

Resolution of the SEP (UK) Fourth National Congress

The resurgence of the class struggle and the tasks of the Socialist Equality Party (UK)

By the Socialist Equality Party (UK)
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1. The world situation is characterised by an immense crisis of the capitalist profit system and acute social and political discontent. All the measures taken to offset the 2008 financial crash and bailout the super-rich, through the imposition of permanent austerity, have changed class relations irrevocably. Capitalism is increasingly discredited, as many recognise that the present economic system is fatally flawed and in need of drastic remedy—even if they do not yet understand how this should be done. This is finding expression in a global resurgence in the class struggle, which immediately involves a conflict with the traditional political mechanisms of class rule—especially the labour and trade union bureaucracy. In response, the bourgeoisie is aligning the state apparatus more directly with the interests of the financial oligarchy, turning towards police state methods and deliberately cultivating far-right forces. As imperialism spirals into protectionism, trade war and militarism, the conditions associated with the 1930s are returning, at an even more advanced and explosive level.

2. The ever-tightening grip of the financial oligarchy and its ultra-wealthy periphery over the world's resources threatens the survival of humanity and the planet. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos is now the richest person in history, at \$150 billion and rising, with his wealth ballooning last year alone by \$35.1 billion—more than one million times the average pay of an Amazon employee. The top 10 percent of society owns over 70 percent of total wealth, while the bottom half of the world's population—3.5 billion people—owns less than 2 percent. In 2017, nearly all the growth in global wealth—72 percent—went to the top one percent, while the bottom 50 percent received nothing. The vast majority of the world's population toils under conditions of poverty, hunger and disease. But calls for even a modest reallocation of resources to meet social needs meets furious resistance from a financial elite that enforces its dictates through the official political parties, trade unions and the mainstream media. Capitalist democracy is a fraud, a cover for the rule of the billionaires. Social and political discontent is routinely dismissed as the outcome of “fake news,” “conspiracy theories,” and “foreign meddling” by state actors—usually Russia—to be dealt with by intimidation, censorship and repression.

3. The fundamental contradictions within capitalism—between socialised production and the private ownership of the means of production; and between a global economy and the division of the world into antagonistic

nation states—is fuelling trade war, military rearmament and the threat of a third world war, fought with nuclear weapons. The ruling elite in every country is embracing nationalism, authoritarianism and fascistic reaction. Writing in the 1930s, five years before the outbreak of World War II, Leon Trotsky explained that the interdependence of every country in the global economy meant that the programme of economic nationalism was a reactionary utopia “insofar as it set itself the task of harmonious national economic development on the basis of private property. But it is a menacing reality insofar as it is a question of concentrating all the economic forces of the nation for the preparation of a new war.” (*War and the Fourth International*)

4. The epicentre of the eruption of imperialist violence is the United States, which is seeking to counter its economic decline and the challenge from rival powers by asserting its dominance over the Eurasian landmass. The fascistic bully in the White House embodies the criminality and parasitism of the entire US ruling class. Recklessly destabilising the institutions through which the US exercised its hegemony in the post-war period, President Donald Trump enacts trade war measures targeting much of the globe—including America's European allies—while issuing bellicose threats of war against China, North Korea and Iran. His efforts to cultivate a fascistic movement at home, through nationalist demands for “America First” and the mass round-up of immigrants, is directly responsible for the massacre at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, the largest act of anti-Semitic violence in US history. Notwithstanding the civil war in the American state apparatus, his Democratic Party opponents are no less reactionary. Their utilisation of sex scandals to effect a change in the White House expresses their own contempt for democratic rights. As the political mouthpiece for the CIA and the Pentagon, their conflict with Trump is over foreign policy—whether the US war drive should be directed, in the first instance, against Russia or China.

5. Trump's presidency marks an unprecedented deterioration in post-war relations between the US and Europe, above all with Germany. America's post-war relationship with Europe between 1945 and 1991 was determined by the overriding need to enforce the isolation of the Soviet Union and prevent social revolution, at a time when the European working class was extremely militant and highly politicised. Now, powerful tendencies within the US ruling elite have concluded that the dissolution of the Soviet Union means there is no longer any reason to prop up the European bourgeoisie, who are viewed as strategic competitors and rivals. Trump praised Britain's decision to exit from the European Union (EU), which he denounced as a vehicle for German domination, declaring the NATO alliance “obsolete.” Regardless of the notes of caution by leading Democrats, the US is being objectively driven into conflict with Europe as it seeks to counter the threat to its global hegemony posed by the rise of China and other rivals.

6. The European ruling elites are responding to this geostrategic shift by preparing their own challenge to the US, seeking an end to their military subordination to Washington. German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas (Social Democratic Party) says it is necessary to recalibrate the NATO alliance and build the EU as a counterweight to the US. French President Macron and German Chancellor Merkel agree that the US can no longer be relied on as an ally and have called for the development of a “genuinely European army” to protect European interests. However, their ability to formulate such a coordinated response is undermined by the deepening of national antagonisms, which the EU only held in abeyance but never overcame. The corollary of Trump’s “America First” agenda is demands to put “Britain First,” “Germany First” and “France First,” portending the fracturing of Europe into competing power blocs.

7. The project of European unification under capitalism is being stripped of its liberal pretensions. Right-wing movements are being assembled as a shock force against the working class, and the doors of state office thrown open to the likes of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) and Italy’s Lega. Seven decades after the death of Hitler, the fascistic AfD is the main opposition party in the German parliament. Despite receiving just 12.6 percent of the vote, it sets the tone in federal politics, while its supporters physically attack immigrants, Muslims and Jews with impunity, because of the tacit support of the Grand Coalition and the highest echelons of the state. In Poland, the government marches alongside neo-Nazis, while in France, President Macron pays tribute to the leader of the Nazi collaborationist Vichy regime, Marshal Pétain. Alongside the attack on workers’ jobs, wages and living standards goes the brutal reinforcement of national borders, as migrants fleeing unending wars of western intervention are left to drown in the Mediterranean or herded into prison-camps. The official parties and media pollute society with the poison of anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim xenophobia, while demanding an increase in military budgets.

8. Brexit was only an initial expression of this disintegration of the post-war European order. Having seized on the 2016 referendum to try and settle a factional conflict within the right-wing of the Tory Party and its fringes, the unexpected vote to leave the EU has provoked an existential crisis for the British bourgeoisie. Throughout the post-war period, the ruling elite sought to offset the decline of Empire through the transatlantic alliance, acting as a bridge between the US and Europe, at the centre of which was NATO. The growing divide between Washington and Europe’s capitals—especially Berlin—means this balance can no longer be sustained. Whatever their differences over foreign policy, all factions of the ruling class and its political parties are united in their determination to try and resolve this crisis through a ratcheting up of militarism, paid for by the gutting of social and democratic rights. The fate of the working class, not only in Britain, but across Europe, once again hangs in the balance. The continent that was the crucible for two world wars and the extermination of European Jewry is once again being torn asunder.

9. These conditions are driving forward a renewed interest in socialism, which the ruling elites believed they had banished to the history books, thanks to the crimes of Stalinism and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Internationally, the decades-long suppression of the class struggle is being challenged by a revival of militant protests and strikes. This includes anti-austerity protests in Iran, strikes throughout China, India, Latin America and the Middle East, and state-wide action by educators in the US. In Europe, coordinated walk-outs by Ryanair and Amazon workers express the elemental striving by the working class to internationalise its struggle against global corporations. In Britain, after industrial disputes hit a record low in 2017, this year saw a spate of actions, including by rail workers, lecturers and council employees, and a doubling of disputes in the private sector to a 20-year high. The greatest threat to the bourgeoisie and its plans is the development of the political understanding, in wide sections of the working class, above all the youth, that its enemy is the

entire capitalist system.

10. Whether the working class can rise to its historic task of socialist revolution in time, or be crushed by reaction, will be decided in the course of the class struggle. The decisive role will be played by the Marxist party. In its resolution, “The resurgence of the class struggle and the Tasks of the Socialist Equality Party,” the Fifth National Congress of the SEP (US) recognised:

The relation between the objective crisis of the global capitalist system and the class consciousness of the working class is not static, but dynamic. There will be no shortage of explosive events—above all, those arising out of the actual experience of class conflict—that will undermine traditional beliefs and radicalize social consciousness. Only a Marxist party, conditioned by theoretical insight and historical knowledge, can detect, analyze and prepare for the deep-rooted processes that will “suddenly” assume the form of mass revolutionary struggles. The task of the revolutionary party, therefore, is not to speculate as to whether a revolutionary movement can be built. What can and cannot be achieved will be determined in struggle...

Within this historical situation, the revolutionary party is itself an immense factor in determining the outcome of the objective crisis. An evaluation of the objective situation and realistic appraisal of political possibilities, which excludes the impact of the intervention of the revolutionary party, is utterly alien to Marxism. The Marxist revolutionary party does not merely comment on events, it participates in the events that it analyses, and, through its leadership in the struggle for workers’ power and socialism, strives to change the world.

The 80th anniversary of the Fourth International

11. The fight for a socialist alternative to the prevailing capitalist chaos must be informed by historical knowledge. The answer to questions such as “What is socialism? Can it be achieved, and by what methods?” requires an understanding of the strategic lessons of the 20th century. At the centre of the Socialist Equality Party’s active intervention in the class struggle, therefore, must be educating workers and youth in the history of the Fourth International, founded 80 years ago in September 1938 by Leon Trotsky, to take forward the struggle for world socialism against Stalinism, Social Democracy and all forms of pseudo-left politics. Trotskyism is the Marxism of the 21st century, led for 65 years by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). Contained in its history and in the programme and perspective of the ICFI are all the essential prerequisites for international socialist revolution.

12. The founding document of the Fourth International, *The Transitional Programme*, began by insisting, “The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat.” The struggle for the Fourth International was precipitated by the most terrible event of the 20th century—the coming to power of fascism in Germany. Its formation was prepared by the struggle initiated by Trotsky in 1923, with the formation of the Left Opposition to oppose the bureaucratic degeneration of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet regime. Under the anti-Marxist banner of building “socialism in one country,” the Stalinist bureaucracy subordinated the fight for world socialism to the defence of its own material interests and privileges. Trotsky’s struggle assumed international dimensions as Stalin’s disastrous policies led to defeats, including the British General Strike in 1926 and the Chinese revolution in 1927.

13. The refusal of the Third International to permit any discussion of the policies of the German Communist Party, which had enabled Hitler to take power without a shot being fired, signified that it had passed irrevocably into the camp of reaction. This was followed by the betrayal of the 1936 Spanish revolution and the wave of counter-revolutionary terror within the Soviet Union. In the fight against centrist tendencies, which refused to break decisively with Stalinism and social democracy,

Trotsky warned that the Soviet bureaucracy's role as an instrument of imperialism within the workers' movement threatened the very existence of the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers state. Unless overthrown in political revolution, the Stalinist counter-revolution would end in the restoration of capitalism.

14. Trotsky's prognosis was vindicated by the events in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China and Vietnam between 1989 and 1991. The Stalinist bureaucracies liquidated the nationalised property relations on which these states rested, and reconstituted themselves as the new bourgeoisie, turning the masses over to imperialism for super-exploitation. History delivered its verdict on all the anti-Trotskyist tendencies that broke from the Fourth International and which, in one form or another, ascribed an enduring historical legitimacy to Stalinism and opposed the fight for the political independence of the working class.

15. The Shachtmanite opponents of Trotsky in 1940 rejected the defence of the Soviet Union against imperialism, declaring that it represented a new form of state-capitalism, headed by a new class of exploiters. In 1953, the Fourth International came under renewed revisionist attack, led by Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel. In a seeming reversal of the Shachtmanite line, they claimed that the Stalinist bureaucracies in the Soviet Union, and the regimes established in Eastern Europe and China at the end of the Second World War, could be driven objectively towards the realisation of socialism under pressure from the working class. Both tendencies therefore assigned a world historic role to the Stalinist bureaucracy. Having excluded any role for the Fourth International and the independent revolutionary struggle of the working class, the Pabloites later also hailed Castro in Cuba, Ben Bella in Algeria, and a host of similar bourgeois nationalist and petty-bourgeois radical movements, as "blunted instruments" through which capitalism could be overthrown.

16. The issuing of the Open Letter in 1953 by the leader of the American Trotskyists, James P. Cannon, and the establishment of the ICFI, was critical in ensuring the continuity of Trotskyism. But the split heralded a protracted civil war within the Fourth International between the orthodox Trotskyists and various strains of Pabloism. Behind the theoretical disputes were opposing class interests. The role of the petty-bourgeoisie as a political and social buffer between the working class and the bourgeoisie was greatly strengthened during the post-war boom. The continued domination of the workers' movement by the Stalinist, social democratic and trade union bureaucracies, and the expansion of welfare states, suppressed socialist consciousness and created conditions favourable to petty-bourgeois opportunism. The pressure this exerted led, in the 1970s, to the retreat of the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP), the ICFI's British section, from the principled struggle it had previously conducted against Pablo and Mandel in 1953, and in opposition to the American Socialist Workers Party's reunification with the Pabloites in 1963.

17. The political and theoretical opposition led by the Workers League (predecessor of the Socialist Equality Party in the US) between 1982 and 1986 to the WRP's Pabloite course won the support of the ICFI majority. The split with the WRP between December 1985 and February 1986 represented the decisive victory of the orthodox Trotskyists. It coincided with the final stage of the terminal crisis of the Stalinist regimes, the repudiation by the social democratic parties and trade unions of any defence of the interests of the working class, and the abandonment of the anti-imperialist struggle by the bourgeois nationalists.

18. The objective processes which underpinned the crisis of these agencies of imperialism strengthened the position of the International Committee and its relationship to the working class. In the aftermath of the split, the International Committee drew on the wealth of Marxist theory, as distilled in the history of the Trotskyist movement, to initiate a process of political clarification and organisational development. Drawing

the most far-reaching conclusions from the decay of the old nationally-based parties and trade unions, the ICFI recognised that the Trotskyist movement must prepare to advance itself as the leadership of a new revolutionary upsurge of the working class.

This was the basis for the decision to end the previous "league" forms of the International Committee's sections, and to establish the Socialist Equality Parties. The establishment of the *World Socialist Web Site* in February 1998 enabled the ICFI to utilise the revolutionary potential of the Internet to vastly expand the audience for revolutionary Marxism and the political influence of the Trotskyist movement globally. By virtue of its principles, programme and history, the International Committee of the Fourth International is now the critical force in uniting the world working class through the building of the World Party of Socialist Revolution.

The social catastrophe in Britain

20. The Grenfell Tower Fire on June 14, 2017 was a seminal event. The horrific loss of 72 lives starkly exposed the reality of class relations in Britain. As the SEP commented, "There are events in world history that lead to a fundamental change in consciousness and create the basis for developing a socialist political orientation among broad masses of workers. The June 14 Grenfell Tower inferno is such an event." The fire was an act of social murder, responsibility for which lies with successive Conservative and Labour governments and councils. They have destroyed Britain's social infrastructure and turned London into a playground for the rich, while socially cleansing working people and the poor. That is why, despite the crocodile tears of royalty and the political establishment, no one has been held to account. The government-mandated inquiry is a cover-up. It cannot allow the truth to come out because Grenfell is only the most egregious example of how the lives of workers and their families are sacrificed to satiate the super-rich.

21. This is a deliberate policy. In a devastating critique of the impact of austerity, the United Nations special rapporteur Philip Alston commented, at the conclusion of his two-week visit to the poorest areas of the UK in November 2018, "In the area of poverty-related policy, the evidence points to the conclusion that the driving force has not been economic but rather a commitment to achieving radical social re-engineering ... Key elements of the post-war Beveridge social contract are being overturned." According to the *British Medical Journal*, austerity can be linked to 120,000 extra deaths since 2010. It estimates that between 2015 and 2020, an extra 100 people will die every day. The growth in life expectancy has now stopped and has decreased in some areas. This reversal is the fastest rate of any leading industrialised nation, outside of the United States. "Unexplained" infant mortality has increased and is highest in the most deprived areas. At least 320,000 people are homeless, with the numbers increasing by 1,000 people a month, meaning one in every 200 adults is without a permanent place to live. At least one person dies on the streets each day, yet the majority of homeless are in employment. Drug addiction, too, is rising, as are instances of suicide. With 4,500 suicides annually, this is now the leading cause of death amongst men below 50 years of age, while it has risen 67 percent amongst teenagers since 2010. The UK government has the dubious distinction of being the first in the world to appoint a Minister for Suicide Prevention.

22. Workers in Britain have suffered a decline in wages unsurpassed for more than a century, falling further than any European country except Greece. The official jobless rate of 4.1 percent conceals large numbers of mainly young workers, who have been driven off the employment rolls, and more than 7 million people—one in every five workers—who are in precarious employment. At least 6 percent of the workforce is on zero-hour contracts, rising from 1.7 million to 1.8 million last year. More than 14 million people, including 4.5 million children, one-third of all children, live below the poverty line. More than two-thirds are comprised of the "working poor." The use of food banks has doubled, with the

Trussell Trust delivering almost one and a half million three-day emergency food supplies in the first three months of 2018. Food bank usage and the resort to extortionate pay-day loans has grown, even among professionals. The roll-out of the punitive Universal Credit benefits system has left thousands without any means of support. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimated that around 1.5 million people were destitute last year, including 300,000 children. UK households collectively owe £400 billion in personal debt, the highest on record, on average spending £900 more than they received in income during 2017. Every three minutes last year, one person sought help for issues related to non-payment of rent, utility bills or council tax.

23. The situation facing young workers is most severe. The ruling class is using this generation to set a new benchmark for the exploitation of the entire working class. The gig economy now accounts for more than five million workers, most of them young. Those employed in this sector are not even guaranteed the minimum wage. The norm now is zero-hour contracts and no pensions, sick leave, holiday or redundancy pay. Even as earnings overall have fallen, young workers aged 30 years and under have been especially impacted. In the last 20 years, the pay differential between those aged 30 and below, and those over 30 years of age, has increased by 50 percent. Young workers' pay has fallen by 16 percent since 2008. Warehouse and distribution centres such as Amazon and call centres proliferate, where the latest technology is used to enforce maximum productivity at the expense of employees' health. Millions of students and graduates face rising levels of debt, due to the hiking up of tuition fees to £9,240 a year. With interest repayments at 6.3 percent, average student debt is £57,000 with the student debt loan book expected to reach £1 trillion by 2025. Many will never be able to pay off their loans, as a university education is no longer a route to a decent job.

24. In a country that once prided itself on its social safety net, "from the cradle to the grave," essential services have been gutted. Little remains of the founding ethos of the National Health Service. Subject to severe funding cuts, whole areas of healthcare have been turned over to giant corporations, such as Richard Branson's Virgin Care. Waiting lists have soared, leaving many with debilitating and life-threatening illnesses, or pushed into seeking expensive private provision. Almost half of all maternity units in English hospitals were closed to expectant mothers at least once last year, with some shut for weeks. In education, schools have suffered a real-term funding cut of £2.7 billion since 2015. In the next two years, nine out of 10 schools will see cuts in real terms, while further education colleges, catering predominantly for working class youth, have been the biggest losers in education spending over the last 25 years. Central government funding to local authorities has been slashed by £11.3 billion, and by 2020 local authorities will have lost 75 percent of the grant they received in 2015. Almost half of all councils will receive no central government funding by 2019/20, leaving a funding gap of £5.8 billion. The response of some local authorities has been to halt all but emergency spending and, in moves pioneered by Labour councils, to become property speculators, selling off social assets to private developers and earning themselves windfalls in the process.

25. The money looted by government from working people and essential services is funnelled into the coffers of the super-rich, so that the UK is now home to the largest number of billionaires on record—134—with London host to 86, more than any other city in the world. Since 2016, the wealth of Britain's top 1,000 has grown by 14 percent to £658 billion, more than the combined wealth of the poorest 40 percent of the population (10.3 million families). Such a social divide has revolutionary implications, as was acknowledged by Martin Sandbu in the *Financial Times*: "To borrow a Marxian term, the social contradictions are more acute [in the UK] than elsewhere and may have been so more often than not throughout history... The more tense are the pent-up springs of opposite extremes forced together, the more disruptive is the snap when it

ultimately comes."

Brexit and the drive to trade and military war

26. The outcome of the 2016 referendum on Britain leaving the EU has produced an unprecedented crisis of class rule. The May government faces possible collapse due to the sharpening divisions within the Tory Party over an agreement with the EU to prevent a "hard Brexit." Even the constitutional and territorial integrity of the United Kingdom has been thrown into question by the impact of Brexit on both Scotland and Northern Ireland. With Labour still torn apart by the efforts of its right-wing to remove Jeremy Corbyn as leader, the ruling elite is deeply divided over whether a general election can break the deadlock, with many urging a second referendum to overturn the 2016 result. Meanwhile, there are dire warnings of a national crisis and escalating social conflict, of failures in supply chains and talk that the police and armed forces are readying for a national emergency.

27. The SEP rejected the false binary "choice" offered in the 2016 referendum, insisting that the responsibility of genuine socialists "is to define a policy that upholds the interests of workers not only in Britain, but in Europe as a whole and throughout the world." This was critical, it warned, as the "biggest political danger in this situation is the mixing of class banners on the basis of the espousal of a supposedly 'left nationalism'... subordinating the working class to an initiative aimed at shifting political life even further along a nationalist trajectory, thereby strengthening and emboldening the far-right in the UK and across Europe, while weakening the political defences of the working class." Calling for an active boycott of the referendum, the SEP explained, "There can be no good outcome of such a plebiscite. Whichever side wins, working people will pay the price ... A boycott prepares the ground for the development of an independent political struggle of the British working class against these forces. Such a movement must develop as part of a continent-wide counteroffensive by the working class, which will expose the referendum as only an episode in the deepening existential crisis of the British and European bourgeoisie."

28. This was in sharp contrast to all the pseudo-left tendencies, who lined up behind one or another faction of the bourgeoisie. The Socialist Party and Socialist Workers Party, advocates of a "Left Leave" vote, acted as an appendage of a campaign led by the most right-wing sections of the Tory Party and the UK Independence Party. As for Left Unity, Socialist Resistance and the Alliance for Workers Liberty, they lined up behind Corbyn and the Labour Party in backing the Remain camp and its promotion of the EU as a bulwark of social progress against nationalism. Likewise, in the referendum's aftermath, they are working to politically confuse and mislead workers and youth by parroting the demands to either "honour" the Leave vote or support a second "people's vote" to overturn the result. Both arguments are yet another cynical pseudo-democratic smokescreen, aimed at obscuring that, whatever their disagreements, the Leave and Remain camps are united in their support for NATO, demands for more military spending and provocations against Russia—and, above all, in their determination to deepen the savage assault on the working class.

29. Events since the Brexit referendum have proved that in a globally integrated economy it is impossible to secure economic progress or defend democratic and social rights on a national basis. The Leave campaign's rhetoric of "reclaiming sovereignty" was only ever an assertion of the "sovereign right" of British capital to better exploit the working class and secure more favourable investment and trade relations with the US, China and the emerging markets. The Brexiteers' dismissal of warnings from industry and the City over the economic impact of Brexit is based on the calculation that a hard rupture will create the necessary political crisis for the imposition of economic shock-therapy and the realisation of their preferred "Singapore economic model." Their

plan for a free trade deal between the UK and US argues for the complete privatisation of the NHS and a bonfire of consumer, environmental and worker protections. Their geostrategic calculations centre on aligning themselves with the Trump administration and its unilateralist turn against Europe in order to crack open the Single European Market, while establishing relations with far-right pro-US governments and parties on the continent, as allies against Germany and France.

30. Fear of economic dislocation, combined with hostility to the overt xenophobia and nationalism of the leading Brexiteers, and restrictions on travel and work within the EU, has increased support for a second referendum on Brexit. But these legitimate concerns are exploited by the political representatives of the dominant sections of the ruling elite, who are just as hostile to the working class as the pro-Brexit Tories. The Remain faction's real concern is how best to ensure British imperialism's global position. The Labour Party, dissident Tories, the Liberal Democrats, Scottish National Party and the Greens want to ensure continued tariff-free access to European markets, on which Britain depends for 40 percent of its trade, and which has guaranteed London's position as a global financial centre. That is why there is no hint of opposition among them to a domestic agenda of continued austerity, and why they are silent on what EU membership really means for working people—as evidenced in Greece, where extreme poverty has doubled, social services have collapsed and the economy has shrunk by 25 percent as a result of EU dictates.

31. The acute polarisation of society between the mass of working people struggling to survive and a grotesquely rich oligarchy is incompatible with the preservation of democratic forms of rule—whether in or out of the EU. Already five years ago, Edward Snowden revealed the existence of the surveillance programs PRISM and Tempora, through which Britain's GCHQ colluded with the US intelligence agencies in spying on millions of people throughout the world, to identify political threats and to destabilise and undermine their opponents. Britain now operates one of the highest levels of state surveillance and censorship in the world, including numerous legal restrictions of online communication and “voluntary” arrangements with ISPs. The ongoing parliamentary inquiry into further internet regulation, under the guise of clamping down on “fake news” and Russian interference, will inevitably end in the imposition of still more onerous restrictions.

32. Such police state measures are in line with a massive escalation of militarism, on which all factions of the bourgeoisie are agreed. The Commons Defence Committee has proposed to increase defence spending from 2 to 3 percent, on the grounds that it is the “only solution” to the “serious risk” of the army “being outgunned by its Russian counterpart,” warning that “[d]iminished capacity reduces the UK's usefulness to the US and our influence within NATO.” To this end the UK, despite disagreements over the nature of relations with the US and NATO, is still taking full part in plans to develop a European military capability. War requires the suppression of anti-war and socialist opposition at home. This is behind the “Fusion Doctrine” initiated by the National Security Council Capability Review, in which government, the military and the security services, corporations, the BBC and the other media, charities and NGOs are to be wielded together in a unified security strategy directed against Russia and other unnamed “state actors.”

33. The task facing working people is not to help resolve the crisis facing the bourgeoisie, as Corbyn and the Labour Party insist, but to secure its independent class interests in a common struggle with its class brothers and sisters throughout the European continent. The International Committee's European sections, the SEP in Britain, the Parti de l'égalité socialiste (PES) in France and the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP) in Germany, together with our co-thinkers in Turkey, Ireland and throughout the world, seek to mobilise the working class against the nationalist splintering of the European continent and the growth of

far-right movements, while rejecting any support for the EU and its constituent national governments. The rule of the financial oligarchy and its governments must be broken and replaced with government of, by and for the working class—a socialist Britain as part of the United Socialist States of Europe. The adoption of this perspective would bring the most powerful social force into action—the European working class.

A balance sheet of Corbynism

34. Three years after taking the Labour leadership as the undeserving beneficiary of a leftward shift amongst workers, and especially youth, Corbyn and his Stalinist and pseudo-left coterie have reneged on every single one of his minimal reformist pledges. Despite widespread demands for change among the hundreds of thousands of new members that flooded into the party, he has opposed efforts to kick out the right-wing and issued instructions to Labour councils to abide by Tory spending limits and implement cuts. So completely does the right-wing continue to dominate Labour policy that the party's 2017 general election manifesto was largely indistinguishable from that under Ed Miliband, with its pledge for Trident's renewal, support for NATO, and commitment to a “fiscal credibility rule” that prohibits any end to austerity. Corbyn's commitment to the interests of British capital is behind his promise, on Brexit, to oppose any deal that does not guarantee access to the European Single Market. This is combined with a rejection of free movement and support for “managed migration.” Above all, wherever the class struggle erupts, Corbyn functions as the high priest of class compromise, sermonising on the need for a swift return to negotiations.

35. The SEP's rejection of the claims advanced by the pseudo-left that Corbyn's leadership offered a “socialist” rebirth of Labour, has been vindicated. For more than a century, the Labour Party has functioned as the primary political pillar of capitalist rule in Britain—from its betrayal of the 1926 General Strike, the split to form the national government with the Tories in 1931 to administer austerity, and the formation of a second government of national unity to support the Second World War. Labour underwent a further transformation in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 by the Stalinist bureaucracy. As the ICFI analysed, advances in science and technology enabled the development of globalised production, which exploits the labour power of the working class as a global workforce. This ripped the ground from under the feet of the old nationally-based labour organisations, which became the direct instruments of their own bourgeoisie in eliminating workers' past social gains to secure global competitiveness. This process was epitomised by the Blair Labour government. Repudiating any connection with the working class, it transferred more wealth to the oligarchy than Margaret Thatcher did, joined the illegal war against Iraq in 2003, and bailed out the banks in 2008. As the SEP warned following Corbyn's election in 2015, “No one can seriously propose that a party which, in its politics, organisation and the social composition of its apparatus, is Tory in all but name, can be transformed into an instrument of working-class struggle.”

36. Historically, the reformist pledges of the “left” have played a key role in subordinating the working class to Labour. Even so, the ruling class has viewed those carrying out this carefully calibrated task with deep suspicion, aware that they are policing dangerous militant and socialist sentiment in the working class. Writing in 1925, Leon Trotsky explained that the left-wing noises of the Labour leadership were made “not at all with the intention of arousing the workers to drive the capitalists out, but merely to urge the capitalists along the road of ‘progressive efforts’... if this pathetic scaremongering has any effect at all, it is in the opposite direction. Every serious British bourgeois understands that behind the mock-heroic threats of the Labour party leaders there lies concealed a real danger from the deeply stirring proletarian masses.” (Trotsky, *Where is Britain Going?* New Park, 1978, p.15) Any indication that the left might lose control has been met with

deep-state intrigues—including the forged Zinoviev Letter in the 1920s, the destabilisation of the Wilson government in the 1970s and the fashioning of the right-wing, break-away Social Democratic Party and the forced resignation of Labour’s leader, Michael Foot, in the 1980s.

37. It is the danger from the “stirring proletarian masses” that accounts for the hysterical attacks by the Blairites and the mainstream media against Corbyn. But it is Corbyn’s innumerable retreats that have given them free rein in their vicious political offensive for his removal, centred on smears of anti-Semitism. Led, behind-the-scenes, by the military-intelligence agencies of Britain, the US and Israel, the target is not primarily Corbyn, but the workers and young people who rallied to his pledge against austerity and war. Drawing an equals sign between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism is aimed at silencing criticism of Israel and its brutal treatment of the Palestinians. But it is also part of efforts to criminalise anti-imperialist and socialist views, while legitimising Europe’s far-right parties as defenders of Israel based on their espousal of anti-Muslim prejudice and support for imperialist intervention in the Middle East. The 2018 congress of the European Jewish Association devoted an entire session to the “existential threat” represented by a Corbyn government, while reaching out to the AfD, Freedom Party of Austria and other formations because, as one participant declared, “It’s impossible to classify European parties as Left or Right. Everything has changed.”

38. The equation of Nazism and socialism is a historic libel. The emergence of modern anti-Semitism from the 1920s as a mass political movement in Germany and other European countries, was bound up with efforts to mobilise petty-bourgeois and lumpen layers as a shock force to destroy the organised workers’ movement. This was the precondition for an eruption of militarism, aimed at securing the markets and territory required by imperialism. Anti-Marxism was Hitler’s driving obsession, to which he counterposed ethnic German nationalism. His hatred of the Jews was based on their association with the socialist movement. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler wrote of his “conviction” that “the question of the future of the German nation is the question of the destruction of Marxism ... In Russian Bolshevism we must see the attempt undertaken by the Jews in the twentieth century to achieve world domination.”

39. None of those complaining about the threat facing Britain’s Jews from a Corbyn-led government have any qualms about allying themselves with Hitler’s successors. Tory MEPs voted to defend Hungary’s Viktor Orban in the European Parliament in September and set up the European Conservatives and Reformists grouping to unify the far-right in Europe. Boris Johnson and other leading Tories meet with Trump’s fascist former adviser, Steve Bannon, who promotes the far-right Britain First, and anti-Muslim demagogue Tommy Robinson, whose supporters have been involved in attacks on left-wing bookshops and trade unionists, and the murder of Labour MP Jo Cox. Other leading Tories, such as Toby Young, advocate “progressive eugenics,” appearing alongside leading fascistic exponents of racial superiority at the prestigious University College London, to assert that global inequalities are the result of “mental capacity” and call for the “phasing out of incompetent cultures.”

40. There is widespread hostility to the Blairite conspiracy among workers and Labour Party members. This has been expressed in protests, especially in London, against the social cleansing carried out by Labour councils, as well as numerous successful no-confidence and censure motions against sitting MPs and a 50,000-strong petition to Labour’s annual conference calling for mandatory reselection. In each instance, it has been Corbyn, and his supporters within the Labour Party and the trade unions, who have sought to smother the fight against the right-wing, including vetoing mandatory selection at Labour’s conference. Unmasking Corbyn’s left pretensions is critical, especially under conditions in which the crisis over Brexit and the disintegration of the Tories could bring a Labour government to power. His constant policy

shifts and abasement before the right-wing are in preparation for this possibility.

41. The SEP has lent critical support to the efforts waged by Labour members against the Blairites, urging them to “Drive out the right-wing!” This call is directed not to Corbyn, but to the rank-and-file. It is an appeal to Labour members to reject Corbyn’s soporifics and take up an independent political struggle. While solidarising with this struggle, the SEP warns that Corbyn and his coterie would rather see their own supporters expelled, than break with the Blairites. Events in the London borough of Haringey are telling. Popular opposition to the planned destruction of public housing, in a £2 billion sell-off of public assets and the imposition of cuts, led to the deselection of Blairite councillors and the resignation of the council’s leader. Months later the newly elected “Corbyn council” announced a 10 percent overall budget cut on top of the 40 percent imposed by the Blairites, after McDonnell insisted that they must run a “prudent, responsible authority.” Under these conditions the call to kick out the right-wing can provide a mechanism to advance the class struggle, break the stranglehold of the Corbynites and strengthen the influence and political authority of the SEP.

42. As important as any such tactical initiative is in the arsenal of the party, it is always directed towards, and subordinate to, the building of the Marxist revolutionary party. In its June 10, 2017 statement, “Britain’s general election: A new stage in the class struggle,” the SEP stressed that “the greatest political danger is to identify the radicalisation of the masses with the initial and undeserving political beneficiaries such as Corbyn.” This was based on the lesson drawn from the warning made in 1967 by the Socialist Labour League, then the British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, to the then-French section, the Internationalist Communist Organisation (OCI). The OCI was moving in a pronounced centrist direction, under conditions of the beginning of a major political shift in the working class that was soon to take on revolutionary dimensions. The SLL cautioned the OCI: *There is always a danger at such a stage of development that a revolutionary party responds to the situation in the working class not in a revolutionary way, but by adaptation to the level of struggle to which the workers are restricted by their own experience under the old leaderships, i.e., to the inevitable initial confusion. Such revisions of the fight for the independent party and the Transitional Programme are usually dressed up in the disguise of getting closer to the working class, unity with all those in struggle, not posing ultimatums, abandoning dogmatism, etc.*”

43. Corbyn’s overarching concern is to preserve the domination of the Labour and trade union bureaucracy over the working class, which routinely employs the possibility of a Labour government to stem rising social anger and demands for change. But the re-emergence of the class struggle that is now underway means this is not sufficient. With the support of the Trades Union Congress, Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell champions the “new economy” plan of the Blairite Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR). This calls for an “activist role” for government to reverse low productivity and boost industrial competitiveness to place the UK economy on a trade war footing. A central role is assigned to the unions as an arm of corporate management and the state apparatus in policing the workforce, with the IPPR advocating a “social partnership” between the Bank of England, Treasury, big business and the trade union bureaucracy.

44. As Trotsky warned in 1935: “Should the electoral successes of the Labour Party raise it once again to power, the consequences would not be a peaceful socialist transformation of Great Britain, but the consolidation of imperialist reaction, that is to say, an epoch of civil war, in the face of which the leadership of the Labour Party will inevitably reveal its complete bankruptcy.” (*Documents of the Fourth International: The Formative Years (1933-40)*, p.67) The character of any incoming Labour government and its role is already being mapped out. After first meeting

with MI5 for a briefing on the threat of “extremism,” Corbyn then met with Alex Younger, the head of the Secret Intelligence Service, MI6, to discuss the necessary preparations for a possible snap election in the event of the failure of Brexit negotiations. The implications of such discussions were made clear by the head of the Armed Forces, General Sir Nick Carter, who confirmed the existence of “sensible contingency plans ... Whether it’s a terrorist attack or whether it’s a tanker drivers’ dispute, industrial action or whatever else it might be.”

The struggle against the pseudo-left

45. The building of the SEP as a mass party in the working class requires a concerted political and theoretical offensive against the anti-Marxist theories of the pseudo-left groups, most of whom have their origins in the repudiation of the Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution. Representatives of the many Pabloite, state-capitalist and other pseudo-left tendencies occupy leading positions in university departments, academic journals, online media and publishing houses, as well as the trade unions. They function as professional anti-Trotskyists, playing the essential role in promoting theories aimed at attacking the fundamental tenets of Marxism, including philosophical materialism, the revolutionary role of the working class and the necessity for a vanguard party. Their rejection of the “grand narrative” of the class struggle, in favour of identity politics based on race, nationality, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, facilitates the anti-democratic agenda of the ruling elite. Their embrace of irrationalism and philosophical subjectivism articulates the striving of an upper middle-class layer to buttress their social privileges against the challenge “from below.”

46. Whether they are organisationally part of the Labour Party or formally stand outside it, the pseudo-left are all loyal advocates of a Corbyn-led government, apologists for his every retreat before the right and determined opponents of the developing rebellion of the working class against the trade union bureaucracy, whose authority they uphold unconditionally. They collaborate intimately with Corbyn’s Stalinist advisers, such as Seumas Milne and Andrew Murray, and the leadership of Momentum, Jon Lansman, Paul Mason and Owen Jones, who have collectively drawn up the blueprint for an incoming Labour government. The pseudo-left’s acceptance of Momentum’s claim to represent “a people-powered, grassroots movement” facilitated the efforts of Lansman et al to stifle opposition to the right-wing, and police the influx of new members into the Labour Party. Notwithstanding belated and token criticisms, this collusion continues despite Momentum endorsing the expulsion of Ken Livingstone and others, removing critics of Israel from its National Executive Committee slate and Lansman joining anti-Corbyn coup plotters on the platform of the Zionist Jewish Labour Movement.

47. The pseudo-left’s support for Corbyn is based on their desire for a position of influence within government and the state apparatus. Like Corbyn, their model is the Syriza government in Greece that, in 2015, betrayed its anti-austerity mandate. In the period since, it has dutifully implemented austerity measures far worse than those of its right-wing predecessors, and ruthlessly enforced the anti-immigrant policies of the EU. Earlier this year, Corbyn not only congratulated Syriza Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras on his record, but also invited Minister of State Dimitris Tzanakopoulos to address Labour’s annual conference, so delegates could “understand what they are going to do if they are going to enter government.” Tzanakopoulos was also afforded pride of place at Momentum’s World Transformed event, where Paul Mason echoed the statement of Syriza’s former finance minister, Yanis Varoufakis, that his aim was “to save European capitalism from itself,” by boasting that Labour could “make an offer to capitalism. We will save your bacon.”

48. Chantal Mouffe has emerged as a key advisor defining the political agenda of Momentum and similar pseudo-left groups throughout Europe, such as Die Linke in Germany and La France Insoumise. Mouffe

describes Corbyn as potentially the most successful example of a new wave of “left populism,” because he “stands at the head of a great party and enjoys the support of the trade unions.” His success, she told *Red Pepper*, is above all based on Labour’s break with politics based on the working class and its defence of “political liberal institutions.” “The traditional left political frontier was established on the basis of class. There was the working class, or the proletariat, versus the bourgeoisie. Today, given the evolution of society, that is not the way in which one should establish the political frontier anymore,” she asserted. The reactionary character of this perspective is underscored by Momentum’s endorsement of Aufstehen (Stand Up), a right-wing initiative spawned from Die Linke that competes with the AfD in its denunciations of “unrestricted immigration, which also includes those who merely want to earn more money and enjoy a standard of living.”

The class struggle, rank and file committees and the general strike

49. In a period of enormous flux and sharp political changes, the SEP is charged with providing a programme, perspective and leadership, through which the working class can advance its independent interests and open the road to socialist revolution. The lag between the consciousness of the working class and the advanced stage of the imperialist world crisis presents grave dangers. But the objective conditions that give rise to these dangers also provide the basis for their overcoming, through the intensification of class conflict. The struggle against the horrors of mass poverty, fascism and war generated by capitalism will dispel illusions, undermine traditional beliefs and radicalise social consciousness.

50. This is foreshadowed by recent strikes, where opposition to the attacks of the employers has immediately involved a confrontation between workers and the trade unions. The past two years has witnessed a series of walk-outs on the railways against Driver Only Operated trains, and the generalised attack on pay, pensions and safety. Entire areas of the country, including London, have been paralysed, demonstrating the immense potential power of the working class. After decades in which anti-union legislation and the threat of punitive fines and dismissal has been used to prevent solidarity action, railway drivers have refused to cross guards’ picket lines. During the recent strike by female council workers in Glasgow, refuse collectors took illegal secondary action in their support. In each instance, this was in defiance of the trade union bureaucracy, which functions as the chief ally of corporate management and enforcer of anti-union laws. The strike by lecturers saw mass protests outside the University and College Union HQ, in opposition to its planned sell-out deal and the early closure of its annual conference to prevent motions of censure against its leadership. In the Royal College of Nursing, anger at a similar rotten pay deal forced the resignation of the entire executive. In November, an entire shift of auto workers at Vauxhall’s Ellesmere Port plant mounted a wildcat strike against job losses that Unite was negotiating, while, on the same day, Cammell Laird shipyard workers, just 20 minutes away, began a series of strikes against mass redundancies.

51. Historical experience demonstrates that the escalation of social struggles leads towards a general strike, which poses the question of political power. This was the case in the 1926 General Strike that was betrayed by the TUC and Labour Party. The same possibility was pregnant within the strikes by miners and others that erupted between 1972 and 1974, which brought down the Conservative government of Edward Heath. Today, the generalised offensive of the capitalist class, and the common experience of millions, who face worsening social hardship and brutal exploitation, must once again provoke such a unified counter-offensive by the working class. Preparation for such a coalescence of struggles requires the formation of rank-and-file committees of action in factories, workplaces and communities, from which the capitalist politicians and the corporate-controlled trade unions

are excluded. The *World Socialist Web Site* has established a far right and the EU's inhumane "Fortress Europe" policies, to *International Amazon Workers Voice* and the *Autoworkers Newsletter* as a forum through which workers can begin to coordinate their struggles independently and on a global basis. In Britain, the SEP set up *NHS Fightback* and the Grenfell Fire Forum, which has worked to systematically expose the fraud of the official government inquiry through hundreds of postings and in the monthly public meetings held in the local area.

52. The rightward evolution of what was once defined as the "labour movement" has seen the emergence of mass protests and movements outside the confines of official politics. In the absence of a socialist program, such socially heterogeneous protests, often in defence of essential democratic and social rights, take on a confused character. Hundreds of thousands protested in favour of Remain, animated by genuine revulsion at the nationalist xenophobia of the leading Brexiteers and its devastating economic impact. Close to 300,000 protested in France against Macron's crippling fuel tax rises. In Britain, this sentiment was exploited by a coalition of Blairites, Liberal Democrats and Tories, while in France it was Marine Le Pen's National Rally that tried to make political capital from the fuel protests. But the ability of right-wing or far-right forces to secure influence and exploit popular discontent is the product of the suppression of the class struggle by the trade unions and social democratic parties. Against this danger, the working class must come forward as the leadership of the emerging social and political movements.

The tasks of the Socialist Equality Party

53. The SEP's work in the coming period will be to extend its influence in every section of the working class. It will connect struggles against austerity, falling wages, attacks on the NHS and the dismantling of education with the defence of immigrant workers and free movement, and opposition to the destruction of democratic rights and the danger of world war. It will seek to impart to these struggles a revolutionary socialist, anti-imperialist and internationalist orientation for the working class to take state power and reorganise economic life to meet social need, not private profit. At the centre of this is the fight for the United Socialist States of Europe.

54. Together with its sister parties, the SEP has a central responsibility in building sections of the ICFI throughout Europe. It will wage a unified campaign in next year's European elections, in support of the candidates of the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei, and will publish and popularise the book, *Why Are They Back? Historical Falsification, Political Conspiracy And The Return Of Fascism In Germany*, documenting the fight waged by the SGP since 2014 to develop a socialist opposition to the rehabilitation of fascism and the renewal of German militarism. The SGP and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality have been alone in alerting workers and young people to the implications of efforts to rehabilitate Hitler by far-right ideologues such as Jorg Baberowski of Humboldt University. For this, the SGP has been cited by the German secret service as a "left-wing extremist party," and identified as an "object of observation." This is justified on the basis of the SGP's opposition to "nationalism, imperialism and militarism." In contrast, the AfD is mentioned only as a victim of alleged "left-wing extremists." The issues fought out by the SGP have become the immediate concern of masses of workers and youth, as expressed in the recent 250,000-strong protest in Berlin against the rise of the far-right.

55. The SEP has a special responsibility to champion the rights of immigrant workers, above all the refugees made homeless by the social and economic devastation created by imperialist intervention in their countries. The SEP defends the right to free movement, not just for European citizens but for workers throughout the world. It opposes the whipping up of anti-immigrant chauvinism, from the open xenophobes on

Corbyn's specious advocacy of "managed migration." The fight against the persecution of immigrants must be based on the recognition that their scapegoating is an attack on all workers, and that the brutal measures taken against them strengthens the state in its suppression of social and political dissent. Their defence is the cutting edge of the struggle to unite the working class across national boundaries in the struggle for socialism.

56. The SEP will redouble its efforts to develop an international coalition of socialist and anti-war web sites against Internet censorship by the tech corporations and governments. The WSWS has been the primary target of internet censorship, because of its role as the authentic voice of Marxist revolutionary socialism. The aim of the international coalition is to encourage the broadest possible mobilisation of the working class in defence of democratic rights. It opposes all attempts to justify censorship with claims of "Russian interference," combating terrorism, or on the grounds of "anti-bullying" and political correctness. Measures taken on such pretexts are directed at closing off all avenues of democratic debate and independent political action by the working class. It will counter the efforts to conceal the WSWS, by Google and other search engines, by developing its content and expanding its readership, including through the development of our social media presence.

57. Central to this work is the intensification of the campaign to end Britain's persecution of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. For exposing the war crimes of the major powers, Assange has been forced to shelter in the Ecuadorian Embassy for six years, against Britain's plans to extradite him to the US, where he faces criminal proceedings that could even include the death penalty. Since the start of the year, he has been rendered incommunicado, cut off from contact with the outside world. The key role in isolating Assange, despite massive popular support, has been played by the Labour and trade union bureaucracy and the pseudo-left groups. Based upon their espousal of identity politics, they endorsed the demands for Assange to be extradited to Sweden to face trumped-up allegations. All of them, including Corbyn, have erected a wall of silence, behind which the government conspires to lay the basis for Assange to be arrested and deported to the US to face espionage charges.

58. The branches of the SEP must conduct an energetic offensive to build the International Youth and Students for Social Equality among young workers and on the campuses. The desire for social change is felt most keenly in the young generation, which is the hope for a new social order. The focus of the IYSSE will be to educate the younger generation in Marxism and the history of Trotskyism, and to turn student youth towards the working class and a conscious struggle against capitalism. It will make a focused intervention among the younger generation of workers, especially the super-exploited in the major distribution centres, call centres and others employed for a pittance in the gig economy.

59. The SEP reaffirms its commitment to establishing a new socialist anti-war movement of the working class. The principles of such a movement are outlined in the ICFI statement, *Socialism and the Fight Against War*:

i) *The struggle against war must be based on the working class, the great revolutionary force in society, uniting behind it all progressive elements in the population.*

ii) *The new anti-war movement must be anti-capitalist and socialist, since there can be no serious struggle against war except in the fight to end the dictatorship of finance capital and the economic system that is the fundamental cause of militarism and war.*

iii) *The new anti-war movement must therefore, of necessity, be completely and unequivocally independent of, and hostile to, all political parties and organizations of the capitalist class.*

iv) *The new anti-war movement must, above all, be international, mobilizing the vast power of the working class in a unified global struggle against imperialism. The permanent war of the bourgeoisie must be*

answered with the perspective of permanent revolution by the working class, the strategic goal of which is the abolition of the nation-state system and the establishment of a world socialist federation. This will make possible the rational, planned development of global resources and, on this basis, the eradication of poverty and the raising of human culture to new heights.

60. The building of a new revolutionary leadership demands that the cadre of the SEP is firmly rooted in the historical experiences of the Marxist movement, above all the eighty-year history of the Fourth International. This immense history must be brought into the developing movement of the working class. As Trotsky insisted, “Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer” (*The Lessons of October*). Only the conscious alignment of the programme and practice of the revolutionary party with the objective radicalisation of the working class will create the conditions for a world free of class exploitation, fascist reaction and war.

To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

<http://www.wsws.org>