12. The task of authentic British internationalists

is to call now for a broad united front in defense of the migrant and black community against the racist backlash. *Defend the Mosques against the EDL thugs! Renew the anti-war movement in order to help driving out the British and other occupation forces from Afghanistan, Mali and other places and to stop the barbarous drone attacks!* Such united front actions must be combined with an internationalist, anti-imperialist stand which supports the resistance struggle against the British occupation forces and calls for the military defeat of Britain. Such a perspective has to be combined with the program for socialist revolution in Britain. However, only a program which includes such a consistent anti-imperialist position, only an organization which succeeds in maintaining anti-imperialism against the massive pressure of the imperialist public opinion and their allies in the labor movement, only such an organization can be considered as truly internationalist and socialist.

13. Revolutionaries in Britain should break with the reformist and centrist swamp which capitulates to the imperialist public opinion. They should join forces to build an organization based on an authentic revolutionary program. Let us move forward to build a multi-national revolutionary party of white, black and Asian workers and youth as part of a new World Party of Socialist Revolution – the Fifth Workers International! The RCIT looks forward to work together with all those who are striving for such a goal.

#### Footnotes

(1) Kate Hudson: The Woolwich Attack, May 23, 2013, <http://leftunity.org/the-woolwich-attack>

(2) Statement from Greenwich Socialist Party on the Woolwich killing: No to terrorism! No to racism! No to war! <http://www.socialistparty.org.uk/articles/16739/23-05-2013/no-to-terrorism-no-to-racism-no-to-war>

(3) Workers Power: Statement on the killing of a British soldier in Woolwich, 23.5.2013, <http://www.workerspower.co.uk/2013/05/british-soldier-killed-woolwich-london>.

Today the centrist leadership of Workers Power regrets the killing of an imperialist killer. When Workers Power was still a revolutionary organization, it took a very different and anti-imperialist position. When the IRA killed British paratroopers, it called this action "double defensible". When it killed retired Commander Lord Mountbatten in 1979, it titled simply "Don't mourn Mountbatten". (see Workers Power No. 8, September 1979)

(4) Lindsey German: The lessons to learn from the Woolwich killing are obvious: but not to David Cameron, 23 May 2013, <http://www.counterfire.org/index.php/articles/analysis/16473--the-lessons-to-learn-from-the-woolwich-killing-are-obvious-but-not-to-david-cameron>

(5) Glenn Greenwald: Was the London killing of a British soldier 'terrorism'? The Guardian, 23 May 2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/may/23/woolwich-attack-terrorism-blowback>

(6) Communist International: Manifesto of the Second World Congress (1920); in: Leon Trotsky: The First Five Years of the Communist International, Volume 1, New Park Publication 1973, p. 153, <http://marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/ffyci-1/ch12.htm>

(7) See Workers Power: The British Left and the Irish War (1983)

(8) <https://twitter.com/MMFlint/status/337451498369851393> ■

# Sweden: Long live the Uprising of the Migrants!

Statement by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 23.5.2013,

1. The brutal murder of a 69-year-old man by the Swedish police has triggered an uprising of the migrants and poor. The police ridiculously claims it killed the victim *"in self-defense"* despite the fact that this poor old man locked himself in an apartment in Husby, west of Stockholm, and the cops forcefully entered this flat. Thousands say *"Enough is Enough!"* and they are right! Since several days migrant youth have entered the streets in Husby as well as other parts of Stockholm and fight against the police.

2. This cold-blood murder by the police was the trigger but certainly not the cause of the Uprising. Sweden's 1.4 million migrants – about 14.8% of the population (these are the official figures) – constitute the poorest strata of the country's society. They work as a cheap labor force which Sweden's capitalist's super-exploit to raise their profits. While only 5% of native Swedish children live in poverty, for immigrant children with both parents born outside of the Sweden, the poverty rate is 39%! According to a study, 67% of those on long term benefits were born abroad. They are ghettoized in poor suburbs like Husby where 80% of the roughly 11,000 residents are first- or second-generation migrants. As in all imperialist countries, migrants are nationally oppressed and economically super-exploited. The RCIT states: the main force of the coming storm of class struggles in the imperialist countries (like Sweden) will be the lower and middle strata of the working class – not the upper, privileged, aristocratic layer. Amongst the lower strata of our class, the migrants constitute an important sector. This is why all authentic revolutionaries recognize the task of organizing migrant workers and youth and joining their struggles as a major task.

3. As always the politicians and the media of the ruling class denounce the Uprising as *"senseless violence"* and *"riots"*. Nonsense! Like the heroic rebellions of the migrants and poor in France's *Banlieues* in 2005 and in England's inner cities in August 2011, this is not a riot – this is a spontaneous Uprising of the most oppressed strata of the working class! The RCIT welcomes this Uprising of Sweden's migrants!

4. What are now the most important tasks for revolutionaries in Sweden? First of all, mobilize for solidarity and support for the rebellious migrant youth! Participate and extend the spontaneous Uprising into mass struggles all over the country! For demonstrations and other protest actions all over the country! For regular *local assemblies* and for the formation of *action committees* of migrants and all workers and youth who support the protests! Such committees must coordinate the protests nationally. *No to vandalism* against the private property of ordinary citizens (e.g. smashing cars etc.) – focus the struggle against the state apparatus! For organized and coordinated attacks against police stations, public authorities and other institutions of the ruling class! Let them pay for the murder! To fight back against the brutal police forces: For *self-defense units* of migrants and all workers and youth who support the protests! Prepare and arm for the future: If the police

are ready to kill a 69-year-old man, what will they do if they are faced with serious and determined resistance of the masses?!

5. No trust in any state investigation into the murder committed by the police! For an *independent inquiry by elected representatives of the migrant communities and the workers movement!* Release of all those arrested in connection with the uprising, no criminal prosecution, no cuts in the social and communal services!

6. The workers movement must break with the backward, pro-capitalist politics, the deep integration into the imperialist state and aristocratic prejudices of its leadership – the corrupt and privileged bureaucracy which dominates the LO (*Landsorganisationen i Sverige*, the trade union federation), the *Socialdemokraterna* (social-democratic party) and the *Vänsterpartiet* (ex-Stalinist Left Party). Down with the reformists and centrists who ignore and even denounce the Uprising! Mobilize for a program against poverty, against police brutality and against racist oppression! Fight for a *public employment program* under control of the workers movement and the migrant community, financed by massive taxes of the rich and the expropriation of the super-rich, in order to built up housing, schools, utilities, public transport in Sweden and in particular in the migrant areas! Long live the Uprising!

7. Migrant and native workers and youth: Fight for full equality for migrants! For *full citizenship rights* for all who live in the country and irrespective of the passport! *Equal Wages and Equal Jobs!* Down with the national oppression, no privileges for the ruling Swedish nation, *abolishment of the official state language!* *Equality for the mother languages of migrants in public administration, education system and media!* The usage of the mother tongue has to be accepted in every public facility, for every legal document and contract! For a *massive state program to employ migrants* as teachers, translators, workers in the public administration and media!

8. The most important task is to organize the politically conscious and militant migrants, workers and youth for the struggle for a revolutionary program. For a revolutionary migrant movement! Transform the trade unions into a multi-national, militant force! Smash the repression as well as the whole state apparatus and replace it with the organs of working class power – for a workers government based on workers' councils and militias to open the road to socialism! Organize together in order to build a multi-national revolutionary party in Sweden as part of new World Party of Socialist Revolution – the Fifth Workers International. Only such a party can open the road to the socialist revolution in Sweden which is the only solution to eliminate once and for all poverty, national oppression and exploitation! ■



# The EU Reform Treaty: What it is and How to Fight it (2008)

By Michael Pröbsting

**N**ote by the Editor: The following document is an abridged English translation of a pamphlet of comrade Pröbsting which the Austrian section of the League for the Fifth International published in spring 2008. It was published in Fifth International journal Vol.3, No.1, 2008.

Comrade Pröbsting – a member of the international leadership of the LFI – was bureaucratically expelled from this organization in April 2011 together with other comrades a few weeks after they formed a faction in opposition against the increasing centrist degeneration of the LFI. The expelled comrades built immediately after their expulsion a new organization and founded together with sister organizations in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the USA the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) in April 2012.

We republish this document because, while it was written five years ago, its fundamental programmatic answer against the imperialist European Union remains correct.

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## Part of the general attack by the imperialist bourgeoisie

What fundamentally is the purpose of the EU reform treaty? It is to take forward and strengthen the European Union as a common economic, political and military organisation of the imperialist ruling classes of Europe, that is, of European monopoly capital.

The EU reform treaty means the advance of turbo capitalism. "An open market economy with free competition" is to be written in as a fundamental basis of the EU constitution that will facilitate the privatisation by the capitalists of state property and the dismantling of social gains.

The EU reform treaty means permanent rearmament and war. In its struggle with the USA for worldwide spheres of influence, the EU is using the means of "Americanisation": EU battle groups, under the hypocritical excuse of democracy and human rights will undertake wars to secure raw materials and geostrategic interests.

In order to achieve this, an EU state apparatus is to be built over and above the state apparatuses of the individual capitalist nation states and it will not be subject even to the minimal bourgeois democratic standards of parliamentarism in the individual states. The EU Commission President, Manuel Barroso has himself made clear the character of the future European Union: "sometimes I compare the EU with the model of organisation of an empire. We have the scale of an empire." (1)

The question of the EU reform treaty, therefore, is objectively of the greatest importance for the class struggle in Europe and in Austria because the treaty would mean the consolidation and strengthening of EU imperialism and its wars against the working class domestically and against the oppressed peoples externally.

## The EU reform treaty: the EU Constitution in new packaging

That is why the rulers want to force this treaty through at any price. It is why they want to prevent any referendums that would threaten defeats as in France and Holland in the spring of 2005. In order to justify this to the population, they have formulated the text of the reform treaty in even less clear language than the draft constitution. The Belgian Foreign Minister Karel de Gucht admitted this openly: "The aim with the constitution treaty was to make it more readable; the aim with this treaty is to make it unreadable. The constitution aimed at clarity while this treaty must be unclear. That is a success." (2)

In fact, the EU reform treaty is simply a new edition of the defeated EU constitution. Thus it differs from the draft constitution in only 10 of the 250 proposals. In other words, 96 per cent of the text of the defeated constitutional treaty has been taken over.<sup>3</sup> Leading representatives of European monopoly capital justify this. EU Parliamentary President Hans-Gert Poettering explained, "the substance of the constitutional treaty has been successfully defended." (4) Even Giscard d'Estaing, the former President of France and, as the EU Convention President, the architect of the EU constitution, compared the EU reform treaty with the defeated constitutional draft in the tone of an arrogant imperial ruler: "with regard to the content the proposal is largely unaltered, it has simply been presented differently. The reason is that the new text should not look too similar to the constitutional treaty". The EU governments have agreed upon "cosmetic changes so that the constitution can be more easily swallowed" in order to avoid the now risky referendums. (5)

The "amending treaty" alters two existing treaties; the "European Union Treaty" (EUT) and the treaty upon which the European Community was founded, now known as "the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union" (TFEU). (6)

## Free-market economy

One important function of the reform treaty is the justification of the dismantling of workers' rights and social gains and the extended privatisation of state property. Because of this the emphasis on the capitalist order runs like a red thread throughout the treaty with its various keywords such as "open market economy" and "free competition". Thus, for example, article 119 says:

"The activities of the member states and the union in the meaning of article 3 of the Treaty on the European Union embraces in the terms of the treaty the introduction of an economic policy which aims at the closer coordination of economic policies of member states, the domestic market and the identification of common aims and they are subordinated to the fundamental rule

*of an open market economy with free competition. Parallel to this, under the terms of the treaty, these activities embrace the therein anticipated measures for a unified currency, the euro, as well as the formulation and introduction of a unified monetary and interest rate policy with the objective of achieving price stability and alongside this general economic policy of the union and the observation of the fundamental rules of an open market economy with free competition.*" (7)

Equally, free trade, that is trade that benefits the strongest corporations, is promoted. It is to be a task of the EU "to take forward the integration of all the countries in the world economy among other things through the step by step dismantling of all limits on international trade". (8) Similarly, adherence to the neoliberal Lisbon Strategy is explicitly written into the treaty with reference both to the "Growth and Stability Pact" and the objective of achieving budgetary surpluses at time of economic growth. (9)

Thus we have here the treaty-based commitment of the states to advance neoliberal economic reforms and investments by corporations and, simultaneously, a commitment to massive savings in state expenditure, that is, above all, in social and health provision. Indeed, the policy is now to be made even sharper; according to Austrian Finance Minister Grassler it means not just a nil deficit in prosperous times but a budget surplus.

### Privatisation of public services

In the same spirit, the EU reform treaty would mean subordinating public services to the rules of competition. Article 86 makes clear that it will be the EU commission alone that will decide over such matters. (10)

This establishes the danger that many service sectors that have for a long time been untouched by the "blessings of the free market economy" will now be privatised, beginning with water, electricity and waste disposal through to public transport. It is no accident, for example, that the section dealing with transport policy has been amended. Previously, unanimity by all member states was required in order to implement measures over a common transport policy if their implementation endangered quality of life, or the functioning of means of transport. With the EU reform treaty such matters are now only to be noted. The French anti-globalisation activist Pierre Khalifa rightly concluded that, "a defence of public transport facilities is hereby removed." (11) Similar measures of liberalisation of the energy sector are also anticipated.

### Armaments and military interventions

The reform treaty confirms and accelerates the militarist armament and expansion plans of the EU. The "common security and defence policy" will become an integral component of the union. The EU Defence Agency would now become treaty based. Equally, every member state would become obliged to develop their defence capabilities and involvement in European plans so that at the latest by 2010 they are able to provide armed units to participate as national contingents or as parts of a multinational unit in proposed missions. (12)

Armament and the formation of multinational troop units are obviously not ends in themselves but serve the military interests of EU imperialism. With interventionist units, the

EU will be able to carry out military operations abroad. Chad, in which even Austrian troops are participating, is only the first taste of future colonial adventures by European imperialism. (13)

The justifications for leading such wars are consciously left broad and open. Thus, a case for war could be established even if just one single EU state were "attacked": "in the event of an armed attack on the territory of a member state the other member states will provide all possible help and support in their power." (14)

However, it does not even need to be an attack, it is enough if the "Values of the Union" are endangered: "the Council can commission a group of member states to undertake a mission in order to defend the values of the Union and in service of its interests." (15)

But the ruling classes are not only interested in fighting wars abroad. They also need an army for civil war domestically. The solidarity clause in Article 188r of the Lisbon Treaty specifies the conditions, such as terrorist attack, natural catastrophe or "man-made catastrophe" in which the Union and "member states will act together, using the military means available to them to defend democratic institutions or if requested to give support to a member state's political institutions." (16)

It is not difficult to understand that behind these legalistic phrases is hidden the possible suppression of uprisings and unrest within the EU by a civil war intervention by EU armies. We have always emphasised that the central problem of the EU is that it is far weaker militarily than its competitor, the USA. Against a background of increasing rivalry between the USA and the EU, the ruling class of Europe needs a change of course:

*"However to become a power on a similar scale to the USA, Europe needs a fundamental change in its military policy. Which is why it is written into the constitution that European imperialism has the ability to undertake wars around the world in order to defend its political and economic interests (Values)." (17)*

At first sight, the EU reform treaty appears to be contradictory. On the one hand it confirms close collaboration with NATO, which means that any powers within the EU that wanted to achieve any military policy independent from that of the US American competitors would not be able to carry this out fully. On the other hand, however, the powers around the German French block have opened the way to an independent military role, by the creation of their own confederation, the so-called "permanently structured cooperation". (18)

### Who is the boss?

The EU reform treaty, like the constitution before it, anticipates that the EU will be seen as an independent legal personality. The EU, or its representatives, could thus conclude treaties that would be binding on all members. (19) In connection with this, the EU reform treaty foresees the formation of central state power structures. The ruling class sees in this the only possibility for building an effective central state apparatus that could overcome the conflicting interests between member states and force through measures against the working class. With this aim in mind, the number of decisions that can only be taken on the basis of unanimity has been greatly reduced, while the number that can be decided on the principle of "qualified major-

ity" has increased, from 137 to 181. There has been conflict over what weight the individual states should have in this. In the end, an amendment to the advantage of the big countries was adopted. From November 1, 2014, the qualified majority will be changed to one half of the member states and 55 per cent of the population, with complicated transitional rules that will be valid until 2017.

Even more important, however, is the fact that, alongside the EU Council, that is the common representative of the governments of the member states, the EU Commission will play the central role. This is set out in the following Article: Article 9d:

*"1. The Commission shall promote the general interest of the Union and take appropriate initiatives to that end. It shall ensure the application of the Treaties, and measures adopted by the institutions pursuant to them. It shall oversee the application of Union law under the control of the Court of Justice of the European Union. It shall execute the budget and manage programmes. It shall exercise coordinating, executive and management functions, as laid down in the Treaties. With the exception of the common foreign and security policy, and other cases provided for in the Treaties, it shall ensure the Union's external representation. It shall initiate the Union's annual and multi-annual programming with a view to achieving inter-institutional agreements.*

*2. Union legislative acts may be adopted only on the basis of a Commission proposal, except where the Treaties provide otherwise. Other acts shall be adopted on the basis of a Commission proposal where the Treaties so provide."* (20)

The rights of the EU Parliament, by contrast, are minimal and citizens' initiatives have only the right to make requests to the Commission. (21)

### **Reactionary ideology is written into the Constitution**

Alongside the principle of the free market economy, the Constitution establishes further important ideological principles of the bourgeois order. The preamble to the "Treaty of the European Union" has been amended by the introduction of the following paragraph: *"created out of the cultural, religious and humanist heritage of Europe from which the inalienable and inviolable human rights such as freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law have developed as universal values".* (22)

The reference to the "religious heritage of Europe", in other words Christianity, is noteworthy. This is a religion in whose name innumerable wars and mass murders have been committed throughout history. This means, as the Catholic Church and the conservative forces demand, nothing less than the elevation of Christianity to the status of the constitution. This apparently innocent choice of words could, if necessary, be used by the ruling class as an ideological justification for numerous attacks, for example, setting aside the separation between state and religion, and for actions against atheists, questioning the right to abortion, justification of military intervention in defence of Christianity, for example, against Islam, and so on.

### **Fundamental causes: the decline of capitalism**

It is obvious that all progressive organisations and activists oppose the EU reform treaty. However there is very little clarity about its origins and what alternatives there

are and with what strategy we can fight it.

The EU reform treaty is not the result of a sudden lust for power on the part of the bourgeoisie, as various left reformist currents believe. Even less is it a conspiracy by various bureaucrats in Brussels, as in the fantasies of the editorial offices of the Kronen newspaper or in the Freedom party.

The struggle against the EU reform treaty cannot possibly be won if it is based on illusory and utopian foundations. The basic mistake of many Lefts today is to believe that the policy of the ruling class, which people usually call neoliberalism or militarism, is simply one of several possible options for the capitalist system. It is generally argued that the bourgeois rulers really have a range of possibilities as to how to exercise their power. The programme of relentless attacks on the social and democratic achievements of the working class and the imperialist war offensive is therefore not seen as an unavoidable, and from their own point of view absolutely necessary, policy of the ruling class but rather as a "mistaken policy" which could be replaced by a "correct policy" such as the development of the social state, full employment, disarmament and peace, whilst at the same time maintaining capitalism.

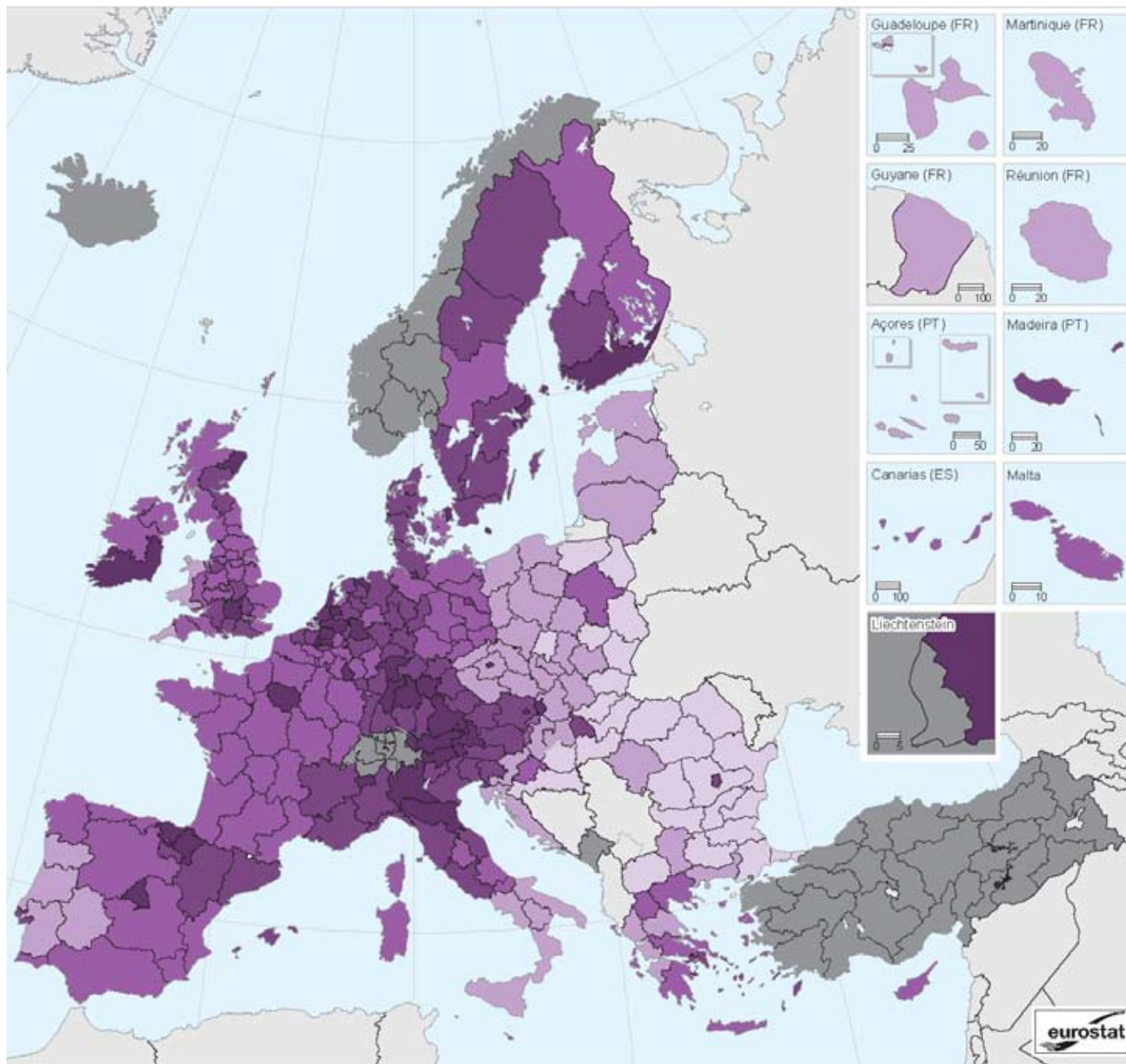
In reality, the neoliberal militarist offensive of the ruling class is the necessary result of the decline of capitalism against a background of increased competition between the monopolies and the great powers. Since the 1970s, the world economy has been characterised by a tendency towards stagnation of the productive forces. (23) This development holds true for the period of globalisation even though here we can see that there has been an uneven development where the tendency to stagnation dominates in the imperialist metropolises and in broad areas of the so-called Third World, while at the same time there are important exceptions such as China or India.

### **The formation of the EU as an answer of the imperialist capitals of Western Europe**

It is the crisis ridden developmental tendency of the capitalist global economy which drives monopoly capital to sharper attacks on the working class and the increased exploitation of the semi-colonial world and, simultaneously, sharpens the competitive struggle between the great powers - above all between the two most powerful blocks, the USA and the EU. This results, on the one hand, in a common approach by the great powers when it is a matter, for example, of opening the semi-colonial countries to the great corporations but, on the other, also leads to political and economic conflict between the two blocks when their interests conflict.

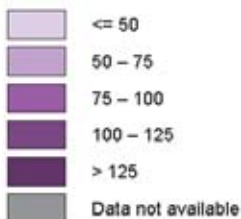
The formation of the European Union as not only an economic domestic market but also as a political and military power bloc is the answer of the ruling class of Europe, above all of the core states, Germany and France, to increased competition and the necessity to pursue their interests in an increasingly unstable world with all the means at their disposal. We had already made this clear in an analysis three years ago: *"the formation of a European capital and imperialism which can offer a rival to the USA as the leading world power is and remains a strategic aim of the German and French capitalist classes and their political executives."* (24)

# Gross domestic product (GDP) per inhabitant, in purchasing power standard (PPS), by NUTS 2 regions, 2009 (% of the EU-27 average, EU-27=100)



(% of the EU-27 average, EU-27=100)

EU-27 = 100



Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN-FAO © Turkstat  
 Cartography: Eurostat — GISCO, 03/2012



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [nama\\_r\\_e2gdp](#))

That is why it is no accident that, after the ruling classes of Europe suffered the defeat of the referendum on the constitutional treaty in 2005, they soon began a renewed attempt. *"The general attack on the workers will be maintained across the whole of Europe with unlimited, indeed increased, sharpness. Even if, in individual countries, there are short-term tactical retreats by the ruling class in response to mass mobilisations, these will lead quickly to even harsher attacks. The ruling classes will consciously take steps towards the formation of an imperialist bloc."* (25)

This remains our position: the aggressive policy of the ruling classes of Europe in the direction of a neoliberal dismantling of social services, militarisation and the building of the central EU state apparatus is the unavoidable result of the interests of capital in a time of stagnation, increased competition and instability. They have to pursue these policies otherwise the USA, and other powers, will in the long run degrade their European rivals from an advancing empire into a dwarf among the imperialist powers. Flowing from this, there will be rapidly developing sharp political crises up to the revolutionary situations. Any attempt to move the capitalist class to adopt different policies by negotiation or petitions is, therefore, nothing more than a reformist daydream.

That does not of course mean that absolutely no changes or modifications in the policy of the ruling class are possible without the immediate development of a revolutionary situation. It is possible to block this or that attack temporarily by hard class struggle or to reduce their impact. However, such changes are temporary defensive successes and, as long as the capitalist relations of exploitation remain, cannot lead to a fundamental and permanent improvement in the situation of the working class.

### **Reforming the EU in the interests of the oppressed?**

A good proportion of the left holds a reformist politics that would like to change the EU and create a "social, peaceful and democratic Europe". Two examples can be dealt with here. ATTAC, for example, demands the election of a constitutional assembly in the EU from which a reformed EU could proceed. (26) The ATTAC founder in Austria, Christian Felber, hopes that through such democratic and social reforms a more effective EU can be created: *"the effectiveness of the EU in comparison to the present situation would be improved through such new structures."* (27)

Similar hopes are held by the European Left Party whose Austrian component is the Kommunistische Partei Österreichs (KPO): *"we believe that the EU is in a position to disarm and should do this and that the military budgets of the member states should be reduced and they should give up thinking in military categories."* (28)

It is noteworthy that the Socialist Party youth organisation has never brought itself to make a clear rejection of the EU reform treaty. In their one public position they did indeed demand a referendum but did not take a position. At the same time, they opened the columns of their newspaper to Socialist Party propagandists for the EU reform treaty and declined to offer any criticism. Once again this shows that the Socialist Youth, unlike their self-characterisation, are neither autonomous nor Marxist but rather the left reformist drummer boys of the Socialist Party apparatus in the ranks of the youth.

Despite differences of nuance, these positions have in common a deeply reformist petty bourgeois logic. Namely, that it is possible to create a "democratic socially just and peaceful EU" without posing the question of property and power in Europe. How can a socially just Europe be possible as long as capitalist property relations are maintained, as long as a tiny minority of employers hold all the means of production in their hands? How can a peaceful Europe be possible as long as the corporations and the generals, who intend to further their interests globally by military means, exist? How can there be any real democracy so long as the ruling class is in power and is daily strengthening the police state?

Reformist politics have no clear class understanding that our society is divided between a ruling class, at whose head is monopoly capital and its professional politicians, and the working class, that is to say those dependent on wages and their families.

Naturally this lack of understanding is not accidental, it has a material basis. Behind the reformist view that neoliberalism is simply a "mistaken policy" which can be resolved through "another politics" with "another government", there is a political perspective. Namely, the hope by forces such as the European Left Party that they can become part of a government coalition in the capitalist EU member states and thereby get their noses into the trough of power and its associated privileges. In Italy, this has already been carried out and the Rifondazione Comunista (PRC) played a substantial role in the neoliberal and militaristic government of Prodi (which, with the help of the PRC, raised the pension age, participated in the occupation of Afghanistan and built up the NATO military base in Vicenza). In Berlin, the Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (PDS) has been in a coalition with the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) for three years and undertaken dismantling of social provisions. Behind the reformists' phrases of a "social and peaceful Europe" is hidden the reality of their desire to participate in capitalist power.

The League for Socialist Revolution (the Austrian section of the L5I) stands for a socialist Europe and rejects the slogan of a "social Europe". At best, this formulation leaves open which class should rule in such a Europe. But those who leave this question open are basically accepting that those who rule today shall also rule in the future. In other words, their "social Europe" is nothing more than a social democratic, that is, a bourgeois and imperialist, Europe.

We do not want to reform the EU, we want to destroy it – but not in order to return to the nation state, the form of social organisation which corresponded to the level of development of the productive forces in the 19th century. We want to go forwards: to a European revolution over the corpse of the EU towards the United Socialist States of Europe.

### **Is an exit from the EU an alternative for the working class?**

An apparent alternative to this is the strategy of various left organisations such as the KPO Steiermark and the Communist Initiative, which propose that Austria should leave the EU. This demand for a return to the old nation state is deeply illusionary and dangerous. It is wrong to



believe that Austria, if it were to free itself from the EU, would be any less reactionary, any less hostile to the working class, as a state. Austria is an imperialist state, it has not been led astray by the “bad EU”, rather, domestic capital sees its interests best served, for the moment, in the EU. The capitalists are not attacking the working class because of some “diktat from Brussels” but out of their own basic interests in profit. It is therefore all the more damaging when various lefts strengthen this excuse from fractions of domestic small and medium-sized capital and echo the lies that are spread by the bourgeois media. The ideology of the “good” old nation state would in reality mean the retreat of the working class from the stage of the class struggle by a united global proletariat and back to narrow, reactionary, national horizons. Austrian capital does not only exploit the working class here at home but also in numerous semi-colonies, above all in Eastern Europe, through its massive foreign investments from which it gains super profits. It was not for nothing that the ruling class of Austria was strongly in favour of the EU entry of the east European countries.

In the capitalist world, the individual capitalist states do not exist entirely independently of each other and neither could they. Rather, what we see is a constantly increasing involvement of individual countries within the global economy. Austria is one part of the global economy and cannot change this by leaving the EU. All of its involvements would continue to exist even if Austria were to leave the EU. The leader of the Russian October Revolution in 1917, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, characterised nationally limited politics such as those of the “leave the EU” current very accurately:

*“The petty striving of petty states to hold aloof, the petty-bourgeois desire to keep as far away as possible from the great battles of world history, to take advantage of one’s relatively monopolistic position in order to remain in hidebound passivity—this is the objective social environment which may ensure the disarmament idea a certain degree of success and a certain degree of popularity in some of the small states. That striving is, of course, reactionary and is based entirely on illusions, for, in one way or another, imperialism draws the small states into the vortex of world economy and world politics.” (29)*

At heart, the “leave the EU” perspective shares the same fundamental error as the left EU reformers, that is, they completely ignore the class question. Whose EU? Whose Austria? The EU that really exists is the EU of the corporations and the generals. And the Austria that really exists is equally the Austria of the corporations and the generals. As long as this class holds the power in the economy and the society there can be no long-lasting reforms. Only their overthrow will open the way to the future.

### **Revolutionary strategy**

Today we are facing an all-embracing offensive by the ruling classes of Europe. They want to destroy the social and democratic gains of the working class, whatever the cost, and establish the EU as the second military superpower, alongside the USA.

Resistance to this can only be successful if we orient ourselves not towards appeals and petitions to the rulers or to the achievement of governmental posts but towards a Europe-wide organisation and struggle by the working

class and youth. That is why we in the LSR, together with our international comrades in the League for the Fifth International, stand for mass demonstrations and strikes up to a general strike against the EU reform treaty and other attacks. This is necessary both in individual countries and across Europe.

We need an organisation of resistance from below at every level. That is why we call for the building of action committees, social forums and alliances at every level, local, regional and national. Equally, we need a European wide coordination of the struggles. This demand is directed at all organisations of the working class, all parties which are against the war and neoliberalism, all the groupings within the anti-globalisation movement, the antiwar movement, immigrant organisations, youth organisations and student representatives.

The resistance against the EU reform treaty demands broad struggle both in Austria and across Europe. In this way we can build on a broad rejection of the EU reform treaty and popular demand for a referendum across the whole of Europe. Just in Austria, 70 per cent of those asked in the most recent opinion poll were in favour of a referendum and in another poll twice as many people saw a disadvantage in the treaty as those that saw an advantage, 39 per cent to 19 per cent.

The League of Socialist Revolution supports the demand for a referendum over the EU reform treaty as one form, although limited, of opposition. We are, therefore, active in the referendum campaign. The majority of organisations in this alliance see its priority as small media actions, press conferences, petitions and the winning of individual officials and sectors of the established parties, they hope for support from the Kronen newspaper and so on. We by no means reject such steps, in particular circumstances they could indeed play a subordinate but positive role. However, the centre of gravity of the resistance must lie in a working class, class struggle perspective in order to force a referendum. The whole campaign can only be successful if it concentrates itself on organising broad mass actions, meetings oriented towards the masses and the building of local committees rooted in the masses. In concrete terms we call for:

The trade unions as well as the student organisations and progressive immigrant organisations should be won to opposition to the reform treaty and a perspective of class struggle against it through strikes and demonstrations.

We propose coordinated interventions by the organisations participating in the campaign in the planned so-called “information meetings” over the EU reform treaty to be organised by the government.

We are in favour of the organisation of local action committees in factories, schools and universities and also locally, following the example of the 900 local Committees for a No against the EU constitution in France in 2005.

We propose the organisation of at least one major demonstration as well as further direct actions in the spring.

### **For a programme of struggle against the general offensive of EU capital**

The struggle against the general offensive of capital cannot limit itself to the EU reform treaty but must include all fronts. For that it needs a clear programme of defensive

struggles.

### **Stop the social attacks!**

Unemployment, under employment and poverty affect millions and millions in Eastern and Western Europe. As unifying key demands in the struggle we propose:

- *Europe-wide introduction of the 35 hour week with no loss of pay or jobs.*
- *A minimum wage established by the labour movement of each country.*
- *For a struggle against privatisation of public services and mass redundancies.*
- *For a programme of socially useful public works under the control of the workers, the unemployed and consumers.*
- *Progressive taxation of firms and the rich to finance these measures.*

### **Fight racism**

The division of the working class and the oppressed along national and ethnic lines is a central problem for any common struggle. The EU and the national bourgeoisies and governments are consciously deepening the divisions. Workers from Eastern Europe and from the semi-colonial countries outside the EU are excluded from the Western labour market, dealt with as second-class workers or forced into illegality where they have to work in the worst possible conditions.

Within the EU, national and ethnic minorities such as the Basques or the Roma are denied their democratic rights. Moslem, Turkish, Arabs and migrants from the Balkans or from Africa are subjected to systematic hate and oppression. Fascist and racist forces are spreading the poison of anti-semitism. Against all this we fight for:

- *Full and equal social and political rights for all who live in Europe.*
- *We are against immigration controls, for open borders.*
- *For self defence organisations of the racially or nationally oppressed against fascist or racist attacks.*
- *For a common struggle of migrant and indigenous workers against such attacks.*
- *Down with all reactionary "anti-terror laws"*

### **Against war and occupation**

The EU and its member states are open or covert supporters of the occupation of Iraq, Afghanistan and of the US threats to Iran. Therefore we are:

- *For the immediate withdrawal of all troops from Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon.*
- *Support the legitimate liberation struggle of the Iraqi and Afghan resistance against the occupiers and, likewise, the resistance of the Palestinians.*
- *EU states are not only passive supporters of the USA. Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia are practically colonies of the EU. Germany participates in the occupation of Afghanistan and France regularly intervenes in Africa. And now the EU and Austria are also sending troops into Chad.*

• *No to all EU interventions whether under US leadership, the EU or UN flags! Withdrawal of all troops stationed abroad!*

### **No to the building of the police state**

The ruling classes are consciously building a police state under the cover of security for citizens and the "war against terror". Democratic rights are being systematically hollowed out or even completely repealed.

- *Against the permanent surveillance state. Down with all permanent surveillance cameras in public places. No online surveil-*

*lance.*

• *Stop all dragnets and bugging operations. Against all security police authority. For self defence units to defend demonstrations against attacks by the police.*

• *Police out of the localities. Maintenance of public order by self defence units based on elections and control by mass meetings in the factories and housing estates.*

### **For a constituent assembly**

The question of the EU reform treaty is a democratic question. It is a matter of determining the constitution of a future federation. The ruling class has been trying to bring this about with either undemocratic or plebiscitary measures. All future attempts by the ruling class will have a similar character because of the internal contradictions within the national capitalist classes. The question of a constitution and of democracy can and must, under these circumstances, be made into a means of mobilising the masses but not for some "other" bourgeois constitution as suggested in the reformist daydreams of groups like ATTAC. Instead, we need a consistent democratic form for the unification process, a constituent assembly elected by all the inhabitants of the EU as well as those countries that wish to join a united Europe.

Such a slogan has a revolutionary democratic character if it is understood as a means of mobilisation, a means of using bourgeois democratic hopes and illusions against the rulers in order to make it easier to take the steps necessary for the overthrow of the ruling class.

### **Through the European revolution...**

A decisive, Europe-wide struggle by the working class, the youth and the migrants will, sooner or later, raise the question of power: who rules in Europe, the capitalists or the oppressed? In order to rid ourselves of social cuts, racism and war for good we must overthrow the power of the ruling class. For that, we need a Europe-wide socialist revolution. Such a revolution will not be brought about by proposals in Parliament or buy peaceful pressure on the streets but only by the struggle and armed uprising of the mass of the working class. Only through such a revolution can we really build our Europe, a socialist Europe.

Already, 160 years ago, in the year 1848, working class and oppressed layers first rose up against their rulers. Such a revolution, but this time with a clear socialist perspective, is more necessary than ever today in Europe.

The European revolution will not be a spontaneous process that grows organically out of a steady broadening and expansion in class struggle beyond the limits of the national states to a European level. Equally, it will not be a matter of conspiratorial and simultaneous coups in all the main EU countries. A precise description of how European working class revolution would develop is, of course, impossible. We can, however, make the following observations: the economic unification of Europe by capitalism will inevitably develop an Europeanization of the class struggle, even if it is delayed and distorted. The only progressive aspect of the development of the EU, an unintended side effect of the bourgeoisie's policy, so to say, is an inevitable international linkage of struggles by workers, youth and migrants. We have already seen the first signs of this in Europe-wide strikes or the echoes in other countries of the rising by immigrant youth in the Parisian

suburbs in 2005.

Against a background of a Europe-wide wave of class struggle, there will develop in this or that country, perhaps even across the continent, pre-revolutionary and revolutionary situations. Against this background, in one or more countries, a revolutionary party based in the working class will lead the overthrow of the ruling class. If the revolution is victorious in one or more countries this will quickly have widespread effects across the rest of the European Union. It will have a dynamising and inspiring effect on other class brothers and sisters as well as alarming the capitalist classes. It is therefore likely that a successful socialist workers' republic in one or more countries could not survive for very long, either it will extend itself across the whole continent to form the United Socialist States of Europe or it will be quickly destroyed by an armed counterrevolution.

It is obvious that a successful European revolution would have an enormous impact on the imperialist states, above all the USA, and in the rest of the world. In 1923, Trotsky made the following observations that, of course, cannot be applied directly today because of the changed historical situation. Nonetheless his observations summarise clearly and sharply the possible worldwide effects.

*"It must not be overlooked that the very danger arising from the United States of America (which is spurring the destruction of Europe, and is ready to step in subsequently as Europe's master) furnishes a very substantial bond for uniting the peoples of Europe who are ruining one another into a "European United States of Workers and Peasants". This opposition between Europe and the United States stems organically from the differences in the objective situations of the European countries and of the mighty transatlantic republic, and is not in any way directed against the international solidarity of the proletariat, or against the interests of the revolution in America. One of the reasons for the retarded development of the revolution throughout the world is the degrading European dependence on the rich American uncle (Wilsonism, the charitable feeding of the worst famine districts of Europe, American "loans", etc., etc.). The sooner the popular masses of Europe regain the confidence in their own strength which was sapped by the war, and the more closely they rally around the slogan of "United Workers', and Peasants', Republics of Europe", the more rapidly will the revolution develop on both sides of the Atlantic. For just as the triumph of the proletariat in Russia gave a mighty impetus to the development of the Communist parties of Europe so, and even to an incomparably greater degree, will the triumph of the revolution in Europe give an impetus to the revolution in America and in all parts of the world. Although, when we abstract ourselves from Europe, we are obliged to peer into the mists of decades to perceive the American revolution, yet we may safely assert that by the natural sequence of historical events the triumphant revolution in Europe will serve in a very few years to shatter the power of the American bourgeoisie." (30)*

### ...to the United Socialist States of Europe

The alternative of the League for the Socialist Revolution and the League for the Fifth International to the EU reform treaty of an imperialist Europe is therefore neither a reactionary return to "independent" national states and the reintroduction of schillings, Deutschmarks, French francs and other national currencies, nor a "social" but, in reality,

social chauvinist, Europe.

The capitalist unification of Europe, the development of European monopolies and corporate alliances cannot be fought via reactionary and utopian attempts to turn back the wheel of history.

On the contrary, the fight against the formation of a European imperialism and European monopolies needs the working class itself at all levels to give a political answer to the problem of European unification. That means fighting the attacks of the ruling class and fighting for the United Socialist States of Europe as a step toward world revolution.

This would create a basis for a complete reorganisation of the European and global economy on the basis of democratic planning. Central problems such as mass unemployment can only really be solved on this basis. Only on this basis can long lasting national and racist oppression really be overcome. A socialist Europe would, for example, implement the right of self-determination for the Basques and it would allow the possibility of overcoming the national divisions on the Balkans. Both these tasks would be possible if we recognised the rights of the various nations to self-determination, while at the same time creating the possibility of voluntary alliance without allowing the profit interests of the imperialist capitals and the national bourgeoisies to intervene. The following declaration of the Marxist revolutionary and leader of the October revolution of 1917, Leon Trotsky, summarises our goals in the revolution for the United Socialist States of Europe:

*"In the person of the Opposition the vanguard of the European proletariat tells its present rulers: In order to unify Europe it is first of all necessary to wrest power out of your hands. We will do it. We will unite Europe. We will unite it against the hostile capitalist world. We will turn it into a mighty drill-ground of militant socialism. We will make it the cornerstone of the world socialist federation." (31)*

### For new revolutionary parties, for the Fifth International

A revolutionary perspective remains an illusion if no fighting parties exist nationally or internationally. The League for the Socialist Revolution is under no illusions that the exploiting class will ever voluntarily and peacefully give up their rule. Only a socialist revolution in Austria and worldwide, only the armed insurrection of the working class, can open the door to the future of freedom and justice. Such an uprising will not come about spontaneously but demands systematic preparation and organisation of the revolution. For that it needs a party, an organisation in which the most conscious sections of the working class and the youth are organised under the banner of revolution. The creation of such a party of socialist revolution in Austria and worldwide, the Fifth International, is therefore the most urgent task of all workers and youth who wish to struggle for a socialist future with us. The building of such a party and international can accept no delay. We cannot wait until revolution is at the door. Then, as history shows us, it is already too late to begin serious political and organisational preparations.

Let us unite into an international party of the working class, in a Fifth International! Forward in struggle for socialist Europe! Forward in struggle for a socialist world!

## Endnotes

- (1) EU Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso, Telegraph, 18.07.2007, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/07/11weu111.xml>
- (2) <http://www.free-europe.org/blog/?itemid=383>
- (3) <http://www.openeurope.org.uk/media-centre/pressrelease.aspx?pressrelease...>
- (4) <http://www.merkur-online.de/politik/art8808,869823>
- (5) Reform treaty: cosmetic changes to avoid referendums, says Giscard d'Estaing, 17.7.2007, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/003-9201-197-07-29-901-20070716IPR09200-16-07-2007-2007-false/default\\_de.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/003-9201-197-07-29-901-20070716IPR09200-16-07-2007-2007-false/default_de.htm)
- (6) References to the Treaties signed in December 2007 are according to the version published on December 17, 2007 and published on <http://eurollex.europa.eu/>
- (7) TEU Article 119
- (8) TEU Article 21e
- (9) See: Final Act Declaration: Nr.30. Clarification of Article 104 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU
- (10) Lisbon Treaty Article 86
- (11) Pierre Khalifa: EU Reform Treaty: Both Method and Content are Unacceptable (August 2007)
- (12) Protocol regarding permanently structured cooperation, according to Article 28a TEU, Article 13 *"Article 28 1. The tasks referred to in Article 27(1), in the course of which the Union may use civilian and military means, shall include joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation. All these tasks may contribute to the fight against terrorism, including by supporting third countries in combating terrorism in their territories.*  
*2. The Council shall adopt decisions relating to the tasks referred to in paragraph 1, defining their objectives and scope and the general conditions for their implementation. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, acting under the authority of the Council and in close and constant contact with the Political and Security Committee, shall ensure coordination of the civilian and military aspects of such tasks."* (Lisbon Treaty on Changing...)
- (13) We have explained the our anti-imperialist position against the EU intervention in Chad in the declaration: Austria and EU: Get Out of Chad! Stop the imperialist military intervention! Solidarity with the resistance of the rebel movements in Chad against the Austrian and EU troops! 6.12.2007, <http://www.fifthinternational.org/content/austria-and-eu-get-out-chad>. A longer elaboration of this subject including a polemic against the reformist and centrist left can be read in German language in the article by Michael Pröbsting: *Der Tschad-Einsatz und die Linke. Über jene Linke, die ihren Schein-Antiimperialismus mit marxistischen Phrasen tarnen*; in: *Unter der Fahne der Revolution*, No. 2-3 (2008) (Theoretical Journal of the *Liga der Sozialistischen Revolution*).
- (14) Lisbon Treaty on Changing...
- (15) Lisbon Treaty on Changing...
- (16) Lisbon Treaty on Changing... Article 188r
- (17) Translated for this article from Michael Pröbsting: ‚Amerikanisierung oder Niedergang‘. Widersprüche und Hausforderungen für das imperialistische Projekt der Europäischen Vereinigung. In *Revolutionärer Marxismus* Nr.35, Berlin, 2005 p.39
- (18) Article 28a of the Lisbon Treaty refers to those powers which *"have met the demanding criteria in respect of military abilities"* forming this *"Structured Cooperation"* within the framework of the Union.
- (19) This is to be found in the Final Act, Declaration on Priority
- (20) Treaty of Lisbon
- (21) Article 8b, para 4: Not less than one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States may take the initiative of inviting the Commission, within the framework of its powers, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a legal act of the Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties. The procedures and conditions required for such a citizens' initiative shall be determined in accordance with the first paragraph of Article 21 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
- (22) TEU
- (23) By *"productive forces"* Marxists understand both the material means and the results of production, thus the term includes means of production (machinery etc) and produced goods and also the people who serve the means of production and, for this purpose, enter into particular forms of social division of labour. Obviously, means of production and people stand in a relationship to one another and, from the point of view of capital, the purpose of setting the worker to work on the means of production is to produce goods and, thereby, surplus value. Productive forces, therefore, are not simply a collection of things but include people and their living conditions. The point is discussed further in Michael Pröbsting: *Die widersprüchliche Entwicklung der Produktivkräfte in Kapitalismus*, in *Revolutionärer Marxismus* 37, Berlin, 2007
- (24) Martin Suchanek/Michael Pröbsting: *EU in der Krise. Soziales oder sozialistisches Europa?*; in: *Revolutionärer Marxismus* Nr.35, Berlin, 2005, p. 6
- (25) *ibid*, p7
- (26) See: *"Attacs 10 Prinzipien für einen demokratischen EU-Vertrag"*, [http://www.attac.at/uploads/media/10\\_Prinzipien\\_fuer\\_einen\\_demokratische...](http://www.attac.at/uploads/media/10_Prinzipien_fuer_einen_demokratische...)
- (27) Christian Felber: *Mein europäischer Traum*; in: *DER STANDARD*, 5.12.2007 p28
- (28) ELP: *In the name of a democratic and social Europe: "THE GOVERNMENT'S TREATY MUST BE PUT TO REFERENDUM IN THE EU"*, 19. October 2007, [http://www.europeanleft.org/nc/english/news/news\\_archive/news\\_archive/br...](http://www.europeanleft.org/nc/english/news/news_archive/news_archive/br...)
- (29) V.I. Lenin: *The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution*; in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, Moscow, p.86
- (30) Leo Trotzki: *Über die Aktualität der Parole „Vereinigte Staaten von Europa“* (1923); in: Leo Trotzki, *Wohin treibt England/Europa und Amerika*, Verlag Neuer Kurs, Berlin 1972, S. 95f.; in English: *Is the slogan of "The United States of Europe" a timely one?*; in: Leon Trotsky: *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Vo. 2, London 1975, p. 344, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1923/06/europe.htm>
- (31) Leon Trotsky: *Disarmament and the United States of Europe* in *Writings*, 1929, New York, 1975, p 357 ■

# Brazil: Solidarity with the Teacher's Strikes in São Paulo!

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) and Blog El Mundo Socialista (Brazil), 17.5.2013

Public school teachers of the State of São Paulo (Brazil) were on strike for 22 days and the teachers of the capital of the State, the city of São Paulo, started its strike on May 3. The teachers of the state had finished their strike (APEOESP- Union of Teachers of the State), but the teachers of the city continues, with the command of the SINPEEM (Union of the educator of the city of São Paulo). The teachers of the state were protesting the noncompliance with a minimum educator's salary law that was passed in Brazil's Congress 5 years ago, with an average 780 dollars per month and working 40 hours weekly. In addition they demand a raise of the minimum, an increase of the budget for education and for teacher training as well as reductions in class sizes and better working conditions. The teachers however have to fight not only against the government and the repressive police. They have also an enemy within – the teacher's trade union leadership which is close to the government around the reformist PT. Maria Isabel Noronha (Bebel), president of the teachers union São Paulo state (APEOESP), in May 10, declared the end of the strike despite the fact that a mass of two thousand teachers in assembly voted with 70% in favor of the continuation of the strike! No surprise that she only escaped the fury of the teachers by calling the vicious Military Police to protect her. One of the main reasons for Bebel betraying the strike and declaring the end of it was that the union leadership

feared to be faced with two strikes, demonstrations and common acts both in the State and in the City. This would have exposed to the population that the two bosses – the government of the State ruled by the PSDB (conservative) and the government of the city ruled by the PT (Popular Front) are only opposition during the elections. This shows once more the treacherous role of the trade union bureaucracy. Its main interest is to preserve their positions and privileges for which they are dependent on keeping good relations with the bourgeois state and the capitalists. Workers must never trust them! They must do everything possible to organize independently of the bureaucracy – in action committees – in order to control the struggle and decide democratically in mass assemblies. The teachers of the city (SINPEEM) should not be influenced by the defeat of State colleagues and continue their strike against the government of the PT and its bourgeois policies of wage squeeze and privatizations. They should also appeal to the teachers and trade unions in other cities and States to join the struggle. Similarly it is important to orientate towards broadening the struggle to other sector of the working class.

## Victory to the City Teacher's Strike in São Paulo!

You can find more information on the website <http://elmundosocialista.blogspot.com.br> ■

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## Chile: Hands Off the Colectivo “Revolución Permanente”

*Colectivo “Revolución Permanente”, 28.5.2013*

**R**eprinted here is a letter from comrades of the Permanent Revolution Collective in Chile indicating stepped up political repression against working class militants. It was originally published in English language on the website of the CWG(USA), , <http://cwgusa.wordpress.com/2013/05/28/chile-hands-off-the-permanent-revolution-collective>

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We address this letter to all political organizations of the revolutionary left to denounce strange events that occurred in the house of some members of our organization, the Permanent Revolution Collective. We start by defining, as it were, the facts so that readers can judge his own head the character of these.

On Friday May 24 this year, at approximately 19:30 pm, the home of some of our members was assaulted by an unknown subject. The place was a single companion, sleeping, after having completed their workday as telephone agent last night. The other two friends who live in that house were not at that time, because they worked. The subject entered the room of our colleague and bluntly demanded that he surrender “notebooks” of the house. This, no doubt, by the knowledge evidence thief in our home that had more than a laptop. Calmly, and threatening to mate with an alleged armed accomplice outside the home, forced to give our partner the three notebooks they had there. The strange fact is that having money, even in the face of the subject, this did not flinch. Did not check either box. There were no notebooks chargers (even a very old, unsellable) being connected, and have not sought nothing more than computers, even though at first glance, there were other valuables, starting with the money.

The department attacked is located in the commune of La Cisterna, in a condominium that never in its history had been robbed of its kind. The apartment is located on the second floor, which compels us to believe that the subject climbed to the balcony through the Avenida El Parrón in high pedestrian traffic hours. The unique style of dress and talk the thief, his parsimony and confident attitude, totally different modus operandi of the lumpen common and vulgar, and the strange lack of money and other species requires us to suspect that this was not a common theft.

The department was docked is inhabited by three militant revolutionaries, workers and students, who have been active in the process of mass mobilization has been opened in Chile in recent years. All three computers are stolen militant team of our organization, now fighting in the front row next to all sectors who revolt against the government of Piñera and the Pinochet regime administered by the Coalition. They found hundreds of files with policy documents, private and public, that shape our lives militant heritage. We clarify in advance that the contents of these documents there is no appearance that violates existing bourgeois legality. They all deal with theoretical debates and policy development, national and international, about the class struggle in today’s society.

We denounce these facts because we refuse to think of as a “petty theft” that a revolutionary organization would derogate the three teams. We just and legitimate reserve the right to suspect the bourgeois state and its intelligence services as architects of the assault.

As appropriate, the complaint was made in police, who, of course, did nothing more than a round of rigor, a couple of blocks, to abort quickly finding the “evildoers”. This I believe, however, normal, then we say that the police is not only the instrument of coercion of the bourgeois state against the working class and the exploited. We know that the police force only serves to protect the private property of the big bourgeoisie, and in no case the belongings that costs them much effort to working families like ours.

This fact is part of an escalation in the regime’s repressive crackdown against activists of the working class, the student movement, the poor peasantry and the Mapuche. While we have no concrete evidence, background and characteristics, which meet all the requirements of the modus operandi-police openly compel us to suspect that it is actually an intervention by the state intelligence services, who have been particularly active on Last month, as was exposed to the secondary companion sequestration César Reyes and Human Rights activist Muñoz Stephanny recent weeks. Not to mention the home allamientos Pinochet style squat and Mapuche communities in struggle.

While we do not want this complaint either excessively alarming activism, considered a must denounce it as a possible new attacks, which would just be a tip of an iceberg of provocation and aggression against workers and popular fighters.

The fellow whose house was attacked are Gisselle Sanchez, hardworking operator, Alejandro Solis, student expelled for political reasons USACH and a building worker, and Sergio Vega, metalworker. All partners are members of the collective assets Trotskyist permanent revolution, and consistent fighters for the working class, internationally and nationally.

We urge the labor, student, and left, to work together quickly to address the current escalation of repression. A meeting that is aimed at developing a control plan to address these attacks is an unavoidable task for our class and the revolutionary movement. This task demands a principled attitude of all those who fight against capitalism.

Finally, we reiterate that this letter has no other desire than to alert the entire capitalist political activism on repressive crackdown is under development. Of course, far from intimidating and undermining battle energies of our members, this fact only serves to redouble our unwavering commitment to fight alongside the oppressed of the world, at a time when imperialist capital bleeds the world with its savagery, and the war they have declared against us, the poor.

Stop the attack Piñera government and the rule of right and the Coalition against the working class, students, the poor peasants and the Mapuche! Freedom to all workers and popular fighters imprisoned and persecuted by the bourgeois state in Chile and around the world! ■

## Report on MayDay 2013 in Austria

Report from the RKOB (Austrian Section of the RCIT), 2.5.2013

On MayDay 2013 the *Revolutionary Communist Organization for Liberation* (RKOB) called together with the youth organization RED\*REVOLUTION for a multi-national and militant demonstration in Vienna. Since 2005 we organize together with several Stalinist, Centrist and Maoist organizations the internationalist MayDay demonstration - organizations like the *Communist Initiative* and a number of Turkish Organizations like ATIGF (Federation of Workers and Youth from Turkey in Austria), ADHF (Federation for democratic rights in Austria), the *Organization of Labor Immigrants in Austria* and others. We are organizing these demonstrations as an alternative to the one of the Communist Party which remains too sectarian to work together in a multi-national alliance with all of these organizations.

More than 1.000 activists participated in the demonstration, chanting slogans in different languages. The young and multi-national contingent of RKOB and RED\*REVOLUTION was characterized by a high level of organization and fighting spirit – as one can see from the numerous pictures and videos (see links below). We chanted slogans like: “One Solution – Revolution”, “Intifada”, “Free, Red Palestine”, “Black and White – Unite and Fight” and others.

Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the RCIT, was – like all the years ago – a main organizer of the MayDay demonstration. He chaired the rally at the beginning of the demonstration and introduced the speakers. At the end of the rally he said: “The road to socialism is opened by revolutions. Long lives International Solidarity!”

Nina Gunić, spokesperson of the RKOB, spoke at the final rally of the demonstration. She sent revolutionary greetings to all workers and oppressed and emphasized that the building of a revolutionary workers party is more ur-

gent than ever before. She also said that the struggle of all workers and oppressed has to focus also on the struggle for the rights of women, the youth, migrants and national minorities. She finished her speech by calling in three languages “Unity!”: “Einheit! Birlik! Jedinstvo!”

The spokesperson of RED\*REVOLUTION, Marc Hangler addressed the demonstration at the opening rally and called for the abolishment of all privileges of the German language and for full and equal right for all migrants living in Austria. He said: “This country is not my country! We are living the international solidarity!” He emphasized that the unity of the workers needs the consistent struggle for the rights of the specially oppressed layers of our class. The speeches from both speeches can be viewed at the links below.

Our contingent had two banners. The banner of RED\*REVOLUTION read “Against Exploitation, Unemployment, War, Oppression and Racism! For socialism through Revolution!” The RKOB banner showed the heads of the most important Marxist leaders and read: “Marx, Engels, Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky: In their spirit we will fight and win!”

In addition to this we addressed the participants of the social democratic demonstration by selling the May issue of the RKOB paper and having a book stall. All in all our intervention at the demonstration showed the progress which we made in the last 12 month.

Pictures of the demonstration can be found in the multimedia section of the RKOB website: <http://www.rkob.net/multimedia/bilder-erster-mai-2013/>

Videos of our contingent and of the speeches of Nina Gunić, Marc Hangler and Michael Pröbsting can also be found in the multi-media section of the RKOB website: [www.rkob.net/multimedia/videos-erster-mai-2013/](http://www.rkob.net/multimedia/videos-erster-mai-2013/) ■



MayDay Demonstration 2013 in Vienna: The Contingent of the RKOB (Austrian Section of the RCIT)

## Announcement of a new Book from the RCIT

# Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South

## Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new book. It's called **THE GREAT ROBBERY OF THE SOUTH**. The book's subtitle is: *Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism*. The book is in English-language. It has 15 chapters, 448 pages and includes 139 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who is the *International Secretary* of the RCIT.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting analyses the super-exploitation and oppression of the semi-colonial world (often referred to as the "Third World") by the imperialist powers and monopolies. He shows that the relationship between the small minority of rich capitalist countries and the huge majority of mankind living in the semi-colonial world forms one of the most important elements of the imperialist world system we are living in. *The Great Robbery of the South* shows that the past decades have been a complete confirmation of the validity of Lenin's theory of imperialism and its programmatic conclusions.

*The Great Robbery of the South* demonstrates the important changes in the relationship between the imperialist and the semi-colonial countries. Using comprehensive material (including 139 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that never before has such a big share of the world capitalist value been produced in the South. Never before have the imperialist monopolies been so dependent on the super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world. Never before has migrant labor from the semi-colonial world played such a significant role for the capitalist value production in the imperialist countries. Never before has the huge majority of the world working class lived in the South – outside of the old imperialist metropolises.

### The Author

Michael Pröbsting is a revolutionary activist since 30 years. He is the author of many articles and pamphlets in German and English language. He published books or contributed to books on *Rosa Luxemburg* (1999), on the *World Economy* (2008), on *Migration* (2010) and the *Arab Revolution* (2011). He is the *International Secretary* of the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency*.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting argues that a correct understanding of the nature of imperialism as well as of the program of permanent revolution which includes the tactics of consistent anti-imperialism is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future.

You can view more details of the book as well as excerpts at the special website which we have created for this book:

**[www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net](http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net)**

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# The Great Robbery of the South

*Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital*

*Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism*



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency



# From the Archives of Marxism

## Leon Trotsky: For Grynspan. Against Fascist Pogrom Gangs and Stalinist Scoundrels (1939)

### Introduction from the Editorial Board:

**I**n the following article by Leon Trotsky has been published in February 1939. The great leader of the Russian Revolution 1917 and later the Fourth International outlines in it the Marxist position on misguided individual terrorist actions which are undertaken against representatives of the ruling class and its repression apparatus. He explains that Marxists reject such methods while at the same time they refuse to join the reactionary chorus of condemnation which is usually unleashed by the bourgeoisie and their reformist lackeys. This text is highly relevant in situation like presently in Britain after the Woolwich attack (see the RCIT statement on this on pp. 24-26).

The document was first published in the paper of the US Trotskyists "Socialist Appeal" (14 February, 1939). We have taken the article from <http://marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1939/xx/grynspan.htm>.

\* \* \*

It is clear to anyone even slightly acquainted with political history that the policy of the fascist gangsters directly and sometimes deliberately provokes terrorist acts. What is most astonishing is that so far there has been only one Grynspan. Undoubtedly the number of such acts will increase.

We Marxists consider the tactic of individual terror inexpedient in the tasks of the liberating struggle of the proletariat as well as oppressed nationalities. A single isolated hero cannot replace the masses. But we understand only too clearly the inevitability of such convulsive acts of despair and vengeance. All our emotions, all our sympathies are with the self-sacrificing avengers even though they have been unable to discover the correct road. Our sympathy becomes intensified because Grynspan is not a political militant but an inexperienced youth, almost a boy, whose only counselor was a feeling of indignation. To tear Grynspan out of the hands of capitalist justice, which is capable of chopping off his head to further serve capitalist diplomacy, is the elementary, immediate task of the international working class!

All the more revolting in its police stupidity and inexpressible violence is the campaign now being conducted against Grynspan by command of the Kremlin in the international Stalinist press. They attempt to depict him as an agent of the Nazis or an agent of Trotskyists in alliance with the Nazis. Lumping into one heap the provocateur and his victim, the Stalinists ascribe to Grynspan the intention of creating a favorable pretext for Hitler's pogrom measures. What can one say of these venal "journalists" who no longer have any vestiges of shame? Since the beginning of the socialist movement the bourgeoisie has at all times attributed all violent demonstrations of indignation, particularly terrorist acts, to the degenerating influence of

Marxism. The Stalinists have inherited, here as elsewhere, the filthiest tradition of reaction. The Fourth International may, justifiably, be proud that the reactionary scum, including the Stalinists, now automatically links with the Fourth International every bold action and protest, every indignant outburst, every blow at the executioners.

It was so, similarly, with the International of Marx in its time. We are bound, naturally, by ties of open moral solidarity to Grynspan and not to his "democratic" jailers, or the Stalinist slanderers, who need Grynspan's corpse to prop up, even if only partially and indirectly, the verdicts of Moscow justice. Kremlin diplomacy, degenerated to its marrow, attempts at the same time to utilize this "happy" incident to renew their machinations for an international agreement among various governments, including that of Hitler and Mussolini, for a mutual extradition of terrorists. Beware, masters of fraud! The application of such a law will necessitate the immediate deliverance of Stalin to at least a dozen foreign governments.

The Stalinists shriek in the ears of the police that Grynspan attended "meetings of Trotskyites." That, unfortunately, is not true. For had he walked into the milieu of the Fourth International he would have discovered a different and more effective outlet for his revolutionary energy. People come cheap who are capable only of fulminating against injustice and bestiality. But those who, like Grynspan, are able to act as well as conceive, sacrificing their own lives if need be, are the precious leaven of mankind. In the moral sense, although not for his mode of action, Grynspan may serve as an example for every young revolutionist. Our open moral solidarity with Grynspan gives us an added right to say to all the other would-be Grynspans, to all those capable of self-sacrifice in the struggle against despotism and bestiality: *Seek another road!* Not the lone avenger but only a great revolutionary mass movement can free the oppressed, a movement that will leave no remnant of the entire structure of class exploitation, national oppression, and racial persecution. The unprecedented crimes of fascism create a yearning for vengeance that is wholly justifiable. But so monstrous is the scope of their crimes, that this yearning cannot be satisfied by the assassination of isolated fascist bureaucrats. For that it is necessary to set in motion millions, tens and hundreds of millions of the oppressed throughout the whole world and lead them in the assault upon the strongholds of the old society. Only the overthrow of all forms of slavery, only the complete destruction of fascism, only the people sitting in merciless judgment over the contemporary bandits and gangsters can provide real satisfaction to the indignation of the people. This is precisely the task that the Fourth International has set itself. It will cleanse the labor movement of the plague of Stalinism. It will rally in its ranks the heroic generation of the youth. It will cut a path to a worthier and a more humane future. ■

# From the Archives of Marxism

## Leon Trotsky: Disarmament and the United States of Europe (1929)

### Introduction from the Editorial Board:

The following article by Leon Trotsky was written in 1929. It appeared in the period between the World Wars when Europe was marked by the massive rivalry between the Great Powers Britain, Germany and France. Today the rivalry between these powers have been overshadowed by the rivalry between imperialist Europe, the USA, Japan, Russia and China.

Nevertheless Trotsky's article remains relevant for today since he outlines that revolutionaries should argue for the working class to take the issue of Europe's unification in its own hands. Otherwise Europe will be marked by the drive of the bigger powers to "unity" Europe under their boots. Needless to say that as Bolshevik-Communists call the working class to fight against such an "unification" and therefore we sharply denounce those – like the European Left Party – which support the imperialist unification of Europe in words and deeds.

The document was first published in the *Bulletin of the Russian Opposition*, No.6, October 1929, the paper of the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists. An English translation was published the same year in "The Militant", the US Trotskyists paper. It was republished in their journal "Fourth International", Vol.6 No.5, May 1945, We have taken the article from <http://marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1929/10/disarm.htm>

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### Original 1945 introduction by Fourth International

Among the most significant writings of Leon Trotsky are those of his articles which deal with the burning problem of Europe's economic unification and the utter impotence of the bourgeoisie in coping with this problem. The entire course of Europe's development necessitates its unification. The sole progressive solution is the unification of the continent through a system of federated Socialist republics, operating their nationalized economies under a unified plan.

Previous failure to resolve this task by the only progressive class in Europe – its working class – has not removed the economic unification of Europe from the agenda of history. As a matter of fact, in the space of a little more than three decades (1914-1945) we have witnessed several attempts by various reactionary capitalist forces to solve precisely this task. Thus the bourgeoisie of Germany has twice tried to unify Europe by force: the first time under the scepter of the Hohenzollerns in the world war of 1914-1918, and the second, under the aegis of Nazism in the present imperialist slaughter. The second attempt proved even more abortive than the first.

In the interval between these wars, a section of the French bourgeoisie likewise made an attempt – through a series of diplomatic maneuvers under the direction of Premier Briand. This almost forgotten episode occurred in 1929 and, needless to say, it was equally fruitless. On that occasion Trotsky wrote the important article which we reprint in this issue.

Trotsky's approach to the "United States of Europe" is all the more instructive in view of the fact that in the period ahead, with the termination of the war in Europe, the task of the continent's unification is once again imperiously posed, and the road is once again opening up for a progressive solution through the proletarian revolution.

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### 1. How Can Europe Be United?

Briand senses the need of improving the historical lot of 350 million Europeans who are the hearers of highest civilization but who find it impossible to live through a single century without a dozen wars and revolutions. For the sake of pacifying our planet, MacDonald has crossed the Atlantic. On the agenda are the United States of Europe, disarmament, freedom of trade, peace. Capitalist diplomacy everywhere is cooking up a pacifist stew. Peoples of Europe, peoples of the world get out big spoons to swallow it with.

Why all this pother? After all, aren't the Socialists in power in the most important countries in Europe, or else preparing to assume power? Yes, that is just why! It is already apparent that Briand's plan and MacDonald's plan pursue the "pacification" of mankind from diametrically opposite directions. Briand wants to unify Europe as a defensive measure against America. MacDonald wants to earn the gratitude of America by helping her oppress Europe. Two trains are rushing to meet one another in order to save the passengers from – trainwreck.

A frown by the United States sufficed to cancel the Anglo-French naval agreement of July 28. This fact amply demonstrates just what the relationship of forces is in the world today. "Are you by any chance entertaining notions," America intimated, "that I propose to adjust myself to any negotiations you may conduct on either side of the Channel? If you want to discuss *seriously* then take the trouble to cross the Atlantic." And MacDonald promptly reserved a stateroom. This proved to be the most realizable part of the pacifist program.

At Geneva the would-be "unifiers" of the European continent felt scarcely more at ease than the bootleggers on the other side of the ocean. They kept their eyes warily cocked on the American police. Briand began and ended his speeches by vowing that the unification of Europe must in no case and under no circumstances be directed against America. God forbid. In reading these avowals the American politicians must have derived a twofold satisfaction: "Briand is rather scared of us. But he won't put anything over on us, just the same."

While repeating Briand's words with respect to America, Streseman at the same time launched into a veiled polemic

against him. Henderson polemicized against both of them, especially against the French Prime Minister. By and large the discussion at Geneva fell into the following pattern:

*BRIAND*: "In no case against the United States of America."

*STRESEMAN*: "Absolutely so. But some people have hidden plans-America can rely only on Germany."

*MACDONALD*: "I take my oath on the Bible that loyalty in friendship is exclusively the endowment of Britons, especially the Scotch."

That is how the "new international atmosphere" was created at Geneva.

The weakness of present-day Europe flows first and foremost from its economic dismemberment. The strength of the United States, on the contrary, is derived from its economic unity. The question is: How to arrange matters so that the unification of Europe is not directed against America, i.e. without changing the relationship of forces to America's disadvantage?

The *Daily Herald*, MacDonald's semi-official organ, September 10, 1929, characterized the idea of the United States of Europe as "grotesque" and even as a provocation. Should, however, this fantasy be realized, then the United States of Europe would erect a monstrous tariff wall against the USA, so argued MacDonald's semi-official organ, and as a result Great Britain would be caught between two continents as in a vise. And the *Daily Herald* then went on to add: How could one expect aid from America by steering a course toward the unification of Europe? "To act in this way would be insanity or worse." One could not speak more plainly.

No one knows just what the United States of Europe is supposed to signify in practice. Streseman reduced the whole question to a common monetary unit and-postage stamps. That's a bit thin. Briand proposes to "study" the problem whose content nobody knows.

The basic task of unification must be economic in character, not only in the commercial but also productive sense. It is necessary to have a regime that would eliminate the artificial barriers between European coal and European iron. It is necessary to enable the system of electrification to expand in consonance with natural and economic conditions, and not in accordance with the frontiers of Versailles. It is necessary to unite Europe's railways into a single system, and so on and so forth ad infinitum. All this, in its turn, is inconceivable without the destruction of the ancient Chinese system of custom borders within Europe. This would, in its turn, mean a single, All-European customs union – against America.

## 2. Disarmament à la Americaine

There can be no doubt whatever that if the internal tariff barriers were swept away, capitalist Europe, after a certain period of crises of regroupment and readjustment, would attain a high level on the basis of the new distribution of productive forces. This is just as incontestable as the fact that, given the necessary economic conditions, large-scale enterprises are decisively superior to small ones. But we have yet to hear of small entrepreneurs voluntarily renouncing their businesses for this reason. To conquer the outlets the big capitalist must first ruin the small one. The situation with states is similar. Tariff barriers are erected

precisely because they are profitable and indispensable to one national bourgeoisie to the detriment of another, regardless of the fact that they act to retard the development of economy as a whole.

Following the economic conference convened by the League of Nations in order to restore the reign of free trade in Europe, there has been an uninterrupted increase of tariffs. The English government has just proposed a two year "tariff vacation," i.e. no increases in tariffs for the next two years. Such is the modest contribution toward the United States of Europe. But even that still remains on paper.

To defend the tariff walls, which have grown uninterruptedly since the (first world) war, there stand the national armies which have likewise increased above the prewar level. [1] This adequately shows how precious its own national tariff wall is to each national bourgeoisie of the thirty European countries. If a big capitalist must ruin a small capitalist, then a strong state must conquer weaker ones in order to batter down their tariff walls.

Comparing present-day Europe with old Germany where dozens of little German fatherlands had their own customs borders, Streseman tried to find in the economic unification of Germany the precursor of the economic federation of Europe and the world. The analogy is not a bad one. But Streseman omitted to point out that to achieve her unification – solely on a national basis – Germany had to pass through one revolution (1848) and three wars (1864, 1866 and 1870) – not to mention the wars of Reformation. Meanwhile to this very day, after the "republican" revolution (1918), German Austria still remains outside Germany. Under the existing conditions it is hard to believe that a few diplomatic luncheons will suffice for the economic unification of all European nations.

But after all isn't the question of the reduction of Europe's armaments placed on the agenda side by side with the problem of unifying Europe? MacDonald has declared that the road of gradual disarmament is the surest way of guaranteeing peace forevermore. A pacifist may raise this as an objection. Of course, if all the countries disarmed, it would constitute a serious guarantee of peace. But self-disarmament is just as excluded as the voluntary demolition of tariff walls. In Europe today there is only one major country which is seriously disarmed, to wit, Germany. But her disarmament was accomplished, as everybody knows,



Leon Trotsky (1879-1940)

by crushing her in a war, in which Germany herself had sought to "unite Europe" under her domination.

In general it is not hard to show that the problem of "gradual disarmament," if examined closely, assumes the aspect of a tragic farce. The question of disarmament has been replaced by the question of reducing armaments. And finally the latter problem has been reduced to establishing naval parity between the United States and Britain. Today this "achievement" is being acclaimed in advance as the greatest guarantee of peace. This amounts to saying that the surest way of suppressing duels is by regulating the size of pistols to be used by the duellists. Common sense would indicate that the situation itself points to just the contrary. If two of the strongest naval powers haggle so furiously over a few thousand tons, then this only goes to show that each of them is simply jockeying, through diplomacy, for the most advantageous position in the coming military conflict.

However, what does the establishment of "parity" between American and English navies signify from the standpoint of the international situation? It signifies the establishment of a colossal *disparity* between them – in favor of America. And this is of course perfectly understood by all the serious participants in this game, above all by the Admiralties of London and Washington. If they keep quiet about it, it is solely out of considerations of diplomatic shyness. We have no reasons for emulating them.

After the experience of the last war there is no one who does not understand that the next war between the world titans will not be brief but protracted. The issue will be determined by the relative productive power of the two camps. This means among other things that the combat fleets of the sea powers will be not only supplemented and renovated but also expanded and newly created in the very course of the war.

We have seen what an exceptional role the German submarines played in the military operations in the third year of the slaughter. We have seen how England and the United States created in the very course of the war powerful armies, heifer armed and equipped than the old armies on the European continent. This means that soldiers, sailors, ships, guns, tanks and planes available at the outbreak of war represent only the initial stake. The issue will be decided in dependence upon the extent to which a given country is able, while under fire, to produce ships, guns, soldiers and sailors. Even the Czarist government proved capable of preparing certain reserves for the outbreak of war. But what was beyond its strength was to renew and supplement these reserves under fire. In the event of war with America the one theoretically conceivable condition of success for England is to assure herself, before the outbreak of war, a very great military-technical preponderance which would in some measure compensate for the incomparable technical and economic preponderance of the United States. But the equalization of the two fleets prior to the war means that in the very first months of war America will possess an incontestable preponderance. Not for nothing did the Americans threaten several years ago to turn out cruisers in an emergency like so many pancakes.

In the negotiations between Hoover and MacDonald it is not a question of disarmament or even of limiting naval armaments, but solely that of *rationalizing war preparations*.

Types of ships are rendered quickly obsolete. Today when the colossal experience of the war and the resulting flood of inventions and discoveries are just being elaborated for military needs, any and all instruments of military technology are rendered obsolete in a far briefer space of time than was the case before the war. This means that the main section of the fleet may prove outdated even before it has been placed in action. Under such conditions, what sense is there in accumulating ships in advance? A rational approach to the problem demands that the fleet be just large enough for the initial period of the war and of sufficient size in peacetime to serve as an adequate laboratory for testing and checking new inventions and discoveries with a view to placing them in standardized mass production in the course of the war. All the great powers are more or less interested in the "regulation" of armaments, especially such costly ones as naval armaments. But inexorably this regulation becomes transformed into the greatest advantage for the economically strongest country.

In recent years the US war and navy departments have applied themselves systematically to prepare the entire American industry for the needs of the next war. Schwab, one of the magnates of maritime-war industry, recently concluded his speech to the War College with the following words: "It must be made clear to you that war in the present period must be compared with a great big industrial enterprise."

The French imperialist press has naturally done everything in its power to incite America against England. In an article devoted to the question of the naval agreement, *le Temps* writes that naval parity by no means signifies the equalization of sea power, inasmuch as America cannot even dream of securing such naval bases as England has acquired in the course of centuries. The superiorities of British naval bases are absolutely incontestable. But after all, the accord on naval parity, if it is concluded, will not represent America's last word on the subject. Its slogan is "Freedom of the Seas," that is a regime that must first of all place restrictions on Great Britain's use of her naval bases. No less significant is another slogan of the United States: "The Open Door." Under this banner America will act to counterpose not only China but also India and Egypt to Great Britain's naval domination. America will conduct her offensive against British naval bases and points of support not by sea but by land, *i.e.* through the colonies and dominions of Britain. America will put her war fleet in action when the situation is ripe for it. Of course all this is the music of the future. But this future is not separated from us by centuries nor even decades. *Le Temps* need not worry. The US will take piecemeal everything that can be taken piecemeal, altering the relationship of forces in all fields-technical, commercial, financial, military -to the disadvantage of its chief rival, without for a moment losing sight of England's naval bases.

The American press has referred with a contemptuous smile to England's acclaim of Snowden when the latter gained at the Hague conference, with the aid of terrifying gestures, twenty million dollars to England's profit, *i.e.* a sum of money that American tourists perhaps spend on cigars. Is Snowden the victor? asked the *New York Times*. No! The real victor is the Young Plan, *i.e.* American finance capital. Through the Bank of International Settlements, America is enabled by the Young Plan to keep her hand

firmly on the golden pulse of Europe. From the financial shackles on Germany's feet, there extend solid chains which encumber the hands of France, the feet of Italy and the neck of Britain. MacDonald, who nowadays fulfills the duties of keeper to the British lion, points with pride to this dog collar, calling it the best instrument of peace. And mind you, to attain such results all America had to do was exhibit her magnanimity by "aiding" Europe to liquidate the war and "agreeing" to naval parity with a weaker Great Britain.

### 3. The Imperialist Dictatorship of America

Since 1923 we have had to conduct a struggle to have the leadership of the Communist International deign, finally, to take notice of the United States, and to understand that the Anglo-American antagonism constitutes the fundamental line along which world groupings and world conflicts occur. This was considered a heresy as far back as the era of the Fifth World Congress (middle of 1924). We were accused of "overestimating" the role of America. A special legend was invented to the effect that we had proclaimed an epoch of the disappearance of European capitalist contradictions in the face of the American peril. Ossinsky, Larin and others spoiled not a little paper in order to "dethrone" the might of America. Radek, in the wake of bourgeois journalists, demonstrated that ahead lies an epoch of Anglo-American collaboration. Temporary, conjunctural, episodic forms assumed by the reciprocal relations have been confused with the essence of the world process.

Gradually, however, America came to be "recognized" by the official leadership of the Comintern which began to repeat our formulas of yesterday, without forgetting, naturally, to add each time that the Left Opposition overestimates the role of America. The correct appraisal of America was at that time, as everybody knows, the exclusive prerogative of Pepper and Lovestone.

However, no sooner was the course "to the left" inaugurated, than all reservations were cast aside. Today the official theoreticians are obliged to proclaim that England and America are heading directly to war. In this connection I wrote in February last year to friends exiled in Siberia:

The antagonism between England and America has finally broken to the surface in a serious form. It seems that now even Stalin and Bukharin are beginning to understand what it is all about. But our newspapers oversimplify the problem by depicting matters as if the antagonism between England and America is being steadily aggravated and must lead directly to war. Undoubtedly several more breaking points will occur in this process. War would prove too dangerous an enterprise for both sides. They will still make more than one attempt to come to an agreement and to reach a peaceable solution. But on the whole the development is proceeding with giant strides toward a bloody culmination.

The present stage has once again assumed the form of military-naval "collaboration" between America and England, and some French newspapers have even expressed fears of an Anglo-Saxon world dictatorship. The United States of course can and probably will utilize the "collaboration" with England to tighten the reins on Japan and France. But all this will represent phases not toward Anglo-Saxon but American domination of the world, including Great Brit-

ain.

In connection with this perspective, the leaders of the Comintern may once again repeat that we are unable to see anything ahead except the triumph of American capitalism. In much the same way, the petty bourgeois theoreticians of Narodnikism (Russian Populism) used to accuse the pioneer Russian Marxists of failing to see anything ahead except the victory of capitalism. These two accusations are on a par. When we say that America is moving toward world domination, it does not at all mean that this domination will be completely realized, nor, all the less so, that after it is realized to one degree or another, it will endure for centuries or even decades. We are discussing a historical tendency which, in actuality, will be criss-crossed and modified by other historical tendencies. If the capitalist world were able to endure several more decades without revolutionary paroxysms, then these decades would unquestionably witness the uninterrupted growth of American world dictatorship. But the whole point is that this process will inevitably develop its own contradictions which will become coupled with all the other contradictions of the capitalist system. America will force Europe to strive for an ever increasing rationalization and at the same time will leave Europe an ever decreasing share of the world market. This will entail a steady aggravation of the difficulties in Europe. The competition among European states for a share of the world market will inevitably become aggravated. At the same time under the pressure of America, the European states will endeavor to coordinate their forces. This is the main source of Briand's program of the United States of Europe. But whatever the various stages of the development may be, one thing is clear: *The constant disruption of the world equilibrium in America's favor will become the main source of crises and revolutionary convulsions in Europe throughout the entire coming period.* Those who hold that European stabilization is assured for decades understand nothing at all of the world situation and will inevitably sink head first in the swamp of reformism. If this process is approached from across the Atlantic Ocean, i.e. from the standpoint of the fate of USA, then here too the perspectives opened up resemble least of all a blissful capitalist idyl. The prewar power of the United States grew on the basis of its internal market, i.e. the dynamic equilibrium between industry and agriculture. In this development the war has produced a sharp break. The United States exports capital and manufactured goods in ever greater volume. The growth of America's world power means that the entire system of American industry and banking—that towering capitalist skyscrapers resting to an ever increasing measure on the foundations of world economy. But this foundation is mined, and the United States itself continues to add more mines to it day by day. By exporting commodities and capital, by building up its navy, by elbowing England aside, by buying up the key enterprises in Europe, by forcing its way into China, etc., American finance capital is digging with its own hands powder and dynamite cellars beneath its own foundation. Where will the fuse be lit? Whether it will be in Asia, Europe or Latin America – or what is most likely in various places at one and the same time that is a second-rate question.

The whole misfortune is that the incumbent leadership of the Comintern is totally incapable of following all the

stages of this gigantic process. It shies away from facts by means of platitudes. Even the pacifist agitation in favor of the United States of Europe has taken it by surprise.

#### 4. Soviet United States of Europe

The question of the United States of Europe regarded from the proletarian standpoint was raised by me in September 1914, i.e. at the very beginning of the (last) imperialist war. In the pamphlet, *The War and the International*, the author of these lines sought to demonstrate that the unification of Europe was irrefutably advanced to the forefront by Europe's entire economic development, but that the United States of Europe was conceivable only as the political form of the dictatorship of the European proletariat.

In 1923 when the occupation of the Ruhr once again posed acutely the fundamental problems of European economy (primarily coal and iron ore) and coincident with them also the problems of the revolution, we succeeded in having the slogan of the United States of Europe officially adopted by the leadership of the Comintern. But the attitude toward this slogan remained hostile. Not being in a position to reject it, the Comintern leaders regarded it as an abandoned child of "Trotskyism." After the collapse of the 1923 German revolution, Europe lived the life of stabilization. The basic revolutionary questions disappeared from the agenda. The slogan of the United States of Europe was forgotten. It was not included in the program of the Comintern. Stalin explained this new zigzag with remarkable profundity: Since we cannot tell the order in which the various countries will accomplish their revolutions, it follows that it is impossible to predict whether the United States of Europe will be necessary. In other words, this means that it is easier to make a prognosis after the event than before it. As a matter of fact, it is not at all a question of the order in which revolutions will be accomplished. On this score one can only speculate. But this does not relieve the European workers, nor the International as a whole from the necessity of giving a clear answer to the question: How can European economy be snatched from its present state of dispersion and how can the popular masses of Europe be saved from decay and enslavement?

The trouble, however, is that the economic ground for the slogan of the United States of Europe overthrows one of the basic ideas of the present Comintern program, namely: the idea of building socialism in one country.

The essence of our epoch lies in this, that the productive forces have definitely outgrown the framework of the national state and have assumed primarily in America and Europe partly continental, partly world proportions. The imperialist war grew out of the contradiction between the productive forces and national boundaries. And the Versailles peace which terminated the war has aggravated this contradiction still further. In other words: thanks to the development of the productive forces capitalism has long ago been unable to exist in a single country. Meanwhile, socialism can and will base itself on far more developed productive forces, otherwise socialism would represent not progress but regression with respect to capitalism. In 1914 I wrote: "If the problem of socialism were compatible with the framework of a national state, it would thereby become compatible with national defense." The formula Soviet United States of Europe is precisely the political

expression of the idea that socialism is impossible in one country. Socialism cannot of course attain its full development even in the limits of a single continent. The Socialist United States of Europe represents the historical slogan which is a stage on the road to the world socialist federation.

It has happened more than once in history that when the revolution is not strong enough to solve in time a task that is mature historically, its solution is undertaken by reaction. Thus Bismarck unified Germany in his own manner after the failure of the 1848 revolution. Thus Stolypin tried to solve the agrarian question after the defeat of the 1905 revolution. Thus the Versailles victors solved the national question in their own way, which all the previous bourgeois revolutions in Europe proved impotent to solve. The Germany of the Hohenzollerns tried to organize Europe in its own way, i.e. by uniting it under its helmet. It was then that victorious Clemenceau decided to utilize the victory in order to slice up Europe into the greatest possible number of pieces. Today Briand, armed with needle and thread, is preparing to sew these pieces together again, even if he doesn't know where to begin.

The leadership of the Comintern, and particularly the leadership of the French Communist Party are exposing the hypocrisy of official pacifism. But this is not enough. To explain away the course toward the unification of Europe solely as a means of preparing war against the USSR is, to put it mildly, puerile and only compromises the task of defending the Soviet Republic. The slogan of the United States of Europe is not a cunning invention of diplomacy. It springs from the immutable economic needs of Europe which emerge all the more painfully and acutely the greater is the pressure of the USA. It is especially now that the Communist parties must counterpose the slogan of the Soviet United States of Europe to the pacifist concoctions of the European imperialists.

But the Communist parties have their hands tied. The living slogan, with a profound historical content, has been expunged from the program of the Comintern solely in the interests of the struggle against the Opposition. All the more decisively must the Opposition raise this slogan. In the person of the Opposition the vanguard of the European proletariat tells its present rulers: In order to unify Europe it is first of all necessary to wrest power out of your hands. We will do it. We will unite Europe. We will unite it against the hostile capitalist world. We will turn it into a mighty drill-ground of militant socialism. We will make it the cornerstone of the World Socialist Federation.

October 4, 1929

#### Endnotes

1. Before the war (of 1914-1918) Great Britain spent \$237 million on her navy; today, she spends \$270 million annually. The US fleet cost \$130 million in 1913. The cost for the current year (1929) is \$364 million. Finally, Japan's naval expenditures have increased in the same period from \$48 million to \$127 million, i.e. have almost trebled. It is hardly surprising that the Ministers of Finance are beginning to suffer from attacks of seasickness.

The combined expenditures for militarism (land, sea, air) by the five greatest capitalist powers have grown in the last three years alone from \$2,170,000,000 to \$2,292,000,000 — Leon Trotsky ■

# Revolutionary Communist International Tendency:

## What does the RCIT stand for?

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) is a fighting organisation for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. It has national sections in various countries. The working class is the class of all those (and their families) who are forced to sell their labour power as wage earners to the capitalists. The RCIT stands on the theory and practice of the revolutionary workers' movement associated with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Capitalism endangers our lives and the future of humanity. Unemployment, war, environmental disasters, hunger, exploitation, are part of everyday life under capitalism as are the national oppression of migrants and nations and the oppression of women, young people and homosexuals. Therefore, we want to eliminate capitalism.

The liberation of the working class and all oppressed is possible only in a classless society without exploitation and oppression. Such a society can only be established internationally.

Therefore, the RCIT is fighting for a socialist revolution at home and around the world.

This revolution must be carried out and lead by the working class, for she is the only class that has nothing to lose but their chains.

The revolution can not proceed peacefully because never before has a ruling class voluntarily surrendered their power. The road to liberation includes necessarily the armed rebellion and civil war against the capitalists.

The RCIT is fighting for the establishment of workers' and peasant republics, where the oppressed organize themselves in rank and file meetings in factories, neighbourhoods and schools – in councils. These councils elect and control the government and all other authorities and can always replace them.

Real socialism and communism has nothing to do with the so-called "real existing socialism" in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba or Eastern Europe. In these countries, a bureaucracy dominated and oppressed the proletariat.

The RCIT supports all efforts to improve the living conditions of workers and the oppressed. We combine this with a perspective of the overthrow of capitalism.

We work inside the trade unions and advocate class struggle, socialism and workers' democracy. But trade unions and social democracy are controlled by a bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is a layer which is connected with the state and capital via jobs and privileges. It is far from the interests and living circumstances of the members. This bureaucracy's basis rests mainly on the top, privileged layers of the working class - the workers' aristocracy. The struggle for the liberation of the working class must be based on the broad mass of the proletariat rather than their upper strata.

The RCIT strives for unity in action with other organizations. However, we are aware that the policy of social democracy and the pseudo-revolutionary groups is dangerous and they ultimately represent an obstacle to the

emancipation of the working class.

We fight for the expropriation of the big land owners as well as for the nationalisation of the land and its distribution to the poor and landless peasants. We fight for the independent organisation of the rural workers.

We support national liberation movements against oppression. We also support the anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed peoples against the great powers. Within these movements we advocate a revolutionary leadership as an alternative to nationalist or reformist forces.

In a war between imperialist states we take a revolutionary defeatist position, i.e. we don't support neither side and advocate the transformation of the war into a civil war against the ruling class. In a war between an imperialist power (or its stooge) and a semi-colonial country we stand for the defeat of the former and the victory of the oppressed country.

The struggle against national and social oppression (women, youth, sexual minorities etc.) must be lead by the working class. We fight for revolutionary movements of the oppressed (women, youth, migrants etc.) based on the working class. We oppose the leadership of petty-bourgeois forces (feminism, nationalism, Islamism etc.) and strive to replace them by a revolutionary communist leadership.

Only with a revolutionary party fighting as its leadership can the working class win. The construction of such a party and the conduct of a successful revolution as it was demonstrated by the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky in Russia are a model for the revolutionary parties and revolutions also in the 21 Century.

For new, revolutionary workers' parties in all countries!  
For a 5<sup>th</sup> Workers International on a revolutionary basis!  
Join the RCIT!

*No future without socialism! No socialism without a revolution!  
No revolution without a revolutionary party! ■*



