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Hong Kong/China: Down with the CCP Dictatorship!



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

plus: Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Yemen,
CWI&Zionism, Pakistan, Brazil, etc.

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED UNITE!

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Revolutionary Communism

No. 27, October 2014

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Hong Kong/China: Long Live the Anti-Government Protests!

For a General Strike against Police Repression and for Democratic Rights!

Down with the Reactionary CCP Dictatorship!

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 2.10.2014

1. In Hong Kong, mass protests have erupted against the planned reform for the next scheduled elections in 2017. On 31 August, the National People's Congress Standing Committee announced that, while Hong Kong's future chief executive can be elected by popular vote, no more than three candidates will be able to compete, and these three must be approved in advance by a 1,200 person nominating committee composed of Beijing loyalists. According to the decision, only candidates "*who love the country and love Hong Kong*" (i.e., who love the rulers in Beijing) will be allowed to stand for election. When student protestors organized a series of street-protests, the police attacked them with tear gas. This has provoked a massive surge of popular solidarity – including trade unions calling for solidarity strikes – and culminated in the call for the resignation of Hong Kong's pro-Beijing Governor Leung Chun Ying. Socialists in Hong Kong and internationally must support these democratic protests. The task is to transform them into a general strike and to spread to the mainland the struggle against the Stalinist-Capitalist regime.

2. Hong Kong is a former colony of British imperialism which was reunited with China on 1 July 1997. Because the ruling "Communist" Party promoted the restoration of capitalism in China in the early 1990s, both Hong Kong's and the mainland's economies operate on the same basis – exploitation of workers for the profit of the small minority of capitalists. While Hong Kong is known to be one of the richest cities in the world, its wealth is concentrated in the hands of a small group of tycoons, such as Li Ka-Shing. At the same time, the mass of the working class is living in poverty. However, as part of the treaty between Beijing and London, Hong Kong became a *Special Administrative Region* which effectively meant that it could retain various aspects of the old political and juridical system. (This arrangement is known under the slogan "*One country, two systems*.") As a result Hong Kong has a restricted bourgeois democracy where out of the seventy members of the Legislative Council only forty are elected by popular vote (the rest are "elected" by so-called functional constituencies consisting of a small number of professional people). However, this means that the working people in Hong Kong have comparatively more rights to democratically express their opinion and to protest than do their brothers and sisters on the mainland. But the Stalinist-Capitalist regime with Xi Jinping at the top is determined to ensure that the future Governor of Hong Kong is loyal to Beijing. As a result it is not willing to comply with the protestors' demand for democratic elections.

3. The protest movement was initiated by university and school students – led by the *Hong Kong Federation of Students* (HKFS) – who organized strikes and street demonstrations starting from 22 September. Popular support

surged after the violent crackdown of the police on 26 September. On 28 September the *Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions* (HKCTU) – albeit a small union – issued a call for a "general strike." The HKCTU demands – reflecting the desire of the popular masses: "*i) Police must release the arrested protestors immediately. They must guarantee the basic human rights of the arrested protestors during retention; ii) The government and police must stop suppressing the peaceful assembly and apologize to the people; iii) National People's Congress must withdraw the 'fake universal suffrage'. The Hong Kong government must restart the consultation of political reform. Workers have been demanding a fair election system to rectify the longstanding problem of the business-leaning government. However, the 'fake universal suffrage' framework proposed by NPC is merely 'old wine in a new bottle'; iv) Chief Executive Leung Chun Ying must step down to bear the responsibility of violent suppression of protest.*" Despite its small size, the union federation's call was followed up in a number of sectors (i.e., water workers, bus drivers, some bank employees, workers at the Coca Cola factory in Sha Tin, schoolteachers, university lecturers). On 29 September, more than 180,000 people (in a city of seven million) demonstrated against the repression!

4. The Stalinist-Capitalist regime in Beijing is determined to smash the protests. It fears that the demands for democracy could provoke similar protests in mainland China. For this reason it is attempting to suppress the spread of any news about the demonstrations in Hong Kong by massively censoring news and social media. In the past few years, there has been a significant increase in the number of protests by mainland workers as well as peasants. The regime also brutally suppresses the growing unrest among the national minorities of the Uyghur and the Tibetan peoples (as evidenced, for example, by the life sentence handed down against the moderate Uyghur scholar Ilham Tohti for his political dissent). In addition, Xi Jinping is currently engaged in a factional struggle against the so-called "*Shanghai gang*" (former President Jiang Zemin and his protégés) and the group around former President Hu Jintao. Any failure to suppress the current protests in Hong Kong could weaken Xi's position.

5. In its struggle against Governor Leung Chun Ying and the Beijing regime, the protest movement faces various obstacles within its ranks. Among them are the bourgeois-liberal politicians of the "*pan-democracy camp*" who just want to utilize the movement to achieve a better deal with Beijing as they have in past years. Among them are also the middle-class intellectuals, like Benny Tai – a law professor, who are leading the "*Occupy Central*" movement. They totally ignored the student movement which organized the protests in September, but hope to take over the leadership after others have achieved such great success. Socialists must organize to counter the influence of

these petty-bourgeois and bourgeois leaders and to win over the movement to a working class perspective. As such, socialists should call for democratic mass assemblies to discuss the demands and tactics of the movement and to act against the self-appointed petty-bourgeois leaders. The workers and students should form action committees to organize the struggle. Based on delegates elected by such committees, the movement could be democratically led by a coordinating body. Such action committees could also be the organizing bodies to found self-defense forces against the looming crackdown by the police.

6. The main task now is to unite the resistance of the workers and students in an indefinite general strike in Hong Kong in order to bring down Governor Leung Chun Ying and to force the regime to immediately accept full universal suffrage. Socialists should also call for the expropriation of the tycoons who are the powerful backers of the regime.

7. However it is equally important not to limit the struggle to the peninsula. The protest movement must fight for democracy not only in Hong Kong but also in the whole of China. Uniting Hong Kong workers and students with their brothers and sisters in Beijing, Shanghai, East Turkestan, and Tibet is crucial to winning the struggle for democracy. It is imperative because the regime in Beijing controls a huge apparatus of repression with which it could easily crush the protest movement in Hong Kong. Hua Chunying, Chinese Foreign Minister, recently held a news conference in order to emphasize Beijing's control over peninsula: *"Hong Kong is China's Hong Kong."* Socialists will gladly confirm that Hong Kong is no longer the property of British imperialism but they will add: *"China will become the Worker's and People's China!"* They will also state that they oppose China as an imperialist power – such as they oppose all other imperialist powers like the USA, Japan, EU or Russia.

8. In addition, socialists should argue for spreading the revolutionary-democratic struggle to the mainland in order to combat backward, localist sentiment which is widespread among the middle-class of Hong Kong. Such sentiments were nurtured during the 155 year-long colonial rule of Britain and by the influx of anti-communist elements after the social revolution took place under the leadership of the Stalinist party after 1949.

9. Socialists should fight for the formation of an independent workers' party. Such a party should combine the struggle for democratic rights with the struggle against growing social injustice. Social inequality and dictatorship are caused by the same people: the ruling capitalist class and its "Communist" dictatorship. Such a party should also call for the expropriation of the big capitalists – including the numerous "princelings." It should fight for the nationalization of the domestic and foreign corporations and banks under workers' control. And, it should also raise the banner of permanent revolution, i.e., the intermeshing of the democratic and socialist revolutions, which will lead to an armed uprising of the workers and poor peasants with the aim of overthrowing capitalism and founding a workers' and peasants' republic.

10. Revolutionaries in Hong Kong and China should unite to build an authentic Marxist organization based on a program for permanent revolution. They should combine such a perspective with their participation in the struggle

to create a new World Party of Socialist Revolution which, in our opinion, will be the Fifth Workers' International.

** For the immediate release of all arrested protestors! Down with Chief Executive Leung Chun Ying!*

** For the people, and not a few selected bureaucrats, to decide which candidates truly "love China and Hong Kong"! For democratic elections without any restrictions on the candidates!*

** For mass assemblies and action committees to democratically organize the protest movement! For the establishment of self-defense units against police repression!*

** For a general strike in Hong Kong!*

** For democratic rights throughout all of China! No restrictions on the right to demonstrate, strike, organize parties and trade unions, nor on the free flow of information in the media!*

** For higher wages! Full citizenship rights for "migrants" wherever they live!*

** Support the national liberation struggle of the Uyghur and the Tibetan peoples!*

** Expropriate big business and nationalize the banks! Place large industrial and service enterprises under workers' control!*

** Down with the reactionary CCP Dictatorship!*

** For a workers' and poor peasants' government based on councils and popular militias of the armed masses!*

International Secretariat of the RCIT ■



Mass Demonstration of Students in Hong Kong, 23.9.2014

Pakistan: Down with the Government of Nawaz Sharif!

No trust for Populist Politicians like Imran Khan and Tahir-ul-Qadri! Turn the Mass Protests into a Revolution Led by the Working Class in Alliance with the Urban and Rural Poor!

*Joint Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)
and the Revolutionary Workers Organization (RCIT-Section in Pakistan), 10.9.2014*

1. The government of Nawaz Sharif and his bourgeois, reactionary, pro-imperialist party PML-N are facing a deep crisis. In the eyes of the popular masses, they are thoroughly discredited for their unwavering support of US imperialism's "war on terror," their endemic corruption, and their inability to improve the living conditions of ordinary people. The PPP – the former ruling party of the late Benazir Bhutto, currently led by "Mister 10 percent" Asif Ali Zardari – is equally despised. On this backdrop, since 15 August hundreds of thousands of people have been protesting in the capital city, Islamabad, against government corruption and the rigged elections of 2013, and are demanding that the government resign. These protest marches and sit-ins are the initiative of two opposition parties – the *Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf* (PTI), led by Imran Khan, and the *Pakistan Awami Tehrik* (PAT), led by the cleric Tahir-ul-Qadri.

2. While coordinated, these protests are nevertheless organizationally divided into two separate camps. Imran Khan's PTI heads the so-called *Azaadi March* (Independence March) while al-Qadri's PAT leads the so-called *Inqilabi March* (Revolutionary March). Imran Khan follows a bourgeois-liberal agenda representing the upper layer of the urban middle class (a relatively small percent of Pakistan's population – about 10 million out of a nationwide total of 196 million people). In the last few years, his party has succeeded in increasing its popular support at the expense of the two main capitalist parties, the PML-N and the PPP, thanks to its rhetorical campaign against corruption and the US imperialist "war on terror." Tahir al-Qadri's PAT party represents the lower strata of the middle class, but also has substantial support among the workers and the urban and rural poor. Al-Qadri owes his support by the masses to his bourgeois populist agenda which includes numerous democratic demands. He has also won popular support by calling for a new "revolution."

3. Pakistan's military command is attempting to exploit the present governmental crisis in order to gain influence. Consequently, on 28 August it offered – on the request of the government – to act as the "facilitator" between the government and the protestors. While there are currently no indications of an imminent military coup, one must not forget that, since the country gained independence in 1947, the military has ruled Pakistan by means of an open dictatorship for more than three decades (1958-1971, 1977-1988, and 1999-2008). Naturally, in the event of a new military coup d'état, all progressive forces must mobilize against the army command, the main enemy in such a situation.

4. All socialists and consistent democrats should

support the mass protests against the reactionary government of Nawaz Sharif. Despite all their limitations and the illusions they spawn among the masses, the current wave of protests reflect a progressive, justified hatred of the government by the lower middle class, the workers, and the poor; a government which unashamedly serves the rich, is thoroughly corrupt, and plays the stooge for Western imperialism and its war of aggression in western Pakistan and Afghanistan. At the same time, the RWO and the RCIT warn against having any illusions about the respective leaderships of the PTI and PAT. For these politicians, the current protests are merely a device to achieve an advantageous deal when bargaining with the political establishment. All these leaders are fundamentally supporters of the capitalist system.

5. In the present situation, the central task of authentic socialists is to get the organized workers' movement to join the protests, something resisted by the reformist and Stalinist bureaucratic leadership. The RWO and the RCIT call for popular assemblies to be held in Islamabad's protest camps, allowing the masses to democratically make decisions, instead of receiving orders handed down by the protests' leaders. We call for the formation of action committees around the country to spread the protests and build a nationwide mass movement led by the working class. It is of prime importance that socialists challenge the leadership of the PTI and PAT. Hence it is vital that a revolutionary workers' party be built as part of a new Fifth International. Such a party would fight for a program of socialist revolution: for the nationalization of the banks and corporations under workers' control; for the expropriation of the big land owners and redistribution of land to small and landless peasants; for the right of national self-determination of the oppressed national minorities in Pakistan (e.g., like the Baloch people or the Kashmiri people); and for the formation of a workers' and poor peasants' gov-



ernment defended by popular militias. In addition, such a government would immediately expel the US, Chinese, and other imperialist monopolies and military forces.

6. The RWO and the RCIT unequivocally condemn the shameful betrayal of the protesting masses by the reformist and centrist forces that either totally ignore or, even worse, denounce the mass protests taking place in Islamabad. The reformist *Awami Workers Party* (AWP) condemns the democratic and anti-corruption protests as being organized by "right-wing populists" who act as stooges of the military command. These condemnations are not only wrong but are also particularly grotesque in their irony, given the fact that just three months ago the AWP leadership itself openly praised the army's brutal military offensive against the Taliban – in collaboration with the US imperialists – in North Waziristan: "After all the government and its armed forces have seen the light of the day, and have abandoned the futile negotiations, which went on for several months between itself and Taliban. Awami Workers Party from the very outset opposed negotiations with terrorists and demanded a different course of action against Taliban and other reactionary terrorists outfits. (...) There are people and groups who in name of religion directly or indirectly support the terrorist activities of the Taliban and its likes. The government Pakistan must come out with a plan to isolate and annihilate all such elements." (AWP Joint statement on military operation in Waziristan, 17 June 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/farooq.tari/posts/10152444386972856>) Similarly, during the present crisis, the reformist AWP has joined the side of counterrevolution and openly defends the reactionary government of Nawaz Sharif against the mass protests by stressing its legitimacy: "... despite the civilian government's major economic and political failings, it retains a mandate to fulfill its term in office" (AWP Statement, 31 August 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/AwamiWorkersParty>) Again, all this decisively reconfirms the characterization of the AWP by the RWO and the RCIT as a reformist party which does not serve the working class. Instead, since its beginnings, the AWP has proven time and again that not only does it not advance the working class struggle, but rather

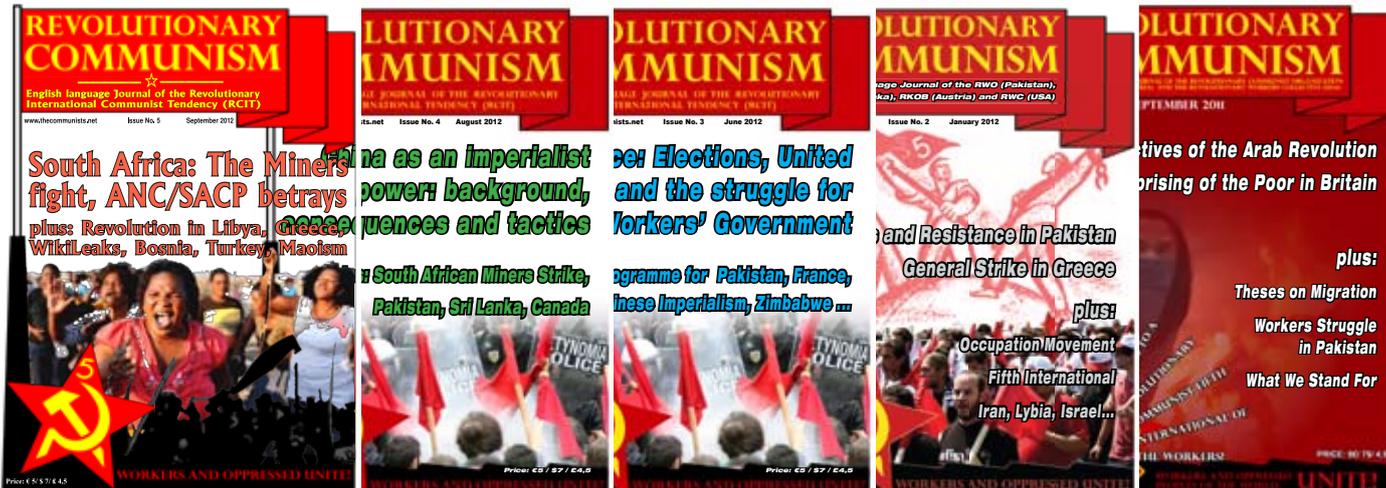
acts as a brake or, even worse, as an instrument of the counterrevolution. We call upon all socialists inside the AWP to break with this obstacle and to join us in building an authentic revolutionary workers' party.

7. No less so, Lal Khan's "The Struggle" group (IMT section in Pakistan) once more has proven itself to be a right-centrist outfit. It too refuses to lend any support to the mass protests. Lal Kahn compares Tahir al-Qadri's PAT with Islamist fundamentalists like Jamaat-e-Islami or even terrorist groups. He denounces PAT as "sectarian" which "is not less reactionary than that of the other sects". (Lal Khan: Political Islam in Pakistan, 2 September 2014, <http://www.marxist.com/political-islam-in-pakistan.htm>) This is just pseudo-socialist rhetoric to cover the IMT group's adaption to the bourgeois establishment.

8. We in the RWO and the RCIT stand for all of the following:

- * Spreading the mass protests against the government of Nawaz Sharif throughout the entire country! For the founding of mass assemblies and action committees to organize the struggle in a democratic manner! Harbor no illusions about the leaderships of PTI and PAT! Force the leadership of the organized workers' movement to join the protests!
- * Making all state functionaries accountable to the popular masses and recallable at any time! They must not earn more than an average worker's income!
- * Nationalization of the key industries and banks under workers' control!
- * Expropriation of the big land owners and the redistribution of land to the small and landless peasants!
- * Defense of the right to national self-determination for all oppressed national minorities in Pakistan (e.g., like the Baloch people or the Kashmiri people)!
- * Defeat for the US "War on Terror"! Expel the US, Chinese and other imperialist monopolies and military forces!
- * A workers' and poor peasants' government defended by popular militia!
- * A socialist federation for all of South Asia!
- * Onward to the building of a revolutionary workers' party as part of a Fifth International! ■

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Defeat Obama's New Crusade in the Middle East!

**For an International Mass Movement to Defeat the Offensive of the Great Western Powers! Support the Kurdish Struggle for an Independent State!
No to the Harassment of Muslims in Western Countries!**

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 18.9.2014

1. The Obama administration has called for the formation of an international coalition of states under its leadership in order to “destroy” and “annihilate” the extreme Salafi-Takfiri *Islamic State* (IS, often called *Daash* in Arabic). Since early August, the US has carried out more than 162 air strikes inside Iraq. Unsurprisingly, General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the US military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, is already speculating about sending US ground troops into combat in the region. US officials have speculated that this war might last for at least three years.

2. Regardless of Obama's rhetoric, the “*War against IS*” is nothing but a cover for another major imperialist offensive of the US and its allies in the Middle East. It is an attempt by US imperialism to strengthen its economic and political influence in the Middle East following the setbacks it suffered during the past decade. In the wake of the US initiative, Western European imperialism and Australia similarly hope to enhance their positions in the region. These powers also interested in supporting Israel which suffered a humiliating political defeat in its recent failed war of aggression against the Palestinian resistance in Gaza. In addition, the war against IS/Daash serves as a pretext to wage a chauvinistic campaign against Muslim migrants in Western countries who are frequently discriminated against, oppressed, and super-exploited as cheap labor. Finally, this imperialistic war is intended to prop up the instable rule of the pro-Western Arab dictators.

3. The composition of the US-led coalition is indicative of its reactionary nature. The US itself – the biggest and most powerful imperialistic state on the planet – has been involved in all the world's major wars during the past century and has killed millions of people, a large percentage of which were non-combatant civilians, in their wars in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. In general, Britain and France, who on their own have a bloody legacy of colonial wars waged by them for centuries, supported the US in these imperialist wars of aggression. Not at all out of character, the tiny imperialist country of the Netherlands, which assisted the Serbian chauvinist mass murder Ratko Mladić in his massacring of 8,000 unarmed Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica in 1995, is also part of this newest coalition. Finally, the corrupt monarchs and military dictators of Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf states – prime examples of the imperialist values of “democracy” and “human rights” – have also signed up again as US lackeys. These dictators are primarily motivated by fear for the safety of their own regimes and their concomitant luxurious lives, fears which are justified considering the heroic uprising of the Arab workers, peasants, and youth since the beginning of 2011. And these greedy and power-hungry mass murderers and dictators dare lecture others about “terrorism”?! How

can state terrorists possibly wage a “war on terror”?! They can't! No, this is rather an imperialist war of terror!

4. Obama's new crusade in the Middle East is part of a general offensive of the great Western powers to re-establish their influence, so undermined in the wake of the emergence of the new imperialist powers, Russia and China, as well as by their tremendous loss of prestige in the course of events in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Arab Revolutions, and various Latin American countries. Not at all coincidentally, in parallel to this new crusade, the Western powers are exploiting the civil war in the eastern Ukraine as a pretext to launch a political and military offensive against their Russian rival.

5. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) calls the international workers' movement and all popular mass organizations to unite in mobilizing against the new imperialist offensive. Together, we must stand up and undermine any popular support in Western countries for the “war against IS.” This united mobilization should organize demonstrations, strikes, and direct actions against the US and their military allies.

6. The RCIT also calls for the defense of our Muslim brothers and sisters residing in the Western countries, who are increasingly harassed by the bourgeois state, the media, and nearly all established parties – from fascists to liberals, social democrats to greens. These imperialist parties are exploiting the reactionary nature of IS/Daash to stigmatize and humiliate the Muslim migrants and thereby make them a more submissive sector of the working class. At the same time, these forces of reaction aim at demoralizing backward sectors of the working class using chauvinistic, anti-Muslim hatred to distract them from resisting the ongoing austerity offensive of the bosses and the capitalist governments.

7. We restate our support for the Kurdish struggle for an independent state, and for the defense of all religious minorities against the oppression of IS/Daash. No less so, just as we defended the Kosovar, Bosnian and other resistance movements' right to get weapons from wherever possible, we defend the Syrian and Kurdish peoples' right to acquire weapons – even from Western imperialists – to advance their struggle for freedom. At the same time, we warn against the bourgeois leaderships of the *Peshmergas* – Barzani's *Kurdistan Democratic Party* and Talabani's *Patriotic Union of Kurdistan* – both of whom have long records of offering their service as agents for Western imperialism. In contrast to them, Öcalan's PKK has been persecuted by imperialists for decades. Nevertheless, the leadership of the PKK has consistently demonstrated its own petty-bourgeois character, first when it failed to defend Iraq against the US imperialist attacks in 1991 and 2003, and now by its offer to act as an ally of the West against IS/

Daash. While the RCIT supports the struggle of the Kurdish people to win their rights even if this is accomplished under non-revolutionary leadership, we emphasize that they can only achieve true liberation by establishing a united and socialist Kurdistan.

8. Regardless of some of the Western media's fictitious stories about the IS/Daash, there is no doubt about this organization's extremely reactionary nature. Clearly, its member adhere to a deeply sectarian understanding of Islam which represses not only non-Muslims but also Shiites and even Sunnis who think differently, and who are dubbed by them *kafirs* (infidels). Their petty-bourgeois reactionary nature has been made clear to all by the battles they wage against other Syrian rebels, as well as during the recent Gaza war when IS/Daash fighters burned Palestinian flags and declared Hamas as *apostates* because of its struggle for *national* liberation. However, it is important to recognize that IS/Daash has gained significant support among many Muslims both in the Arab world as well as among migrant youth in the West. Thousands of Muslim migrant youth in Western Europe are travelling to Syria to join the uprising against Assad – unfortunately under the leadership of the IS/Daash. Many Muslims – and in particular many youths – have become despondent and disillusioned due to the state terrorism used by Assad's regime as well as the passivity of the official leaders of the *ummah*. The objective reasons for the appeal of IS/Daash to these youths include:

- i) The war of state terrorism waged by the Assad regime against the Syrian people which has already claimed more than 190,000 lives;
- ii) The systematic discrimination of Sunnis in Iraq and the leading role of the IS/Daash in the legitimate rebellion of the Sunnis against the Maliki regime;
- iii) The failure of the imperialist powers to give any material aid to the Syrian rebels, as well as their support for the sectarian Maliki government in Iraq;
- iv) The oppression and poverty of many Muslim migrants in the Western countries, and the resulting disillusionment among youth;
- v) The utter discrediting of the Arab regimes, including the corrupt monarchies in the Gulf States;
- vi) The failure of the international workers' movement – controlled by social democratic and Stalinist bureaucrats, and aided by various centrist groups – to provide any meaningful support for the Syrian Revolution or, worse, their support for the Assad dictatorship.

9. Naturally, socialists must support the Syrian rebels, the Kurds, and religious minorities in their defense against IS/Daash attacks. But this legitimate defense must never lead to any collusion with the imperialists. Quite the opposite, socialists must defend the resistance forces in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Pakistan, Mali, etc. – including reactionary Salafi-Takfiris like the IS/Daash – against the much greater terrorists: the great Western powers and their allied Arab dictators. Only by such a principled anti-imperialist stand will it be possible for socialists to be heard among the growing numbers of Muslim youth who, unfortunately, have many illusions regarding IS/Daash. The goal must be to break these Muslim workers, peasants, and youth away from the reactionary IS/Daash Salafi-Takfiris, and to win them over to a democratic, anti-imperialist, and socialist perspective.

10. The struggle against Obama's crusade must be combined with the continuing support for the Palestinian people and their heroic resistance against Israeli occupation. For an international solidarity campaign with the Palestinian people including financial, medical, and military aid for the people in Gaza! For international brigades of volunteers to support the Palestinian resistance against the powerful Israeli army – as the workers' movement did in solidarity with the antifascist resistance in Spain in the 1930s! For an international boycott campaign against Israel!

11. The RCIT calls for the formation of a non-sectarian, mass resistance led by the working class to bring down the reactionary regimes of Assad, General al-Sisi, Khamenei, and their ilk. Instead of the sectarian IS/Daash, the workers and oppressed need independent and non-sectarian workers' and peasants' militias. The goal of such a struggle must be to free the region from enslavement by the imperialist monopolies and great powers, so that the workers and peasants can establish workers' and peasants' republics as well as a socialist federation of the Middle East. Such a perspective must be a crucial part of the program of revolutionary parties in the region, as well as that of a new revolutionary Workers' International, which (in our opinion) will be the Fifth International.

* Down with Obama's crusade! Defeat the military intervention of US imperialism and their allies! Support the rebels against the US-led war of aggression! For international mobilizations to defeat US aggression!

* Removal of the Kurdish PKK, the Palestinian resistance organizations (Hamas, Islamic Jihad, PFLP etc.), the Syrian Al-Nusra as well as IS/Daash from the imperialists list of declared 'terrorist' organizations!

* Defend the Sunni popular insurrection against the Iraqi army!

* Down with reactionary sectarianism! Drive IS/Daash forces out of the resistance movement!

* Defend the Kurdish and Yazidi people against IS/Daash forces! Support the Kurdish people's right of self-determination! For a united and socialist Kurdistan!

* Defend Gaza! Defeat Israel! For an international boycott campaign against Israel! For a Free and Red Palestine!

* Victory to the Syrian Revolution against the Assad Regime!

* *For joint action councils and militias of Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish workers and peasants!*

* *Expropriate the foreign owners of the Iraqi oil industry with no compensation! Nationalize all oil companies, large industrial and telecommunication enterprises, and banks under workers' control!*

* *For a workers' and peasants' government! For a socialist federation of the people of the Middle East!*

International Secretariat of the RCIT ■



Down With the New Imperialist Attack on Iraq and Syria!

The Renewal of the Imperialist War and the Tasks of the Workers Movement

by Yossi Schwartz, Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine), 2.10.2014

In mid-September the US ruling class decided to bombard the *Islamic State* (IS, often called *Daash* in Arabic) in Syria. Already on the first day, American war planes killed or wounded dozens of Islamic State fighters in air strikes on the Syrian city of Raqqa and surrounding areas. It already started to attack IS fighters in Iraq in early August. Thus, we see that the imperialist war on Iraq did not end in December 2011. The official declaration, then, of US President Obama that the imperialist war had ended was an empty promise. The US is once again involved in a war against Iraq and Syria. Imperialism cannot survive without wars; but, as Lenin wrote, for humanity to survive we must destroy the imperialist system.

In 1991 a coalition of thirty-four states, among them Syria's Assad regime, led by American imperialism waged a war against Iraq of Saddam Hussein. Subsequently, in 2003, the US, Britain, and Australia occupied Iraq and deposed Saddam Hussein who later was hanged. During this latter war and the ensuing occupation Iraq was devastated. Whatever can be said about Saddam's brutal regime, under the American-led occupation Iraq was devastated; in comparison, Saddam's regime was heaven.

Following are estimates of the damage incurred by the Iraqi people since the start of the war launched in 2003: (1)

Iraqis killed between March 2003 and December 31, 2011 (when U.S. military forces withdrew): at least 121,754
Total number of Iraqi deaths as a result of the war, either direct or indirect (the latter due to the destruction and disruption of the war, including water supply and power infrastructures, health-care, and food production):

According to a 2006 *Lancet* study: 655,000

According to a 2008 *Opinion Research Business* study: 1 million

Current estimates: 1.2 to 1.4 million

Iraqis injured: 4.2 million

Iraqis driven from their homes: 4.5 million

Malaki's Corrupt Government and the Uprising

When the US fled Iraq three years ago, it left behind a corrupt Shia Muslim regime led by Nuri al-Malaki whose sectarian policies fiercely discriminated against the Sunni minority. Under his rule, police killed peaceful Sunni



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

protestors and used anti-terrorism laws to conduct mass-arrests of Sunni civilians. Maliki formed political alliances with violent Shia militias to kill and torture Sunni Muslims. During this period, the imperialist mass media either minimally covered or did not report at all any of the atrocities committed by Maliki's government.

The sectarian policies of the American puppet government led to a rebellion of Sunni tribes which many supporters of the Ba'ath party joined. As the Huffington Post and the Washington Post reported:

"Militants affiliated with al Qaeda have joined with local tribal Sunni leaders to expel government troops and to raise their flag over the powerfully symbolic city of Fallujah, where U.S. troops fought their bloodiest battle of the Iraqi war." (2)

"Reports on Wednesday suggested that ISIS's ranks may have grown after collaboration with militias connected to the old Baathist regime of fallen dictator Saddam Hussein; they played a role in ISIS's reported capture of Tikrit, Hussein's home town. ISIS appears to be well-funded, benefiting from the same shadow networks of donors in the Arab world who funded al-Qaeda as well as the widespread practice of extortion and kidnapping, and other criminal activities." (3)

Following a barrage of reports by the imperialist mass media portraying the mass rebellion as the terrible and cruel terrorism of IS/Daash, as if the only forces fighting are radical Islamists, Obama and the other heads of the imperialist states in Europe decided to strike the rebels in order to save the pro-imperialist government in Iraq.

The *Islamic State* (formerly known as ISIS) was initially established as *Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad* in 1999. From it was formed *Tanzim Qaidat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn* or *al-Qaeda in Iraq* (AQI) by Abu Musab Al Zarqawi in 2004. It participated in the military resistance against the invasion of Iraq and joined other Sunni insurgent groups to form the *Mujahideen Shura Council*, which became to the *Islamic State of Iraq*.

IS/Daash is a reactionary organization which dreams of restoring the glorious days of the Caliphate. It employs sectarian killings, oppresses women, and opposes the right of self determination of the Kurds. It has killed several thousand victims, both civilian and military. According to the *British Guardian*, by June of this year, the Iraqi civilian death toll passed 5,500 in wake of the IS/Daash offensive. (4)

War Propaganda

This month the imperialist press made a lot of noise about the militants from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria who allegedly killed hundreds of Iraqi soldiers captured at Camp Speicher, an air force base which had previously served as a US military base.

"According to Human Rights Watch, new evidence indicates the Islamic State fighters killed between 560 and 770 soldiers captured at Camp Speicher, near the city of Tikrit." (5)

However, it is a sheer hypocrisy to claim that these soldiers were innocent victims. In reality, the Iraqi army which incorporated Shiite militias has and continues to commit war crimes against Sunni civilians. Of course, killing simple soldiers is not a revolutionary policy, but then ISIS is not a revolutionary organization. You cannot expect a monkey to behave like an elephant.

Furthermore, comparing the crimes committed by ISIS to those

committed by the imperialists and their servants in Iraq is like comparing an ant to an elephant.

There are many stories circulating about atrocities committed by ISIS which cannot be confirmed, like the beheading of Christian babies. For example, in June of this year it was reported that:

"... an official of the UN claimed that the jihadists in Iraq have ordered all women between the ages of 11 and 46 to undergo female genital mutilation, but experts quickly cast doubt on the claim. Several experts have speculated that the fatwa may have been a hoax, and a number of journalists said on Twitter that their contacts in Iraq had not heard of it being issued. Charles Lister, visiting fellow at the Brookings Doha Center and expert on Iraqi and Syrian extremist groups, said the UN claim appeared to be based on a 'quite clearly faked statement.'... 'It would certainly be a very big coincidence if the UN source was separate but happened to arise at the same time as this fake statement online,' he said." (6)

We should bear in mind that propaganda by imperialists during their wars are mixture of lies and half-truths. For example, in WWI the British and American anti-German propaganda and German anti-British and French propaganda were based on lies. (7)

"Propaganda was used in World War One as in any war – and the truth suffered. Propaganda ensured that the people only got to know what their governments wanted them to know. In World War One, the lengths to which governments would go to in an effort to blacken the enemy's name reached a new level.... They printed headlines that were designed to stir up emotions regardless of whether they were accurate or not. The most infamous headlines included:

* "Belgium child's hands cut off by Germans"

* "Germans crucify Canadian officer"

The same thing was done in Germany – untrue headlines were tolerated and even encouraged by the German authorities. Some headlines were:

* "French doctors infect German wells with plague germs"

* "German prisoners blinded by Allied captors"

The Revolutionary Position

The US military's latest intervention is the continuation of the imperialist war in Iraq. Without giving any *political* support to reactionary Islamists (including IS/Daash), with regard to their fighting US imperialism and its servants, revolutionaries support the military victory of these Islamists because the more dangerous enemy of the Iraqi workers, peasants, and poor is the imperialist side.

At the same time in, with regard to the atrocities committed against civilians by IS/Daash, revolutionaries support the armed self-defense of Kurds and Iraqis against IS/Daash.

Syria and the Middle Class Left

Some of the middle class left – usually from the camp of those who opportunistically adapt to the emerging imperialist powers Russia and China – claim that Syria is fighting the imperialists and that it is the imperialists who pushed the Jihadists to topple the Assad regime. In reality, this is nonsense. Like during the 1991 Gulf War, the Syr-

ian regime is interested in joining the US and other Arab countries in fighting an imperialist war.

"Syria has 'no reservations' about U.S. airstrikes against ISIS and wants to team up with Washington to tackle the militants, the country's deputy foreign minister told NBC News. Faisal Mekdad called Syria's President Bashar al-Assad 'a natural ally' for the U.S. in its battle against ISIS, saying in an exclusive interview that both countries are 'fighting the same enemy' and should be working together — not antagonizing each other." (8)

The United States rejected Assad's offer and, instead, decided to arm the so called moderate opposition in Syria.

"After two years of rejecting calls from his own national security team to arm the FSA, President Obama announced Wednesday night that he now wanted to arm the FSA to fight against the terrorists who are on the march in Syria and Iraq. He said the only way to beat ISIS was to train and equip the moderate rebels—the same rebels he ignored for so long—and he called on Congress to authorize the mission White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest said Thursday that Obama wanted to wage war only against ISIS, not the regime in Damascus. After all, Syria is still technically a sovereign U.N. member state and the U.S. thinks the regime will be needed to negotiate the political solution to the civil war Obama mentioned." (9)

However, in fact the Obama administration is helping the Assad regime by attacking its opponents. It is not only bombing IS fighters and facilities. It has already killed dozens of fighters from *Jabhat Al-Nusra*, a Salafist organization which has fought against the Assad regimes as well as – together with other Syrian rebels – against IS/Daash. In addition, US forces have also attacked other Syrian rebel groups – like *Ahrar al-Sham*, *Islamic Front* and even the pro-Western FSA – and killed a number of civilians. (10)

This has provoked the legitimate and widespread outcry of most of the Syrian rebel forces. As a result protest demonstrations against the US have taken place in a number of Syrian towns. (11) It is clear that these attacks will deepen the popular hatred against US imperialism amongst the Arab masses. One of the *Al-Nusra's* leader, *Abu Firas al-Suri*, already proclaimed:

"These states have committed a horrible act that is going to put them on the list of jihadist targets throughout the world. (...) This is not a war against al-Nusra, but a war against Islam." (12)

At least for now, Obama is determined not to send troops to fight against IS/Daash. However, without sending ground forces, the United States cannot win this war.

"Determined to counter fears that America may find itself bogged down in another war, the Obama administration insists the U.S. won't send troops to fight the Islamic State in a 'combat role' in either Iraq or Syria... But airstrikes have their limitations. They run the risk of significantly increasing civilian casualties. While ISIS has some known strongholds -- in Raqqa, Syria, for example -- which could be neutralized by airstrikes, their other hideouts will not be as easily targeted. Last week, the CIA estimated that the militants could have up to 31,500 fighters sprinkled across Iraq and Syria. They operate in clandestine cells in many parts of Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. The more the U.S. bombs them from the sky, the deeper they go underground: That could make the air campaign less effective while also endangering more civilians." (13)

The US Cannot Win This War

At the same time, the US is not in a position to send ground troops to Iraq because of the high number of the soldiers that will die in such an adventure.

Instead, the US will use its local servants to fight on the ground; but the only local state that has enough power to seriously fight the insurgents is Iran, and it will be very difficult for the US to form an open alliance with Iran.

Thus, the US is facing the same dilemma Israel faced in Gaza, and we can expect the same results: a political defeat for the US. The similarity between the failings policies of Israel and the US is not a coincidence but the result of the decline of both imperialist states.

There are stories circulating which claim that Israel is backing up ISIS. However, this is pure speculation which cannot be confirmed; it also smells of crude anti-Semitism. For example:



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

"It is vile Zionist Jews who are behind the terrorist group known as ISIS or Islamic State (also, Islamic State of Syria). It is an entity which commits bloodthirsty murder throughout the Middle East. Yet, once again, it is Jews and Jews alone who are completely behind it. Moreover, their goal has been in part achieved, which is to slaughter as many Muslims – and to a degree Christians – in the Middle East as possible." (14)

The Solution

We should view as transitional the current movement of young Muslim militants to join a jihadist organization rather than a working class revolutionary one. Today, young Muslims perceive the jihadists as a serious fighting force against imperialism. However, sooner or later these jihadist organizations will betray the struggle because of their bourgeois class character and the historical epoch we live in. The young Muslim militants will then look for other kind of organization fighting imperialism. The only type of organization that can consistently fight imperialism is a revolutionary communist organization at the nucleus of which are small forces currently fighting to form the Fifth International.

The reformists, like the Communist parties who claim that Assad regime is an anti imperialist and that the jihadists are agents of imperialism, are a mere caricature of communist fighting organizations. The centrists, who refuse to advocate forming a united front with the forces actually fighting imperialism on the ground because they are reactionary, are useless and constitute a barrier on the road of fighting imperialism.

The struggle against imperialist domination that is a revolutionary democratic struggle cannot be won without a working class socialist revolution. We saw this very clearly in Egypt, where a wonderful democratic revolutionary struggle of millions was stopped in its tracks because of the lack of revolutionary working class leadership; instead of a revolution, Egypt got a military counter revolution.

* Down with Obama's crusade! Defeat the military intervention of US imperialism and their allies! Support the rebels against the US-led war of aggression! For international mobilizations to defeat US aggression!

* Removal of the Kurdish PKK, the Palestinian resistance organizations (Hamas, Islamic Jihad, PFLP etc.), the Syrian Al-Nusra as well as IS/Daash from the imperialists list of declared 'terrorist' organizations!

* Defend the Sunni popular insurrection against the Iraqi army!

* Down with reactionary sectarianism! Drive IS/Daash forces out of the resistance movement!

* Defend the Kurdish and Yazidi people against IS/Daash forces! Support the Kurdish people's right of self-determination! For a united and socialist Kurdistan!

* Defend Gaza! Defeat Israel! For an international boycott campaign against Israel! For a Free and Red Palestine!

* Victory to the Syrian Revolution against the Assad Regime!

* *For joint action councils and militias of Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish workers and peasants!*

* *Expropriate the foreign owners of the Iraqi oil industry with no compensation! Nationalize all oil companies, large industrial and telecommunication enterprises, and banks under workers'*

control!

** For a workers' and peasants' government! For a socialist federation of the people of the Middle East!*

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Yemen: The Mass Protests continue

Report from a Yemeni Supporter of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 4.9.2014

Since the Yemeni government abolished fuel subsidies, which would cause an increase in fuel prices by 60% to 90%, a wave of mass protests have shattered the country. Recently, the protests have reached a new level. The Houthi movement has urged its supporters to wage a campaign of civil disobedience until their demands are met. Their demands are:

- * an immediate reinstatement of the fuel subsidies and
- * the resignation of the government

The Houthi leader, Abdul Malik al-Houthi, has started this campaign with what he calls an escalation step by step. The first step was calling for protests and making threatening speeches against the government. Camps were set up around the capital city Sana'a. There were three marches per day.

The government assigned a committee to negotiate with the Houthis in which they however failed. At the end of stage one, Abdul Malik al-Houthi made a speech. Everyone was expecting him to be aggressive. However, he started to talk about the situation Yemen and insisted that the protests will continue to be peacefully. At the end of his speech he asked his supporters to pray on the next day, Friday, at the highway to Sanaa's airport near of the ministry of interior.

The second step started with camps blocking the Sanaa's airport's street. Abdul Malik made sure his speech at that day was directed to the ordinary people with a simple language and full with religious terms. However, he continued threatening the government. At the same day the government has called the people to line up calling against a possible civil war. They made a march on the next day which was considered to be the biggest march in the history of Yemen.

The Houthis have started now the third step which con-

sists of demonstrations and protests against the government plus blocking main streets for an hour to stop the traffic. Abdul Malik said: *"The steps will continue to the end of the week,"* he said, adding that *"if the corrupt continue dealing in an irresponsible way, we will be forced into further steps"*. The UN Security Council called to end hostilities against the Yemeni government but the Houthi stands against it. It looks like the government would never reach out to the Houthis demands and they know that. It can't be excluded that the situation transforms into a civil war.

The RCIT calls workers and youth activists to fight for:

- * *For the immediate revoking of all price hikes! Down with President Hadi and the Islah government!*
- * *For the founding of popular mass assemblies to democratically lead the protest movement!*
- * *For a mass movement which unites Sunni and Shia workers and fellahin, one which is based on solidarity and respect for all groups!*
- * *For a Workers' and Fallahin government defended by popular militias which will expropriate the foreign corporations and the rich domestic capitalists! For the nationalization of the key industries and banks under workers' control!*
- * *For solidarity with the Palestinian liberation struggle! Defend Gaza – Defeat Israel!*
- * *Down with the reactionary military dictatorship of General al-Sisi in Egypt!*
- * *Down with the reactionary monarchy of Saudi Arabia!*
- * *Renew and extend the Arab Revolution which started in 2011!*
- * *For a united, socialist Yemen as part of a socialist federation of the Middle East!*
- * *Onward to the building of a revolutionary workers' party as part of a Fifth International!*



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

LATUFF 2011 + YEMEN

Women's Oppression in Israel

Studs? Rather we need more Amazons and real heroes!

*Interview with Hila Slutsky by the Youth Organization RED*REVOLUTION, 7 September 2014*

As women, we often experience disgusting examples of oppression. The interview was held shortly after the last Gaza war from 8th July to 26th August. As a result, women in Israel are suppressed more and more – especially if they take a stand against the Gaza war. We are therefore proud to publish an interview with Hila Slutsky, a member of the *International Socialist League* (ISL), about her most recent experiences with women's oppression.

* * * * *

RED*REVOLUTION: Dear comrade Hila, please start with a short introduction of yourself. Tell us, what it was like to be in Israel during the recent months.

HILA: I am an Israeli and 17 years old. I attend a regular high school. In addition I study psychology at the university. The last weeks were really difficult for us women. Sexual violence rose in Israel. Facebook groups started, which called women to send naked pictures to the *Israel Defence Force* (Israel's Army, editor's note). Women, who supported Palestine, were accused of prostitution, judged by their appearance, and some Israelis wished us to be raped by Arabs.

RED*REVOLUTION: You wrote in a statement that you were raped twice. In your personal life, how would you say is it possible to deal with such issues? Are there people who try to use this issue against you?

HILA: Of course, life is restricted after such an incident. However I am happy that I found a way to deal with it. Recently I founded a page against the discrimination of women on Facebook. *וייושהו שפוחה ועמל תומחל-קוטשל תוקיספמ* is the name. Its aim is to create a strong awareness amongst girls and young women who are discriminated in school. You know, the best thing to fight against the problems in our everyday life, is to fight against it together with other women! Although we might be afraid of being alone, we are not. We can organize ourselves; this will have a positive impact on our problems.

In the last days, I heard that my ex-boyfriend tells lies about me. At first, I could not believe it. But when I spoke to him, he did not deny it.

RED*REVOLUTION: Could you give an example of which lies he told about you?

HILA: We had a good relationship, or at least this is what I thought. There was no violence between us. But he told his friends, after we broke the relationship off, that I would want to hit him. The reason, why I was supposed to do this, is that he cheated on me. Unfortunately it is not the only lie. For example he also says that I want to have sex with many men, because I was raped in the past.

These accusations are very disgusting. I think no woman should experience such a humiliation. We all know that: There are nasty rumors about some of us – and you get to

know them on Facebook!

I think our private life should stay private. These accusations lead to sexist comments about women. This can seriously harm our lives! Some women are shocked by such an insulting behavior of men and face great difficulties to overcome such a breach of trust.

RED*REVOLUTION: How do you feel after these accusations? What should women do, when stuff like this happens?

HILA: Such lies shouldn't bother us... Think about it, what is the reason for this sexist behavior? It is the fact that men in this capitalist world have to be the "superior sex". We, as women, are educated to be pretty, peaceful, pure and chaste. In the movies and magazines men act like studs. But this is not the reality. The life of some men is a big lie. Some think they need to lie to themselves and to women. But no one needs the studs. We should care for ourselves, without dependence on others. We need Amazons and real heroes!

Only a revolutionary movement of women, who are consistently active against their discrimination, can be successful. Men, who want to fight against sexism, should be part of it as well... we are not feminists. But women have to liberate themselves; this is not the task of old-fashioned superheroes.

As communists we should create a culture of respect and solidarity. We women are strong fighters for our future. Men show their strength in acknowledging this. I will cope with lies of my ex-boyfriend, because in the ISL, and internationally in the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT), we know that such nonsense is a product of the capitalist society.

In the end, the revolution of the workers will solve the problem of women's oppression. Just like it will solve many other social problems that confront us as women today.

RED*REVOLUTION: Thank you for the interview, comrade Hila! ■



CCR and Elections in Brazil in 2014

Corrente Comunista Revolucionária (RCIT Brazil), 24.9.2014

As in all political systems under the capitalist system, elections in Brazil are a mockery of democracy. The state and the bourgeois parties organize themselves to brainwash the people; newspapers, radio, television, the clergy, everything is bought and mobilized by the bourgeoisie to generate propaganda for the upcoming elections of the bourgeois candidates. The toiling masses are thereby deceived, duped into imagining that they are actually determining their own future while, paradoxically private ownership of the means of production is maintained. In fact, the working class is simply invited to elect its butcher for the next four years. We, Bolshevik revolutionaries, understand that workers' struggles against the rule of capital and its state are not decided in super-structural realms of bourgeois democracy.

While we oppose electioneering, we are not opposed to electoral politics. The elections of bourgeois democracies can afford opportunities for revolutionaries to denounce the elections as a sham, while making propaganda of our revolutionary program.

The Workers' Party-PT is already finishing its third term in office, having come to power in 2003, with Lula da Silva serving as president for two terms and Dilma Rousseff fill-

ing this office during the last four years. The PT-led government is a Popular Front government in which sections of the bourgeoisie form part of the government. The PT's current candidate for vice president, running alongside Dilma Rousseff, is Michel Temer from the bourgeois party PMDB. The PT government has an ally in the *Popular Party* (PP) led by the notorious right-wing politician Paulo Maluf, infamous as the governor of São Paulo during the military dictatorship who repressed all social movements and workers' strikes.

In this context, we should understand the PT government's caving into many of the demands made by imperialism during in the last 12 years: pension reform, privatization of roads and airports, the financing of export agribusiness, financial support to large banks and large multinational companies headquartered in Brazil, etc. At the end of his second term as president, Lula noted that "*the bankers have never had as huge profits as during in my administration.*" Internationally, at the behest of American imperialism, Brazil sent troops to Haiti. There are numerous reports of abuse and violence against Haitian workers by Brazilian soldiers. But because the PT needed to provide some answers for the masses, they pushed forward some mini-



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

mum social assistance policies – the family allowance, a monthly bonus for the poorest families.

In recent years, to ensure Brazil's hosting of the World Cup and the 2016 Olympics, the federal government, with the help of state governments, has imposed harsh repressive measures to bring huge profits to billionaires from these two events. The Coletivo Lenin group, headquartered in Rio de Janeiro, wrote the following in its blog: *"We live under a wave of political arrests unprecedented since the dictatorship. The military police's sealing off of the Tijuca favela, in Rio de Janeiro, during which 500 protestors were under house arrest, and the inhabitants of the entire neighborhood were incommunicado for the World Cup final, demonstrated that the bourgeoisie parties are prepared to tear to shreds the minimal legal guarantees made by the Constitution in order to prevent struggles against the consequences of these mega-events. And these consequences have been the uprooting of entire communities. The presence of UPPs – Pacification Police Units – in the favelas is an attempt to hide drug trafficking while at the same time increasing the militarization of the slums, in parallel to the absurd increases in rent and public transportation."* (1)

Naturally, the fact that the PT rules just like any other bourgeois party caused a great deal of disappointment among various organized sectors of the working class. Lula's 2003 pension reform led to the breakup of a sector of the PT which founded the PSOL. The PSTU was encouraged to break with the central trade union (CUT) directed by the PT and to found the Conlutas, representing part of federal public workers. Corruption scandals, such as the monthly bonuses (*mensalão*) arranged by Lula to encourage deputies to vote in favor of his government, and the case of the US refinery in Pasadena under the Dilma's administration are direct consequences of the PT's popular front tactics which make a government of the bourgeoisie, by the bourgeoisie, and for the bourgeoisie.

What are the Electoral Options in Left Field?

Let us now analyze the options offered by leftist parties, or those posing as leftists. The PSOL, PSTU, and the PCO each have their own candidates.

The PSOL (Party of Socialism and Liberty) which emerged in 2005 following the split of various groups within the PT claimed who they wanted to rescue the origins of the PT. But after all these years, this party has made an extraordinary shift to the right. Its candidate for president, Luciana Genro, openly declared that *"there is no problem in receiving donations from companies."* Roberto Robaina, campaign coordinator and chief advisor of Luciana Genro, told Reuters: *"We have received the money (from the Brazilian multinational Gerdau) and we are already spending it."* Furthermore, in 2012, during the elections for mayor in the city of Rio de Janeiro, the PSOL candidate, Marcelo Freixo, was supported by DEM and PSDB. DEM has its roots in the ARENA party which governed during the military dictatorship; PSDB is the direct representative of US-EU imperialism in Brazil and the main opposition party to the PT. The turn to the right by PSOL is reflected in its positions against abortion and the criminalization of *"black block"* activists in protest movements that have emerged since June 2013.

The PSTU (United Socialist Workers' Party) is that of LIT-Morenoite in Brazil. Its candidate for president is Zé Ma-

ria, a former metalworker. The PSTU has been trying for several years to form a broad Left Front, with PSOL as its main ally. This attempt has failed mainly because of PSOL's refusal to ally itself with PSTU, seeing no electoral advantage in doing so. The PSTU finds no problem in attempting to form an alliance with a party like the PSOL which receives funding from the bourgeoisie. However, the PSTU itself, while it does not receive funding from the bourgeoisie, has adopted policies of absolute centrism in recent years.

Despite their radical rhetoric resembling that of the PSTU, in 2009, without even issuing a call for an indefinite strike, their central union, CONLUTAS, accepted the dismissal of more than 4,000 workers from Embraer, a Brazilian multinational that manufactures commercial and military aircraft in the region of São José dos Campos-SP. This cowardly surrender opened the door for massive layoffs during subsequent years by other multinationals such as GM's firing of thousands of workers. In the realm of trade union politics, PSTU-Conlutas isn't very different than the Workers' Party-PT.

In their electoral campaign, which they take in earnest, the PSTU has even broken with what any Trotskyist party sees as one of its main pillars: Proletarian internationalism. The party has taken a position strongly against the arrival of Cuban doctors in Brazil in the context of the federal government's *"More Doctors"* program. This program, inspired by the model implemented in Venezuela by Chavez, is intended to ensure the presence of doctors both in the great metropolises (São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, etc.) as well as in the most remote regions of the country like the Amazon, the Northeast, etc.

Furthermore, the party's policy towards repressive state bodies, specifically the Military Police, completely breaks with the Leninist policy regarding the roll of agents of repression. One of the main actions of the Russian Revolution of 1917 was the dismantling of the police. But in its federal CSP-Conlutas Trade Union, the PSTU has members from the police associations (the latter are prohibited from creating their own trade unions). This puts in direct contact as *"colleagues"* the leaders of social resistance movements with representatives of repressive police groups. (2)

The left-centrist PCO (Workers Cause Party) has as its candidate for president the journalist Rui Costa. For years the PCO has participated in Brazil's presidential elections, always winning a very low percentage of votes. In the last presidential elections held in 2010, the combined total number of votes cast for the candidates of the PCO, PSTU, PSOL, and PCB was less than 1% of the electorate. This being the case, the analysis of the survey data regarding the appeal of the PCO among the masses is equally applicable to the other parties: it is regarded by the press as being far-left, i.e., the bourgeois press puts the PCO as far to the left as PSOL and PSTU. This has consequences: in a largely conservative electorate, the penetration of the PCO in the working class is very limited. However, the PCO is the only remaining party presenting its electoral program on television and radio and warning that *"bourgeois elections are useless for the working class, and only benefit the bourgeoisie."* Furthermore they maintain that *"the social revolution is the way for the working class."* Important too, considering the obvious lack of democracy in the current electoral laws of Brazil, in which the very small par-

ties are prevented from competing, the PCO has opened up its party for the other far-left groups so that the latter can run in elections under their own party program. The PCO supports the complete abolition of the police. According to a report by the OAB-RJ (Order of Lawyers of Brazil-Rio de Janeiro section) police in Brazil are among the biggest killers in the world. According to this data, between 2001 and 2011, there was an astonishing increase in the number of deaths caused by police and registered as "resistance." The number of such deaths peaked in 2007. In Rio de Janeiro, 12,000 acts of resistance were analyzed; 60% were pure and simple execution, many victims having been shot in the neck. We have no programmatic agreement with the PCO. We have very different views when it comes to the characterization of the contemporary roles of Russia and China which we see as imperialist countries. We do not advocate the release of criminals from PT like former minister

José Dirceu and former PT leader José Genoíno. Contrary to the PCO, we advocate that the movement "*We will not have the Cup*" had legitimate claims because of the repressive apparatus that displaced thousands of people from their homes and because of the continued shortage that is still happening in public hospitals, public health in general, housing and education. However, the PCO has not crossed the class line as has the PSOL and they have not betrayed or boycotted the struggles of workers' strikes as PSTU and PSOL have, and still do. For this reason, the Brazilian CCR-section of RCIT gives critical electoral support to PCO.

- (1) <http://coletivolenin.blogspot.com.br/2014/07/uma-campanha-eleitoral-de-denuncia-do.html?m=1>
- (2) <http://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/policia-mata-cinco-pessoas-por-dia-no-brasil-10669947> ■



Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9f/Brazil_rel94.jpg

Austria: Controversial Debate on Palestine

Controversial Debate with the CWI at the annual CP Fête

*Report from the RKO BEFREIUNG (RCIT's Austrian Section) and the Youth Organization RED*REVOLUTION, 13.9.2014*

The Revolutionary Communist Organization LIBERATION (RKO BEFREIUNG, RCIT's Austrian Section) and the Youth Organization RED*REVOLUTION had a well-organized intervention at the annual political and cultural event of the Communist Party (similar to the L'Humanité fete of the French CP) which took place on 30/31 August. We have booked space for a stall twice as big as in the past years because – as a result of our growth – we have much more publications and other things to present. Amongst our latest publications were the September issues both of the Austrian section's as well as of the youth organizations monthly paper. In addition we presented three new issues of the German-language theoretical journal *REVOLUTIONÄRER KOMMUNISMUS* as well as two new issue of our English-language theoretical journal *REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM*.

One of German-language journals consists of a booklet about Alcoholism and the workers movement written by Nina Gunić. In this study comrade Gunić analysis the world-wide consumption of alcohol and the differences which exist between the classes, the imperialist and the semi-colonial world as well as between the genders. She shows, using the latest data of the UN's *World Health Organization* as well as many other studies of health scientists, that contrary to the widespread believe amongst many Western leftists (who usually like to take a bottle) nearly two third of the world population is abstinent (particularly in the semi-colonial countries). Comrade Gunić also elaborates in separate chapters the attitude to alcohol amongst the German social democracy before 1914 as well as of the Russian Bolsheviks. She shows that while the German socialists had an ambiguous attitude, the Bolsheviks had a clear anti-alcohol policy which they put into practice after the victorious October revolution in 1917. She also demonstrates how the Stalinist bureaucracy reversed these gains step by step which helped the return of widespread drunkenness. In her final chapter comrade Gunić explains why a revolutionary communist organization should combine the struggle against repression by the bourgeois state (like criminalization of cannabis) with a campaign inside the working class and the poor against alcoholism and drug consumption.

Despite heavy rain on both days our militants were very active in discussing with people about our ideas and selling our publications. While a public meeting on the crisis and class struggle in Greece planned for Saturday fell prey to the heavy rain, we had more luck with our second meeting on Sunday (albeit then it was raining too).

In this second meeting we had a public debate with the Austrian CWI section on Israel and the liberation struggle in Palestine. Comrade Franz Neuhold spoke for the CWI while comrade Johannes Wiener presented the views of the RCIT. Comrade Rebecca Stauder, a young spokesperson of the RKO BEFREIUNG, was the moderator. There was a lot of interest in this public debate which was re-

flected in the fact that 80 people came to the meeting despite rain. Some Zionist provocateurs from the so-called "Anti-German left" tried to disrupt our meeting but they were quickly thrown out by the women and men of our security service.

The CWI representative defended his organization's support for a "socialist" two-state solution as well as why their Austrian section has abstained from pro-Palestinian demonstrations since years. (We will publish an extensive document in the next days in which we will deal in detail with the CWI position on Israel and the Palestinian liberation struggle.)

Comrade Wiener explained why a two-state solution ("socialist" or not socialist) is undemocratic because it denies the Palestinian people the return to their homeland. He also elaborated why it is indispensable for socialists to support the Palestinian liberation struggle in words and deeds without giving political support to the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois leaderships of this struggle. He emphasized that socialists must fight for a "Free, Red Palestine".

All in all it was a highly successful intervention of the RCIT's Austrian Section and the Youth Organization RED*REVOLUTION and a good beginning for our work in autumn.

*Pictures from the stall of the RCIT's Austrian Section and the Youth Organization RED*REVOLUTION as well as from the public debate with the CWI can be viewed here:*

<http://www.rkob.net/wer-wir-sind-1/rkob-aktiv-bei/bericht-volksstimmefest-2014/> ■



Debate between the Austrian Sections of the RCIT and the CWI, 31.8.2014

Austria: Cliffites and “left” social democrats invite war-mongering Zionists to anti-racist demonstration!

Report (with Pictures and Videos) of the RKO BEFREIUNG (Austrian section of the RCIT), 21.9.2014

A coalition of progressive organizations called for an anti-racist demonstration in Vienna on 18 September. The reason was the original plan of the right-wing populist party FPÖ to send an extreme right-wing representative as a deputy minister for the department for schools in the Viennese government. However, meanwhile this attempt has been aborted. Nevertheless, the demonstration took place to protest against racism in schools.

The demonstration was rather small with about 200 people amongst which the red contingent of RKO BEFREIUNG (Austrian section of the RCIT) and the youth organization RED*REVOLUTION was clearly the biggest.

The initiators of the demonstration – the Cliffite IST section in Austria and the school student group of the social democratic party – did everything to control the coalition in a highly bureaucratic way. Contrary to their promises they failed to print the names of the organizations that were part of the alliance on the joint flyers and posters. Likewise they failed to convene a single meeting of the coalition in order to jointly plan and decide on the procedure of the demonstration.

Worse, 18 hours before the demonstration took place, they announced that they had decided to integrate the war-mongering Zionist group *Hashomer Hatzair* into the coalition. While organizations like RKO BEFREIUNG and RED*REVOLUTION (as well as others) were not given the right to have a speaker at the demonstration, these Zionists

got a speaker. In addition, *Hashomer Hatzair* was allowed to march at the front of the demonstration (see the third photo at <http://www.liv3.at/article/wien-diskriminierung-am-marsch-gegen-diskriminierung>)

Hashomer Hatzair is an international Laborite Zionist organization. On its website it proudly states that its members were part of the Zionist terror militias Hagana and Palmach who expelled hundreds of thousands of Palestinian people from their homelands in 1948/49. (See <http://www.hashy.org.au/info>) During the Gaza war two years ago they called – as part of the pro-Zionist coalition „Free Gaza from Hamas“ – for a rally on 21.11.2012 which praised Israel’s murderous war against the Gaza people. (See <http://freegazafromhamas.wordpress.com/2012/11/17/kundgebung-solidaritat-mit-israel-befreit-gaza-von-der-hamas/>)

The reactionary coalition „Free Gaza from Hamas“ includes – in addition to *Hashomer Hatzair* – Christian fundamentalists (like “*Christians on the Side of Israel [Austria]*”), war-mongering Zionists like the „*Zionist Federation in Austria*“ as well as notorious ex-leftist “*Anti-Germans*” like Simone Dinah Hartmann und Stephan Grigat. It should be mentioned that also pseudo-progressive forces like the youth group of the Green Party as well as the university student group of the Communist Party are also took part in this war-mongering pro-Zionist alliance.

It is a scandal that the Cliffites did not invite progressive



Contingent of the RCIT's Austrian Section at the Anti-Krauss Demonstration in Vienna on 18.9.2014

Jewish organizations like the "Jewish Voices for a Just Peace in the Middle East" or the "Women in Black" instead of these war-mongers!

Together with our comrades from the ISL in Palestine/Israel we fight against Anti-Semitism as well as against the Zionist oppression of the Palestinian people. We strongly reject any exploitation of the just struggle against Anti-Semitism and in defense of the Jewish people against discrimination by the supporters of Israel's wars and occupation!

Obviously we were not prepared to accept such war-mongering Zionists at an anti-racist demonstration without protest. Hence the spokesperson of RED*REVOLUTION, Marc Hangler, explained our protest in a speech with our megaphone at the beginning of the demonstration. (For the video of the speech, see the link below.) During the speech of the *Hashomer Hatzair* representative, we chanted "Viva, Viva Palestina!". One of the organizers of the demonstration, Nathan Y., called the police to intervene and to expel us. (He openly confesses this in an interview at <https://cba.fro.at/269352> which starts at minute 3:45) Equally, David Albrich, a leader of the Austrian Cliffites, hysterically tried to create a scandal in front of our contingent and in front of the police. However in the end, our pro-Zionist opponents failed to expel us from the demonstration.

This whole incident is a vivid confirmation of the Cliffites opportunism and hypocrisies. In their paper they proclaim their solidarity with the Palestinian people. However during the 51 days of the last Gaza war they didn't join

a single pro-Palestine demonstration or rally which were organized by the migrant communities! Since a number of years they conduct a thoroughly opportunist adaption to the social democratic youth organization which again is strongly pro-Zionist. (The leadership of the social democratic youth organization has adopted a resolution stating that they won't take part in any united front in which the Austrian RCIT section participates because we fight for the replacement of Israel by a single state for Palestinians and Jews.) As a result the Austrian Cliffites end up defending war-mongering Zionists against the anti-imperialists of the RCIT! It is not without irony that the same opportunist method led their sister organization in Britain, the SWP, to an opportunist adaption to bourgeois Muslim leaders in their joint party RESPECT.

All in all we see how a shrinking and strongly middle-class orientated reformist and centrist left which degenerates and adapts more and more opportunistically to the pressure of the ruling classes and the labor bureaucracy. The Austrian RCIT section and the youth organization RED*REVOLUTION will continue to fight against all forms of racism and to combine it with a principled anti-imperialist policy.

Pictures and videos of some speeches at the rally can be found at on the RKO BEFREIUNG website:

<http://www.rkob.net/wer-wir-sind-1/rkob-aktiv-bei/anti-krauss-demo/> ■



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

Austria: Main Right-Wing Party stirs up hatred against RED*REVOLUTION

Report from RKO BEFREIUNG (Austrian RCIT section) and the Youth Organization RED*REVOLUTION, 27.09.2014

As we reported recently, activists from the youth organization RED*REVOLUTION were engaged in a campaign against the nomination of Maximilian Krauss from the right-wing populist party FPÖ to become the deputy minister for the department for schools in the Viennese government. Krauss is even inside his party an extreme racist and calls for “foreigners-only” classes in schools in order to separate migrants from Austrian school students! The FPÖ got 20.5% at the last national elections in 2013 and is the biggest opposition party. It is the leading force in the current polls.

Amongst the numerous activities of the RED*REVOLUTION comrades was a protest event with Piñatas. A number of school students from one school went to a park in a break and hit several Piñatas which had the face of Krauss on it. After a video of this action was posted on RED*REVOLUTION TV, it became pretty popular and got already 6.200 hits. (See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98sT8VZ0U4>)

HC Strache, the leader of the FPÖ, expressed his outrage over this action of RED*REVOLUTION on his Facebook site. (See <https://www.facebook.com/HCStrache>). In addition one of the biggest dailies in Vienna, HEUTE, published an article on our action in its issue of 19 September. (See <http://www.heute.at/news/politik/art23660,1071970>) On 23 September Strache issued a video in which he called the social democratic mayor of Vienna, Michael Häupl, to publicly dissociate himself from RED REVOLUTION and our activities against the racist Krauss. (See <http://www>.

hcstrache.at/hc-strache-an-haeupl-distanzieren-sie-sich-von-hass-und-hetze/ as well as http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=RcUYs71WsYE) Häupl refused to accept Krauss as a deputy minister for the department for schools in the Viennese government. Characteristically, Strache, Krauss and the FPÖ also accuse the RKO BEFREIUNG and RED*REVOLUTION of “Anti-Semitism” because we protested against the prominent presence of the war-mongering Zionist group *Hashomer Hatzair* at the demonstration against Krauss on 18 September. Similarly to various pro-Zionist “left-wing” groups – like the social democratic as well as the Communist Party’s youth group – the FPÖ supports Israel and its wars against the Palestinian people. (See RKO BEFREIUNG: Austria: Cliffites and “left” social democrats invite war-mongering Zionists to anti-racist demonstration! 21.9.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/austria-anti-krauss-demo/>) These recent developments underline once more that RED*REVOLUTION and its activities have a growing impact amongst youth in Vienna and provoke the hatred of our right-wing enemies. It also shows how shameful it is that the Cliffites invited the Zionist *Hashomer Hatzair* to an anti-racist demonstration and that pro-Zionist “left-wing” groups share the reactionary slander of the FPÖ against us. The RKO BEFREIUNG and RED*REVOLUTION will continue their communist struggle against imperialism, racism and for solidarity with the liberation struggle of the Palestinian as well as all oppressed people.



Contingent of the RCIT's Austrian Section and RED*REVOLUTION at the MayDay 2014 Demonstration

The CWI's "Socialist" Zionism and the Palestinian Liberation Struggle

A Reply from the RCIT

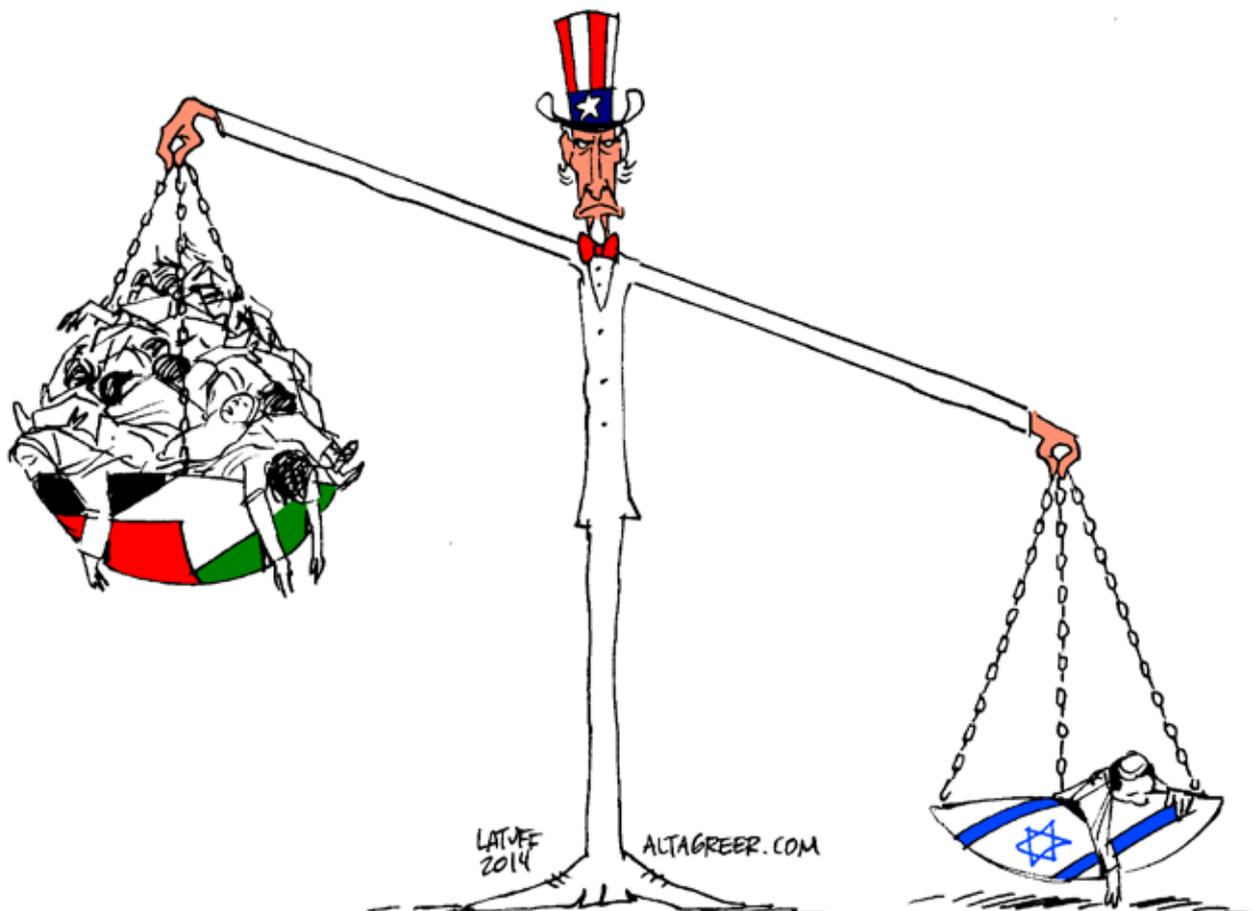
By Michael Pröbsting, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 15.9.2014

Peter Taaffe, the CWI's long-standing leader, recently published a response to criticism against the position of his organization regarding the Palestinian liberation struggle. (1) In addition, on 31 August a public debate took place between representatives of the Austrian sections of the RCIT and the CWI in which the participants debated strategy for the Palestinian liberation struggle. (2) Furthermore, RCIT comrades in Israel / Occupied Palestine as well as socialists inside the *Workers and Socialist Party* (WASP) in South Africa regularly hold discussions with CWI activists on this issue.

While Taaffe's article takes the form of a reply to an article by the Cliffite US group ISO, it is in fact an attack on the positions of all consistent socialists who take an anti-Zionist stand in their support for the Palestinian liberation struggle. In fact, Taaffe's article is a reaction – on the backdrop of the massively growing international solidarity movement for Palestine – to the increasing criticism which the CWI is facing from socialists. This criticism targets the CWI's failure to side with the Palestinian resistance in the ongoing liberation struggle against the Zionist state, as

well as its long-standing support for a "socialist" Jewish state of Israel alongside a "socialist" Palestine. In the following essay we will reply to the arguments of the CWI and explain the position of the RCIT.

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) and its section in Israel / Occupied Palestine – the *Internationalist Socialist League* (ISL) – have a long-standing record of fighting for a communist and anti-Zionist program in the struggle for the national liberation of the Palestinian people and a socialist federation of the Middle East. We – and our predecessor organizations respectively – have always fought against the Apartheid State of Israel and for its replacement by a single state in all of historic Palestine, one which should have a democratic and socialist character. Equally, we have always sided with the Palestinian resistance and the Arab people in their struggles with and wars against Israel, and have helped to organize numerous solidarity actions. Thus, we refer all those who are interested in learning more about our program for Palestine to the numerous documents and articles which we have published in our journals and online. (3)



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

What are the Main Differences between the RCIT and the CWI regarding Palestine?

Let us start by giving a brief recapitulation of the main differences between the RCIT and the CWI regarding the issue of Palestine. (see below)

I. Permanent Revolution for a “Free, Red Palestine” or “Socialist” Zionism for a Two State Solution?

We begin by analyzing the differences between the respective programmatic goals of the RCIT and the CWI. As we have stated above, all RCIT comrades, both in the *Internationalist Socialist League* and in their respective organizations internationally, stand for a *Free, Red Palestine from the River to the Sea*. We consider this as the only possible so-

lution to the burning national question which dominates political life both in Israel / Occupied Palestine as well as throughout the entire Middle East. The national oppression of the Palestinian people, the majority of whom live either in refugee camps or in the Palestinian Diaspora, can only be ended if all Palestinians are given the right to return to their homeland – currently under Israeli occupation.

Such a state must be socialist in character because only a Workers’ and Fallahin Republic which expropriates the (mostly Israeli Jewish) capitalist class will be able to ensure social equality and mobilize the huge economic resources which are indispensable to implementing a program of return for the Palestinian refugees, and at the same time ensure an overall improvement of living conditions for the popular masses.

RCIT	CWI
<p>The RCIT considers Israel to be an imperialist, colonial settler state with no legitimacy. It calls for a <i>Democratic, Palestinian, Multinational and Socialist Workers and Fallahin Republic from the River to the Sea</i>. In such a single state in the whole of historic Palestine, the Palestinians – having the right to return to their homeland – would naturally constitute the majority of the country’s population. Such a state should be part of a socialist federation of the Middle East. All Jews will be welcomed to live in such a state as long as they accept the democratic rights of the Palestinian majority. In short, we fight to replace the State of Israel with a “Free, Red Palestine.” The RCIT believes that the right of national self-determination is only a right for oppressed nations, not oppressor nations.</p>	<p>The CWI considers Israel as a normal capitalist state, not a colonial settler state. It views Israel as being similar to other capitalist states, like Egypt. While the CWI recognizes the <i>Nakba</i> as a tragedy, it believes that this is an historic episode belonging to the past. According to the CWI, an Israeli Jewish state is an historic fact which should be accepted. Therefore, the CWI defends the right of national self-determination for the Israeli Jews, including the right to have their own state. Consequently it calls for a socialist Israel alongside a socialist Palestine. Both states should be part of a socialist federation of the Middle East.</p>
<p>The RCIT sides with the practical struggle (including its military aspects) of the Palestinian resistance and calls for the application of the anti-imperialist united front tactic as elaborated by Lenin’s Communist International. We call for the victory of the Palestinian resistance and for the defeat of Israel, while at the same time giving no <i>political</i> support to the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois leaderships of the Palestinian resistance (like Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Fatah, PFLP etc.).</p>	<p>The CWI opposes Israel’s wars of aggression. While it abstractly “defends the right of the Palestinians to resist,” it explicitly rejects any united front approach or support for the struggle of the Palestinian resistance as it exists today (i.e., with Hamas in the leadership role). The CWI considers Hamas to be an enemy of the Palestinian people no less than the Israeli state.</p>
<p>The RCIT critically supports the international mass boycott campaign against Israel which has been joined by many trade unions and solidarity organizations around the world. While this campaign alone cannot defeat Israel, it can contribute to the support of the Palestinian liberation struggle. Equally, the RCIT calls the international trade union movement to break their links with the Histadrut, the Zionist trade union which is closely connected with the Israeli state.</p>	<p>In general, the CWI opposes the boycott campaign against Israel, with the exception of some selected measures against this or that company located in the West Bank settlements, or against arms exports by Israel. The CWI claims the broad boycott campaign against Israel should not be supported, since it is rejected by the Israeli workers. The CWI also opposes calling for the international trade union federation to sever their links with Histadrut.</p>



The CWI slogan of a two-state solution – i.e., retaining the Israeli-Jewish state which was founded on and nurtured by the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their historic homeland – effectively means denying the Palestinians the right of return to that homeland. Simply calling two such proposed states “socialist” doesn’t make them so; if it doesn’t change the basic injustice of denying the Palestinians the right to return to their homes in Haifa, Jaffa, and hundreds of ethnically cleansed villages, while at the same time perpetuating the Jewish colonialist legacy which preceded and was many times augmented after the Nakba. A priori, such an arrangement could never be deemed socialist, but rather would be something like calling for a “socialist” state in which women don’t have the same voting rights as men. If such a state would deny women equal rights – irrespective of its disingenuously being called “socialist” – it would not be socialist at all. Thus, the CWI’s two-state program effectively makes its adherents “socialist” Zionists. It is a pure expression of social-imperialism or “social-Zionism.”

Will a “Free, Red Palestine” Lead to the Expulsion of the Israeli Jews?

In our recent debate with the CWI representatives in Austria, these comrades maintained that our program of a *Free, Red Palestine* would lead to the expulsion of the Israeli Jews. We replied then and we repeat now that this is utter nonsense. In a *Free, Red Palestine*, Jews would be a legitimate and integral part of the multinational state. No authentic socialist can call for the expulsion of the Jewish people from Palestine. Jews would have the right to maintain their culture and languages (including observing holidays, obtaining kosher food, founding their own schools, and establishing media in their languages, etc.). A Palestinian workers’ state would mobilize the huge financial resources required to organize a massive public program of building new homes. Only such a program will ensure that both the Palestinian people can return to their former places of residence while, at the same time, the Israeli Jews can continue to live in decent housing. However, we do not deny that a significant proportion of Israeli Jews may not readily accept the loss of the privileges to which they have become accustomed during the decades of an apartheid system in Israel. In an earlier essay on the question of permanent revolution in Palestine, we addressed historical examples of other settler peoples. *“If one takes into account the extraordinary privileges which the Israeli Jewish population enjoy by the Zionist Apartheid state, it is very likely that a significant proportion of them will not accept a democratic state and equality with the Palestinians. We have seen the developments in Africa after the end of the European colonial empires. Many of the white colonial settlers left the country since they didn’t want to accept being a minority in a (formally) independent country in which the black population dominates. For example, at the end of the 1970s, Portugal’s withdrawal from Mozambique and Angola spurred a great exodus, in which 95% of whites in both countries left. In Zimbabwe, this exodus was also huge where the white population dropped from a peak of around 296,000 in 1975 to 120,000 in 1999 to just 30,000 today. In South Africa this development was less dramatic. Nevertheless even here and even despite the fact that the white population could retain their privileged material posi-*

tion, some 800,000 out of a total white population of 4 million have left the country since 1995.” (4)

The Right of National Self-Determination: A Principle of Socialism?

In an attempt to justify their neglect of the Palestinian national liberation struggle as part of the program for permanent revolution, the CWI has reinvented some “Marxist” principles. Such ideological acrobatics demonstrate that the CWI comrades have, in fact, broken with Marxist methods. For example, Peter Taaffe claims: *“The right of self-determination is not a “socialist principle”, as the ISO asserts, but a democratic task.”*

Such a claim only reveals the extent to which Taaffe is not familiar with the Bolshevik program. Of course, it is certainly true that, in a revolutionary situation, the right of national self-determination – like many other goals of the socialist program – can be superseded by more burning tasks of the socialist revolution. For example, in the course of a successful proletarian revolution it might become necessary to invade another country, and thereby temporarily suppress its population’s right of national self-determination, in order to spread the world revolution. Similarly, it may become necessary to temporarily suspend the democratic right of factory workers to elect their superiors; or that of rank and file soldier to select their commanders. However, taking such temporarily necessary steps does not alter the fact that the right of national self-determination is an indispensable part of the socialist program for working class power. Lenin was quite clear that this right is a fundamental principle of socialism and not just “a task”:

“On the other hand, in contrast to the Proudhonists, who “repudiated” the national problem “in the name of the social revolution,” Marx, having in mind mainly the interests of the proletarian class struggle in the advanced countries, put into the forefront the fundamental principle of internationalism and socialism, viz., that no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations.” (5)

The Peculiarity of the Colonial Settler State Israel

Similarly, the CWI tries to deny the peculiarity of Israel as a colonial settler state. (6) Essentially they claim that, as horrible as it might have been, the *Nakba* – the expulsion of the Palestinian people from 1948 onwards – it is an historical fact and one has to accept the existence of a Jewish majority in historic Palestine which desires to live in a state of their own. Peter Taaffe writes:

“A state or a series of states can be established by the brutal displacement of peoples. Look at the removal of the Greek population from many parts of Asia Minor and of Turks from Greece following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. If you went back and redrew the map, you would now have huge exchanges of populations. (...) However, the reality now is that, in the course of time, a Jewish or Israeli national consciousness has been created. What do Marxists say to this? Just ignore the real situation and continue with the old position?”

However, this comparison with events in Greece and Turkey in 1923 is not valid. Without doubt, these expulsions of about 350,000 Muslims from Greece and of 1.2 million Greeks from Turkey were utterly horrible and reactionary.

fiction for calling for the continued existence of Israel (in a “socialist” form) and, hence, the continuation of the Palestinian people’s expulsion, as well as the CWI’s refusal to side with Arab countries in a war against Israel.

Israel and South Africa

No less, the CWI also rejects the comparison of the apartheid state of Israel and South Africa:

“[T]here are profound differences between the South African apartheid regime and Israel, particularly from a demographic angle. There were seven times more Africans and others than the white population in South Africa. This is not the situation in Israel/Palestine at this stage. If threatened with destruction, the Israeli population will fight.”

It is certainly true that there are differences between Israel and South Africa. While the demographic ratio between white and black people in South Africa was about 1:7, it is about 1:2 between Israeli Jews and Palestinians (in historic Palestine and those living in the Palestinian Diaspora). However, this is only true if one limits one’s outlook to Palestine itself. In fact, Israel is a settler state which was forcefully implemented by the imperialists as their bridgehead into the Arab world. As a result, today there live 6.1 million Israeli Jews in a hostile environment of the Middle East with about 366 million Arabs – i.e., there is a ratio of 1:60 between Israeli Jews and Arabs. These Arabs are deeply hostile to the state of Israel because of its historic role as an anti-Arab colonial settler state in the service of the imperialist powers. They have equally strong national and religious bonds with the Palestinian people and their liberation struggle.

Another difference is that the South African capitalists under the Apartheid regime exploited the black workers as a source of cheap labor. However, the Israeli capitalists can make do with other sources of cheap labor and, therefore,

ideally would want to expel all the Palestinians, if this were feasible. As our comrade Yossi Schwartz, a leader of the RCIT section in Israel / Occupied Palestine, noted:

“Many people deny that Israel is similar to South Africa during the Apartheid regime, and they are right to do so. In fact, Israel is not the same but worse. In South Africa, the white settler colonialists needed the blacks to accumulate capital, and thus turned the blacks into a source of cheap labor. Israel does not need the Palestinians as cheap labor. It wants them out of Palestine.” (12)

However, the fundamental similarities between Israel and pre-1994 South Africa remain. Both did, and Israel still does, propagate a system of Apartheid using a wealth of discriminatory laws and brute force (leading to regular incidents of murder, imprisonment, and expulsion) to ensure that the minority population is granted formal and de facto sovereignty, while the majority are systematically oppressed. It is grotesque how the CWI can ignore this obvious reality!

It is also somewhat amusing that– in order to emphasize the differences between Israel and South Africa – Peter Taaffe claims that: *“If threatened with destruction, the Israeli population will fight.”* Mr. Taaffe may have forgotten this, but the Black people in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Angola, and Mozambique recall very clearly that the white populations in these countries also fought to retain their Apartheid system! Thus, this willingness to do battle is certainly nothing unique to Israel!

The CWI Capitulates to the Chauvinism of the Oppressor Nation

Again and again the CWI leadership justifies their advocacy of a two state solution by referring to the wishes of the Israeli working class. They write:

“If threatened with destruction, the Israeli population will fight.”



Contingent of the RCIT’s Austrian Section and the youth organization RED*REVOLUTION

(...) Even the 'peace camp' will fight if their right to a separate state is under threat. The Israeli working class will fight if you threaten them that they will be driven into the sea. (...) A key question in the Middle Eastern revolution is how to split the Israeli workers away from the ruling class. Challenge them, threaten the idea of an Israeli 'homeland', then there is no chance of achieving this. (...) At the moment, we have to face the fact that the Palestinian and Jewish peoples have decided that they could not live together in one state. That is their consciousness."

The bottom line of such an argument is that, as long as the Israeli working class does not agree to give up its privileges – relative to Arab workers and peasants – which are the direct result of Israel's status as a rich, imperialist, settler state, socialists must uncritically accept such Israeli Jews' wishes for a state of their own so that they can retain these privileges.

This contention is both utterly absurd and anti-Marxist. Socialists have never subordinated their principles – among them, the right of self-determination for oppressed nations – to the wishes of privileged oppressor nations. The RCIT's comrades in Israel / Occupied Palestine rightly remarked recently on the CWI's program to retain the Israeli state:

"The current round of massacres will end in a few days or weeks, but sooner or later the killing will be resumed because Israel is committed to removing most of the Palestinians from their country, as it did in 1948. These cycles of violence will end either when Israel will be militarily defeated or when the struggle for liberation leading to a socialist revolution will win. Those who speak about a two-state solution, whether capitalists, socialist reformists (the Communist Party of Israel), or those like centrist Maavak Socialisti (CWI) who call for two "socialist states," all take as given that the existing imperialist order is permanent and, at the same time, entirely ignore the nature of the Israeli apartheid. There is no way, at one and the same time, to support both the right of self-determination for the Palestinians and the

right of self-determination for Israeli's since by definition the state of Israel must act to oppress, kill, and otherwise remove the Palestinians from the entire country. And there can be no other Israel. What does Maavak Socialisti mean when they call for two "socialist states"? It is essentially their recognition of the right of the settler colonialist oppressors to self-determination. Indirectly, such recognition is a rejection of the right of return of the Palestinians refugees. For, if the refugees will be allowed to return to what is today Israel, the Palestinians will constitute the demographic majority of the state. Why, then, will there be a need for two states with a Palestinian majority rather than a single socialist state where they will be the majority and those Israelis who accept this new reality will not be discriminated against? Why, indeed, if in such a state, where the Israeli workers who will participate in the socialist revolution will be part of the new ruling class, until classes will entirely disappear and with them the state itself?" (13)

We could also take other examples. It is a historic fact that the huge majority of the white people in the USA in the early 20th century thought that it was justified that the black people were oppressed. Did this stop the communists and Trotsky from advocating the black liberation struggle, including the right of national self-determination? Of course not! Likewise, many French – and even more so, the French settlers in Algeria – supported the colonial subjugation of Algeria for a long period of time. Similarly, there is virtually no doubt that the white settlers in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Angola, and Mozambique were also adamantly opposed to the black liberation struggle. If one would accept the CWI's logic, one could conceivably argue that these European settler families in colonial Africa had even greater historic rights to "their" respective lands than the Israeli Jews, since they lived far longer in these colonies than most Israeli Jews have lived in Palestine! However, in all these cases, communists consistently supported the right of the oppressed nations *irrespective* of the



at the Gaza Solidarity Demonstration in Vienna on 20.7.2014

consciousness of the oppressor nation. The South African communists did not make their support for black liberation dependent on the consciousness of the white minority (which, in its overwhelming majority, favored Apartheid until 1994).

Finally, let us not forget that, for a long period of time, the majority of men actually opposed granting the right to vote to women. And today, it is still not uncommon that the majority of people oppose granting full and equal rights to sexual minorities, or that many people in Western Europe are against the right of Muslim women to wear a scarf. Should such opposition deter socialists in their support for such democratic rights? Only if they are opportunistic capitulationists!

How Central is the Israeli Working Class for the Permanent Revolution in the Middle East?

The CWI considers the Israeli working class as a central component of the revolution without which it is not winnable. Peter Taaffe writes: *"We do stress that only unified mass action of Israeli and Palestinian workers can create a force which can overthrow the capitalists, both Israeli and Palestinian."*

In a resolution of its congress in 2010, the CWI emphasized *"It is only through united mass movements of the working class and poor in Palestine, and in Israel, as well, that a solution will be found; opposing national oppression, the bosses' parties and imperialism; and bringing about real self-determination for Palestinians - for a socialist, democratic Palestine and a socialist Israel, as part of a equal and voluntary socialist confederation of the Middle East."* (14)

The significance of the above is that the CWI sees permanent revolution in Palestine not primarily as part of the Arab revolution, but rather as a local struggle for which the participation of the relatively small Israeli working class – as an equal partner with the Palestinian workers – is a precondition.

Similarly, in our debate with the Austrian CWI, the CWI comrades objected to our program: *"How can you liberate Palestine if you repulse a core component of the population there – the Israeli Jews – who oppose the formation of a single multinational state?!"* To this we reply that, for Marxists, it is hardly surprising that the Israeli working class is by far the most reactionary, pro-imperialist, and politically backward. This is a direct result of its being the most privileged and aristocratic component of the entire working class in the Middle East.

Consequently, it is most probable that the Israeli workers will be the last to join the permanent revolution in the region – and perhaps only parts of it will in fact join. A far more likely scenario is that the Palestinian liberation struggle will unite with the revolutionary struggles throughout the Arab world, and only when the Israeli aristocratic working class faces such tremendous combined pressure, may significant sectors of it be prepared to break with Zionism.

Our comrades in the ISL are certainly aware that, today, the overwhelming majority of Israeli Jews oppose the dismantling of the state of Israel and its replacement by a single workers' state. However, sooner or later, this will change. When the national liberation struggle of the Algerian workers and peasants reached its height, significant sectors of the French people started to change their view

on the colonial occupation. When the Palestinian liberation struggle will fuse with the Arab Revolution, more sectors among the Israeli working class will also begin rethinking their Zionist prejudices. Yes, it is likely that particularly reactionary sectors will continue to maintain their Zionist views and may even move into a fascist direction (indications of which we witnessed during the recent Gaza war). Obviously, such arch-reactionary supporters of Apartheid will have a hostile attitude to the future democratic and socialist state in Palestine. For them there will be only one choice: capitulate or leave.

We repeatedly have questioned our comrades from the CWI: why do you insist that the fate of Palestinian liberation is dependent on this small minority of six million Israeli Jews, people who directly and indirectly profit from the Palestinians' oppression? Is it not much more likely that Palestinian liberation will be tied to the struggle of the worker and peasant masses numbering more than 360 million who contend with living conditions much more similar to those faced by their Palestinian brothers and sisters, and with whom they are related through national and religious bonds?! Have the Arab masses not proven their ability for revolutionary actions in the past few years?! Have the Egyptian masses – when they were not bound in chains by a pro-imperialist dictatorship – not demonstrated their close ties with their Palestinian brothers and sisters, demonstrating numerous times in front of the Israeli embassy in Cairo, and culminating in its storming in September 2011?!

In fact, the CWI leaders themselves are fully aware of these ties between the Palestinian and Arab workers and poor and their common anti-imperialist hatred against Israel. Peter Taaffe himself has admitted:

"We accept that many Arab workers have the hope that the Israeli state must be destroyed. It is an imperialist wedge against the Arab Revolution." (15)

We ask Peter Taaffe: Are the Arab workers not right in viewing Israel as a *"wedge against the Arab Revolution"*?!

The Rights of Oppressed Nations, Not of Oppressor Nations!

Finally, let us return to CWI's approach to the Marxist position on the national question. A central methodological failure of the CWI is its inability to understand the essence of the Leninist position regarding this issue. The CWI does not understand that Marxists view national oppression as a central component of the world capitalist system – in particular during the epoch of imperialism. By contrast, we emphasize – as Lenin did time and again – that the *"division of nations into oppressor and oppressed ... forms the essence of imperialism"*. (16)

Hence, it is absolutely indispensable that the workers' movement supports *all* struggles against national oppression (without, at the same time, supporting *any* nationalist ideology) and connects these struggles with that for an international socialist revolution against imperialist capitalism. It is only by supporting all struggles against national oppression and for full equality that the working class can learn to overcome all nationalist prejudices and appropriate a thoroughly internationalist class consciousness.

Contrary to this position, the CWI believes that it is suf-

ficient to agitate against nationalism – irrespective of whether it is the nationalism of an oppressed or oppressor nation – without *actively* supporting the specific struggles of the oppressed nations. Such Peter Taaffe writes:

“The national question is immeasurably more complicated than even existed at the time of Lenin and Trotsky. For Marxists it has two sides. We are opposed to bourgeois nationalism, which seeks to divide the working class. We are for the maximum unity of the working class across borders, continents and worldwide but at the same time we oppose the forcible incorporation of distinct nationalities into one state against their will.”

What the CWI forgets here is the essential, “small detail”: Marxists differentiate between oppressed and oppressor nations and they support the struggle of oppressed nations against their oppressor. Hence, while we reject *all* forms of nationalism, we differentiate between the nationalism of the oppressed nation and the nationalism of the oppressor nation. Why do we do so? Because the nationalism of the oppressed has a justified, democratic element as it is an (albeit insufficient and distorted) expression of the struggle for national liberation. On the other hand, the nationalism of the oppressor nation is thoroughly reactionary, since it is an expression of its privileges and dominance.

This was the method of Lenin and the Bolsheviks as was outlined in *“The Right of Nations to Self-Determination”* in 1914:

„The bourgeois nationalism of any oppressed nation has a general democratic content that is directed against oppression, and it is this content that we unconditionally support.” (17)

This failure of the CWI is linked to their misunderstanding of the essence of the right of national self-determination. This right is categorically *not* a liberal proclamation, but rather a revolutionary tool in the struggle of oppressed nations for liberation. Hence the right of national self-determination *cannot* be applied to nations which oppress others, but only to those nations which actually face oppression.

This distinction should be obvious to every clear thinking socialist. Can there be a right of national self-determination for imperialistic Germany, France, or the USA? Could there have been a right of national self-determination for the white minority in South Africa or in Zimbabwe? It is obvious that only reactionaries and social-chauvinists could support such an application of the right of national self-determination. In fact, this fallacy was a key element in the ideology of the reformist social democracy in Europe at the beginning of World War I, upon which they based their support for their respective imperialist “fatherlands” by citing the right of national self-determination.

However, as Marxists have repeatedly pointed out, socialists only support the struggle for national rights of those people who are facing oppression, not for those who are oppressing others. The Bolshevik leaders G. Zinoviev and V. I. Lenin wrote in 1915 during World War I:

„Social-chauvinism is advocacy of the idea of “defence of the fatherland” in the present war. This idea logically leads to the abandonment of the class struggle during the war, to voting for war credits, etc. In fact, the social-chauvinists are pursuing an anti-proletarian bourgeois policy, for they are actually championing, not “defence of the fatherland” in the sense of combating foreign oppression, but the “right” of one or other of the “Great” Powers to plunder colonies and to oppress other nations. The social-chauvinists reiterate the bourgeois deception of the people

that the war is being waged to protect the freedom and existence of nations, thereby taking sides with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Among the social-chauvinists are those who justify and varnish the governments and bourgeoisie of one of the belligerent groups of powers, as well as those who, like Kautsky, argue that the socialists of all the belligerent powers are equally entitled to “defend the fatherland”. Social-chauvinism, which is, in effect, defence of the privileges, the advantages, the right to pillage and plunder, of one’s “own” (or any) imperialist bourgeoisie, is the utter betrayal of all socialist convictions and of the decision of the Basle International Socialist Congress.” (18)

Marxists have always rejected such a bourgeois liberalization of the revolutionary-democratic demand for the right of national self-determination. Instead, they consistently understand this right as a means for achieving national liberation which will ultimately bring about internationalist unity of the workers of oppressed and oppressor nations. Hence Lenin and Trotsky emphasised that the right of national self-determination applies for *oppressed nations* and not for oppressor nations. Below, we provide a small sample of quotations to demonstrate this, and refer readers to the relevant chapter in our study on the permanent revolution in Palestine. (19)

“That is why the focal point in the Social-Democratic programme must be that division of nations into oppressor and oppressed which forms the essence of imperialism, and is deceitfully evaded by the social-chauvinists and Kautsky. This division is not significant from the angle of bourgeois pacifism or the philistine Utopia of peaceful competition among independent nations under capitalism, but it is most significant from the angle of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. It is from this division that our definition of the “right of nations to self-determination” must follow, a definition that is consistently democratic, revolutionary, and in accord with the general task of the immediate struggle for socialism.” (20)

“The right of nations to self-determination implies exclusively the right to independence in the political sense, the right to free political separation from the oppressor nation. (...) It implies only a consistent expression of struggle against all national oppression.” (21)

This is also how Trotsky understood both the Bolshevik and his own approach towards the national question:

“But the very conjuncture of the national movements with struggle of the proletariat for power was made politically possible only thanks to the fact that the Bolsheviks during the whole of their history carried on an irreconcilable struggle with the Great Russian oppressors, supporting always and without reservations the right of the oppressed nations to self-determination, including separation from Russia. The policy of Lenin in regard to the oppressed nations did not, however, have anything in common with the policy of the epigones. The Bolshevik Party defended the right of the oppressed nations to self-determination with the methods of the proletarian class struggle.” (22)

We emphatically repeat that our denial of the right of national self-determination for the Israeli-Jews has nothing whatsoever to do with the desire to expel them from Palestine, or to implement any other reactionary anti-Semitic fantasy. It simple means that the Israeli Jews have no right to deny the Palestinian people their democratic rights, just as men do not have the right to deny women their democratic rights. This is the Marxist meaning of our approach – nothing less and nothing more.

To summarize: Our rejection of a “right of national self-

determination" for the Israeli-Jewish nationality is not a denial of any inherent revolutionary democratic right due to them as a group. It is rather our rejection of their right to oppress the Palestinians and to perpetuate the expulsion of the latter from their homeland. It is our refusal to condone and continue the inherently racist political project of Zionism.

The CWI Method of Adaption to the Heritage of Imperialist Colonialism

In the past, we have already stressed that there is nothing exceptional about the CWI's "socialist" Zionism. Rather, it is rooted in and yet an additional manifestation of this tendency's adaption to imperialism and the aristocratic privileges of oppressor nations. In this light we remind the CWI comrades of their leaders' support "for self-determination" of the pro-British Protestant minority in Northern Ireland against the wishes for unification of Ireland by the entire Irish nation. As a result, the CWI consistently refused to support the armed struggle of the IRA against the British occupation army and their RUC police force.

Based on this very same social-chauvinist methodology, until today the CWI continues to support the British imperialists' claim to Argentina's Malvinas Islands because of the "right of national self-determination" of 1,800 colonial settlers. This position becomes evident from the following statements made by CWI leaders:

"The labour movement should be mobilised to force a general election to open the way for the return of a Labour government to implement socialist policies at home and abroad. Victory of a socialist government in Britain would immediately transform the situation in relation to the Falklands. The junta would no longer be able to claim to be fighting British imperialism ... A Labour government could not just abandon the Falklanders and let Galtieri get on with it. But it would continue the war on socialist lines." (23)

In his book on the history of Militant, CWI leader Peter Taaffe argues: *"The democratic rights of the 1,800 Falklanders, including the right to self-determination, if they so desired, was a key question in the consciousness of British workers. (...) Marxists could not be indifferent to the fate of the Falklanders, particularly given the consciousness of the British working class as it developed over this issue."* (24)

From this we see how the CWI completely distorts the Leninist notion of the right of national self-determination and transforms it into an ideology to justify colonial possessions of imperialism, specifically the existence of a colonial settler state as is the case with Israel.

II. "Socialist" Pacifism or Support for the Struggle of the Oppressed Nations?

The consequence of this social-chauvinist distortion of the right of national self-determination is a complete failure to support the struggle of oppressed nations. The CWI leaders may protest against our thesis, and refer to statements like the following one from Peter Taaffe:

"We have never opposed the right of the Palestinians to defend themselves against Israeli attacks, including armed defence in Gaza and legitimate attacks on military targets in Israel itself. We did, however, point to their ineffectiveness – it is like using peashooters against tanks – but also that they are counter-pro-

ductive when indiscriminately used against civilians."

Surely, the Palestinian people must be "grateful" that the CWI grants them the "right" to defend themselves. However, as we have pointed out in the past, this is in fact a meaningless phrase because the CWI in fact supports Palestinian resistance in the abstract, but not one which is actually taking place. The concrete Palestinian resistance which exists, lives, and fights is the one under the leadership of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist organizations like Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Popular Resistance Committees, the Al-Aqsa Brigades, the PFLP, etc.

Two different Things: The Palestinians "Right to Defend Themselves" vs. Taking the Side of the Palestinian Resistance as it Concretely Exists

In our recent debate in Austria, as well as on other occasions, the CWI has refused to support the struggle of the Palestinian resistance as it concretely exists today. It justified this refusal by referring to the reactionary nature of these organizations. Characteristically the CWI has no problems supporting a strike of Israeli workers organized by the Histadrut, the Zionist racist trade union which is organically linked to the Israeli state and which has supported Israel in all its wars. Similarly, the CWI didn't see any problem in supporting the reactionary strike demanding *"British Jobs for British Workers"* in 2009. However, it does feel itself incapable of supporting an anti-imperialist struggle led by a (petty-) bourgeois organization, even one supported by the entire people – particularly if they are engaged in a struggle against their own imperialism.

This reluctance is in complete contradiction with classic Marxist theory. As we explained in our book *"The Great Robbery of the South"*:

"Lenin, Trotsky and the Communist International called for the support of Turkey in its struggle against British imperialism and its Greek allies in the years after the end of WWI, despite the fact that Turkey was ruled by the bourgeois, anti-communist regime of Mustafa Kemal Pasha. They also supported the struggle of the Riffian Berbers under the leadership of Abd el-Krim in the 1920s against the Spanish and French imperialists drive to occupy their country. The French Communist Party (PCF) organized a militant anticolonial mass campaign in solidarity with the Riffians – including a general strike on 12th October 1925. The PCF publicly expressed its support for the Riffians struggle until "Moroccan soil was completely liberated" from both Spanish and French imperialists. Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International continued this revolutionary anti-imperialism. They supported the struggle of the Chinese people against Japanese imperialism in the 1930s and 1940s despite the fact that it was led by the reactionary general Chiang Kai-shek." (25)

We therefore characterize the CWI attitude as *platonian anti-imperialism*, i.e., one which does not draw the necessary practical conclusions about supporting the struggles of the oppressed today, due to its own backward leadership. In practice, the CWI approach is a kind of "socialist" pacifism, being "against the war" and failing to actively support those who are fighting the imperialist aggressor.

This is the reason why, in its agitation, the CWI does not call for support for and the victory of the Palestinian resistance. It does so neither locally, in the theater of the struggle itself – Israel / Occupied Palestine -- nor internationally. In countries where pro-Zionist sentiment is

particularly strong among public opinion and in the labor movement, like Austria, the CWI refuses to mobilize for or even participate in pro-Palestinian demonstrations of migrant communities, these being the only forces besides the Austrian's RCIT section which mobilizes on this issue. This has been the practical policy of the CWI section in Austria for many years. When we challenged them on this policy in our public debate on 31 August, the CWI speaker explicitly defended their refusal to participate in these demonstrations, arguing that the CWI section is too weak to change the pro-Palestinian nationalist and religious character of these demonstrations -- and as long as they cannot change this character, "it is better to stay at home" (quote). This is an open admission of the harmful, social-chauvinist consequences of the CWI's refusal to support the Palestinian liberation struggle as it concretely exists. When we consider that, in Israel, the CWI has no problem joining anti-war demonstrations organized by left or not-so-left Zionists, it becomes clear that they feel much more comfortable in the company of the latter than they do among nationalist or religious, anti-imperialist migrants in Europe.

Naturally, we are fully aware that intervening in nationalist and religiously-inspired migrant communities can be difficult, requiring socialists to struggle against the influence of Islamists and bourgeois community leaders. However, this is life, and Marxists are keenly aware that intervening in trade union mobilizations and strikes also often involves intense conflicts with bureaucrats. But such difficulties shall never stop authentic Marxists from supporting and participating in such actions. In fact, there is no other way to approach the masses that are fighting against the imperialist and capitalist enemy than by joining their

struggles, even when these are organized by the wrong leadership. The RCIT section in Austria has shown many times that it is possible to become respected by many migrants from these communities and to earn the right to disseminate our propaganda among them. As a result, we have been invited to speak at these actions a number of times. (26)

A General Method:

Failure to Support Struggles against Imperialism which Take Place under a Non-Socialist Leadership

We have shown above that the CWI distorts the right of national self-determination in order to justify the defense of various imperialist occupations (e.g., Israel, Northern Ireland, the Malvinas). Similarly, they generally tend to refuse giving support to concrete practical struggles of oppressed nations which usually take place under bourgeois or petty-bourgeois leadership.

The CWI leaders opportunistically justify this abstention from participation by referring to the consciousness of the masses in the imperialist countries. Taking the example of the resistance in Afghanistan, Peter Taaffe even argued the communists' method of the anti-imperialist united front is no longer applicable today:

"The masses in the 1930s would have understood little of the precise detail of the Haile Selassie regime. Moreover, Ethiopia was under attack by the fascist regime of Benito Mussolini at the time Trotsky was writing. Given the democratic illusions of the working class of Europe or the US in particular, together with the recent bloody example of what fascism would mean for them in the coming to power of Adolf Hitler and Mussolini, it was natural that the sympathies of the masses in the 1930s would be with Ethiopia against fascist Italy. The British and most of



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

the European bourgeoisie together with the US, for their own imperialist strategic interests, also played on this sympathy for Ethiopia. It is nonsense to imply, however, as the sectarian organizations do by quoting these remarks of Trotsky, that the mass of the populations in most industrialised countries could take the same attitude today towards bin Laden and the Taliban.” (27)

Similarly, according to Taaffe, it would be wrong to call for the defeat of the imperialist occupation forces: “To call baldly and crudely for the ‘defeat of US imperialism’ and its coalition allies as an agitational slogan is wrong.”

In the case of Afghanistan, the CWI once again demonstrates its platonic anti-imperialism. While it supports “resistance in general”, it does not support the resistance which is actually taking place. Thus, Taaffe wrote: “Support for the Afghani people and their resistance against the armed incursions of imperialism is not the same as support for the Taliban, even if this support is ‘critical’, as some left organisations have posed it. (...)„If, therefore, we perceive this war as thoroughly reactionary on the part of imperialism, does this mean that we throw in our lot, albeit ‘critically’, with those who have allegedly ‘resisted’ the US juggernaut, namely bin Laden, his al-Qa’ida and the Taliban government? Unbelievably, this is the position of some small Trotskyist groups, such as Workers Power (our predecessor organization, MP) and the Morenoite LIT. The latter is largely based in Latin America. Their approach will find absolutely no echo amongst the world working class, particularly the proletariat in the developed capitalist countries.”

Unfortunately, the Taliban, doubtless a reactionary Islamist force, is the dominant force among the Afghan resistance. Refusing to support their military struggle against the NATO forces is equivalent to rejecting practical resistance on the ground against the imperialist occupation in Afghanistan.

Armed, or rather disarmed, with the same method, the CWI leadership failed to support the military struggle of Argentina against British imperialism in 1982; of Iraq both in 1991 and 2003 and later; as well as in Lebanon in 2006. (28)

It is therefore obvious that the CWI failure to support the Palestinian resistance struggle is no exceptional case but rather an expression of its consistent social-pacifist, centrist method. Trotsky’s condemnation of the centrist politician Georg Ledebour, written in 1932, also illuminates well the political failures of the CWI today: “Nevertheless, Ledebour’s position even on this question does not leave the precincts of centrism. Ledebour demands that a battle be waged against colonial oppression; he is ready to vote in parliament against colonial credits; he is ready to take upon himself a fearless defense of the victims of a crushed colonial insurrection. But Ledebour will not participate in preparing a colonial insurrection. Such work he considers putschism, adventurism, Bolshevism. And therein is the whole gist of the matter. What characterizes Bolshevism on the national question is that in its attitude toward oppressed nations, even the most backward, it considers them not only the object but also the subject of politics. Bolshevism does not confine itself to recognizing their “right” to self-determination and to parliamentary protests against the trampling upon of this right. Bolshevism penetrates into the midst of the oppressed nations; it raises them up against their oppressors; it ties up their struggle with the struggle of the proletariat in capitalist countries; it instructs the oppressed Chinese, Hindus, or Arabs in the art of insurrection and it assumes full responsibility for this work in the face of civilized executioners. Here only does Bolshevism begin,

that is, revolutionary Marxism in action. Everything that does not step over this boundary remains centrism.” (29)

III. The International Solidarity Movement

This leads us to the next methodological difference between the RCIT and the CWI, that pertaining to the international solidarity movement with Palestine. The RCIT calls for an international worker and popular boycott campaign against Israel in order to weaken it and to support the Palestinian resistance. Hence, we critically support the ongoing international boycott campaign like BDS which has received mass support not only from the Palestinian side but also from many trade unions around the world (like COSATU in South Africa, numerous trade unions in Norway, Canada, Ireland, Britain, etc.). In our joint statement which we published with other organizations during the recent Gaza war we stated:

“We call for the building of a mass international solidarity movement of the working class and the oppressed. We call on the mass organizations of workers’ and popular movements (trade unions, parties etc.) to join the international solidarity campaign for Palestine and to actively engage in boycott actions against all commercial activities with Israel! It should boycott all contacts with Zionist institutions while – at the same time – encouraging close collaboration with all progressive Israeli Jews who protest against the apartheid regime. Such a mass solidarity movement should mobilize to close down Israel’s embassies around the world. Equally such a solidarity movement must work towards ending the military and financial aid for Israel by the imperialist states.” (30)

Contrary to this position, the CWI generally rejects the ongoing boycott campaign against Israel with the exception of some targeted measures against this or that company from the settlements in the West Bank or against exporting arms to Israel:

“Should all BDS campaigns be avoided because of the viewpoint of Israel workers? Not necessarily, because some types of selective boycott or sanctions can aid the Palestinians’ cause while, at the same time, coming across to Israeli workers as less hostile to them than blanket boycotts of ‘everything Israeli’. ‘Selective’ can mean targeting the export to Israel of arms and equipment that could be used against the Palestinians; firms that profit from the occupation; goods produced in the Jewish settlements; certain sporting and cultural events to gain publicity; the Ariel university in the occupied territories; Israeli ministers when they make overseas visits – among other possible targets.” (31)

The CWI justifies its refusal to support the international boycott campaign by referring again to the consciousness of the Israeli working class. It says that a campaign like BDS should not be supported because it is rejected by the Israeli workers. This becomes evident from the following quote which we have taken from the same article:

“Israeli Jewish workers genuinely fear for their own security and want to protect the state that was intended to be a safe haven for Jews. This, with the constant barrage of propaganda, unsurprisingly leads them to believe that advocates of the BDS campaign around the world don’t understand the situation in Israel. Also, many of the Israeli Jews who are most critical of their government’s brutality against the Palestinians, at the same time don’t see why Israeli workers should be punished for it by suffering the effects of boycotts. So it needs to be taken into account that boycott campaigns can assist the propaganda of the Israeli gov-

ernment domestically, and can create a barrier between workers in Israel and internationally, negative consequences that need to be weighed up against the advantages."

Similarly, Peter Taaffe states: "Moreover, a targeted campaign, which could grow now in the wake of the horror of Gaza, should be discussed with both Palestinian but particularly Israeli workers." (Our emphasis)

It seems that the consciousness of the small Israeli working class is a far more important factor in the political calculations of the CWI leaders than the consciousness of the much larger working class in the Arab world, in Latin America, and increasingly also in North America and Western Europe! This is just another confirmation of their aristocratic attitude which aligns itself with the rather privileged layers of the working class and not the lower, much larger strata of the world proletariat.

In fact, the CWI's negative position towards international boycott campaigns is in contradiction to the tradition of the revolutionary workers' movement. During the international solidarity campaign for the anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti in the 1920s, militant trade union federations like the CGTU in France called for the boycott of all US commodities, both by consumers as well as by transport workers. They even organized groups which broke up cin-

ema showings of American films. (32) Similarly, Trotsky and US Trotskyists supported the boycott of German commodities after Hitler took power in 1933. (33)

Naturally, Marxists must warn against harboring any illusions that such a boycott campaign could abolish Apartheid in Palestine, contrary to what the initiators of the BDS campaign claim. But this is true for many working class actions. In Greece, the trade union leaders called for two dozen one-day general strikes. Marxists always warned that even these will be insufficient in achieving the desired goal of halting the austerity policy of the government. However, only a traitor and strike breaker would have refused to support and to participate in these one-day general strikes! Unfortunately, the CWI fails to support the international boycott campaign against Israel and in doing so plays the strike breakers against the explicit wishes of the entire Palestinian national movement, as well as numerous international trade unions and solidarity organizations.

The difference between the methods of the RCIT and CWI also is manifested in our respective attitudes towards Histadrut, the main Zionist trade union federation of the Israeli workers. The RCIT, as well as many other progressive organizations, call upon the international trade union



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

movement to sever its relations with the Histadrut. The rationale for such a severe step is the strict and uninterrupted support of the Histadrut for the expulsion and oppression of the Palestinian people since 1948 as well as its support for the Israeli Apartheid system.

On the other hand, the CWI opposes calls to the international trade union federation to break with the Histadrut – irrespective of its criticism against the organization's leadership. As Judy Beishon from the CWI writes:

“Should trade unions internationally have links with the Israeli trade union federation, the Histadrut? The Histadrut leaders have always had close ties with the Israeli elite. (...) A vital task that Histadrut members face is to remove the leaders that are holding back workers' interests, and to replace them with leaders who will be under the democratic control of the membership. Meanwhile, links should be maintained by trade unions internationally with the rank-and-file workers in the Histadrut – encompassing over 700,000, the overwhelming majority of organised workers in Israel, including Palestinians and migrant workers. It is more workable to maintain links with the rank and file if formal links are maintained with the Histadrut leadership bodies, not in order to give any support to the positions of the union federation's bureaucracy, but to have a dialogue and links with the organised Israeli working class.”

In the end, the CWI's softness regarding the Histadrut is hardly surprising, given the fact that it also considers police officers as “workers in uniform” who should be part of the trade union federation. The CWI in Britain even has among its members the president of the prison officers!

Conclusion

Ultimately, the issue of the Palestinian liberation struggle demonstrates that the CWI's failure goes far beyond this issue alone, but rather is rooted in its overall method. It clearly demonstrates that the CWI is not a revolutionary, Marxist, anti-imperialist tendency but rather a *centrist* one. This means that the CWI adapts itself to the reformist bureaucracy and the labor aristocracy and their pro-imperialist prejudices.

Trotsky and the Fourth International sharply denounced such a failure to support the struggles of the oppressed people against imperialism. In a declaration of 1932, they stated:

“Capitalist brigands always conduct a “defensive” war, even when Japan is marching against Shanghai and France against Syria or Morocco. The revolutionary proletariat distinguishes only between wars of oppression and wars of liberation. The character of a war is defined, not by diplomatic falsifications, but by the class which conducts the war and the objective aims it pursues in that war. The wars of the imperialist states, apart from the pretexts and political rhetoric, are of an oppressive character, reactionary and inimical to the people. Only the wars of the proletariat and of the oppressed nations can be characterized as wars of liberation (...)

Whoever directly or indirectly supports the system of colonization and protectorates, the domination of British capital in India, the domination of Japan in Korea or in Manchuria, of France in Indochina or in Africa, whoever does not fight against colonial enslavement, whoever does not support the uprisings of the oppressed nations and their independence, whoever defends or idealizes Gandhism, that is, the policy of passive resistance on questions which can be solved only by force of arms, is, despite

good intentions or bad, a lackey, an apologist, an agent of the imperialists, of the slaveholders, of the militarists, and helps them to prepare new wars in pursuit of their old aims or new.” (34)

Trotsky once described centrism in the following way: *“Centrism is the name applied to that policy which is opportunist in substance and which seeks to appear as revolutionary in form.”* (35) Unfortunately, as we have shown in the case of Palestine, but also in other anti-imperialist struggles, this characterization is entirely applicable to the CWI. We call on the many comrades in the ranks of this organization to critically discuss these issues and to break with such an opportunist program.

Footnotes

(1) Peter Taaffe: Socialism and national rights. Ukraine, Israel/Palestine and other countries, in: Socialism Today No.181, September 2014, pp. 13-17, <http://www.socialistworld.net/doc/6875>. If not indicated otherwise, all quotes from Peter Taaffe in our reply are taken from this article.

(2) A report as well as photos of this meeting, which was attended by about 80 people, can be found on the RCIT's website <http://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/austria-intervention-at-cp-fete/>

(3) The RCIT and the ISL have published numerous documents and articles on Palestine. They can be found on our websites at <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/>, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/> as well as <http://www.the-isleague.com/>.

For an overview of our tactics as well as our historic and programmatic positions we refer readers to the following documents – Joint Statement: Israel Starts Ground Offensive: Defend Gaza! Defeat Israel's War! Support the Palestinian Resistance! For a Workers' and Popular International Campaign to Boycott Israel! Down with the Regimes which Collaborate with Israel! For a Free, Red Palestine! Joint Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine), the Communist Left of Australia and the Editor of the Blog vansterparlan.v-blog.se (Sweden), 22.7.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/joint-statement-defend-gaza/>

RCIT and ISL: Palestine: Forward to the Third Intifada! Organize the Uprising in Workers, Peasant, and Youth Popular Committees! Revitalize the Arab Revolution! Smash the Imperialist Apartheid State Israel! 7.7.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/victory-to-palestinian-uprising/>

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Yossi Schwartz: Israel's War of 1948 and the Degeneration of the Fourth International, in: Revolutionary Communism, Special Issue on Palestine, No. 10, June 2013, www.thecommunists.net/theory/israel-s-war-of-1948-1

Yossi Schwartz: Israel's Six-Day War of 1967. On the Character of the War, the Marxist Analysis and the Position of the Israeli Left, in: Revolutionary Communism, No. 12, July/August 2013, www.thecommunists.net/theory/israel-s-war-of-1967

Michael Pröbsting: On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine, in: Revolutionary Communism, Special Issue on Palestine, No. 10, June 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/permanent-revolution-in-palestine>

(4) Michael Pröbsting: On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine, in: Revolutionary Communism, Special Issue on Palestine, No. 10, June

2013, p. 35, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/permanent-revolution-in-palestine>

(5) V.I.Lenin: The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination (1916), in: LCW 22, p. 149 (our emphasis)

(6) On this issue we refer readers also to the chapter "Socialist Zionism a la CWI" in: 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, pp. 353-357, 2013, <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/>

(7) See Sutay Yavuz: Fertility Decline in Turkey from the 1980s Onwards: Patterns by Main Language Groups, Ankara 2008, p. 133; DEIK/TAIK: Turkey Brief: Turkish - U.S. Relations, 2011, p. 13; Dimitrios Trichopoulos and George Papaevangelou: The Population Of Greece. A Monograph for the World Population Year 1974, CICRED, Athen 1974, p. 11

(8) See Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics: Palestine in Figures 2012, Ramallah 2013, p. 10; Elior Levy: Report: Palestinians to outnumber Jews by 2020, 01.01.13, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4327295,00.html>; Asher Zeiger: Israel at 65: Population tops 8 million, April 14, 2013, <http://www.time-sofisrael.com/israel-at-65-population-tops-8-million>

(9) Michael Pröbsting: On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine, in: Revolutionary Communism, Special Issue on Palestine, No. 10, June 2013, p. 24, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/permanent-revolution-in-palestine>

(10) On this, see the chapter "Israel's development into an imperialist state" in Michael Pröbsting: On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine.

(11) On this, see Yossi Schwartz: Israel's War of 1948 and the Degeneration of the Fourth International, in: Revolutionary Communism, Special Issue on Palestine, No. 10, June 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/israel-s-war-of-1948/> and Yossi Schwartz: Israel's Six-Day War of 1967, July 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/israel-s-war-of-1967/>

(12) Yossi Schwartz: Israel's War against the Palestinians, Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine), 23.7.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/gaza-war/>

(13) Yossi Schwartz: Israel's War against the Palestinians, Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine), 23.7.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/gaza-war/>

(14) CWI: The crisis of capitalism and the naked role of imperialism are graphically manifested in the Middle East. Document No. 3, CWI 10th World Congress, 28.12.2010 <http://www.socialistworld.net/doc/4736>

(15) Peter Taaffe: Marxismus heute. Antworten auf Krieg, Kapitalismus und Umweltzerstörung (2006), p. 40; We are quoting and translating from the German translation since we don't possess the English-language original of „*Marxism in today's World*“.

(16) V. I. Lenin: The revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination (1915); in: LCW 21, p. 409

(17) V.I. Lenin - The Right of Nations to Self-Determination (1914); in: LCW 20, p.412 (emphasis by Lenin)

(18) G. Zinoviev / V. I. Lenin: Socialism and War (1915) ; in: LCW Vol. 21, pp. 306-307

(19) See chapter "The Marxist classics and the right of national self-determination" in Michael Pröbsting: On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine

(20) V. I. Lenin: The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination, in: LCW 21, p. 409

(21) V. I. Lenin: The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Na-

tions to Self-Determination, in: LCW 22, p. 146

(22) Leon Trotsky: On the South African Theses (1935); in: Trotsky Writings 1934-35, p. 251

(23) Lynn Walsh: Falklands war: what lessons for the labour movement? in: Militant International Review, Nr. 22, Juni 1982 (reprinted in: Socialism Today, Nr. 108, April 2007, <http://www.socialismtoday.org/108/falklands.html>)

(24) Peter Taaffe: The Rise of Militant, London 1995, Chapter 20 "The Falklands/Malvinas War", <http://socialistalternative.org/literature/militant/>

(25) Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South, pp. 306-307

(26) To give an overview of our work we refer to some reports and videos from the last 9 months: Austria: Rally in Solidarity with Gaza on 13.7.2014! <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/rally-for-palestine-13-7-2014/>; Austria: Demonstration on the Anniversary of the Raaba Massacre in Egypt! <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/report-egypt-rally-14-8-2014/>; Egypt: Report with Videos from Demonstration in Austria against the Military Dictatorship on 20.4.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-solidarity-demo-in-austria-20-4-2014/>; Austria: Solidarity with the Resistance against the Military Dictatorship in Egypt! <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/solidarity-rally-for-egypt/> Those who are interested can view more videos on our YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/revolutioncommunism>

(27) Peter Taaffe: Afghanistan, Islam and the Revolutionary Left (2002), <http://www.socialistworld.net/pubs/afghanistan/afghanchp1.html>; The following quotes from Taaffe are taken from this document.

(28) We have dealt in detail with the CWI's position on imperialist wars in the chapter "Centrism's Failure in the Struggle against Imperialist Wars" in: 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, 2013, <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/>

(29) Leo Trotzki: Was nun? Schicksalsfragen des deutschen Proletariats (1932); in: Schriften über Deutschland, pp. 246-247; in English: Leon Trotsky: What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/germany/1932-ger/next02.htm>

(30) Israel Starts Ground Offensive: Defend Gaza! Defeat Israel's War! Support the Palestinian Resistance! For a Workers' and Popular International Campaign to Boycott Israel! Down with the Regimes which Collaborate with Israel! For a Free, Red Palestine! Joint Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine), the Communist Left of Australia and the Editor of the Blog vansterparlan.vblog.se (Sweden), 22.7.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/joint-statement-defend-gaza/>

(31) Judy Beishon: Boycotting Israel: the socialist view, in: Socialism Today Issue 169, June 2013, <http://www.socialismtoday.org/169/israel.html>

(32) Johann Zelt: Proletarischer Internationalismus im Kampf um Sacco und Vanzetti, Dietz Verlag, Berlin 1958, pp. 219-220

(33) See: Leon Trotsky: Building a New International and the United Front Policy, in: Trotsky Writings Supplement 1929-33, p. 279 as well as CLA(US): The Militant, Editorial, 21.20.1933

(34) Leon Trotsky: Declaration of the Antiwar Congress at Amsterdam (1932), in: Writings 1932, p. 153

(35) Leon Trotsky: Independence of the Ukraine and Sectarian Muddleheads (1939); in: Writings 1939-40, S. 54 ■

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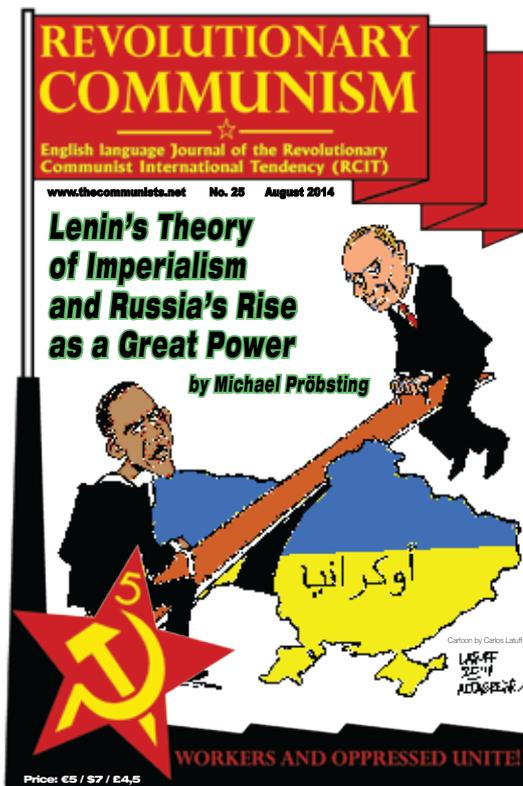
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VI. Summary

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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.

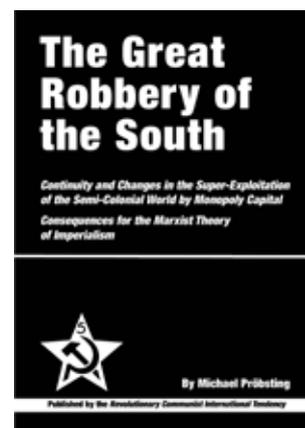
In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting analyses the super-exploitation and oppression of the semi-colonial world (often referred to as the "Third World") by the imperialist powers and monopolies. He shows that the relationship between the small minority of rich capitalist countries and 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.

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Look for details of the books at www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net and www.cuba-sold-out.net

Michael Pröbsting: Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?

The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new book. It's called *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?*. The book's subtitle is: *The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism*. The book is in English-language. It has 5 chapters plus an appendix, 108 pages and includes 19 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who is the *International Secretary* of the RCIT. In *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* Michael Pröbsting analyses the character of the Cuban Revolution 1959-61, its bureaucratic degeneration, and the recent march of the Castro leadership towards capitalism.

The author demonstrates how the Cuban Revolution, despite the initial modest intentions of its leaders, was spurred forward to more radical policies by grass roots struggles of Cuban workers and peasants. In fact, the very abolishment of capitalism by the Cuban regime was no part of the original game plan of either Castro's Movimiento 26 de Julio or of the official Cuban communist party (PSP), but rather was a product of precisely such pressures from below.

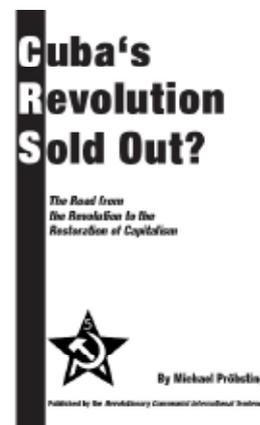
Cuba's Revolution Sold Out? describes in detail how a number of relatively recent political, economic, and social measures were purposely taken by the Cuban government to open the road back

to capitalism. Pröbsting elaborates the key role of the world's new great imperialist power, China, in Cuba's state policy as exemplified in the June 2011 Sino-Cuban agreement for a first Five-Year Plan of cooperation between these two states.

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Price: 8 Euro / 12 US-Dollars / 7 British Pound (plus delivery charges) ■



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). His latest book, *The Great Robbery of the South* (published in 2013), 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 is the *International Secretary* of the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency*.

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 5th Workers International on a revolutionary basis!
Join the RCIT!

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



