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Socialist Fight

No. 14 August-September 2013 Price: Waged £2 (€3) Concessions: 50p

The Miliband/McCluskey conflict: “The crux of the matter is, of course, that the workers’ organizations, by asserting their anti-Liberal, ‘despotic’, Bolshevik right of enforced collection of the political levy, are in effect fighting for the real and concrete, and not a metaphysical possibility of parliamentary representation for the workers; while the Conservatives and the Liberals in upholding the principles of ‘personal freedom’ are in fact striving to disarm the workers materially, and thereby shackle them to the bourgeois parties… Even a blind man can sense here the purely class nature of the principle of personal freedom which in the given concrete conditions signifies nothing but the possessing classes’ attempt politically to expropriate the proletariat by reducing its party to nil”. **Leon Trotsky’s Writings on Britain, 1926.**

Unity is strength, L’union fait la force, Es la unidad fuerza, H ενότητα είναι δύναμη, اتحاد قدرت است., đoàn kết là sữc mạnh, Jedność jest siła, ykseys on kesto, યુનિટિ શ્રૂ ના., Midnimo iyo waa awood, hundeb ydy chryfder, Einheit ist Stärke, एकता शक्ति है, единстве наша сила, vienybės jėga, bashkimi ben fuqine, אחדות היא כח, unità è la resistenza, 団結は力だ, A união faz a força, eining er styrkur, De eenheid is de sterkte, الوحدة هو القوة, Ní neart go chur le céile, pagkakaisa ay kalakasan, jednota is síla, 일성은 이다 힘 힘, Workers of the World Unite!

Socialist Fight Where We Stand

Socialist Fight is a member of the Liaison Committee for the Fourth International with the Liga Comunista of Brazil and the Tendencia Militante Bolchevique of Argentina.

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£10,000 building fund

Socialist Fight has launched this fund to help with our International work. We need to send comrades to attend the projected founding conference of the Liaison Committee for the Fourth International in Brazil. Send donations to: Unity Trust Bank, Sort Code 08-60-01, Account. No. 20227368.

1.WE STAND WITH KARL MARX: 'The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. The struggle for the emancipation of the working class means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies but for equal rights and duties and the abolition of all class rule' (The International Workingmen's Association 1864, General Rules).

2.The capitalist state consists, in the last analysis, of ruling-class laws within a judicial system and detention centres overseen by the armed bodies of police/army who are under the direction and are controlled in acts of defence of capitalist property rights against the interests of the majority of civil society. The working class must overthrow the capitalist state and replace it with a workers' state based on democratic soviets/workers' councils to suppress the inevitable counter-revolution of private capitalist profit against planned production for the satisfaction of socialised human need.

3.We recognise the necessity for revolutionaries to carry out serious ideological and political struggle as direct participants in the trade unions (always) and in the mass reformist social democratic bourgeois workers' parties despite their pro-capitalist leaderships when conditions are favourable. Because we see the trade union bureaucracy and their allies in the Labour party leadership as the most fundamental obstacle to the struggle for power of the working class, outside of the state forces and their direct agencies themselves, we must fight and defeat and replace them with a revolutionary leadership by mobilising the base against the pro-capitalist bureaucratic misleaders to open the way forward for the struggle for workers' power.

4.We are fully in support of all mass mobilisations against the onslaught of this reactionary Con-Lib Dem coalition. However, whilst participating in this struggle we will oppose all policies which subordinate the working class to the political agenda of the petty-bourgeois reformist leaders of the Labour party and trade unions

5. We support the fight of all the specially oppressed; Black and Asian, women, lesbians and gay men, bisexuals and transgender people against discrimination in all its forms and their right to organise separately in that fight in society as a whole. In particular we defend their right to caucus inside trade unions and in working class political parties.

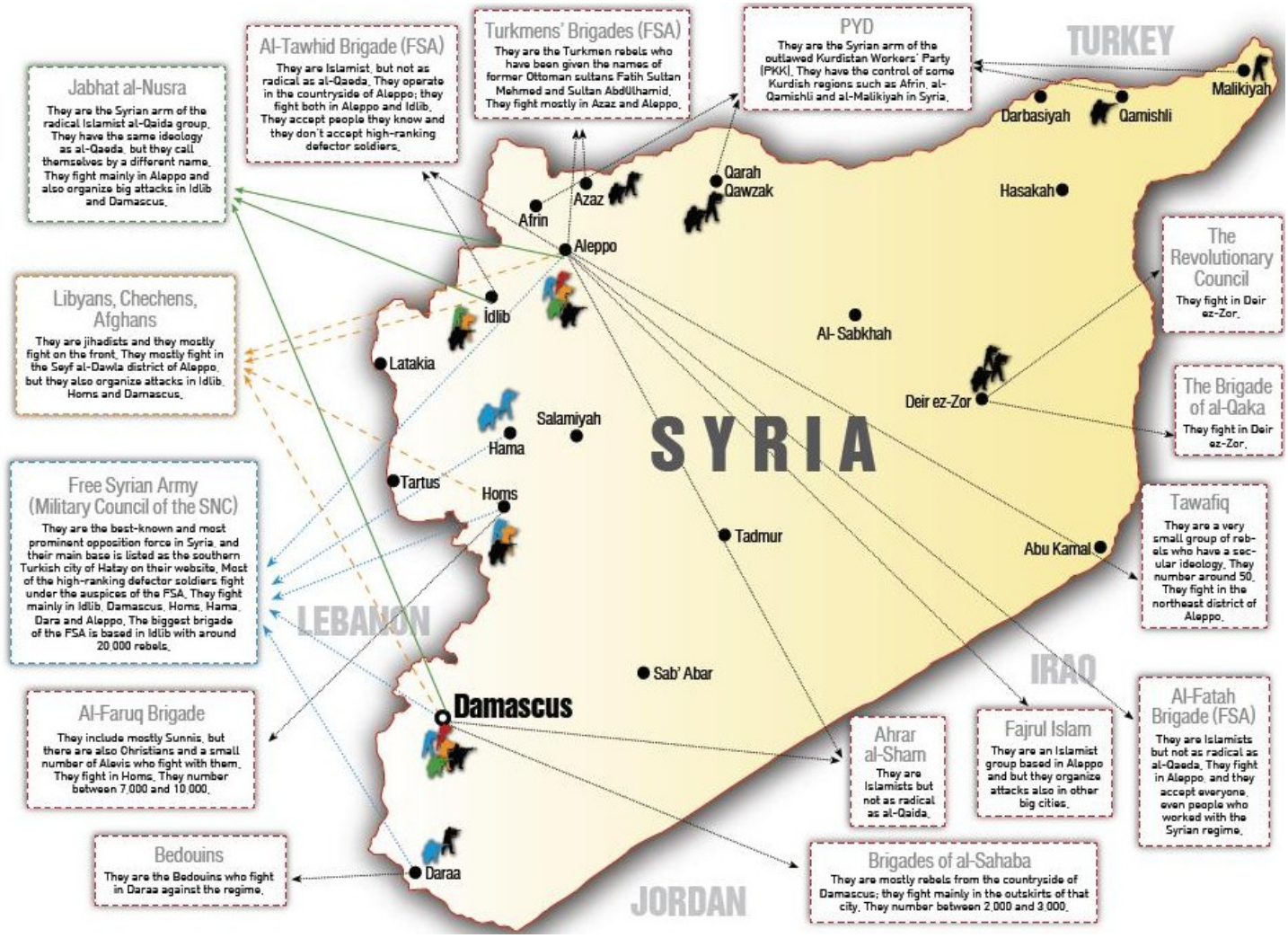
6.We recognise that class society, and capitalism as the last form of class society, is by its nature patriarchal. In that sense the oppression of women is different from all other forms of oppression and discrimination. Because this social oppression is inextricably tied to private property, and its inheritance, to achieve full sexual, social and economic freedom and equality for all we need to overthrow class society itself.

7.We fight racism and fascism. We support the right of people to fight back against racist and fascist attacks by any means necessary. Self-defence is no offence! We support 'No Platform' for all fascists but never call on the capitalist state to ban fascist marches or parties; these laws would inevitably primarily be used against workers' organisations, as history has shown.

8.We oppose all immigration controls. International finance capital roams the planet in search of profit and Imperialist governments disrupts the lives of workers and cause the collapse of whole nations with their direct intervention in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan and their proxy wars in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, etc. Workers have the right to sell their labour internationally wherever they get the best price. Only union membership and pay rates can counter employers who seek to exploit immigrant workers as cheap labour to undermine the gains of past struggles.

Contents

Which of these imperialist-sponsored reactionaries will lead the "revolution" in Syria? In an article in the most pro-Imperialist of all the British press, *The Telegraph* on 25 July 2013, *Face the truth about President Bashar al-Assad, It's bad news for the region, and for the West* Con Coughlin admits the bitter truth about Syria: the Imperialist-sponsored "rebels", supported by some pro-imperialist leftists, are losing the war and, "the most worrying consequence of Assad's survival, though, will be the sense of empowerment it will lend those countries, such as Russia and Iran that have given Damascus their unstinting support. Russians will take satisfaction from the fact that an important ally has been saved, and that they retain access to the Syrian port of Tartus, Moscow's only naval base in the Mediterranean". All serious revolutionaries seek the defeat of US imperialism.



Editorial: The crisis in the Labour party

The crisis of British capitalism is reflected in the war waging inside the Labour party between Ed Miliband and Len McCluskey General Secretary of Unite, the biggest Trade union in Britain. Unite donates large sums of money to the Labour party. According to Channel 4's FactCheck:

Unite the union is Labour's biggest donor by far. It has provided 20 per cent, or £11.9m, of party donations since the election. Unite says it has given Labour £8m in fees in the last three years. The union told FactCheck that the remaining £3.9m (that makes up the £11.9m) "lumps in everything" across Scotland, England and Wales: sponsorship, conference fees, any funding to re-elect Ken Livingstone, regional campaigns – every last leaflet. [1]

Miliband in a letter to Labour Party Members is propagating the idea of "one nation", so that Labour can prepare for coalition government with either the Tories or Liberal democrats. Miliband states "A hundred years the Trade Unions helped to found the Labour Party" [2]. In 1902 the working class through the trade unions founded, built and financed the Labour party to advance the cause of the working class by representing it in parliament. The block vote was used to protect the party from the influence of the ruling class. Miliband further comments "The organised Trade Unions are no longer part of the Labour party, we are changing that relationship between the Labour party and the trade unions" [3]. The actions of Kinnock who drive out the Militant Tendency and Blair who removed Clause 4 from the Labour party constitution were designed to kill off the last vestige of socialism in the Labour party. Miliband takes up the right wing offensive anew and wants to turn the Labour party into an open capitalist party with no connection to the trade unions or the working class, although he is wants to continue receiving big donations from unions like Unite.

And in the compromise that McCluskey is accepting we see that the game is not to starve the Labour party of funds but to abolish the political levy. The levy is taken from each member's contributions and amounts to £3 per year on an "in if you do not opt out" basis. As we can see from the exact same debate in the middle 1920s (see front page) all Tory and Liberal politicians want an "out if you do not opt in" position which would cost the party millions of lost subscriptions if that was the only option. But there is a third way which works so well in the relations between the trade unions and the Democrats in the US; The TU bureaucracy donates millions of dollars to the Democrats in the main (although some money also goes to the Republicans) but they do not get any votes at conference, of in local associations of the party. And here is the target of the Cameron/Clegg assault which now looks like it might bear fruit. McCluskey might agree to the Unison position (two funds, two boxes to tick when joining, if not ticked 50% is allocated to the Labour party and 50% to the general political fund). Miliband might consider this as a compromise.

Ending the political levy would abolish the block vote at conferences and in local associations. But, our ultra left opponents will argue, that block vote is totally undemocratic, signalling a relationship between the bureaucracy and the Labour leaders, who fundamentally agree with defending the capitalist system and all its profits and privileges in private, whatever they say in public. This allows little democracy to the members. True enough (but 'consultations' sometimes happen) but that only means that the task is to democratise the TUs and get value for union funds to Labour above the pathetic pre-election Warwick agreement between Labour and the TUs which yielded almost nothing. From the unions we must take the fight into the Labour party in the course of building a new revolutionary leadership for the class. "Those who cannot defend current gains will never make new ones" Trotsky said and the political levy does allow the membership of the TUs to put pressure on their leaders to get value for the millions spent on Labour.

Let us not forget that it was the response that Jerry Hicks got on this very question from 80, 000 Unite members, 36% of the vote for Unite General Secretary, that aerated McCluskey to make his stance against the dead hand of the Labour party leadership who effectively dominate the inner lives of the trade unions politically.

Let us not forget that it was the response that Jerry Hicks got on this very question from 80, 000 Unite members, 36% of the vote for Unite General Secretary, that aerated McCluskey to make his stance against the dead hand of the Labour party leadership who effectively dominate the inner lives of the trade unions politically. Now we must be on our guard against McCluskey's attempt to abandon this fight.

This attack on trade union influence in the Labour party is being orchestrated by Cameron and Osborne. The introduction of the bedroom tax and attacks on benefits through welfare reform means that it is necessary to purge the Labour party of the trade unions so that Miliband and Balls can be 'responsible' members of a future Coalition government.

McCluskey as leader of Unite has put a different perspective on the link denying that Miliband wants to sever it. It is clear from McCluskey's recent statement that the trade union bureaucracy will not fight to defend the link. McCluskey said on Unite's website "But Ed is onto something, participation in politics in this country is at an all-time low" [4]. This is desperation politics from the leader of Unite. Later on in his statement McCluskey capitulates fully to Miliband and his politics of coalition. We do not expect any help from the trade union bureaucracy to defend the political levy or the historic link with the Labour party. He comments "It is a link, Ed's changes do not signal a break in the Union/Labour party link" [5]. What started this war of attrition and has now led to McCluskey's climb down was Unite campaigning to get Labour parliamentary candidates whom the trade union supports.

Trotsky in 1925 "Where is Britain Going" explained the role of the block vote and the political levy: "the trade unions are for the unconditional right to the enforced collection of the political levy" [5].

Later on Trotsky comments "We regard the trade unions on the one hand as militant economic organisations , after all if the citizen has the right to vote for any party, then workers organisations have the right not to allow into their midst citizens whose political behaviour is hostile to the interests of the working class" [6].

The working class through the trade unions founded, built and financed the Labour party at the beginning of the last century to advance the cause of the working class. Miliband and all the opportunists and careerists are on a path to purge the Labour Party of its proletarian base and drive the trade unions out of the Labour Party.

The Unite leadership and others must tell Miliband to halt this attack. At the forthcoming Labour party conference the Unite leadership must put proposals to defend the historic link, support the political levy and campaign to drive out of the Labour party all those who are intent on turning the Labour Party into a mark 2 Tory party.

Notes

[1] Factcheck, http://blogs.channel4.com/factcheck/labour-funding-party-donors-tories-factcheck/13899
[2] Letter from Ed Miliband to Labour party members
[3] Ibid.
[4] McCluskey's speech, www.unite.org.uk
[5] Ibid.
[6] Trotsky L, Where is Britain Going www.marxists.org
[7] Ibid.

Defend Savas Michael-Matsas and Konstantinos Moutzouris!

Greek Trotsky leader Savas Michael-Matsas is to appear in court on 3 September together with the former rector of the National Technical University in Athens Konstantinos Moutzouris charged with defamation and incitement to violence by the fascist Golden Dawn party. The incitement to violence is the use of the term "smash fascism" in the press of the Workers Revolutionary Party, of which Michael-Matsas is a leader and allowing the premises of National Technical University in Athens to be used by the independent news portal Indymedia.

After a demonstration in May 2009 Golden Dawn charged the entire left with these offenses including the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), the left alliance SYRIZA, the anticapitalist alliance ANTARSYA and also the EEK – as well as immigrant associations and independent activists. But in 2012 the Antonis Samaras government, which has just passed another round of savage austerity cuts, began investigation and have targeted these two individuals.

Michael-Matsas noted in an interview: [1]

> The Nazis have connections to the repressive state apparatus from the time of the Greek civil war in the 1940s and the dictatorship of 1967-74. But these connections have gotten stronger after the youth revolt of 2008. Due to the crisis, the fascists are getting help from the state: they are protected from criminal prosecution, while prosecutors raise charges against antifascists. It is no coincidence that half of the police voted for "Golden Dawn" in the last elections.

And further:

> The fact that I am a Jew makes my case worse. On the internet there are slogans like "kill the Jewish rat", saying that I am an agent of a "World Jewish Conspiracy" to establish a "Judeo-Bolshevik regime" in Greece.

Following the 2008 Greek riots 6 December 2008, when Alexandros Grigoropoulos, a 15-year-old student, was killed by two policemen the state and the fascists responded as Savas-Michael explains:

> The right-wing government – with the assistance of the Nazis of "Golden Dawn" – unleashed pogroms in neighbourhoods with lots of immigrants. The Greek left organized a number of antifascist demonstrations in which our party also participated."

The dangers of a right wing/fascist coup are growing ever greater in Greece and the international working class and left have a pressing duty to defend them. We will mount an international campaign involving picketing Embassies and petitioning etc to defeat this attack from the far right on workers organisations in Greece.

Build an International Defence Campaign for the Greek anti-fascists!

Defend Savas Michael-Matsas and Konstantinos Moutzouris!

Drop the charges brought against them by the fascist Golden Dawn now!

Smash the fascist Golden Dawn, Defend the Immigrants!

Notes

[1] Trotskyist facing charges by Nazis, Interview with Wladek Flakin Revolutionäre Internationalistische Organisation (RIO), 19 July, https://linksunten.indymedia.org/de/node/91006

Picket of the Greek Embassy 1A Holland Park, London W11 3TP Saturday 31 August 2-4pm Free Savas Michael-Matsas and Konstantinos Moutzouris—Drop the charges, smash fascism!

New Labour party cuts the unions?

By Belinda Edney

Ed Miliband has decided to revaluate the links with the trade unions by proposing that trade union members decide whether they wanted to be affiliated with labour. The debate about trade unions and labour has been brought up as claims that the Unite leaders tried to rig the Labour candidate selection Falkirk subsequently this has been dropped by the police because there is not enough evidence. [1]

There are fifteen trade unions affiliated with Labour. Due to the amount of money given by the unions to the party. But it is acceptable for the Tories to get funding from business types , Mick Davis £500,000, May Makhzoumi £500,000,James R Lupton £255,000, Michael S Farmer – £254,334 ,Andrew Law – £136,000, David J Rowland – £120,000,Alexander Temerko – £104,500 Mark C Samworth – £90,000, IPGL – £86,171 Christian Levett – £81,000. [2]

This dismissal of the unions funding echoes Osborne Judgement of 1909, which ruled that it was unlawful for trade unions to contribute to political funds. [3] As James G. Moher explains:

> Meanwhile, the Osborne Judgement of December 1909 provoked outrage in Parliament and in the country, until it was reversed by the Trade Union Act 1913. This restored the legitimacy of union political funding, but required unions to ballot all their members and to allow individual members to opt-out of contributing to the levy. This remains the position today, with a five-yearly balloting requirement added in 1984. [4]

Therefore, declared Lord Halsbury: "what is not within the ambit of that Statute is, I think, prohibited both to a corporation and a combination." Hopefully Miliband will keep in mind the uproar of the Osborne judgement to not put the final nail in the coffin of New Labour.

Miliband has stated "So we need to set a new direction in our relationship with trade union members in which they choose to join Labour through the affiliation fee: they would actively choose to be individually affiliated members of the Labour Party and they would no longer be automatically affiliated. " [5] What Miliband seems to miss is the history of the Labour party, it was set up to be a workers' party , it began as a pressure group inspired by the trade union conference of 1900, the Labour Representation Committee (LRC) and two MPs from LRC were elected in 1900[6] as the Whigs and liberals were not doing their representing the workers.

The Conservatives have suggested that it was the block vote that had Miliband elected. Miliband was endorsed by the three largest unions, Unite, the GMB and Unison. Miliband was not voted for by the union heads but by the affiliated members: 47,439 from Unite, 18,128 from GMB and 9652 votes. [7] So it was individuals who voted not just the big wigs of the unions, which it was designed to do in 1900.

Len McCluskey, the Unite leader, says that there is a breaking point and activist tensions had been growing since the start of new Labour: "the block vote didn't stop a Labour government invading Iraq. Affiliations didn't keep labour out of the clutches of the banks and the city. Our special relationship didn't get the union laws repealed." [8] If Labour do cut the unions link and they just finalising what is already apparent in politics that politicians do not represent the working class just the business oligarchs. In the 1994 conference Tony Blair made Clause IV and inflation the greatest evil not unemployment, which turned the Labour party around and rebranded it New Labour

MPs are meant to represent the people in their constituencies but usually their business interests tide them over. New Labour can be is similar to the conservatives' new right. There seems not to be many differences between the parties. The voting system does not even equal one vote for each person using the first past the post system. For example there can be a 10,000 votes available in one constituency whereas in another it could be 65,000 votes for a seat. [9]

Railway worker and right wing trade unionist Walter Osborne. The Osborne Judgement of 1909 decreed that unions had no power to collect or spend members' money for political purposes

Does this split mean that we need to asses our next move to create some new party, group or gathering which represents the Unions and the working class and everybody who is part of this society, so we can demand and then strive for what an equal society should mean. But to make changes happen it is not enough just voting for a party's manifesto which they don't usually follow; we know that they are just saying the right things to get elected. There seems to be so many divisions in society through colour, creed, geographical location and class that everyone is turning on each other. Maybe we need to unite and reassert our common cause. If Labour does not go through with cutting the union link, I still think there should be discussion about where the socialist party is going, does a new one need to be set up, perhaps in affiliation with other interests? There are more problems inherent in the UK political system; those in power need to be made accountable, we need to shout louder to get our voices heard now that the welfare system is going and inequality is growing.

Notes

[1] *It's time to really mend the Labour/Trade Union Relationship,* http://labourlist.org/2013/07/its-time-to-really-mend-the-labourtrade-union-relationship/.

[2] *Top ten Tory party donors revealed*, http://politicalscrapbook.net/2013/05/conservative-party-donations-q1-2013/.

[3] Moher, James G. *The Osborne Judgment 1909: trade union funding of political parties in historical perspective* http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/policy-paper-96.html#S1.

[4]Ibid., http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/policy-paper-96.html..

[5] *Ed Miliband's speech on the Labour/Union link – key extracts*, http://labourlist.org/2013/07/ed-milibands-speech-on-the-labourunion-link-key-extracts/

[6] *History of the Labour Party,* http://www.labour.org.uk/history_of_the_labour_party

[7] *The myth of the trade union "block vote"*, http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2013/07/myth-trade-union-block-vote

[8] *Len McCluskey warns unions and Labour at turning point,* http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-23434473

[9] FPTP in effect wastes huge numbers of votes, as votes cast in a constituency for losing candidates, or for the winning candidate above the level they need to win that seat, count for nothing - See more at: http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/?

Unify the struggles to defeat the coming anti-working class offensive in Brazil!

By the Communist League

The wave of popular protests in Brasil of June reflected the exhaustion of the current cycle of capitalist accumulation in the country. The population was on the streets in June to protest against the unbearable cost of living increase. Inflation has been continually growing since 2012 because the employers rely on the rise in the price of goods that employers for their profits after the arrival of the economic crisis in the country. Already in 2012 the first reaction against this cost-of-living increase came from organized workers, when the number of strikes recorded in the country reached almost 900, the largest number since 1996. The industrial proletariat managed to recover most of the purchasing power of their wages in relation to inflationary losses, followed by retail workers and, finally, the services.

According to the Dieese (Department of Statistics and Socio-economic Studies) during the governments of Lula and Dilma (2001-2012) productivity in manufacturing industry grew by 26% in 2010 and industrial production by 39%. Since 2005, manufacturing has shrunk 11% (down from 79% to 68%) of the total formal jobs generated in the production, i.e., while the falling rate of profit in the world and particularly in the U.S. In Brazil the rate of profit tended to grow thanks to the overexploitation of the working class.

This data is important because it is in the sphere of production where material wealth is created which disperses in the spheres of circulation (financial capital, commercial capital) and this then feeds the machinery of the capitalist State. The added value is realized in the market, i.e., with the sale of goods produced in the factory. The rate of profit caused by this increasing productivity reached its zenith in 2008 and begin to plummet in 2010.

The Dilma Government then gave an artificial extension to the accumulation cycle through the market by the consumption of the population, on the one hand and, on the other, the reduction of taxes for certain sectors, such as the multinational capitalist automobile manufacturers.

Here it is worth noting that the "apple of the eye" of production of the PT governments achieved a profit margin of 10%, twice the global rate of automobile manufacturers. Because of the increase in car sales in recent years, and profits, automakers accounted for almost 20% of remittance of profits abroad made by companies from Brazil in 2011. This also demonstrates how beneficial the slave-like agreement was with Metalworkers Union of São José dos Campos (CSP / Conlutas) for the imperialist multinational GM. It made vast profits for their Yankee masters.

However, the stimulus to consumption was not made by wage increases, but by increasing credit. By 2012 the debts accumulated by families reached its limit and the bubble burst. (see box on housing bubble). For more than a year we denounced the "anti-crisis measures" of Dilma, "killing the thirst with salt water" (the Bolshevik # 10). We pointed out that preventive Government policies would make the crisis explode with even more force in the country by leveraging existing super-speculation to its extreme limits and that a true "time bomb" against the proletariat was in the making. This would create relative impoverishment by increasing the distance between the value produced by the worker and the amount of this wealth from which they accrue their spending power and this would create debt bondage. It was clear that such an economic growth based on the maximum indebtedness of working families, deceptively promoting by "able to access everything in the middle class" by the PT (the ruling Workers Party), buying "their dreams of consumption" without any salary compatible for this would run out soon. These had now changed to middle class status and were affected by poverty, do you think that they have now become further impoverished when in reality they were always poor workers who were now driven by the consumerist wave and need to face the reality that they are still poor?. Thus the economic crisis arrived in the country late in 2012. Even the mainstream media bosses and government of Dilma pretended that the situation is serious only in Greece, Spain, Portugal, etc.., The masses feel that inflation, loss of access to transport, health, education and the corrosion of their conditions of life.

The impotence of the demonstrations without the organized class and without a revolutionary worker program

This is how these semi-spontaneous protests, unconsciously against the increase of these measures, have become the largest mass mobilisations in recent history of the country, more than two million people came out to protest and this has spread to about 600 cities.

However these sectors who rebel against this social situation have no class consciousness about the real situation; they are feel that they are in a situation with no way out. Or they are induced to believe that their problems lie in corruption, lack of patriotism. This is how bourgeois ideology affects their judgement. Although for these sectors it is difficult to keep believing in the myth that they are middle class, it is more difficult however to abandon this myth. This contradiction manifests itself as both impotence and anger. This impotence will remain if the working class does not enter the conflict on its own behalf and reject those who pretend that a "day of struggle" on July 11 is sufficient.

Now the pro-imperialist media starts to propagandize that Brazil is expensive, that wages are high and that the labor rights and trade unions are obstacles to the fall of the "Brazil cost" (profit-Brazil!) blaming the working class for the high cost of goods (exchange value), on the one hand, and its low quality (value), on the other. At the same time, the same media employer compares prices and "value for money" and demonstrates that the goods from the U.S. and Europe are cheaper and of better quality. This is obviously to make a case for enlarging and further opening the market to the trade offensive of imperialism that requires such measures to get out of its own recession. High interest rates and low exchange rate increases the pressure for Brazil to become an open importer of goods. Deindustrialization in not in our interests i.e. disorganisation which already growing with the dismissal of workers in the industry and this tends to worsen now with competition from imported manufactures which are artificially low in prices since the creation of the Real (economic austerity).

By creating expectations in the "national bourgeoisie" as "Força Sindical"(the main metalwork union in Brazil) the Labour movement becomes the spokesman for the National Confederation of Industry. This same industrial bourgeoi-

Unify the struggles in Brazil!

sie is becoming less and less "national" and increasingly a commercial and importing bourgeoisie. An example is the recent conversion of a national park, which is to be used for engineering purposes, importing auto parts. It is no accident that the flagship of the domestic industry are the automakers. Next the industrial bosses are preparing to convert the factories into deposits of imported goods or mere maintenance and technical assistance departments, taking advantage of the marketing networks of its industries to serve merely as a transmission belt for a new commercial offensive by imperialism.

Dilma believed that her anti-crisis policies could avoid the contagion of the world crisis in Brazil at least until her re-election. The bourgeois opposition itself had not prepared to replace the PT in the Government before that. Thus, the massive protests took the entire bourgeoisie by surprise. The rebellion would be a good time for the masses to take advantage of the confusion in the bourgeoisie, but unfortunately there was not an organized revolutionary workers' alternative to rise up to this task. After its initial surprise capital resumed the offensive and now imperialism is blackmailing Dilma and the PT government demanding the resignation of the PT Economic Minister, increasing the pressure for the arrest of officials that threatens to engulf Lula himself with corruption scandals, campaigning on the street with "down with Dilma!" promotes alternative candidates in the Brazilian Social Democrat Party (PSDB) or the Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB)

The polls show that in an election year Dilma could be tied in the second round with Marina Silva with neither party having a majority. Dilma has conceded her authority to the Central Bank by increasing interest rates making Dilma more dependent on the wishes of bankers and international financiers.

After the dream of being the 6th world power Brazil has woken up to the nightmare of suffering a new colonization with deindustrialization, mass layoffs, population divided at all levels, miserable wages and loss of achievements. Now the ball is with metalworkers, tankers, postmen and banking employees who in the second round of their wage campaigns need to unify the struggles and act as the vanguard of the whole working population.

Therefore, we cannot place any illusion on current union leaders in the fight to stop this catastrophe that threatens us. We need to organize the workplaces and build working class opposition within the unions that are under the influence of the PT and other parties employers not only defend us as they are complicit in the attacks on our rights, such as the CUT defending the Special Collective Agreement. On the other hand we must not foster illusion in the PT, PSDB, the PSB or REDE, (the proto-party of Marina Silva) but we must advocate the construction of a revolutionary workers ' opposition that seeks to win back trade unions for workers, as part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party in the country that lead the struggle to establish a Workers and Employees Government.

The National Shop Stewards Network Conference

An Assessment By Laurence Humphries

The National Shop Stewards Conference met on the 29th June in London where 400 workers and youth attended. The NSSN is heavily influenced by the Socialist Party and its policy of a "24 Hour General Strike". Their attitude to the British working class was "lack of response from British workers". These centrists fail to recognise that the British working class is testing out these so called leaders in the trade unions and most of them view them with the greatest suspicion.

As usual the NSSN Leadership believes that left trade union leaders like Crow, Serwotka, Wrack and McCluskey will lead a great struggle against this Con-Liberal Coalition. Nothing could be further from the truth. This trade union bureaucracy is flat on its back in response to these attacks from the Coalition government who intend to pauperise thousands of workers and their families. Half a million now use food banks and the Bedroom Tax will lead to evictions and homelessness for many workers.

The decision of the 2012 TUC Congress to look at the practicalities of a general strike have been shelved, although it was passed with a big majority at last year's TUC Congress in Brighton. Frances O'Grady the new General Secretary of the TUC failed to mention it at all in her speech at the Durham Miners' Gala on 13 July. McCluskey, the General Secretary of Unite, the biggest Union appealed to Miliband to rethink the possibility of severing the link between the trade unions and the Labour party. Miliband and the Labour party leadership is determined to introduce a Democratic style structure similar to the relationship between the US Democratic Party and the AFL-CIO.

The trade unions in Britain historically built and founded the Labour party. Miliband is determined to break the link with Unite and other Unions funding the Labour Party creating a massive fight inside the Labour Party. Miliband is using the right wing Progress organisation to carry out this role. The Labour party under Miliband is set on a course of Coalition and National Government very similar to the National Government of Ramsey Macdonald in 1929.

Bob Crow of the RMT also spoke at the Durham Miners' Gala. He has a different perspective from the RMT which was expelled from the Labour party. The RMT supports the Trade Union and Socialist Coalition composed of sup-

The National Shop Stewards Network Conference

porters of the SPEW and SWP and others. The TUSC's performance in recent elections has been very negligible because the working class still votes for the Labour party who they still believe represents their wishes.

On the NSSN platform were Steve Gilman from the Prison Officers Association. who moved the general strike motion at last year's TUC Congress and Steve Baugh of PCS and Billy Hayes from the CWU. Hayes is a so called left whose members in Royal Mail are facing a massive onslaught from the employers over privatisation. He said that his members had responded magnificently over the pay deal and attempts to privatise the postal service by rejection by big majorities. He promised a fight over privatisation in the coming battle with the employers and the government. This proves that the working class is a revolutionary class and Trotsky was right when he wrote in the Transitional Programme and the tasks of the Fourth International of 1938 "That the crisis of Humanity can be reduced to the crisis of Proletarian Leadership" [1].

Hayes left talk should be treated with caution. In a letter to postal branches Hayes and Deputy GS Dave Ward have decided that the fight against privatisation is over, although the membership in a consultative ballot voted overwhelmingly for action against private mail companies taking over the business like DHL and TNT. The managers in the postal service are all members of Unite as well as members in TNT and DHL and other private carriers. The ballot which took place on 19 June was a massive 92% in favour for action in defiance of the anti-union laws and to fight privatisation, but as always the trade union bureaucracy is as predictable as ever and has thrown in the towel when it comes to a proper fight.

Hayes and Ward have written to Coalition Ministers asking for breathing space rather than organise an all-out strike against privatisation. This would have been a call to arms for many workers involving not just CWU members but Unite members as well to bring down this coalition government. The Unite bureaucracy has shown the same cowardice in refusing to mobilise their membership in Royal Mail and TNT and DHL to link up with CWU members. All you will find on the Unite website is calls to sign petitions and write letters to various people like MP's Government Ministers and the Employer. CWU members should campaign to recall the CWU Conference so that decisions made at that Conference are carried out by the CWU leadership.

There was a different response from delegates in the NSSN Conference. Glenn Kelly a Unison steward said that every local council has capitulated; there is a foot on our head by New Labour. There is cowardice from many of the TU leaders. If the TUC refuse to take action we will have to go over their head and name the date for action (referring to the 24 Hour general strike).

Tommy Sheridan, Scottish Anti-Bedroom Tax Federation chair who led the Poll Tax campaign that brought down Thatcher said that evictions over the Bedroom Tax would have to be stopped and a human wall will have to be created to prevent any type of eviction over the hated tax. We are the walls of human solidarity who will occupy houses and families threatened with evictions. The only people under attack over the Bedroom Tax are people on benefits. This tax is an attack on the poor, because only the poor are on benefits. Sheridan finished with James Larkin's immortal words "The great appear great because we are on our knees: Let us arise ".

Ian Bradley a construction worker in Unite and a SWP member talked about the Blacklisting campaign and the Leverage campaign. He said if McCluskey is serious in calling for a general strike, that means civil disobedience and we have the power. It was refreshing to see SWP members intervening in the debates. Their members are fighting the bureaucracy and in Unite they took a principled position to support Jerry Hicks the Rank and File candidate who stood for the election of General Secretary in Unite. The new Rank and File organisation inside Unite is to be welcomed and we will support SWP members who are standing in the Elections against the "United Left".

The NSSN Conference showed that it was able to attract sizeable section of workers and youth to its conference. Many of the delegates from the floor showed the way unlike the platform speakers who in the end will prove to be paper tigers and nothing else. The lobby of the TUC Congress meeting in Bournemouth on September 8th and organised by the NSSN should be supported, but unlike the NSSN leadership we will advocate an indefinite general strike as part of an insurrectionary movement to bring down this government in a struggle for power. One day protests although they have to be supported are insufficient in this period and the general strike must be used as Trotsky advocated "A general strike is the sharpest form of class struggle. It is only one step from the general strike to armed insurrection" [2]. The battles against Miliband and New Labour will be sharper as ever as Coalition government is posed in this period of world capitalist crisis.

Socialist Fight will again fight to win the best elements from the NSSN to a perspective which fights the Bureaucracy and puts forward a revolutionary alternative to overthrow this Bureaucracy and establish a principled rank and file Organisation inside Unite and other Unions.

Notes

Trotsky L. The Transitional Programme and the Tasks of the Fourth International New Park Publications

Trotsky L. Trotsky's writings on Britain Volume 2 New Park Publications

The Peoples Assembly against austerity: Reform or revolution?

By Laurence Humphries

The People's Assembly met on June 22nd at Westminster Central Hall. It attracted a large number of workers and youth. The People's Assembly is led by John Rees and Lindsey German both from Counterfire a Left reformist group. They were both involved with the Stop the War Coalition during the Iraq War. The other main organisation enthusiastically supporting the People's Assembly is the Communist Party of Britain. The Morning Star, the daily paper of the Communist Party, was given out free on Saturday because it was funded by the Unite bureaucracy; likewise the Coalition of Resistance Counterfire's trade union arm is also funded and financed by Unite.

The People's Assembly proposed a draft resolution to the plenary session. It states "We will work together with leading experts and campaigners both here and abroad and friendly think tanks to develop rapidly key policies and alternative programme for a new anti-austerity government" [1]. This is pure reformism and an illusion. The system of capitalism is outmoded and must be overthrown through a socialist revolution. Its belief that by tinkering with the system you can change capitalism is an illusion. The People's Assembly which is unelected and with no democratic structures is working with Labour and Green MPs and the trade union bureaucracy. McCluskey of Unite and Serwotka of PCS were both on the platform. It proposes a talking shop with demonstrations over the NHS and at the Tory Party conference. There is no mention of occupations or an indefinite general strike. The experience of the STWC is that this is a recipe for disaster and will lead to defeat.

As we stated in Socialist Fight no 13 "We should intervene to influence and win to revolutionary class struggles politics serious socialists who are responding to the desire for unity" [2]. "In particular the People's Assembly lacks any real internal democracy. It has the classic talking shop format, fill the platform with famous speakers, allow very limited time for discussion from the floor and supplement this with workshops who have no decision making mandate" [3].

Capitalism is in meltdown and in an indeterminable crisis declaring war on the working class in Britain and conducting Imperialist wars abroad. The task is to fight for revolutionary leadership and for the overthrow of capitalism in the struggle for power. There is a conflict between the productive forces (the working class) and the nature of production (capitalism).

Leon Trotsky identified the nature of the trade Union Bureaucracy in his writings on the 1926 General Strike. "The irreconcilable and relentless struggle against the left lackeys of Imperialism both in the trade unions and the Labour party" [4]. The task for revolutionaries is to fight for a principled leadership. Above all it is necessary to clarify principles and tell the truth to the mass movement which is revolutionary in nature. None of the problems of Austerity can be resolved outside of a struggle for power. There is no halfway house however much Rees, German, McCluskey Serwotka and O'Grady would have us believe. This coalition government is set on its course and that is to save this system. Osborne's spending review on Wednesday will set out to pauperise and destroy the living standards of hundreds of workers and their families.

Labour and Green MP's and trade union bureaucrats must be swept aside. They are the main agents of capitalism in the workers movement. It is down to their influence that struggle after struggle for Working class power has been defeated and betrayed.

The two main centrist parties in Britain, the Socialist Workers Party and the Socialist Party of England and Wales, while supporting the People's Assembly still have their own reformist solutions to the crisis. All the SWP calls for is "More rank and file organisations and anti-capitalist leadership" [5]. Nowhere is there a mention about the need to challenge this trade union leadership. Like always a fudge and a refusal to fight. The SP whose Rank and file and Anti cuts organisation NSSN whose Conference meet on 29 June, while supporting the People's Assembly derides the organisation for lack of democracy and how the SP has been squeezed out of the debate and discussion. Both centrist organisations want to avoid the issue of posing a revolutionary leadership to the crisis and instead form alliances with left wing trade union leaders like Serwotka, Crowe, McCluskey and Wrack.

Socialist Fight will intervene in the 'anti austerity' battle recognising that it is imperative to win workers and youth to revolutionary politics. The construction of a revolutionary party is vital in this period. Vladimir Lenin in 1902 wrote a pamphlet "What is to be done" clarifying issues when Lenin and his supporters in the Russian Social Democratic Party were in a struggle with syndicalist and opportunists very much the same forces that lead the People's Assembly today. "We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path firmly holding each other by the hand, we are surrounded on all sides by enemies and, we have to advance almost constantly under fire. We have combined by a freely adopted decision, for the purpose of fighting the enemy, and not of retreating into the neighbouring marsh the inhabitants of which from the very outset having reproached us with having separated ourselves into an inclusive group and we have chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of conciliation" [6].

Socialist Fight will take Lenin's advice. We are on the path of struggle and our intervention in the People's Assembly will be to win as many comrades as possible to the banner of Trotskyism.

The Peoples assembly

The Peoples Assembly on 22 June: Pure reformism, "We will work together with leading experts and campaigners both here and abroad and friendly think tanks to develop rapidly key policies and alternative programme for a new anti-austerity government."

Here is our programme of action.

Occupations and strikes to be organised in workplaces threatened with closure especially in the NHS where acute wards and hospitals face closure. Patients doctors nurses and users must combine together to prevent closure and take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the facilities remain open.

That the TUC together with all other trade union leaders draw up a plan for an indefinite general strike. These proposals to be discussed with community groups, trade union branches, trades councils, workplaces and amongst everyone who would be affected. Last year a proposal was drawn up for a 24 General strike as a one day protest, although carried at the TUC Congress meeting last September nothing has been done. This shows that this supine and cowardly leadership must be removed and a revolutionary leadership constructed in the trade unions based on Rank and File demands for a member led Union.

On housing we say defend tenants and home owners who are threatened by evictions over the Bedroom Tax and hikes in their rent. Occupations of council buildings, demonstrations strikes amongst council workers until the eviction notices are withdrawn. We must follow the inspirational fight conducted by the Counihan-Sanchez Family and their supporters in Brent who refused to cow down to threats and intimidation from Brent Council.

In every town, city and hamlet organise local communities into direct action groups so that a programme of direct action including protests, strikes, occupations and an indefinite general strike can be organised.

Notes

[1] People's Assembly Statement.
[2] Socialist Fight No 13 p. 5
[3] Socialist Fight No 13 p. 5
[4] Trotsky's Writings on Britain Volume 2. p. 197 New Park Publications.
[5] Socialist Worker Leaflet Peoples assembly.
[6] V I Lenin Collected Works Vol. 5 p. 355. Lawrence and Wishart.

Irish Republican Prisoners

(please update and correct mistakes)

Portlaoise Prison, Portlaoise, County Laois, Ireland

E-1

Liam Grogan
Darren Mulholland
Aidan Hulme
Robert Hulme

E-2

Gerard Carroll
Charles Anthony
Niall Farrelln
Patrick Gordon
Tony Hyland
Michael McDonald
Dermott McFadden
Dalton McKevitt
Michael McKevitt
Joe O'Brienn
Patrick Tierneyn

E-3

Bernard Dempsy
Bobby Donohuen
Darragh Evansn
Sean Farrell
Cormac Fitzpatrick
David Jordann
Nick Kendalln
Jim McCormick
Stephen McGowan
Matthew Perry
Vincent Ryann
Brian Walshn

E-4

Owen Clail
Gerard Mackin
Denis Dywer
Eugene Kelly
Paul Kelly
Paddy Wall
Thomas Kelly
Gerard Kelleher
Neil Myles
John McCrossan
Jonathan Keogh
David O'Connor
Noel Mooney
Gareth Bryne
Anthony Lee
Páidí Ó Madáin
Michael McLaughlin
Stephen Cummins
Gavin O'Reilly
Rowan O'Clerigh
Antaine Mac Dhomhnail

Maghaberry Gaol, Old Road, Ballinderry Upper Lisburn, Ireland BT28 2PT

Joe Allen
Joe Barr
Brendan Campbell
Brian Cavlan
Martin Connolly
Dee Duffy
Paul Duffy
Shane Duffy
Dominic Dynes
Harry Fitzsimmons
Tony Friel
Sean Kelly
Brendan McConville
Sean McConville
Liam McDonnell
Mark McGuigan
Gerard McManus
Kevin Barry Nolan
Brian Sheridan
John Paul Wooton
Fra Carlton
Eamonn Cassidy
Martin Corey
Danny Doyle
Mark Kerr
Gerry McGeogh
Tommy Maguire
Marty McLoone
Ta McWilliams
Phil Sean O'Reilly
Tony Rooney
Tony Taylor

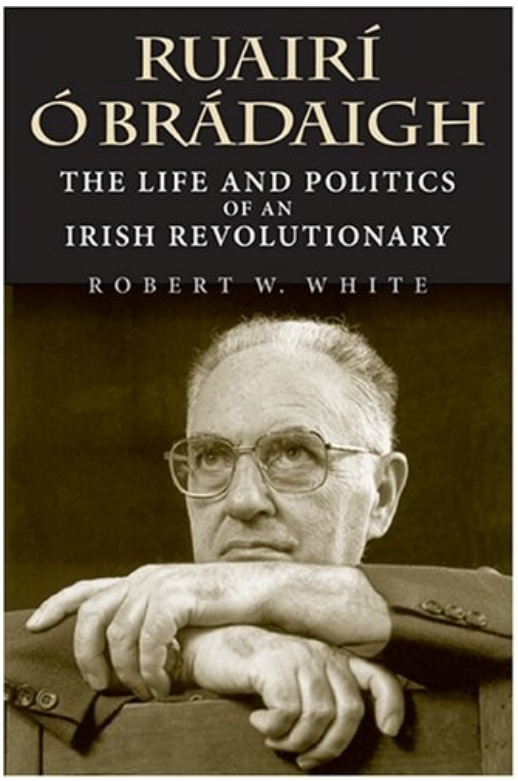
Special Supervision Unit - Isolation

Liam Campbell
Gavin Coyle

Pravieniskiu Pataisios Namai-Atviroji Kolonija 2-Oji Valdyba Pravieniskiu 11k Kaisiadoriu R Lt-56552, Lithuania

Michael Campbell

Death of Ruairi O'Bradaigh - Patron of Republican Sinn Fein By Michael Holden.



The death of Ruairi O'Bradaigh took place at his home in Longford on June 15th. O'Bradaigh was founder - and for many years - President of Republican Sinn Fein. He was 80 years of age.

Born into a middle-class family he graduated from University College Dublin in 1954 with a degree in Commerce and a certificate entitling him to teach the Irish language. His ability to teach stood him in good stead in later years - serving as a republican prisoner in the Curragh Military Prison! While still a student at university he had joined Sinn Fein initially, then the Irish Republican Army. Soon after graduating he was appointed to the IRA Army Council - and wasting no time led a successful arms raid on an army barracks in Berkshire. Again in 1958 he was part of an IRA unit in an attack on a Royal Ulster Constabulary barracks in Derylin, County Fermanagh.

Following that attack he was imprisoned. Whilst a prisoner he stood as a Sinn Fein candidate for the Longford/Westmeath constituency in the 1957 General Election - and won the seat on an abstentionist ticket - much to the dismay of the Dublin government! On release from prison he was immediately interned in the Curragh concentration camp in County Kildare. Never one to let the grass grow under his feet he and fellow prisoner Daithi O'Conaill escaped during a hurling match inside the prison grounds by cutting their way through a barbed-wire fence - becoming the first Sinn Fein TD (Irish member of Parliament) to go "on the run" since the 1920's!

He was appointed Chief of Staff by the Army Council - a position he held until the early nineteen sixties. Again in 1966 he stood as an "Independent republican" for the Fermanagh/South Tyrone constituency winning over 10,000 votes (20% of the poll) but not enough to win the seat. At the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis (annual conference) in 1970 a split within the membership occurred on the thorny issue of abstentionism - a small majority voted to end the policy of abstaining to take seats if elected. As a result, O'Bradaigh together with Sean MacStiofain and Joe Cahill founded 'Provisional Sinn Fein' - with O'Bradaigh as President - a post he held until 1983. Both he and O'Connaill realised a written political agenda was needed if the republican movement was to have overall appeal to the general public. Both he and O'Connaill wrote and developed the "Eire Nua programme for a federal Ireland" - which championed having an elected assembly in each of the four Irish provinces with a Central government not necessarily in Dublin but possibly Athlone

A practising Catholic from the South O'Bradaigh had no problem participating in talks with leaders of the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian Church and other Protestant denominations at the Feacle talks at the height of 'the Troubles' in 1974. Again in 1976 he was prepared to meet members of the "Ulster Loyalist Central Coordinating Committee" - John McKeague and John McClure - and unexpectedly and controversially agreed to the 1975 'cease-fire' - which turned out later to be a fake deal conjured up by the London government.

But in the early nineteen eighties changes in policy were being muted once again. Gerry Adams and Martin McGuiness were finding their way to the fore with new ideas! I well remember attending an Ard Comhairle (Central Committee) meeting in Dublin when Gerry Adams harangued O'Bradaigh for using an old dilapidated building to hold Ard Comhairle meetings! It was I thought at the time, an unfair criticism.

Sinn Fein had little or no money to buy or even hire more up-to-date premises at that time. There were hundreds of republican prisoners in Long Kesh, Magilligan and Portlaoise Gaol, family men mostly who needed support. The Sinn Fein office was situated at 2a, Lower Kevin Street in an old part of the city (now demolished I believe). To gain access you had to climb two flights of stairs. I remember once Joe Cahill saying to O'Bradaigh that walking across the uneven floor was like being out at sea in a boat! However in hindsight maybe Adams had a point!

Looking back now I believe it was positively dangerous to be even in that building!

In 1986 Sinn Fein voted to abandon abstentionism at their Ard Fheis and O'Bradaigh and his supporters walked out and very quickly founded Republican Sinn Fein - losing some stalwarts along the way - including veteran republican Joe Cahill.

In 2009 Ruairi O'Bradaigh resigned from active politics on health grounds - becoming Patron of Republican Sinn Fein. Ever a controversial figure even his funeral was disrupted by huge numbers of Garda (Irish police) who scuffled with the mourners and clashed with his widow and family in the cemetery - showing a shocking lack of respect for O'Bradaigh's memory. But O'Bradaigh would not have expected anything less from such people. He will not be forgotten.

The Dublin Lockout of 1913 and its significance for today's revolutionaries By Gerry Downing 1/6/2013

The Great Dublin Lockout, which began on 26 August 1913, pitted two powerful antagonists; Jim Larkin, leader of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union and William Martin Murphy, leader of the Dublin Employers' Federation.

Larkin was born in 1876 in Liverpool to parents from County Armagh. In 1905 he participated in a Liverpool dock strike, was sacked and became an organiser for National Union of Dock Labourers (NUDL) because they valued his organising skills and fiery oratory. He voiced the anger at the terrible living conditions particularly of the unskilled labourers and did not mince his words at what he saw as the treachery of the trade union bureaucrats, earning the hatred of the British TUC and the more conservative of the Irish trade union leaders. Tomás O'Riordan, writing in University College Cork's Multitext project in Irish History, says of him:

> His combination of socialism, republicanism, and trade unionism became known as 'Larkinism'. His magnetic personality and gifted oratory soon attracted thousands to his Union. His success caused alarm and fear among the Dublin employers because he was becoming too powerful and too popular with the working class of Dublin.

William Martin Murphy was born in 1844 in Castletownbere, County Cork. He was an MP for Dublin from 1885 to 1892. Together with Tim Healy (who gave his name to the Healy Pass in the Caha mountains between Cork and Kerry) and Tim Harrington they formed the 'Bantry band' of MPs from that area of west Cork. Famously in 1907 he refused a knighthood from Edward VII having organised his visit to Ireland. He was a millionaire, owner of the Irish Independent, the Dublin Tramways and Cleary's Department store and had 'interests' in Africa. On 10 May 1916 his Irish Independent printed a picture of James Connolly and demanded: "Let the worst of the ringleaders be singled out and dealt with as they deserve". On the 12 May a British firing squad obliged him – Connolly was executed in his wheelchair.

Dublin was the second city of the Empire when the Act of Union came into force on 1 January 1801. By 1913 the south was a rural backwater, taxed out of all proportion to its ability to pay, its industries and commerce suppressed and its peasantry reduced to subsistence living typified by the Great Famine of 1845-52. The north was industrialised and depended on its close connections with the empire. But the workers in the southern cities were mainly unskilled. As Padraig Yeats says:

> There was good reason for discontent in Dublin in 1913. Unskilled workers lived in desperate poverty. Housing conditions were deplorable. Overcrowding was a serious problem, and bred disease and infection. Malnutrition was common. The death rate in Dublin (27.6 per 1000) was bad as Calcutta, and the city's slums were amongst the worst in the world. Over 20,000 families lived in one-room dwellings. There were often more than ten families in town houses that were built for one upper-class family in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These houses became dilapidated when wealthy elites left them and moved to the suburbs. The houses were often taken over by landlords who rented them out, room by room, to poor families, and they quickly became slums. There was little privacy. Facilities for cooking, cleaning, and washing were wholly inadequate. Sanitary conditions were worse. Many tenement buildings shared one lavatory in a yard."

Just a week into the strike two tenements in Church Street collapsed. Seven were killed and many more injured. Sixteen rooms housed more than forty people.

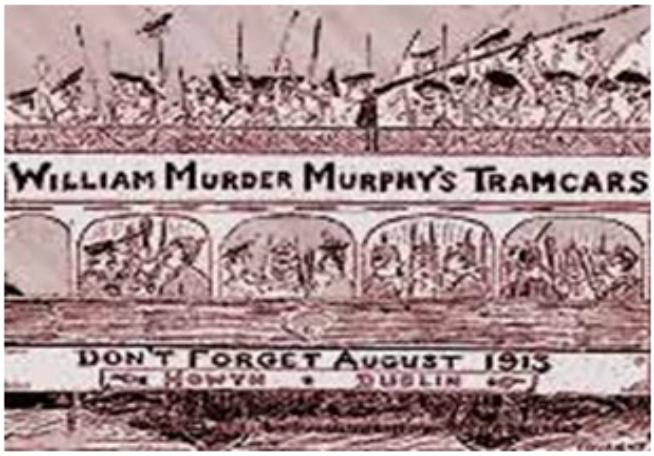
Starving children of the strikers in the Dublin tenements of 1913

The Dublin Lockout was different from and yet part of the Great Unrest that swept Britain and its Irish colony in the years before WWI. Falling wages and rising prices were destroying the living standards of the British working class in the decade before 1911, when the Great Unrest began. Cynical trade union leaders sold out strikes and negotiated compromises detrimental to their membership to offset the loss of international markets to the more efficient rising capitalist powers of Germany and the USA. A layer of women and young workers lost confidence in the TU leaders and began to embrace the politics of syndicalism whose most prominent members were Tom Mann and Jim Larkin. The movement grew to revolutionary proportions, embracing miners, dockers, seafarers, railway workers and even school students. 961,000 workers took strike action in 1911. Asquith's Liberal government sent warships to the Mersey in 1911 and Winston Churchill notoriously sent troops to Tonypandy to put down the riots of 1910 and 1911 and prevent the strike from winning.

In 1907 Larkin organised a successful strike in Belfast as an official of the National Union of Dock Labourers (NUDL), whose general secretary was James Sexton a former Fenian. But Sexton had become a British TU bureaucrat pure and simple, a defender of the status quo and Larkin's talk of revolution disturbed him greatly. He sold out the strike by negotiating a deal for the carters, who were vital to Larkin's tactics of paralysing the docks. Sexton expelled Larkin in 1908 on a trumped up charged of embezzling union funds he used for a strike in Cork, for which he later had him jailed. Larkin immediately formed the Irish Transport and General Workers Union and broke from the British TUC.

The ITGWU now began using the revolutionary tactics Larkin had developed in Belfast and which became integral to the Great Unrest itself; sympathy strikes and blacking, very militant pickets against scabs and inspiring propaganda for socialism and revolution. More importantly the ITGWU began organising women workers and the unskilled in the same union as skilled men. The conservative principles of the labour aristocracy were breached and the class was acting as one unit in de-

The Dublin Lockout of 1913



fence of its weakest members – it was now truly a class for itself, a condition that had never been fully achieved in Britain itself despite the New Unionism of the late 1880s and the Great Unrest. James Connolly arrived back in Ireland in 1910 and became Larkin's deputy in the ITGWU. The beginning and course of the strike is well known and we will only sketch it in outline here from Padraig Yeates:

> Shortly after 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 26 August 1913—the first day of the Dublin Horse Show, one of the city's busiest events—drivers and conductors stopped their trams and abandoned them in protest. About 700 of the 1,700 Tramways Company's employees went on strike. The city was filled with tension on the days following. Strikers resented the workers who continued to operate the trams, and fights often took place between them. Workers who usually distributed the Irish Independent—[owned by Murphy] though not employed by Murphy—refused to handle it in protest. Messrs. Eason and Co., the large city newsagents, were asked by Larkin not to sell the paper. They refused. As a result dock-workers at Kingstown (Dún Longhaire) refused to handle any Eason and Co. goods from England or addressed to England.

The employers drew up a pledge for workers to sign:

> I hereby undertake to carry out all instructions given to me by or on behalf of my employers, and further, I agree to immediately resign my membership of the ITGWU (if a member) and I further undertake that I will not join or in any way support this union.

Those who refused to sign were sacked. Thousands refused. James Connolly wrote of one such case:

> A labourer was asked to sign the agreement forswearing the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, and he told his employer, a small capitalist builder, that he refused to sign. The employer, knowing the man's circumstances, reminded him that he had a wife and six children who would be starving within a week. The reply of this humble labourer rose to the heights of sublimity. 'It is true, sir', he said, 'they will starve; but I would rather see them go out in their coffins than I should disgrace them by signing that'. And with head erect he walked out to share hunger and privation with his loved ones. Hunger and privation—and honour. Defeat, bah! How can such a people be defeated? His case is typical of thousands more.

There was tremendous solidarity support in Manchester. 130 NUR rail union branches called for action. In South Wales, rail workers and dockers went out on unofficial Strike. But on 9 December 1913 the TUC Special Conference met and predictably there was a sell-out and betrayal of the Dublin strikers. As in 1907 Belfast another major Larkin-led strike was betrayed by a British-based leadership. It was Ben Tillett, the famous leader of the 'dockers tanner' strike in 1889, a left winger who Larkin had considered a staunch supporter up to then, who denounced Larkin and proposed the motion not to call industrial action in defence of the Lockout. Larkin wrote bitterly:

> These men who wore tall hats and frock coats in London and bowler hats when among the boys were getting too big. They should be weary of a man whom the capitalists pat on the back. They should also be suspicious of men who dined and wined with those who caused the Dublin troubles.

Also bitterly opposed to the Lockout were the right wing dual-monarchist nationalist of pre-1916 Sinn Fein led by Arthur Griffiths. The Irish Parliamentary party, whilst no friends of Larkin, had a long running feud with William Martin Murphy going back to his pro-British anti-Parnell stance and so took a more neutral position. John Dillon, deputy leader of the party, proclaimed: "Murphy is a desperate character, Larkin is as bad. It would be a blessing for Ireland if they exterminated each other". But the radical nationalist artists and republicans strongly supported Larkin and the Lockout. These included W. B. Yeats, George Bernard Shaw and AE (George Russell), Countess Markievicz, Maud Gonne MacBride and every signatory of the 1916 Proclamation.

The Bishops of the Catholic Church mobilised against the Dublin Kiddies Scheme and forced its abandonment in September 1913. English labour activists were prepared temporarily to adopt the starving children of the strikers but church leaders said that they were going to Protestant homes and this would undermine their Catholic faith. The state of their starving bodies was an entirely secondary consideration for the well-fed clerics. Those who have read James Plunkett's Strumpet City will be aware of the controversy.

The Dublin workers were defeated but the ITGWU soon revived. James Connolly's explained:

> The battle was a drawn battle. The employers were unable to carry on their business without men and women who remained loyal to their union. The workers were unable to force their employers to a formal recognition of the union and to give preference to organised labour. From the effects of this drawn battle both sides are still bearing scars. How deep these scars are none will reveal.

James Connolly and Jack White, an ex-British officer, founded the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) in 1913 in response to police violence against the Lockout. This was the first and only armed workers militia in Britain and Ireland, reflecting the revolutionary spirit of that age in Ireland. Although numbering a few hundred they remained intact after the defeat of the Lockout and adopted as their goal an independent and socialist Irish nation. This was the vehicle which propelled Connolly into the 1916 Easter Rising. Connolly had become convinced that England's difficulty was Ireland's opportunity and that an armed uprising for a Workers Republic was only possible during the war. He was bitterly disappointed with the betrayals of the German and British trade union and Socialist leaders in particular who had abandoned all their previous opposition to war and pledges to turn the war into a civil war and voted war credits and entered war cabinets to support their own capitalists in slaughtering other workers similarly betrayed by their leaders. The 1913 Lockout inevitable led to the 1916 Easter rising.

The London demonstration for Trayvon Martin: "The position that Kishore (US SEP) puts forward is indeed "historic," the history being that of the American Socialist Party, which included the likes of outright white supremacist Victor Berger. Even the best elements of the early socialist movement, such as Eugene Debs, who opposed all racial prejudice, treated the question of black oppression as simply part of the workers' struggle against capitalism and no more. As James P. Cannon, a founder of the American Communist movement and later of U.S. Trotskyism, wrote in *The Russian Revolution and the American Negro Movement* (printed in *The First Ten Years of American Communism* [1962]): "The old theory of American radicalism turned out in practice to be a formula for inaction on the Negro front, and—incidentally—a convenient shield for the dormant racial prejudices of the white radicals themselves."
Workers Vanguard, 6 July 2012

Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group Picket of Belmarsh Prison for John Downey

Thursday 15 August, 2.30 pm
Belmarsh Prison, Western Way, Thamesmead, London, SE28 0EB
Nearest Station: Plumstead, North Kent line (15 Minute walk)
Buses: 53, 96, 99, 122, 177, 180, 244, 380, 422, 469, 472,
On 19 May 2013, 61-year-old John Anthony Downey was charged with murder in relation to the Hyde Park bomb and intending to cause an explosion likely to endanger life.
Sinn Fein described the arrest as "vindictive, unnecessary and unhelpful" to the peace process.
Sinn Fein Assembly Member Gerry Kelly said: "The decision to arrest and charge him in relation to IRA activities in the early 1980s is vindictive, unnecessary and unhelpful. It will cause anger within the republican community.
"Clearly, if John Downey had been arrested and convicted previously he would have been released under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement."
The Pensive Quill commented in his blog:
"The prosecution of John Downey presents Sinn Fein with greater difficulties than the internment of either Marian Price or Martin Corey even though both are being held on foot of activity they committed as Provisional IRA volunteers prior to the GFA. The party faithful who could afford to ignore the arrests of republicans - sure they are just dissidents anyway - are now confronted with the prosecutors calling at their door too. It is too late for the party leaders to begin thinking Pastor Niemoller might have had a point." – Prosecuting John Downey The Pensive Quill

The Dublin Lock Out Centenary Conference in London

Time: 09.00 to 17.00
Date: Saturday 24th August 2013
Venue: Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London, WC1R 4RL
Nearest tube station: Holborn (Central and Piccadilly Lines)
We are commemorating 100 years since the great Dublin Lockout of 1913. The conference is organised by CRAIC (Campaign for the Rights and Actions of Irish Communities) Fighting the Cuts.
There will be an evening social at the Cock Tavern Pub, 23 Phoenix Road, London, London NW1 1HB. The nearest tube stations are Euston, Kings Cross and St. Pancras. Details of bands will be posted closer to the date. The purpose of the social is to support an Irish community pub that is constantly threatened with closure by private developers.
The conference will be as follows:
(1) Registration: 09.00 to 09.30: £5 for waged; £1 for non-waged; £20 for 1 stall each.
(2) History of the Dublin Lockout: 09.30 to 11.30
(Chaired by Gerry Downing) with guest speakers: John Newsinger, (Marxist professor of History at Bath Spa University), Sheila Coleman, (Spokesperson on the history of the women in the Dublin Lock Out), Donnacha De Long (Academic on Jack White), Tony Donaghey (Connolly Association) and Cillian Gillespie (Irish Socialist Party academic on the Dublin Lock Out) and Keith Flett (Author of "Chartism After 1848: The Working Class and the Politics of Radical Education").
(3) Lessons learned and Ireland today during the austerity crisis: 11.30 to 13.30
(Chaired by Isabel Counihan Sanchez) with guest speakers: D.R. O'Connor Lysaght (Author of "The story of the Limerick Soviet"), Bob Crow (General Secretary of the RMT), Aengus O'Snodaigh (Sinn Fein TD for Dublin Central South), Martin Gallager (NEC member for the CPSU, Irish Civil Service Union), Stephen Boyd (Northern Ireland Socialist Party) and David Convery (Editor of "Locked Out: A Century of Irish Working Class Life" – published by Irish Academic Press).
(4) Lunch and book launches: 13.30 to 14.30
(5) Irish in Britain – Immigration, Race Relations and Trade Unions: 14.30 to 16.30
(Chaired by Austin Harney) with guest speakers: John McDonnell (MP and former Chair of the Labour Party Irish Society), Phien O'Reachtigan (Irish Traveller & campaigner against the Dale Farm evictions) speaker on the London Irish Women's Centre, speaker on the Liverpool Irish Community, Michael Holden (Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group in London) and Trade Union speaker on Community Unionism.
(6) Conclusion: 16.30 to 17.00
Launch of the Campaign of the Rights and Actions of Irish Communities (CRAIC) Fighting the Cuts, and building links against poverty and austerity in Ireland.

For further information, please contact Austin Harney and Gerry Downing, CRAIC Fighting the Cuts, PO Box No. 59188, London, NW2 9LJ; Email: au5tin67@yahoo.co.uk ; Mobile: 07980255642

Marikana Support Campaign

Anniversary of the Massacre picket of the South African Embassy

from 4.00 pm - 7.00 pm
Friday 16 August
South Africa House
Trafalgar Square
London WC2N 5DP

An Urgent Call for International Solidarity
On the 16th August 2012, South African Police fired live ammunition at striking miners at Lonmin's Marikana mine, killing 34 and injuring 78. Many were killed were shot at close range while trying to surrender. The Marikana miners were demanding a tripling of their salary to R12,500 (£950 or €1100) per month.
In the following days, 270 of the Marikana strikers were arrested and charged with the murder of their colleagues under the Common Purpose doctrine, a law last used under Apartheid. They were released on bail after public pressure forced the National Prosecuting Authority to provisionally drop the charges. Since the massacre the community of Marikana has lived under a virtual State of Emergency, with police patrols, raids and reports of unlawful arrests and harassment. Over half of the Lonmin Strike Committee due to testify before the Commission of Inquiry have been over the past days charged with murder.
To date not one police officer or official has been charged for the massacre at Marikana. Yet some of the miners still face the prospect of long prison sentences as the State intends to blame the miners themselves for the violence. Most of the miners who were killed and badly injured in Marikana were sole breadwinners and the loss of their earnings has left many of their dependents in a desperate situation.
Picket the South African Embassy
from 5.00 pm - 7.00 pm *every Thursday*
South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DP

Letter from France: The rise of the Front National, anti-fascism and the working class. And Evo Morales's plane

In 23 June in a parliamentary by election in Villeneuve-sur-Lot in South West France the far right Front National (FN) candidate Etienne Bousquet-Cassagne got a second round vote of 46.2%. He was beaten by the UMP (right wing) candidate Jean-Louis Costes who got 53.8%. The Socialist Party candidate, Bernard Barral, was eliminated in the first round. On 2 July Evo Morales plane was forced to land in Austria, having been refused airspace by France, Spain, Italy and Portugal.

Socialist Fight asked our France correspondent, Yao Wenyaan what was the political significance:

What are the reasons for the growing unpopularity of Holland and the SP, the rise of the Front National and the second round dilemma; some leftists called for a vote for Le Pen against Chirac in 2002; this included the LCR but not the LO or the Lambertists we think. And can you make some comment on the French and European humiliation over Snowden and Evo Morales' plane in Austria?

Yao Wenyaan: In my opinion the rise of the Front National is not a real rise, or an electoral one (even if their percentage is greater because a greater percentage of voters just don't go to the polls, disgusted with Hollande and the like.

It must be considered that in the constituency where the FN got almost 46% of the vote, there was a only a 60% turn out and, perhaps the most important, it was the constituency of Monsieur Cahuzac who was found lying openly to the French voters. He was the minister in charge of "fighting tax evasion" and he was forced to confess that he was also 'outsourcing' with some bank accounts in "foreign fiscal paradises". A real example of the kind of swindler that make a career in that "socialist" party.

But that is not the real question. The FN vote went up because the so called "extreme left" is hopeless. Masses don't choose by books or correct statements or nice perspectives (i.e. communism or "anticapitalism") but in their own search of a solution they look everywhere for real possibilities, "Big battalions" as some say. They go almost naturally where they feel there is a force or at least a real possibility. And that's what the FN offers them.

This FN is moving their line to the centre as much as they can. Marine is very willing to change the name of her party and all her propaganda is made under the label "Marine blue" which is not exactly the old FN tradition. Some of their new "figures" are not directly connected to the most militants extreme right groups and they are looking for a sort of Fini's alliance [1] with the traditional right parties (Which for the moment don't want anything to do with them).

There is also a mobilisation of the bigots against same sex marriage and the resurgence of some extreme right fighting groups which have always been there. This has triggered a reaction by other lefts groups as it can be logically expected. There has been some racist aggressions and, in a fight the death of an antifascist kid.[2] But the police are going against this rightist gangs and some legal condemnation has fallen on this people with some imprisonments. I don't think that the bourgeoisie, who can do whatever she likes in France, has any interest in stirring the antifascist conscience that is ever ready to explode in large parts of the French people.

Then there is some risk that the FN wins some MPs and some risk that some part of the right parties make a few electoral "alliances" with them. But why? Because the "extreme left" (as they called themselves here) is hopeless. Hollande has announced a very hard attacks on retirement pensions. That will begin at the "rentrée" (in September when people comes back from holidays, well, the ones who can go, only 50% of all this year because of the ...crisis). Well every little group has his own agenda, different to the others, but all calling for 'unity" and all totally impotents to mobilise anyone. They wait for the reaction of the big Trade Unions. Politically, everyone plays their own music, but I must say that it is very dissonant; nobody could like such a cacophony.

Then, people, common people just look at this "show" not understanding a fig, shrugs theirs elbows and go to the polls to vote FN disgusted with Hollande to the top and not understanding and not "believing" (because "they will never came to power") the extreme left.

This elementary idea: "masses love and follow big divisions" the EG's know it but they do nothing to make it a fact. For LO it is useless to unite little groups with no significance. For NPA [3], well they are in a big crisis, and they speak of "unity" but they don't know how to make it. For the POI (Lambertists) [4] they also speak "unity" but every one mistrust them because they are known for their quite ...'non fraternal "tactics' if I can permit myself the expression.

But, I must said, that the nervous callings of a "danger of the FN" as we have been hearing for decades it never becomes a fact. Why? In my humble opinion it is because the French bourgeoisie, which is still adamantly opposed to the FN, does not need the FN. The 'Socialist' party and the UMP work very well for them. But this judgement must be modified now by the calls of some big capitalists for a more Bonapartist regimes in all Europe to "get rid of the crisis" (i.e. make brutal attacks on workers under very strong governments) before the crisis explode on their faces.

There could be the chance for the FN; but the fact is that today they even have problems to find people to present themselves to the voters under their own flag. Is this a fascist combat force against the working class or a right parliamentary wing somewhat more brutal than socialists and UMP? And there is always the revolutionary tradition of the French working class, and that, the bourgeois has a very class conscious panic about this. "Please, don't weak up the beast..." They will manoeuvre to the end to avoid such risk.

That's the picture. You must make your own conclusions. On the question of Snowden and Morales's aeroplane being forced down in Austria you must realise that France is an imperialist country with all its imperialist prejudices and colonialist mentality; no body bothers with Morales. Not even a comment in extreme left forums, or parties internet sites, etc Only Mélenchon, a fine tactical man, made a protest, but with a nationalistic bias. A "non évènement" (non event).

Typically the NPA centres its propaganda on "societal" matters and forgets the main problem, the impeding attacks against the working class coming from the government. A typical "call to the wind" because there are no forces capable to build such

Letter from France

Clement Meric (18, centre), who was murdered by skinhead fascists in Paris on 2 July. It provoked huge revulsion and anti-fascist demonstrations all over France.

"effective movement against fascism, racism and Islamophobia". The "working class" which is "called" is in such a degree of demoralisation and demobilisation that it is even incapable to unite against very real attacks as continuous lay-offs, reductions on wages, retirement and the like. You bet they will mobilise, with a total Berezina in matter of political militancy between their ranks, on these societal issues. [5] I am not saying these are not important matters, but you must take account of your real influence, your real strength before beginning a fight if you're not an irresponsible adventurer. Of course you must denounce these reactionary attacks, but to waste all your force in this, you must think very thoroughly how to be the most efficient to your class. There are ten thousands more possibilities of having a big mass movement on the first issue; the increase of the age of retirement, than in the second one, anti-fascist mobilisation. Those are the facts even if we would want other issues. But our desires answer also to our own main concerns. The question of taking the very difficult and hard road of turning to the working class is a class line that presents itself to the large extreme-left forces in France and everywhere else. We must not reject it because we have not enough forces to do both. NPA from way back, when they were LCR, [6] back to the 80s they have agitated the "danger" of fascism (i.e. the FN which to the day it is not fascist and it is going the other way round, as much to the right centre as her leader Marine Le Pen can). If the masses votes FN(and only vote and not the real politically conscious working class who prefers not to go to the polls) is because there is no another real choice for them to express their "ras-le-bol".[7]

There are no FN demos, no FN attacks on left parties, there are not even enough members to fill the FN lists of candidates in the elections and they are forced to advertise in the papers to get candidates in some localities. That for a "fascist" party is quite bizarre... This is a diversion which mobilises a lot of very valuable youth to "fight fascism" and to forget the working class. Then class politics are reduced to a fight between rival fighting groups and the bourgeoisie send its police to put everyone they arrest in jail for some time and that's all. Fine tactics as you can see.

Could the FN become a fascist party? Of course, but that we will see months in advance. We cannot make politics based on our own phantoms but on a very clear analysis of what it is. And, if we have not the militant force, we must chose our axis and not follow ever changing wind with the result of losing our forces and time and becoming demoralised for lack of any real achievement.

Just a final thought. I have been reading the reactions of the people who can write in Le Monde (you must pay an entrance fee) on the Morales affair. There is a huge outcry against the government and on the "shame to France!" line. Against being the "puppets of US" and the like. These are 'middle class people' and their line is a nationalistic, Gaullist line in fine. Some left voter also "disgusted with "Flamby" the nickname of Hollande. Flamby is more or less a jelly because of his "moving, not stable" nature.

Notes

[1] Gianfranco Fini, Italian politician, former leader of the centre-right Future and Freedom party, and the former leader of the conservative National Alliance and the post-fascist Italian Social Movement. He was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in Silvio Berlusconi's government from 2001 to 2006. (Wiki) He is takes as a typical leader who moved his party to the more acceptable right centre against former close association with fascism.

[2] Clément Meric, 18, a anti-fascist campaigner who had been severely beaten in an altercation with skinheads in central Paris and later died. This has shaken France, with thousands gathering in anti-fascist demonstrations across the country and political soul-searching about whether extreme far-right and neo-Nazi groups – which have been on the fringes of recent anti-gay marriage protests – are enjoying a resurgence and should be banned. The Guardian 7 June.

[3] NPA, New Anticapitalist Party (French: Nouveau Parti anticapitaliste),

[4] Parti ouvrier indépendant (POI), the leading front movement of the "Lambertist" Fourth International (after Pierre Lambert, one of its most prominent members), as the Fourth International (La Vérité) (after its international theoretical journal La Vérité),(Wiki)

[5] Refers to the Battle of Berezina (or Beresina) which took place from 26 to 29 November 1812, between the French army of Napoleon, retreating after his invasion of Russia and crossing the Berezina (near Borisov, Belarus), and the Russian armies under Mikhail Kutuzov, Peter Wittgenstein and Admiral Pavel Chichagov. The battle ended with a mixed outcome. The French suffered very heavy losses but managed to cross the river and avoid being trapped. Since then "Bérézina" has been used in French as a synonym for "disaster."

[6] The Revolutionary Communist League (Ligue communiste révolutionnaire) (LCR) was a Trotskyist political party in France. It was the French section of the Fourth International (Post-Reunification). It published the weekly newspaper Rouge and the journal Critique communiste. Established in 1974, it became the leading party of the far left in the 2000s. It officially abolished itself on February 5, 2009 to merge with smaller factions of the far left and form a New Anticapitalist Party. (Wiki)

[7] Idiomatic French expression meaning, I'm sick of it! I'm fed up! I've had it up to here!

For Adebolajo and Oluwatobi, Against Imperialist wars in Muslim lands

LCFI statement on the Woolwich killing: 31 May 2013[1]

The Liaison Committee for the Fourth International (LCFI) is a proudly anti-Imperialist Trotskyist internationalist grouping which never equates the violence of the oppressor with that of the oppressed. We stand with Lenin unequivocally on these questions:

Lenin:

> We are defending… not the national interests, for we assert that the interests of socialism, of world socialism are higher than national interests, higher than the interests of the state. [2]

The killing of the British soldier Lee Rigby, 25, in Woolwich, South London, on 22 May, who was identified as a British soldier by the Help for Heroes t-shirt he was wearing, was a political act. One of the assailants, Michael Adebolajo, immediately made this clear in a statement:

> We swear by almighty Allah we will never stop fighting you until you leave us alone. Your people will never be safe. The only reason we have done this is because Muslims are dying by British soldiers every day. We must fight them as they fight us. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. I apologise that women had to witness this today but in our lands our women have to see the same. You people will never be safe. Remove your government, they don't care about you. Do you think David Cameron is going to get caught in the street when we start busting our guns? Do you think your politicians are going to die? No, it's going to be the average guy like you, and your children. So get rid of them. Tell them to bring our troops back so we, so you can all live in peace.

We sympathise with the family of the dead British soldier; it is terrible to lose a son, husband and father in any circumstances but the full blame lies with British Imperialism's wars of aggression and drone strikes - the kill ratio is thousands to one and they all have families too and the so called "Islamacist terrorists" combatants are "guilty" only of heroically defending their own lands; Lee Rigby was a professional mercenary soldier paid to implement David Cameron's predatory Imperialist foreign policy and he paid the price of this dangerous assignment. The seeds of violence were sown by British Imperialism; together with other European Imperialist powers they shipped upwards of fourteen million black Africans across the oceans in cages as slaves. How many countries have they invaded and destroyed to exploit and rob their wealth and natural recourses? When was the last time a Muslim group invaded a country for its resources and killed a million people?

We will not condemn Michael Olumide Adebolajo, 28, and Michael Oluwatobi Adebowale, 22. According to Paul Cahalan in an article in *The Independent on Sunday* on 26 May Michael Adebolajo was arrested with six others in Kenya under suspicion of being at the centre of an Al-Qaeda-inspired plot in 2010. He was tortured before being released without charge, it seems because MI5 agents thought they could recruit him as a spy. MI5 constantly harassed him and his family in an attempt to make him work for them after he returned home. [3] This was their answer.

However we do not agree with their methods of struggle. As with all so-called "acts of terror" or the shooting of British soldiers by Irish Republicans we say that for national liberations fighters the army of occupation is a legitimate target. But we do not endorse individual action like planting bombs against civilian populations (which this was not) or killing of individual soldiers in a public street not only because it cannot achieve its aim of defeating imperialism but because it has the exact opposite effect on the mass of their potential supporters, the organised working class. Our approach is the traditional Marxist one of "unconditional but critical support". As Trotsky said (and we would not use the epithet "terrorism" today):

> In our eyes, individual terror is inadmissible precisely because it belittles the role of the masses in their own consciousness, reconciles them to their powerlessness, and turns their eyes and hopes towards a great avenger and liberator who some day will come and accomplish his mission. The anarchist prophets of the 'propaganda of the deed' can argue all they want about the elevating and stimulating influence of terrorist acts on the masses. Theoretical considerations and political experience prove otherwise. The more 'effective' the terrorist acts, the greater their impact, the more they reduce the interest of the masses in self-organisation and self-education. But the smoke from the confusion clears away, the panic disappears, the successor of the murdered minister makes his appearance, life again settles into the old rut, the wheel of capitalist exploitation turns as before; only the police repression grows more savage and brazen. And as a result, in place of the kindled hopes and artificially aroused excitement comes disillusionment and apathy. [4]

However we cannot make our support for anti-Imperialist fighters conditional on them agreeing to our methods of struggle. This was not a "terrorist" act but a response to massive Imperialist terrorism against the Muslim lands with which the pair clearly identified. Under the cloak of religion there are very powerful anti-Imperialist sentiments in that statement above with which we solidarise, without in any way conceding to the religious prejudices of Fundamentalism. We must learn how to support the one and oppose the other without ever taking our eye off the main enemy, World Imperialism.

As Trotsky says:

> The struggle against war, properly understood and executed, presupposes the uncompromising hostility of the proletariat and its organizations, always and everywhere, toward its own and every other imperialist bourgeoisie... [5]

The war dead of Imperialism

Estimates of the war dead following the 2003 invasion of Iraq are as high as one million. Taken with the death toll from the previous sanctions campaign and the First Gulf War (Operation Desert Storm, 1990-91) combined with the invasions of Af-

For Adebolajo and Oluwatobi,

ghanistan, Libya and the sanctions campaign against Iran etc this pushes that figure to close to two million dead. Almost all these occupied lands [6] have seen the life expectancy of the general population decline dramatically, infant mortality rise sharply, previously free education and hospital services devastated by privatisation and delivery into the hands of US and other multi-nationals, now affordable only by the rich.

Their infrastructure and services like transport, electricity, water sanitation and sewerage have been enormously degraded and their whole economies reduced to worse conditions than they endured half a century and more ago under colonialism. Radioactive fragments from depleted uranium shells in war-zones from ex-Yugoslavia to Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Mali have caused and will cause countless deaths and birth deformities in these regions. All to serve the global war aims of US-dominated Western Imperialism, to enhance the profits of the great banks and finance houses and their allied multi-national companies. A new fascism is looming, a Fourth Global Reich with the same social values as the Third. As *State, Power & Bureaucracy* put it:

> Over everything (in Nazi Germany) loomed the banks: as the banker Schroder put it at his Nuremburg trial: "They had a powerful influence on the party and on the government." We cite a German couplet from the period: Who marches in with the first German tank? / Herr Director Rasche from the Dresden Bank. [7]

Before the Second Gulf War of 2003 Iraq suffered enormously from the sanctions against it imposed by the US. On May 12, 1996, Madeleine Albright, then U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, appeared on a 60 Minutes segment in which Lesley Stahl asked her "We have heard that half a million children have died. I mean, that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?" and Albright replied, "We think the price is worth it."

This is all caused by Imperialism's drive for profits, to capture markets for their products, to eliminate rival semi-colonial regimes by installing their own puppets in these countries. Even pliant national rulers can become a barrier to the finance capital masters of Wall Street, the City of London and the Paris Bourse; Saddam Hussein was installed as Iraq's ruler by the CIA, Assad was a steadfast ally of Imperialism until they found better ones and Gaddafi had made his peace with Imperialism but nonetheless it was not enough to established today's needs of unrivalled global domination by the US and its allies.

On May 12, 1996, Madeleine Albright, "We have heard that half a million children have died. I mean, that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?" and Albright replied, "We think the price is worth it."

Notes:

[1] In line with Trotsky's article; *For Grynszpan, Against Fascist Pogrom Gangs and Stalinist Scoundrels,* (1939) http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1939/xx/grnszpan.htm

[2] Lenin was speaking of the first workers state then! *Report on Foreign Policy, Joint Meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Moscow Soviet* May 14, 1918 Collected Works, Vol. 27.

[3] Cahalan, Paul *The Independent on Sunday*, 26 May http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/woolwich-attack-terror-suspect-michael-adebolajo-was-arrested-in-kenya-on-suspicion-of-being-at-centre-of-alqaidainspired-plot-8632398.html

[4] Trotsky, Leon.*Why Marxists Oppose Individual Terrorism*, (November 1911), http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1911/11/tia09.htm

[5] Trotsky, Leon. *Resolution on the Antiwar Congress of the London Bureau*, (July 1936).

[6] Apart from Afghanistan, already devastated by the USSR war of 1979-89 against the Mujahideen who were supported by China, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the US via the CIA. Estimates of the dead here vary from 850,000 to 1,500,000.

[7] Dragstedt, A and Slaughter C, *State Power & Bureaucracy*, New Park 1981 p. 95

[8] Socialist Worker, *The wars that fuel the rage behind Woolwich attack,* http://www.socialistworker.co.uk/art/33448/The+wars+that+fuel+the+rage+behind+Woolwich+attack

[9] Socialist Party, *No to terrorism! No to racism! No to war!* Statement from Greenwich Socialist Party on the Woolwich killing, http://www.socialistparty.org.uk/articles/16739/23-05-2013/no-to-terrorism-no-to-racism-no-to-war

[10] Workers Power, *Woolwich: the War on Terror on our doorstep* http://www.workerspower.co.uk/2013/05/british-soldier-killed-woolwich-london/

[11] Ismail, Sacha. *Woolwich, Islamism and the racist, authoritarian backlash*, http://www.workersliberty.org/woolwich

[12] Ibid.

[13] Hudson, Kate. *The Woolwich attack*, http://leftunity.org/the-woolwich-attack/

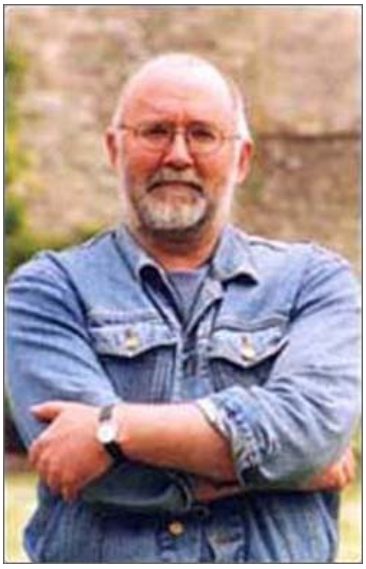
[14] German, Lindsey. *The lessons to learn from the Woolwich killing are obvious: but not to David Cameron*, http://www.stopwar.org.uk/index.php/united-kingdom/2475-the-lessons-to-learn-from-the-woolwich-killing-are-obvious-but-not-to-david-cameron

Full article here: http://socialistfight.com/2013/05/31/for-adebolajo-and-oluwatobi-against-imperialist-wars-in-muslim-lands/

The Blood Never Dried: A People's History of the British Empire

by John Newsinger Bookmarks pp 237, Review by Laurence Humphries

John Newsinger, a Marxist Historian, has written a comprehensive and thorough account of Imperialism throughout the British Empire from the 1830s to the present day. It is a story of brutal exploitation, murder and savagery by British Imperialists against the colonial peoples of the world. He traces its development from the Jamaican rebellion of 1831 through the Opium Wars in China, the Suez crisis, Palestine, the Mau Mau revolt in Kenya to today's conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.



John Newsinger; On its colonies the sun never sets but the blood never dries

The title was coined by the great Chartist leader Ernest Jones in 1851 who said "On its colonies the sun never sets but the blood never dries" [1]. Unlike other histories of the British Empire, Newsinger insists on showing the resistance of colonial peoples to the imposition of Imperial rule:

> From the slaves who overthrew slavery in the Caribbean to the Indian rebels of the 1850s to the Palestinian peasants fighting against the British and the Zionists in the 1930's from the Mau Mau in the 1950's to the Iraqi resistance brave men and women have resisted Empire [2].

Sugar was the important product that was used to enslave the indigenous population, but the slave population would not take this lying down and resisted. As Newsinger comments resistance was widespread "It has been estimated that there was a revolt on a British slave ship every two years" [3]. The great French Revolution of 1789 and the great slave revolt led by Toussaint L'ouverture in Haiti had an immediate impact on the slave revolts in Jamaica and elsewhere. "It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the impact of the Haitian Revolution on the fate of colonial slavery" [4].

The ending of slavery coupled with the abolitionist movement in Britain led by Wilberforce finished the worst forms of exploitation. Even then extreme brutality still continued unchecked. "There were hundreds of executions and over 600 prisoners were flogged" [5].

The Opium Wars in China showed that the British Empire used the drug to great effect and became the biggest drug pusher in the world. "The opium trade was one corner of an eastern Triangular trade that mirrored the 18th Century Atlantic slave trade" [6]. The Manchu Emperors had banned the drug, but this did not bother the British. When the First Opium War started because the Chinese Emperors wanted to stop the trade, the British response was to pillage, murder and rape the Chinese people. "With the bombardment of the town still under way the troops moved in to rape and pillage" [7]. This was the civilising role of British Imperialism! The Chartist movement, the great working class movement in Britain in the 1850s, opposed 'the Opium Wars'. This showed that the working class sided with the Chinese people in its opposition to Imperialism.

The Opium Wars continued with the British determined to hold on to this illegal trade which was a great source of wealth for British capitalism. Charles Gordon of Khartoum fame completely destroyed the summer palace of the Manchus as a reprisal for the death of a number of British prisoners. Gordon tells us what this devout Christian did "We accordingly went out, and after pillaging it burned the whole place, destroying in a vandalised manner most valuable property which could not be replaced" [8].

As well as fighting the Manchu emperors, the British had to destroy the Taiping Revolution which wanted to institute a type of "primitive communism" in the country. In the battle with the Taiping Revolution the British decided to massacre the population. "The Imperial troops were guilty of the most revolting barbarities and Lindley held that Gordon himself was criminally responsible "[9].

The British always viewed Palestine as of strategic importance and also it used Zionism as a settler population that would be sympathetic to the British. As Newsinger states Zionism needed the help of Imperialism.

> Zionism had always looked to the imperial powers for the realisation of its ambitions. What it demonstrates quite clearly however is the extent to which Zionism was a European settler project a child of Western Imperialism [10].

Today with the war over Syria, Palestine and the Lebanon, the Imperialist puppet statelet Israel is still used to bolster up the Imperialists role in the region and deprive the Arab majority of their rights and steal by conquest, murder and exploitation the natural resources of the region. What saved the Zionists, argues Newsinger, was the rise of anti-Semitism and the Nazis coming to power in Germany.

Newsinger also shows that the Zionist movement colluded with the Nazis "The Gestapo worked closely with Mossad the Zionist agency handling Immigration" [11]. The Author quickly identifies the role of the British Labour Party which in every respect is the most Pro-Imperialist social democratic organisation in Western Europe. "The Labour Party had endorsed Zionism even before the Balfour Declaration. Herbert Morrison, an avowed Zionist, stated "The Jews have proved to be first

The Blood Never Dried: A People's History of the British Empire

class colonisers to have the real good old empire qualities" [12]. This shows the pro-Imperialist policies that the Labour Party would adopt over Suez, Vietnam, Indonesia, Kenya and Iraq.

In 1952 a group of Free Officers in Egypt led by Gamal Abdel Nasser overthrew the monarchy. Churchill and the British Government were opposed to Arab nationalism, but the Americans were opposed to any sort of force in the region. The decision to nationalise the Suez Canal alarmed both the British and the Americans. The Labour opposition proved itself as an able ally of Imperialism. "A staunch Zionist Gaitskell (Labour Leader) urged a coalition with Israel". [13]. Eden and the British Government then decided to launch an invasion of Egypt, further evidence if any was needed on capitalism's role in the region, starve the country and steal its natural resources, never mind what the indigenous population wanted. It was brutality and colonisation all over again. "It was an act of desperation by a government that believed the British position in the Middle East was lost unless some dramatic stroke could resolve it" [14]. The invasion plans together with Zionist and French help was doomed to failure. The days of British imperialist adventures were coming to an end. A new Imperialist power was emerging and that was the United States. "The decisive factor in defeating the Israeli-Franco British attack on Egypt was the hostile stance taken by the United States" [15].

The Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya showed how brutal British imperialism could be. It was carried out to subjugate the African state and eventually turn it into a client state of Empire led by Jomo Kenyatta. The brutality, murder and rape of the black population were provided for by the presence of white settlers. Newsinger identifies the real reasons. "The answer is provided by the white settlers, an armed community of white racists that was prepared to resist even the most minimal concessions to the black population" [16]. The Kikuyu tribe had their land stolen by the white settlers and were trying to turn them into landless labourers. This situation can be equated with the white racist Zionist occupation of Palestine. The British Labour Government of 1945 drove the Kikuyu on the road to rebellion by failing to listen to their demands.

Newsinger shows how the revolutionary movement emerged in the Trade Unions. This was no movement of a few peasants with grievances. "It was without any doubt one of the most important revolutionary movements in the history of modern Africa". [17]. There were collaborators amongst the Kikuyu and Kenyatta was one of them, but their influence was slight and the Mau Mau gained support amongst large sections of workers and tribal peoples all over Kenya. The British response was to intern whole sections of the population through internment without trial. "By the end of 1954 there were 77,000 people interned without trial including thousands of women and children as young as 12". [18].

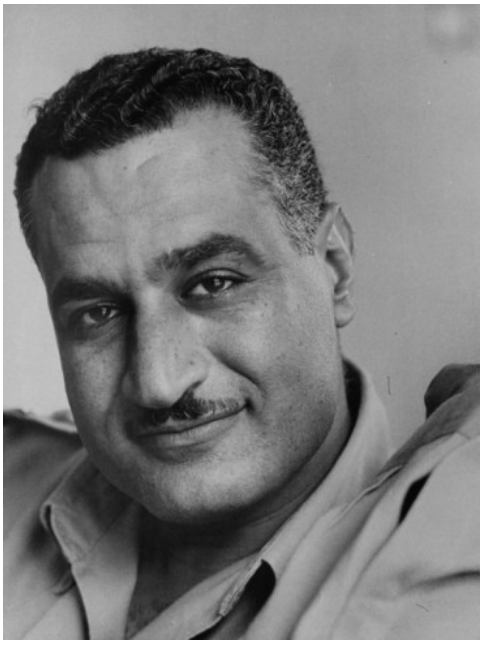
Newsinger gives graphic details of floggings, beatings and killings against the Kikuyu. "The reality was that in Kenya the floggings, torture, mutilation and rape and summary executions of suspects and prisoners were everyday occurrences" [19]. The British used the methods of the Nazis to quell the population. "Elements within the security forces in Kenya particularly the police used the methods of the Gestapo" [20].

Without the intervention of the British the Mau Mau would have defeated the white settlers. In the end Kenyatta formed a client government for the Empire. He was bitterly opposed by the Mau Mau and the revolutionary movement.

This book is to be thoroughly recommended, it details the role of Empire up to the present day. It complements the struggle today of the Syrian and Iranian masses locked into a battle with Imperialism. As before, American Imperialism is using client forces on the ground like the Syrian coalition and the Zionist entity in Israel. The role of successive Labour Governments has been exposed especially the role of Tony Blair's government which used lies and slander to ensure that Iraq and Afghanistan were occupied and their populations destroyed. That is the true role of Imperialism.

Notes

[1] Newsinger J The Blood Never Dried, Frontspiece. p.9
[2] Ibid. P.15
[3] Ibid.. P.20
[4] Ibid p.31
[5] Ibid p.49
[6] Ibid p.52
[7] Ibid p.61
[8] Ibid p.63
[9] Ibid p.123
[10] Ibid p.125
[11] Ibid p.129
[12] Ibid p.135
[13] Ibid p.174
[14] Ibid p.176
[15] Ibid p.177
[16] Ibid p.182
[17] Ibid p.186
[18] Ibid p.189
[19] Ibid p.190



Gamal Abdel Nasser, second president of Egypt, 1956 to 1970: Nasser established universal health care and expanding women's rights, family planning programs and housing provisions. (Wiki)

Ticktin, Taaffe and Underconsumption By Gerry Downing

The article by Paul Demarty on the SP/CWI Rudeness and revolution (WW July 4) is disingenuous. He has neglected to tell us that the CPGB and specifically their in-house Marxist economic theoretician, Hillel Ticktin, has almost exactly the same line on the falling rate of profit (TFRP) as Peter Taaffe of the SP/CWI (and the AWL) and it is this he wishes to defend. In fact Bruce Wallace deals with Ticktin and underconsumption generally in his blog, *Focus on prominent underconsumptionists: Hillel Ticktin*.[1] If you look at the comments on the blog you will see that in discussing the video of last year's Communist University he says;

> Then in response to a challenge on the rate of profit from the floor he describes believers in Marx's theory of crisis as being members of a CULT! Clearly even in the CPGB there must be some members who can't swallow Hillel's nonsense.

Unfortunately the CPGB has no such critical members, that challenge (for the second year) was made by yours truly and the CULT referred to is obviously Socialist Fight. Paul attempts to denigrate the theory of the falling rate of profit. Let us first of all set out the proposition according to Marx:

> The progressive tendency of the general rate of profit to fall is, therefore, just an expression peculiar to the capitalist mode of production of the progressive development of the social productivity of labour. This does not mean to say that the rate of profit may not fall temporarily for other reasons. But proceeding from the nature of the capitalist mode of production, it is thereby proved a logical necessity that in its development the general average rate of surplus-value must express itself in a falling general rate of profit. Since the mass of the employed living labour is continually on the decline as compared to the mass of materialised labour set in motion by it, i.e., to the productively consumed means of production, it follows that the portion of living labour, unpaid and congealed in surplus-value, must also be continually on the decrease compared to the amount of value represented by the invested total capital. Since the ratio of the mass of surplus-value to the value of the invested total capital forms the rate of profit, this rate must constantly fall. [2]

TFRP is the central plank of Marx's revolutionary economic theories. He formed his theory in opposition to the closely related theories of the so-called "iron law of wages" [3] and underconsumptionism and sharply counterposed TFRP to them. He did not have several theories of capitalist crisis, he had one: TFRP. Marx attacked the "iron law of wages" in two lectures to the International Working Men's Association in 1865. As the Irish Workers Group say in *Connolly A Marxist Analysis*:

> The argument was that the "iron law" meant the absolute immiseration of the working class which led to a lack of demand for commodities and hence a crisis pushing prices below the value of commodities finally squeezing profits. [4]

Hillel Ticktin, former professor of Marxist Studies at Glasgow University and co-founder of *Critique, a Journal of Socialist Theory*: "Then in response to a challenge on the rate of profit from the floor he describes believers in Marx's theory of crisis as being members of a CULT!"

This is closely allied to underconsumptionism. Of course it has an immediate reformist implication; there is a Keynesian solution to the crisis of capitalism. All we need to do is raise wages and pump more money into the economy and the crisis will be solved. Hillel is forever telling us that there is plenty of money available but the capitalists just won't invest. So implicitly all we have to do is force them to do so or get the government to do so on their behalf. Because this is the case it is impossible that Imperialism will embark on WWIII, he confidently assures us in a logical reformist extension. It is this reformist conclusion that Bruce Wallace has correctly identified in the line of both the CWI and the CPGB. The notion that they won't invest because the rate of profit is too low is beyond them both.

Ludicrously Paul tells us that:

> The idea that the falling rate of profit interpretation has a total monopoly on orthodoxy, and that underconsumptionism necessarily equals reformism, dates not from the 1860s, but the 1970s, and emerges wholly out of post-New Left trends in Marxist economics.

Well we already have Marx putting that "interpretation" on it in 1865. Now scroll on ten years and he is at it again in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*:

> It is well known that nothing of the "iron law of wages" is Lassalle's except the word "iron" borrowed from Goethe's "great, eternal iron laws". The word "iron" is a label by

Ticktin, Taaffe and Underconsumption

> which the true believers recognize one another. But if I take the law with Lassalle's stamp on it, and consequently in his sense, then I must also take it with his substantiation for it. And what is that? As Lange already showed, shortly after Lassalle's death, it is the Malthusian theory of population (preached by Lange himself). But if this theory is correct, then again I cannot abolish the law even if I abolish wage labor a hundred times over, because the law then governs not only the system of wage labor but *every* social system. Basing themselves directly on this, the economists have been proving for 50 years and more that socialism cannot abolish poverty, which has its basis in nature, but can only make it *general*, distribute it simultaneously over the whole surface of society!

Marx spends fifty pages in Volume 3 of Capital explaining this tendency and the countervailing factors which partially and temporarily offset this "single most important law of political economy". Lenin cites the falling rate of profit in the Imperialist countries as the reason for the development of monopolies and foreign investments a little before the 1970s. Trotsky's theory of uneven but combined development explained that the rate of profit had to be taken globally in the epoch of imperialism. It is impossible to judge by national statistics which might prove that the rates of profits are rising in individual countries. This was the crass error of Bill Jefferies whose misjudgements of the nature of the 2007-8 crises was so famously wrong because he relied on national statistics.

The point about TFRP is that it is a revolutionary theory; capitalism is in crisis because it has these fatal structural flaws; private ownership of the means of production and a system of production for individual profit which has this inescapable tendency to fall and halt production through lack of investment. Only a rationally planned socialised economy based on production for need will overcome the ever recurring crises of capitalism. War on a global scale is the only thing that will temporarily solve this crisis for the capitalists; a much smaller group of monopoly capitalists will now have their profits rates restored before they fall again and the next conflagration is prepared. That is the history of the twentieth century. The same iron laws apply to the twenty-first.

Notes

[1] Focus on prominent underconsumptionists: Hillel Ticktin, http://69.195.124.91/~brucieba/2013/06/17/focus-on-prominent-underconsumptionists-hillel-ticktim/

[2] Karl Marx, Capital, vol. 3, chapter 13.

[3] The Iron Law of Wages is a proposed law of economics that asserts that real wages always tend, in the long run, toward the minimum wage necessary to sustain the life of the worker. The theory was first named by Ferdinand Lassalle in the mid-nineteenth century. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels attribute the doctrine to Lassalle (notably in *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875), Marx), crediting the idea to Thomas Malthus in his work, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*. (Wiki)

[4] *Connolly A Marxist Analysis,* by Andy Johnson, James Larragy, and Edward McWilliams. This book devotes six pages (17-23) to showing that James Connolly held the mistaken views of Lassalle and Dühring on this question.

From back page ace us in the traffic. We were quite frightened but made it back to Kilburn Square and the Cock Tavern for a pint. As we stood at the door of the pub another TNT truck passed and Maggie howled "scab" and let her pint fly at the side of the truck. She had not seen the policeman by her side who immediately accosted her but eventually let her off with a warning.

The birth of out two children in 1987 and 1990 took her out of permanent employment for a time but she began working full time again by 2000 for First Great Western, first as a customer host and then as a travelling chef. She was an RMT shop steward for Paddington No. 1 branch on a number of occasions. At the funeral a workplace colleague paid tribute to her unyielding defence of women with family care responsibilities, fighting for flexible shifts from them etc. something which all employers seek to avoid.

Lastly I include this tribute to her from MK in Ireland which I read out at the funeral and which captures her spirit exactly:

> Gerry, words fail me at this time. I am so deeply saddened at Maggie's passing. I find it hard to believe that the redoubtable Maggie is no longer with us. For me, there are some people that life's circumstances bring together for a time, and there are some who for whatever reason become like family to you. In that sense Maggie was like extended family for me, and like so many others I will miss her all the more. I always thought of Gerry and Maggie, two outstanding individuals in their own right, perhaps to some, an unlikely couple, but ipso facto all the more dynamic. But Maggie has given everyone who ever knew her such lasting memories, I have mine and I will always treasure them. She was a great spirit, an understanding friend and comrade, whose modesty and big personality sometimes concealed a sharp intellect. And for these reasons I do believe the world is a lesser place without our Maggie.
>
> However again, my words feel so inadequate when I wish to express my sincerest condolences to you Gerry and the children, who I only knew as babies. And to Laurence, Maggie's brother who I knew and was a good friend to me in London. My thoughts are with you, in friendship and comradeship, and in hope for the socialist future that Maggie and all of us aspire to. Unfortunately there are too many circumstances preventing me from being with you when you celebrate Maggie's lifetime of struggle, but you can be sure I'll be there in spirit.
>
> Again my kindest condolences and best regards. As always. Beir Bua.....Mick. K.

Finally a memorial collection for Women's Aid raised a magnificent £1,470 which the RMT has pledged to match. Thanks to all who contributed so generously, including Terry Gavin who gave £100, and her workmates in Paddington and Linda and Jacqui who took the collection in the Royal Oak.

Egypt; the coup that wasn't a coup and the revolution that wasn't a revolution

Turn to the mass organisations of the working class!, By Gerry Downing Socialist Fight 20 July 2013

We must make a Marxist analysis of the class forces involved in the so-called Egyptian revolution and the coup, which involve two mass mobilisations, both of which had revolutionary potential and both of which have failed to realise the aspirations of the poor and oppressed. What remains is a growing confidence of the masses in their own strength and ability to force change, but without a revolutionary leadership with a clear programme for socialist revolution with an internationalist perspective.

Both sides in the Egyptian conflict contain an implicit capitulation to Imperialism in different ways, which is why US Imperialism has been able to manoeuvre between both to contain and divert the revolutionary aspirations of the masses. Neither leadership will repudiate the foreign debt of almost $40B which is simply crippling the Egyptian economy. Nonetheless there is a path to the working class, to oppressed women and minorities whatever their religion for revolutionary Marxism, which is Trotskyism today. It is the aim of this piece to seek out that path by the elaboration of a revolutionary programme and perspective.

The first ever welcome by Israel for an Arab 'revolution': The cover of the Israeli daily Yedioth Ahronoth in the morning following the coup that overthrew Egypt's Mohamed Morsi by the army. The headline is "Revolution".

Bogus anti-Imperialism

It is well known that the Egyptian army is closely allied to the USA since 1979 [1] and that the Muslin Brotherhood (MB) was supported by the US after Morsi won the election a year ago. The violent clashes we have seen between the MB supporters of Morsi and the supporters of the 2011 'revolution' who have come to regard the army as their protectors against Sharia law and the oppression of women makes for a very confusing pictures of the class forces involved in this conflict. Added to all this is the increasing indications that both sides are becoming increasingly anti-Imperialist, or at least anti-US, as Marc Lynch reports:

> The streets have been filled with fliers, banners, posters, and graffiti denouncing President Barack Obama for supporting terrorism and featuring Photoshopped images of Obama with a Muslim-y beard or bearing Muslim Brotherhood colours… The tsunami of anti-American rhetoric swamping Egypt has been justified as a legitimate response to Washington's supposed support for the now -deposed Muslim Brotherhood government. There is no doubt that many Egyptians on both sides are indeed enraged with U.S. policy toward Egypt. Nor is there any doubting the intensity of the anti-Brotherhood fever to which Washington has so effectively been linked. [2]

So the growing anti-Imperialist sentiment of both sides is the basis for revolutionary unity and we all should stress that? Unfortunately that will not work on a bureaucratic or simplistic level because the anti-Imperialism of both sides is bogus at leadership level. Therefore we must sharply differentiate this bogus anti-Imperialism from that of their followers. The army's anti-Imperialism is partly a protest against the willingness of the US to collaborate with the MB and also its funding of civil rights NGOs and new TUs of which more below. Mubarak used to engage in this type of bluster for public consumption whilst maintaining the closest relationship with the US, although the anti-Imperialist rhetoric was never as intense as this, reflecting the need to head off the genuine anti-Imperialism of the masses.

And the other side of the anti-imperialism is an intense chauvinistic anti-Sunni attack by the army regime on Hamas and the Syrian opposition to Assad, even going as far as closing down Al Jazeera offices and attacks on Qatar, Turkey and Iran for supporting the MB. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE immediately granted $12 billion assistance to the coupists which they had refused to Morsi. Food shortages and queues for petrol and diesel mysteriously vanished after the coup making it certain that these were deliberately created to favour the conditions for the coup. Morsi's warmongering over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is unlikely to be a cause of the coup; the generals are even more bellicose over this and may even use a war against Christian Ethiopia to "unify the nation".

But Hamas and the Palestinians that have become other victims of this coup. Having severed its ties with Syria and Iran to get the backing of Morsi they have now lost their most important ally and the new army regime in Egypt is proving worse than Mubarak in closing all the life-line tunnels from Gaza to Egypt. In 2008/9 Mubarak facilitated the Zionist Operation Cast Lead which cost the lives of 1,400 Palestinians in Gaza and the destruction of a big proportion of their infrastructure.

Now Brigadier General (Ret.) Ayman Salama is saying Morsi "collaborated" with Hamas in a BBC interview and alleges this was the main reason for the coup:

> You're saying that the main offense from the army's point of view was that President Morsi was too helpful to Hamas? Salama responded: "criminally speaking, he [Morsi] threatened the national and military highest security interests of the army and the whole nation by actually collaborating to Hamas against the interests of

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> the army … especially in Sinai." Salama added that the "military asked the president many times to give them orders, directives to block, to shut off all tunnels, all tunnels with Gaza but the president claimed that there have been many humanitarian actually sympathies with our neighbours (sic) in Hamas in Gaza to let them have a breath against the Israeli blockade." [3]

Of course Morsi had also begun closing the tunnels, had broken relations with Assad and was doing everything the US demanded—but it was not enough for the generals and the US.

Bonapartism and the working class

Anti-Imperialism in the bourgeois nationalist/secularist tradition culminated in the 1952 coup of the Free Officers Movement, led by Muhammad Naguib and Gamal Abdel Nasser and the governments that followed until Nasser's death in 1970. Its three 'circles' were Arab nationalism, Pan-Arabism and Arab socialism. The Wiki article describes very well this type of a Bonapartist state:

> In world politics, Nasser's Egypt, along with Yugoslavia under Josip Broz Tito, and India under Jawaharlal Nehru, was a major proponent of the Non-Aligned Movement, which advocated developing countries remaining outside of the influence of the superpower blocs. However, notwithstanding this policy, and government suppression of communist organisations within Egypt, Egypt's deteriorating relations with Western powers, particularly following the Tripartite Aggression of 1956, made Egypt heavily dependent on military and civil assistance from the Soviet Union. The same was true for other revolutionary Arab governments which, although repressive of communism within Arab borders, entered into strong longstanding relationships with communist states outside of the Arab World. The Egyptian-Soviet alliance continued well into the presidency of Nasser's successor as president, Anwar El Sadat, especially with regard to the Arab-Israeli Conflict. [4]

But Bonapartism manoeuvres between the two last remaining great classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and even though in these circumstances the issue of Imperialism and consequent conflicts between sections of classes hangs over everything it does not negate this essential divide domestically. Evidence has emerged that very likely the CIA knew about Nasser's coup in advance and did not seek to stop it. The US remained neutral on the outcome of the coup, like they have on the 2013 one. They were more than willing to co-opt Nasser in the battle against the Egyptian working class; after the coup he banned the Communist Party and jailed many communists and other leftists. A military tribunal jailed eleven strikers from Kafr Eldawar and hanged their leaders, Mustafa Khamis and Muhammed al- Baqri, on 7 September 1952 some ten weeks after the coup following a strike at their factory for increased wages and bonuses on 12 August. The Egyptian Communist party refused to protest against this, excusing the executions lamely and dissolved itself in 1956 after the Suez crisis (they helped to mobilise popular opposition to the invasion) on the basis that Nasser was building socialism in Egypt. Nasser quickly banned all political parties, women's organisations and the Muslim Brotherhood, who suffered severe oppression. He did pass much progressive legislation on peasant's property right, on women's rights and on workers' rights. But he would not tolerate self-organisation, without which the masses cannot raise

The bogus anti-Imperialism of the Egyptian military

themselves to revolutionary class consciousness. He would not even use the working class as a stage army in any serious way as Peron did in Argentina, as International Socialist reported in 1961:

> During very short periods it seemed as if Abdul Nasser would try to rely on the workers à la Peron, especially when he brought them out into the streets of Cairo in March 1954 against Neguib. But while making some concessions to them, mainly in the field of social insurance and, to a smaller extent, housing, he suppressed any attempt of the workers to organise independent trade unions …the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, formed in Damascus in March 1956 was turned into a tool of Egyptian foreign policy. [5]

This was the two-faced anti-Imperialism, anti women's oppression and pro-worker policy of Nasser and Egyptian bourgeois nationalism. What are the positions of the Muslim Brotherhood on the working class, women's oppression and democratic rights of minorities? They are just as bad, if not worse. The Sunni MB are not just a religious movement. They are the political representatives of the middle bourgeoisie and the culture of the bazaar (souk) market traders [6] with the support of many poor workers and peasants. Nasser savagely repressed them:

> Throughout the rule of Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser in Egypt, many members of the Muslim Brotherhood were held in concentration camps, where they were tortured. Some died in custody, including 21 Brothers killed in their cells in June 1957. Those who escaped arrest went into hiding, both in Egypt and in other countries. One of those tortured was Sayyid Qutb, former editor of the Society's newspaper… In August 1965, the government claimed to have discovered that the Brotherhood was organising a huge revolutionary plot. About 18,000 people were arrested, 100–200 were imprisoned, and 38 of these were killed in custody during the investigation. The police made systematic use of torture during interrogations; many, including Sayyid Qutb and Zaynab al-Ghazali, were tortured for months. The police destroyed the village of Kardasa, where the police believed a suspect was hiding, and arrested and tortured its entire population. Raids throughout Egypt were accompanied by an intense media campaign against the Brotherhood. On the basis of confessions obtained under torture, Qutb and two other Brothers were hanged in August 1966. In the 1970s, it emerged that the plot had probably been fabricated by the security services as part of a conflict between different factions within the

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regime. [7]

So we can see the conflict between the secularists and the MB as a conflict between the middle bourgeoisie and the big bourgeoisie; a vital component of the latter is the army. According to Forbes' Doug Bandow, "Egyptian military officers are a caste apart, pampered apparatchiks who control as much as 40 percent of the economy".

Women's oppression in Egypt

The MB are now the main group behind the violent attacks and rapes of women and the murders of Coptic Christians and Shi'a Muslims, although the army began it. This ultra-reactionary attempt to divide the working class is a prominent feature of anti-modern political Islam. It is also supported by sections of the army and must be totally opposed by Marxists. It is useful here to cite a vital statistic on the terrible oppression of women, who must be such a vital part of any genuine socialist revolution here as everywhere else. They clearly have more to gain than any other section of the community. According to the website of the World Health Authority in Egypt, the Demographic Health Survey in 2000 revealed that 97% of married women surveyed experienced FGC (female genital cutting). Combined with polygamy, property rights laws, laws permitting domestic violence, discrimination in divorce and in almost all aspects of family and employment laws Egypt has regressed far from the days of Nasser on all these issues, even though his reforms were very inadequate.

Women in Cairo supporting Samira Ibrahim in her fight against the 'virginity tests' forced on her by the army in 2011. Now the MB are also joining in these appalling attacks on women

Besides the usual patriarchal oppression of women in all capitalist societies the peculiar form it takes in Egypt has its history in the development of the mercantile classes of the bazaars and souks and their relationship to the land and the family. The current rise in attacks on women is because revolutionary mobilisations put these archaic relations under threat. The operation of the bazaar culture in the Middle East is anti-Imperialist but profoundly reactionary socially. Indeed its twin characteristics are inseparable and fundamental to understanding the rise of political Islam. Modern industry and the development of an industrial proletariat breaks up old family relations based on peasant production and small craft shops based on small clothing workshops, ceramics, leather goods, etc. and their sale via the bazaars and souks. Socialist revolution would begin to abolish all oppression. Rodney Wilson explains:

> The failure of indigenous capitalism to develop in most Middle Eastern states can be attributed to the strength of the traditional feudal structures. A strong attachment to the land prevails in much of the Middle East, and even where there has been considerable migration into towns and cities, traditional loyalties to rural kinship and tribal groupings remain. Investment in land and property is valued more than putting funds into productive enterprises, as there is a physical acquisition that can be used for the benefit of the immediate family and more distant relations. More uncertain investment in industry not only means personal risk, but is potentially irresponsible, as it is regarded as gambling with the assets of the wider family and kinship group. There is also a reluctance to go outside the family group for business finance, as the external providers of capital, whether a bank or equity investors, could potentially wrest control from the owner. For this reason, most businesses in the Middle East are family owned and run, and rely on internal sources of finance. Large-scale private enterprises have failed to develop in most of the economies of the region, and there are few indigenous multinational companies. [8]

And later he elaborates:

> The *bazaar* mentality permeates business culture, with trading regarded as a productive and honourable activity. Competition implies bankruptcy for the unsuccessful, and monopolistic competition a significant amount of take-over and merger activity. Such practices would be out of keeping with the ethos of *bazaar* society, as it involves threatening the positions of entire families. [9]

Women have been in the forefront of the revolutionary movement in Tahrir Square since 2011. And they have suffered terrible counter-revolutionary oppression ever since from the army but primarily from thugs mobilised by the MB. As *The Guardian* reported:

> On Wednesday night, when Egypt's army chief announced the forced departure of Mohamed Morsi, the streets around Tahrir Square turned into an all-night carnival. But not everyone there was allowed to celebrate. Among the masses dancing, singing and honking horns, more than 80 women were subjected to mob sexual assaults, harassment or rape. In Tahrir Square since Sunday, when protests against Morsi first began, there have been at least 169 counts of sexual mob crime. "Egypt is full of sexual harassment and people have become desensitised to it – but this is a step up," said Soraya Bahgat, a women's rights advocate and co-founder of Tahrir Bodyguard, a group that rescues women from assault. "We're talking about mob sexual assaults, from stripping women naked and dragging them on the floor – to rape." [10]

Here the forces of revolution and counter-revolution are clashing and there can be no question of ignoring this or excusing the perpetrators. As we have seen above these attacks have their material basis in the rural bazaar family ideology. These vital women revolutionists must be defended as an urgent political task. It requires physical defence guards, as have already appeared, but also a political assault on the reactionary backwardness whose anti-Imperialism includes the idea that western Imperialism is corrupting women to abandon their duty to their husbands and families with false notions of liberation and freedom. The anti-Nasser ideology of the MB is the font of this

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reaction. As the Wikipedia article on feminism in Egypt puts it:

> Change concerning the position women in Egypt was felt by many as a "final invasion in the last sphere they could control against aggressive infidels, once sovereignty and much of the economy had been taken by the west". Tal at Harb, a prominent Nationalist of his time, in "Tarbiyat al-mar'a wa-al-hijab" 1905 argued that "the emancipation of women was just another plot to weaken the Egyptian nation and disseminate immorality and decadence in its society. He criticised Egyptians who desired to ape the west and claimed that there was a European imperialist design to project a negative image of the position of Muslim women."[11]

Anwar Sadat successively repealed all the progressive laws enacted by Nasser from 1970 as he, and Mubarak, his successor, increasingly turned towards the US and neoliberalism. Pro-working class laws and laws assisting the peasantry and against women's oppression were repealed as social control was imposed in a different way than under Nasser.

In defending the Marxist method Gerry Downing's 1997 work, *Afghanistan: Marxist Method vs. Bureaucratic method* explains how Marxism must approach the question of religious fundamentalism:

> The Bolsheviks understood that in the Muslim lands in Soviet Central Asia there was a material basis for the rural customs that all hinged around the terrible oppression of women. This was an integral part of the production process in those terrible conditions of poverty. Tribal blood feuds, polygamy, etc. are part of the local customs and institutions that enabled that primitive system of production to continue.
>
> It was this type of sensitive approach, taking full cognisance of local customs and practices to advance the progressive and defeat the reactionary that succeeded here in no less difficult circumstances. This was the method of operation of the Zhenotdel - the Department of working women and peasant women - in the short years between the end of the civil war and the beginnings of its Stalinisation after 1924. [12]

This is also the method necessary in Egypt and in the whole of the region. Not the brutal methods employed by the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union after the 1924 counter-revolution, those of Nasser in 1952, or those of the Stalinist leaders in Afghanistan from 1978, or the military in Algeria in 1991 who launched a military coup and started a bloody civil war rather than accept the victory of the Islamic Salvation Front, which was almost certain to win more than the two-thirds majority of seats required to change the constitution and thus democratically form an Islamic state.

But, whilst physically fighting the Imperialist-dominated coupists of the army, politically the MB will not fight them. Instead they seek to turn the anger of the poor Sunni Muslims against the Coptic Christians:

> Following the ouster of Egyptian President Muhammad Morsi, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) began accusing the Copts in Egypt, along with their supporters, of being behind his removal – which they call "the June 30 coup" – and of playing a central role in the protests that led to it. The MB is basing these claims on the fact that when Egyptian Defense Minister Al-Sisi announced that Morsi had been removed, Coptic Patriarch Tawadros II had been standing at Al-Sisi's side.
>
> These MB claims were expressed, inter alia, by Morsi supporters in the form of demonstrations, in which protestors accused the Copts of fomenting a revolution against Islam; some of them chanted "No to the Crusader revolution." In addition, media close to the MB published articles inciting against Egypt's Copts. For their part, the Copts are claiming that since the January 25, 2011 revolution, and particularly since Morsi became president, the violence perpetrated against them by various Islamic elements including the MB has been steadily rising. It is reported that during Morsi's single year in office, over 200,000 Copts fearing for their lives have fled Egypt for Europe, and that since June 30 of this year violence against Copts and Coptic property, including arson against churches, has spiked. [13]

Naguib Sawiris: Egypt's billionaire and leader of the Free Egyptians Party

Egypt has only two companies in Forbes list of 2,000 top companies but one is of exceeding importance in understanding modern Egypt. This is the Forbes list commentary on the Sawiris family:

> Egyptian billionaire Naguib Sawiris has revealed that his family plans to increase their investment in the country to the tune of billions of dollars following the July 3 ousting of President Mohammed Morsi by military force, Reuters has reported. Sawiris made the revelation on Sunday during a phone interview with Reuters when asked to make a comment about Egypt's attractiveness as an investment destination in the wake of its political uncertainties. "My family and I will inject investments in Egypt like never before, in any new projects we could invest in," Sawiris said.
> Naguib Sawiris, who is the oldest son of Egyptian construction magnate Onsi Sawiris, said the Sawiris family is ready to launch new projects and undertake new initiatives that could provide jobs for the young people of Egypt, signalling his optimism that the economy of the troubled North African country will find its feet again after its recent turbulent socio-economic past.
> "There is no going back from what happened beginning on 30 June, and I am confident that Egypt's temporary government understands its current role and is aware of what its priorities should be in the coming months. This provides us, as investors, with new business opportunities, particularly in the hotel and tourist industries," Sawiris said.

Billionaire Naguib Sawiris, key backer of the coup and another who wants to call it a 'revolution' says he will increase his investments in Egypt in celebration.

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Revolutionary Socialists Press Conference: called the coup which was funded by their partner in the popular front National Salvation Front, billionaire Naguib Sawiris and is inflicting such oppression on the Palestinians, a 'revolution'.

He added: "The removal of this fascist regime [referring to the Muslim Brotherhood of which Morsi was a member] has led to a nationwide revival, which will lead to increases in rates of tourism, in addition to creating a more enlightened country."
Naguib Sawiris, who is also a politician and co-founder of Egypt's Al Masreyeen Al Ahrrar political party (the Free Egyptians Party GD), has been a vocal critic of Morsi's regime… During his self-imposed exile, his political party participated in several anti-Morsi demonstrations. His privately-owned television station, ONTV regularly aired shows that criticized the regime. Morsi is said to have specifically targeted a number of leading Egyptian businessmen and companies who were members of the country's opposition party by imposing a series of stringent tax laws, a move that discouraged foreign investors from coming into the country and that ultimately played a role in the country's economic crisis. Naguib also called for the creation of new incentives, including tax holidays for investors looking to inject fresh capital into the country during this period. The Sawiris family controls the Orascom Group, Egypt's largest conglomerate, which owns interests in construction, telecom, hotels and technology and employs over 100,000 people. [14]

This is a Socialist Action report on the activities of the Sawiris:

> The coup campaign was significantly financed by Egypt's most powerful capitalists. Naguib Sawiris, a billionaire whose family controls the Orascom (construction, telecoms, media) corporate empire, one of Egypt's largest private sector employers, funded the opposition 'Tamarrod' movement that led the petition drive calling for Morsi's ousting. At the time it was necessary to conceal who was funding the campaign, but following the coup's success Sawiris wants recognition of his role, so the truth is coming out. [15]

This is surely proof of who organised the coup, where it is going what its intentions are. Two years after the revolution that wasn't a revolution in 2011 we had a coup that wasn't a coup according to the US and to some on the left, who called it another revolution. [16] We repudiate all those like Alan Woods of the IMT, the Revolutionary Socialists (SWP Egyptian section) and the Liaison Committee of Communists who deny in lockstep with US Imperialism that it was a coup. The US are obliged by their own law to halt all aid to coup regimes. We must oppose this coup and not call for or support the suppression of the Muslim Brotherhood in any way in Egypt. On the contrary we must strive to set the base against the leadership by means of transitional demands and the Transitional Method. This is the only way to politically destroy reactionary fundamentalist ideology; by replacing it with a revolutionary socialist ideology and leadership which consistently opposes Imperialism on a global scale.

Popular Frontism of the Revolutionary Socialists

As we have seen both the pro and anti Morsi 'revolutionaries' are a coalition. But politically both are ideologically dominated by bourgeois forces. The positions of the Revolutionary Socialist (RS), the IST section which are led by the UK SWP, are opportunist in the extreme. They have flipped and flopped and turned in all directions politically and even at times in two directions at the same time but never with a clear revolutionary programme for socialist revolution. They endorsed Morsi in the 2012 election and now they have endorsed the coup that has overthrown him, all in the name of the 'revolution'. They have entered at least three Popular Front formations since 2010 which makes no direct appeal to the Egyptian working class, now surely the most militant in the world.

On 10 May 2011, the Egyptian Communist Party (ECP) agreed to enter into a "socialist front" with four other Egyptian leftist groups called the Coalition of Socialist Forces, which includes the Revolutionary Socialists, the Popular Democratic Alliance Party, The Socialist Party of Egypt and the Workers Democratic Party.

Given that it was ultimately the strike wave of the working class that brought down Mubarak and Morsi then surely clarity of programme and a direct appeal to the class interests of the working class and a programme to appeal to the poor peasant and city poor base of the Muslim Brotherhood is necessary. A vital part of this working class is the women workers in the cotton mills, who have fought many class battles in the recent past. A popular front excludes this from the beginning; a big part of the anti-Mubarak demonstrations were the MB and the Copts were a big part of the anti Morsi movement. You had to be able to appeal to the mass base of these movements without politically compromising yourself with the leadership which the RS and its lead organisation the SWP have always done with the Respect project in Britain, for instance. The WSWS report that:

> This eruption of the class struggle threw the pseudo-left groups even more openly into the arms of the counterrevolution. On July 27, they joined a "United Popular Front" involving nearly every force in the Egyptian political spectrum—"left," liberal and Islamist. It included the RS, the Revolutionary Youth Coalition and the Egyptian Socialist Party as well as the Islamist Salafist Youth and ("incredibly," in the words of the state-owned daily *Al Ahram*) the fascistic Islamist party, Gamaa Islamiya. The parties of the "United Popular Front" agreed not to discuss "controversial issues." [17]

This is the Wiki report of the latest Popular Front that the Revolutionary Socialists have entered which is led by Mohamed ElBaradei. Note that it contains the Free Egyptians party, the Al Masreyeen Al Ahrrar party led by Naguib Sawiris, from Egypt's

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billionaire family reported on above:

> The National Salvation Front (also known as the National Front for Salvation of the Revolution or the National Rescue Front, is an alliance of Egyptian political parties, formed to defeat Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi's 22 November 2012 constitutional declaration. The National Front for Salvation of the Revolution has more than 35 groups involved overall. Observers are concerned that the NSF will not be able to become a coherent political force though. The different groups mainly agree on opposing Morsi but only on few topics going beyond that. Mohamed El-Baradei is its coordinator… After the ouster of Morsi by the Egyptian military, a number of politicians from the National Salvation Front were moved into power, including three women. There follows a list of affiliated parties. The front is mainly secular and ranges from liberals (capitalists GD) to leftists. Some of them are as follows: Egyptian Social Democratic Party, Constitution Party, Egyptian Popular Current, National Progressive Unionist Party, Free Egyptians Party, Democratic Front Party, Conference Party, New Wafd Party, Free Egypt Party, Farmers General Syndicate, Socialist Popular Alliance Party, National Association for Change, Reform and Development Misruna Party, Socialist Party of Egypt, Revolutionary Socialists, Social Peace Party, Freedom Party, Democratic Generation Party, United Nasserist Party, Freedom Egypt Party, Egyptian Communist Party. [18]

Key to the prospect of the revolution in Egypt, as everywhere, is the struggle against the existing leadership of the trade unions. There are now two contending leaderships, the old Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF) and the new independent union that emerged from 2010-11. As everywhere the old trade unions were bureaucratically-led and little more than tools of the old regime. Nevertheless strikes did take place against the wishes of the leadership and workers were able to use these organisations for struggle, despite their leadership. We are also aware that the US has long had a dual approach in Egypt, that it has employed the AFL/CIO and various NGOs to prevent the emergence of potentially revolutionary oppositions in the trade unions by bribery and corruption. As William I Robinson explained in 1996:

> All over the world, the United States is now promoting its version of "democracy" as a way to relieve pressure from subordinate groups for more fundamental political, social and economic change. The impulse to "promote democracy" is the rearrangement of political systems in the peripheral and semi-peripheral zones of the "world system" so as to secure the underlying objective of maintaining essentially undemocratic societies inserted into an unjust international system. [19]

Michael Baker goes on to explain:

> Efforts to "promote democracy" in foreign states should not however be seen as a replacement of traditional diplomatic, economic and military forms of statecraft, but instead they should be merely seen as supplemental measures (albeit important ones). Such "democratic" inventions combine relentless propaganda offensives (directed from without and within) with strategically dispersed political aid: aid which is provided to friendly political organizations, and in some instances is used to help local actors create new political bodies. Such "democracy promotion" activities are undertaken by all Western governments, but in the United States they are coordinated by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) — a group that was created in 1983 within "the highest echelons of the US national security state, as part of the same project that led to the illegal operations of the Iran-Contra scandal." It should come as no surprise, that: "In structure, organization, and operation, it is closer to clandestine and national security organs such as the CIA than apolitical or humanitarian endowments as its name would suggest." [20]

And the WSWS quote Hilary Clinton:

> At a February 23 press conference, US secretary of state Hillary Clinton publicly confirmed this: "As many people know, the United States supported civil society in Egypt. We gave grants that the government did not like to support union organizing, to support organizing on behalf of political opposition to the regime. That goes back many years." [21]

The Ridiculous Infantile Leftism of David North's WSWS/SEP

Having understood that it was top priority for the US to subvert the new Independent trade unions in Egypt and that in all probability they have succeeded to a large degree in doing this we are nevertheless left with the central problem of fighting for the leadership of the working class in their traditional organisations by the rank and file method and revolutionary propaganda, the prime task of all serious communists. We therefore concur with almost all of the criticisms made of the Egyptian Communist Party and the Revolutionary Socialist in their opportunist and popular frontist relationships with the forces of bourgeois reaction. But we must absolutely reject Davis North's attack on the stated orientation of the Revolutionary Socialists to the trade unions. Having made a slanderous implication that the RS were in receipt of CIA funds the WSWS article attacks the RS approach the TUs thus:

> 1) She (SWP leader Ann Alexander) praises Egypt's trade unions, which served the Mubarak regime and whose bureaucrats occupied top positions within it. The unions' ability to fight, she writes, "does not depend…on the nature of their leadership, or on their internal organizational arrangements, but on their connection to workers' struggles and the overall balance of forces in revolution. Even undemocratic, bureaucratic trade unions can be a launch-pad for struggles for the narrowest of demands, which are capable of rapidly bursting the bounds of sectionalism."
> 2) This statement falsifies the events of the Egyptian revolution. The overwhelming majority of Egypt's industrial unions in January were controlled by the yellow Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF). The proletariat struggled not through, but against the ETUF. Indeed, during the first protests, ETUF chairman Hussein Mogawer demanded that union officials "prevent workers from participating in all demonstrations at this time," and that they inform him around the clock of attempts by workers to join the protests.
> 3) The crux of Alexander's reactionary argument is that even "undemocratic, bureaucratic" organizations are good enough for the working class. This means, as she explains, that the RS and similar parties need not limit themselves to "organizations that are to some extent initiatives of the left." She continues, "On the contrary, [it] means above all being where the masses are."
> 4) The inescapable conclusion is that the RS can and should work with (or even inside) right-wing groups, like the Muslim Brotherhood or Gamaa Islamiya. Alexander even insists that such alliances must be protected from any Marxist criticism of their right-wing character. She demands that the RS "stop the virus of sectarianism from infecting the workers' movement and undermining the unity needed to defeat the boss, for example."

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> 5) So long as the working class is ruled by the junta—and controlled in the workplace by the junta's yellow unions, or by "independent" unions funded by the junta's backers in Washington—the "new" conditions for workers will not be different from the old. The critical task facing the workers is not the creation of new unions to bargain with the junta, but the overthrow of the junta and the seizure of power. Only placing the resources of the Egyptian and the world economy under the control of working people can provide the resources to end the social deprivation overseen by Mubarak and Washington. [22]

We have used this extended quote to demonstrate how incredibly backward the political method of the SEP/WSWS is, despite the informative and educative role it plays. To help the first time reader the 'wisdom' that underpins this rant is that not only are there no longer any bourgeois workers' parties left on the face of the planet – as Lenin and Trotsky characterised social democratic and Labour reformist parties until their deaths – but now there are no longer any such things as progressive national liberation movements and trade unions have become simply organs of the capitalist state and they are no longer workers' organisations in any shape or form. The SEP guided by David North with its two hundred odd members at the most are the only workers' organisations left on the planet, therefore the entire methodology of communism as practiced by Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky is so much old hat and all contradictions in nature and life have been eliminated; it is, in fact, David North against the world and he is going to win!

To examine the details of the infantile disorder let us look at where it leaves us. The first paragraph by Alexander is objectivist and obviously wrong. It really does matter what type of leadership the TUs have. Her approach on this is the opposite side of the same objectivist coin to North's. Even a more left wing and militant bureaucrat is better than a right wing one in terms of the class struggle, even if there is no fundamental political difference between them in the end.

But it is the second paragraph where North's ass' ears of mechanical materialism pokes through his orthodox Trotskyist hat. "The proletariat struggled not through, but against the ETUF" he says as if it was impossible that they did both. Of course since the bureaucratisation of the trade unions after their 'heroic phase' over a hundred and fifty years ago in advanced capitalist countries and much later in semi-colonial ones every strike struggle has had to overcome the resistance of the bureaucrats, who very seldom call a strike unless absolutely obliged to by pressure from their membership or to prevent the build up of such pressure. Marxists and serious TU militants have always understood this; it is the ABC of the class struggle. Having decided that TUs are not workers' organisations he can then equate them with the Muslim Brotherhood and Gamaa Islamiya, a fascistic organisation. Whilst we must place demands on the MB to separate the leadership from the base we place no such demands on fascistic groups and these are different entirely to the demands we would place on TU leaders and different again to demands on the Stalinist ECP or centrists groups like the RS. We know these are complex question and can only really be understood by forces on the ground with an intimate knowledge of all these organisations. But we also know that Marxist methodology cannot be reduced to the black and white of the good vs. bad stuff that is essentially Christian moralism that now passes for theory in the SEP.

David North addressing the SEP London meeting on 5 May 2013: Having decided that TUs are not workers' organisations he can then equate them with the Muslim Brotherhood and Gamaa Islamiya, a fascistic organisation.

To abandon the fight against the TU bureaucracy is to abandon the working class; you recruit from and train your members to work within the existing trade union structures. If this was Trotsky's advice to German communists even under Hitler when these were corporate unions led by state agents why should we now adopt different tactics? Ann Alexander is quite right in what is a basic Marxist orientation; you go to where the working class are. What you go to them with is our conflict with her and her movement. But not to go to them at all and instead proclaim the revolution: "The critical task facing the workers is not the creation of new unions to bargain with the junta, but the overthrow of the junta and the seizure of power" is the jabbering of ultra-left idiots such as Lenin demolished in his famous pamphlet on *Left Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder* in 1920. And on the new unions so diligently courted by US Imperialism via the CIA and the AFL/CIO it seems North thinks revolutionists must concede that the counter-revolution has a well developed strategy on how to defeat the working class but we must have no strategy to defeat them other than the idiotic self-proclamation above!

Conclusion

We hope the piece has answered those who think this was not a coup organised by the army generals in collaboration with and in tune with the dictates of US foreign policy. We have tried to show that, whilst there is a rising political temperature of anti-Imperialism in the masses the leadership of both the MB and new army regime led by General Abdul Fatah al-Sisi who appointed Adly Mansour as his president and himself as the defence minister are desperately trying to head this off with chauvinistic anti-Sunni chauvinism against the Palestinians. And whilst again it was a strike wave which created the conditions

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for the coup the working class have no leadership to voice its interests and none even trying to intervene to win that vital leadership. We have focused on this latter question in our final paragraphs to expose the RS as opportunist popular frontists who betray the class interests of the working class internationally and David North's WSWS as dyed-in-the-wool sectarians who equally refuse to fight for the leadership of the working class by proclaiming the trade unions as no longer workers' organisations. Both have totally rejected the Leninist united front tactic and the Trotskyist Transitional method, its modern-day development.

And finally we put forward the following slogans as the beginnings of a programme for the Egyptian masses:

• No support for the Egyptian coup! No support for al-Sisi's puppet government!
• Defend the Muslim Brotherhood against state repression!
• Full support to the Palestinians; overthrow the Zionist state, for a multi-ethnic workers' state of Palestine!
• Full separation of church and state, no discrimination against minority Coptic Christians, Shi'a Muslims or any other!
• Form armed defence guards to defend the women and the minorities against MB and state attacks!
• Build rank and file movements in all the unions to defeat the pro-capitalist and CIA funded leaders!
• Build workers committees in all the working class areas with delegates from the TUs, from strike committees, from women's organisations and the rank and file of the army etc.
• For a Constitutional Assembly!
• All working class and socialist organizations must break with the National Salvation Front!
• Expropriate the landlords, the land to the peasants and agricultural workers.
• Cancel the debts, nationalise the major industries and banks under workers' control, organise a planned, socialist economy!
• For a workers' and poor peasants' government!

Notes

[1] Following the peace treaty with Israel, between 1979 and 2003, the U.S. has provided Egypt with about $19 billion in military aid, making Egypt the second largest non-NATO recipient of U.S. military aid after Israel. Also, Egypt received about $30 billion in economic aid within the same time frame. In 2009, the U.S. provided a military assistance of US$ 1.3 billion (inflation adjusted US$ 1.39 billion in 2013), and an economic assistance of US$ 250 million (inflation adjusted US$ 267.5 million in 2013). In 1989 both Egypt and Israel became a Major non-NATO ally of the United States. (Wiki)

[2] Lynch, Marc, July 19, 2013, *They Hate Us, They Really Hate Us, When anti-Americanism is this popular in Egypt, Washington should stay as far away as it can.*
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/07/18/anti_americanism_egypt_muslim_brotherhood.

[3] Ismael Mohamad, United Press International, Warning of humanitarian catastrophe as Egypt tightens siege of Gaza http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/warning-humanitarian-catastrophe-egypt-tightens-siege-gaza

[4] Nasserism, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nasserism

[5] International Socialism, Summer 1961, *Munir, Nasser's Egypt*, thanks to Ted Crawford & the late Will Fancy. Transcribed & marked up by Einde O'Callaghan for ETOL. http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/isj/1961/no005/munir.htm

[6] The main rule of the game in the bazaar economy is to search information the buyers lacks and to protect the information the sellers have (often causing outrage once you realise you have been ripped off as a naive tourist!). It is a pre-capitalist practice and many economists argue that the bazaar-economy behaviour is the cause of underdevelopment in the Middle East region.

[7] *History of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt (1954–present),* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Muslim_Brotherhood_in_Egypt_%281954%E2%80%93present%29

[8] Wilson, Rodney, Economic Development in the Middle East, p. 17

[9] Ibid. p. 22

[10] *80 sexual assaults in one day – the other story of Tahrir Square, Egypt's women increasingly at risk of rape and sexual assault as rights groups warn of a step up in attacks*, Patrick Kingsley in Cairo, guardian.co.uk, Friday 5 July 2013 12.57 BST

[11] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminism_in_Egypt

[12] Downing, Gerry, Afghanistan: Marxist Method vs. Bureaucratic method, 1977, http://en.convdocs.org/docs/index-23324.html

[13] *Special Dispatch No.5366, Muslim Brotherhood: The Copts Are Behind The Egyptian Military Coup That Removed Morsi*, http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/7290.htm. We should take this quote with some caution, however. Ibrahim Hooper of the Council on American-Islamic Relations told the Washington Times: "Memri's intent is to find the worst possible quotes from the Muslim world and disseminate them as widely as possible." http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/aug/12/worlddispatch.brianwhitaker, I'm not saying these things aren't happening but Memri is not a reliable.

[14] Billionaire Naguib Sawiris Says He'll Increase His Investment In Egypt, http://www.forbes.com/sites/mfonobongnsehe/2013/07/17/billionaire-naguib-sawiris-says-hell-increase-his-investment-in-egypt/

[15] Socialist Action, 17 July 2013 *Egypt's unfolding Mubarakist coup* http://www.socialistaction.net/International/Middle-East/Egypt/Egypts-unfolding-Mubarakist-coup.html

[16] See two articles by the RCIT on this point which deal with the wrong positions of the Revolutionary Socialists, the Egyptian Communist party, the LCC and the WIVP very well, *Egypt: The U.S. Support for the Military Coup and the Left's ignorance, Notes on the role of US imperialism in the military's coup d'état and the failure of the Egypt left*, By Yossi Schwartz, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, 11.7.2013
The Military's Coup d'État in Egypt: Assessment and Tactics, A reply to the criticism of the WIVP and the LCC on the meaning of the Military's Coup d'État and the slogan of the Revolutionary Constituent Assembly
By Michael Pröbsting, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, 17.7.2013, www.thecommunists.net

[17] Alex Lantier and Johannes Stern, *The counterrevolutionary role of the Egyptian pseudo-left,* 21 November 2011, http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2011/11/egyp-n21.html

[18] National Salvation Front (Egypt) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Salvation_Front_%28Egypt%29

[19] Robinson, William I. 1996. *Promoting polyarchy: globalization, US intervention, and hegemony. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

[20] Barker, Michael, *Questioning Labor Imperialism in Egypt: A Critique of the Solidarity Centre's "Justice for All" Report, Posted on May 1, 2013 by OneStruggl*, http://onestruggle.net/2013/05/01/questioning-labor-imperialism-in-egypt/

[21] The counterrevolutionary role of the Egyptian pseudo-left.

[22] Ibid.

Maggie Smith 18 April 1962— 29 June 2013

By Gerry Downing

My partner, Maggie, died on 29 June with her family by her bedside. She had smoked since her early teens and throat cancer, diagnosed a year late (she had to tell the doctor what she had!), took her after a six month's fight. A timely diagnosis would have given her a far better chance; always insist on action when you suspect the worst!

Maggie was from a Scottish/Irish Republican family in Paisley. Her mother sold her insurances policies so she and her son Laurence could go to the 1970 European Cup Final where Celtic lost to Feyenoord. The wider family had helped to shelter some IRA escapees from the north of Ireland who later made it to the relative safety of the USA. Furious disputes broke out on occasions between the Orange and Republican wings of the family, including one assault on her pregnant mother with a poker because she was carrying "another Fenian bastard"!

I first met her on 29 March 1986 in Kilburn Square when campaigning for the Wapping dispute and selling Workers Press. She was campaigning for the Neasden hospital occupation where she was a leading light. We met in the Cock Tavern when I had finished selling the paper around the pubs in Kilburn. The Workers Press under Dave Bruce's editorship was now highly regarded and widely read on the left. The post-split Workers Revolutionary Party was at the height of its 'glasnost' period of discussion, debate and reassessment with all interested parties. Therefore members were no longer regarded as sectarian freaks who had a mantra for every other group and only engaged them with angry denunciations, most of which was totally inaccurate on their current politics and trajectories, bad and all as that might be. But people would talk to you now and you could have real debates and have some possibility of developing personal relationships.

We never parted after that day in Kilburn Square, despite the conflicts over the years that are part of any relationship. Maggie had worked for the GLC and was then in possession of some modest redundancy money following its closure by Thatcher. She spent it generously, if not foolishly, as was her wont. She took everyone for an Indian meal near the Old Bell (those working refused her offer). A conflict arose with a man from 'up north', JO'C, who had made a sexist remark. He was a small man with a limp but she offered him out; he complained to me bitterly that she had threatened to "fill him in". I was impressed and her instincts were proved correct; PF had given him free accommodation but he decamped soon after with the contents of the gas meter and was never heard of again.

Maggie was a 'woman's woman', had spent a year at Greenham Common and never accepted sexist attitudes or remarks from anyone, including from me. I was mortified by the obvious backwardness of the WRP on women's oppression as exemplified by Gerry Healy's sexual abuse of 26 women over decades as detailed in Aileen Jennings' letter which caused the explosion of the party after July 1985. But her letter also displayed her own and the party's homophobic attitudes. The farmer's son from West Cork had much to learn on all aspects of special oppression and Maggie helped enormously to educate me in this vital aspect of the class struggle so scorned and neglected by the old WRP (and by some of its descendants today like the WSWS/SEP of David North) as 'identity politics'.

Maggie several time expressed her amazement at the backward culture she encountered in the WRP on these issues; JS, with decades of WRP membership, expressed his view that gay men really wanted to be women. Young women were encouraged to go out to collect for Young Socialist bazaars dressed revealingly and the remarks of some Healy loyalists at the time of the split like; "she was asking for it", were just appalling uncultured bigotry. What political culture operated in an organisation who would tolerate the following treatment of a Young Socialist leader who tells us this of her experience?

"The next evening when I was again called in for a discussion (with Gerry Healy GD), he told me to sit on the bed, which I did. He started telling me that he had a "political relationship" with me and that he would "train" me. He said that he had been watching me for some time and could train me to be a revolutionary leader. I was grateful that he was paying so much attention to me. He then came and sat down beside me on the bed and started patting my knee and kissing me. I pulled away again, this time in tears. He again got angry and said: "You think I am an animal, you're just an idealist who does not want to be trained". I couldn't stop crying so he sent me out of the room." (WRP Control Commission report by Norman Harding and Larry Kavanagh on Healy's sexual and physical abuses).

The Wapping dispute was in full flight in the Summer of 1986 and we all attended the nightly pickets regularly. On one occasion we encountered a scab TNT truck on the Euston Road as we drove back. Words were passed but unfortunately we could not escape the truck driver who took several opportunities to men-

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