

UK government to target “far left” in revised Counter Extremism Strategy

By Laura Tiernan
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A report published by the UK government’s Commission for Countering Extremism (CCE) has branded large sections of the “left” in Britain as “extremist.” It claims the left’s “revolutionary workerist ideas” are associated with increased sympathy for “violent extremist tactics.”

The 37-page report, “Violent extremist tactics and the ideology of the sectarian far left,” was written by British academics Daniel Allington, Siobhan McAndrew and David Hirsh. It was commissioned in the lead-up to a “landmark report” that will be delivered to Home Secretary Priti Patel. The CCE will make recommendations toward a revised UK government “counter-extremism strategy,” including draconian laws aimed at criminalising nonviolent “extremist ideology” for the first time.

In their report to the CCE, the academics warn that small “far-left sectarian” groups might soon win a mass following for their anti-imperialist, anti-war and anti-fascist views. Amid the most acute crisis of capitalist rule since the 1930s, including mass anti-government protests and strikes across the globe, the report is in preparation for state repression against the working class and its revolutionary vanguard.

Counter-extremism bill stalled

The Commission for Countering Extremism was announced by then Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May in May 2017 after the Manchester terrorist bombing that claimed 22 lives. In a snap general election triggered by the Brexit crisis, she seized on the atrocity as part of her pitch to deliver “strong and stable” government, pouring nearly 1,000 troops onto streets across Britain.

While the CCE had been flagged in the Conservative Party’s 2017 election manifesto, Manchester provided the pretext for a propaganda blitz. The CCE was linked publicly to the fight against terrorism, disguising the sweeping antidemocratic implications of May’s plans. The “powerful new Commission” would “have proper legal teeth and a clear remit to identify extremism,” May wrote to readers of the *Sun* on May 27, 2017. It would “advise the Government on what policies and laws, including new criminal offences, and other real actions might be needed to defeat the extremists.”

Scraping back into government on June 8, May and the intelligence agencies used a string of terrorist attacks—Westminster Bridge (March 22), Manchester Arena (May 22), London Bridge (June 3), Finsbury Park (June 19) and Parsons Green (September 15)—to implement longstanding plans for targeting legal, nonviolent “ideology” for criminal sanction.

When May was still home secretary in October 2014, she promised that a Counter Extremism Strategy would tackle “the whole spectrum of extremism, violent and non-violent, ideological and non-ideological.” An “Extremism Analysis Unit” was set up, operating from the Home Office, and had drawn up a “banned list” of “extremist individuals and organisations,” May later revealed. The government’s “full spectrum” measures would include “banning orders” and “closure orders against premises used to host extremist meetings or speakers,” she said in March 2015. A revised counter-extremism strategy would, “set out clearly for

the first time with which individuals and organisations the government and public sector should engage and should not engage.”

But there were problems. A counter-extremism and safeguarding bill was announced in March 2016, but according to the *Guardian*’s Home Affairs reporter Alan Travis, “behind the scenes government lawyers had found it impossible to find a ‘legally robust’ definition of extremism that would have any chance of surviving a free speech challenge in the courts. The anti-extremism bills went through ‘dozens of drafts’ but the problem was never resolved.” The CCE, he noted, “is being asked to resolve the problem of defining an extremist, which the government have so far failed to do.”

Sara Khan and the CCE’s “academic” experts

Leading the CCE’s efforts is Sara Khan. Former Tory minister Sayeeda Hussain Warsi described her as “a mouthpiece for the Home Office.” Khan sat on the Home Office’s Extremism and Radicalisation Working Group established after the 2005 London bombings. She is a vocal supporter of the Prevent Strategy introduced in 2003, which forces teachers and other public sector workers to report signs of “radicalisation.” Khan has defended Prevent against condemnation from human rights groups that it is “stifling freedom of expression,” breaching children’s right to privacy and intimidating, victimising and profiling Muslim children.

Among the thirteen “Expert Group” members advising Khan are: Sir Mark Rowley, former Chair of the National Police Chiefs’ Council Counter-Terrorism Coordination Committee; Sasha Havlicek, Founder and CEO of the Institute of Strategic Dialogue and a member of the European Council on Foreign Relations; Dr Emman El-Badawy, Head of research in the Co-Existence team at the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change; Fiyaz Mughal, a member of the Extremism Task Force Working Group for Communities established by former Tory Prime Minister David Cameron; and Sunder Katwala, former research director of the Foreign Policy Centre, and General Secretary of the Fabian Society from 2003 to 2011.

Nick Lowles, CEO of Hope Not Hate, and Peter Tatchell, a human rights and LGBT campaigner, are also Expert Group members, providing a “progressive” gloss to the CCE’s antidemocratic mandate.

In April, Khan commissioned 19 academic papers to investigate Islamic, far-right, far-left and online extremism. A CCE panel selected the 28 authors. Allington, McAndrew and Hirsh’s paper on “far-left extremism” was commissioned, written and published in less than three months and was assessed by a single peer reviewer, described by a CCE spokesperson as “an experienced academic with expertise on extremism and the methodologies used in the paper” who is also a member of the CCE’s advisory board.

The authors

Hirsh and Allington are both prominent figures in the bogus campaign

against “left-wing anti-Semitism” aimed at removing Jeremy Corbyn from the Labour leadership, criminalising the left and attacking basic democratic rights. Their academic work sets out to brand left-wing criticism of the Israeli state as inherently anti-Semitic.

Allington is Senior Lecturer in Social and Cultural Artificial Intelligence at Kings College London. He conducts research for Quilliam International, a right-wing thinktank that works closely with British intelligence agencies. Allington is also Head of Online Monitoring for the Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA), founded in 2014 and which routinely breaches the political neutrality requirement of its charitable status. A CAA petition circulated last August branded Corbyn an “anti-Semite” and called for his removal as Labour leader. The online petition elicited a torrent of violent threats against Corbyn which the CAA refused to remove, including “Corbyn is a communist and terrorist supporter,” “Let’s get this bastard” and “I would prefer for someone to shoot him.”

Writing in the July 24 edition of the *Jewish Chronicle*, Allington summarised his newly published report for the CCE with the headline, “Our study shows the far-left has a soft spot for violence.” He cited an anonymous death threat against a Jewish Labour Party member, writing, “I believe that the ‘blame’ may lie in the culture created by those groups that have hitched themselves to the Jeremy Corbyn bandwagon despite seeing the answer to Britain’s problems not in electoral politics but in revolution.”

Allington identified the culprits for this supposed “culture of violence”: “We reject the myth that left-wing violent extremism began and ended with the totalitarian rule of Stalin. Support for violence and repression can be found in the works of Lenin and Trotsky—who carried out terrible acts of their own while in power... Yet these are the men whose ideas have shaped Britain’s revolutionary far left.”

Hirsh is a senior lecturer in sociology at Goldsmiths University in London and author of the book, *Contemporary Left Antisemitism* (2017). A former member of the ferociously anti-Trotskyist Alliance for Workers Liberty and a Labour Party member since his teens, Hirsh is now building a career as a “born-again” anti-communist. He resigned from the Labour Party in February 2019, claiming a culture of rampant anti-Semitism and likening Corbyn’s left populism to “Jihadi Islamism.”

Hirsh’s submission to the Chakrabarti inquiry claimed a “Jewish consensus” in favour of defining anti-Semitism on right-wing political grounds as “hostility to Israel.” Those comprising Hirsh’s alleged “Jewish consensus” are Zionist organisations, religious officials and right-wing publications: “the CST (Community Security Trust), UJS (Union of Jewish Students), BICOM (British Israel Communications and Research Centre), The Board of Deputies of British Jews, The Chief Rabbi, the leaders of all mainstream religious movements, the Jewish Leadership Council, the Jewish Chronicle, Jewish News.” This consensus, Hirsh wrote, was historically “mirrored” in “all three mainstream political parties,” but not “in parts of the radical left, parts of the trade union movement, amongst some intellectuals, and within parts of the Labour Party. This is an elite section of society, small, but influential and opinion-forming.”

The selection of such authors for a paper on left-wing extremism could have only one outcome—legitimising the Conservative government’s bid to formally define the “far-left” as “extremist” and “violent” and deserving of state repression. The ultimate target of these repressive measures is the working class.

An anti-communist diatribe against Lenin and Trotsky

Allington, Hirsh and McAndrew oppose the “conventional” categorisation of “far-left” groups as “Trotskyist,” “Stalinist” or “Maoist,” asserting that this “corresponds only weakly with actual patterns of ideological differences between groups.” With these few

words the political gulf separating Trotskyism from Stalinism is simply dismissed, confirming the intellectually crude and dishonest nature of their investigations. “Following Stephen Rayner’s (1979) analysis of such groups as akin to religious sects,” they write, “we refer to them collectively as the ‘sectarian’ far left.”

Rayner’s 1978 doctoral thesis employed familiar anti-communist tropes, describing members of the “sectarian far-left” as “millenarians” and “utopians” who worship “‘sacred’ texts” and the “‘holy’ figures of the Marxist pantheon.” His thesis included a detailed overview of the post-war history of Trotskyism, with a chapter devoted to the Workers Revolutionary Party, the then British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International: “It has the longest direct lineage of any of the British far-left groups and it has exerted a strong historical influence over the development of the whole of the far-left.”

Rayner’s attack on Trotskyism runs like a thread through Allington, Hirsh and McAndrew’s paper. They write that “far-left sectarians” share “three ideological tendencies in common”: vanguardism, anti-imperialism and anti-fascism.

Citing Lenin’s insistence in *What Is To Be Done?* that socialist theory must be “brought into the working class from without,” the academics mount an extended diatribe, attacking the “self-appointed” vanguardists who would seek to rid the working class of the “pollution of bourgeois ideology” and save it from “traitorous leadership.” While vanguardists “do not take up arms against the state,” the academics warn, their long-term strategy is realised through the promotion of socialist ideas which results in “the weaponization of the working class.”

Allington and Hirsh are unable to refute the scientific analysis of imperialism and fascism developed by Lenin and Trotsky. They resort instead to historical falsification, pressing into service their politically depraved “left-wing anti-Semitism” campaign against the 20th century’s most outstanding Marxist theoreticians. They write, “The ‘anti-imperialist’ ideology adopted by most sectarian far-left groups rests on a highly specific understanding of what the word ‘imperialism’ means. ‘Anti-imperialism’ in this sense derives from a political and economic theory formulated in John Hobson’s *Imperialism: a study* (1902) and further developed by Lenin in *Imperialism: the highest stage of capitalism* (1916).”

“Hobson’s ideas grew out of nineteenth century antisemitic conspiracy theory,” they assert, citing Professor David Feldman’s view that Hobson attacked, “not colonialism in general, but what he saw as its debasement from the 1880s as Britain, France, Germany and the United States extended their rule to the tropics’ under the influence of so-called ‘international financiers’, whom Hobson asserted to be Jewish.” On this basis the authors imply that Lenin’s analysis of imperialism was steeped in anti-Semitism: “Lenin integrated Hobson’s ideas [which ideas?] into his own theories about the impending collapse of capitalism, maintaining that a small number of creditor or ‘usurer’ nations now held the rest of the world in debt slavery, waging war in order to protect or extend their monopolies.”

Only those operating in bad faith could conflate the theories of Hobson the bourgeois economist with those of Lenin. Isolated passages in Hobson’s *Imperialism* are undoubtedly anti-Semitic. But his work has nonetheless been regarded as a major text in the history of economic thought. Tony Blair once described Hobson, who joined the Labour Party in 1926, as “probably the most famous Liberal convert to what was then literally ‘new Labour’.”

The real “problem” with Lenin’s anti-imperialism, Allington and Hirsh complain, is that it opposes imperialism! “[T]he ‘anti-war movement... organises demonstrations exclusively against the US and its allies, especially Israel and the UK, whose governments are conceived as acting on behalf of the financial powers at the centre of the usurious ‘imperialist’ system that the sectarian far left understands to be the real

threat to world peace.” The gratuitous insertion of ‘usurious’ insinuates an anti-Semitic motive to the anti-war movement.

Allington, Hirsh and McAndrews state bluntly that the “sectarian far-left’s” opposition to war leads inevitably to support for terrorism: “the ideology of ‘anti-imperialism’ draws sectarian far-left groups, as well as their fellow-travellers across the broader left, into a position of solidarity with terrorist organisations and violently repressive regimes—especially if those organisations and regimes are actively engaged in military struggle against the US and its allies, including the UK.”

Under conditions of mounting war preparations by British imperialism and its NATO allies, the CCE’s paper provides the rationale for the banning and suppression of the left. By way of guidance, the academics cite an edition of the Socialist Workers Party newspaper *Socialist Worker* published after the 2005 London terrorist bombings, headlined, “This is about Iraq, Mr Blair.” The SWP’s 2005 headline was in fact a direct quote from Peter Brierley, whose son Shaun was killed at the start of the Iraq War in 2003. If such statements are to be redefined as “solidarity with terrorism,” then a wide range of political speech, academic scholarship and journalism is threatened.

The attack on the SWP repeats almost verbatim that made by May against Corbyn after the Manchester bombing in 2017. May accused him of “giving succour” to terrorism after his campaign speech linked the increased threat of domestic terrorism to British military intervention in the Middle East—a phenomenon widely known in intelligence circles as “blowback.”

The Manchester bombing in fact proved that the chief enablers of terrorism were to be found in the British state and that the horrific deaths were indeed blowback. Less than a week after the bombing, FBI sources revealed they had warned MI5 that suicide bomber Salman Abedi was “part of a North African Islamic State cell plotting to strike a political target in the UK.” These warnings were ignored because Abedi was one of hundreds of jihadis actively encouraged by Britain’s MI5, MI6 and the Home Office to travel to Libya as part of British efforts to topple Libyan leader Colonel Gaddafi.

Anti-fascism decreed as “extremism”

The report’s designation of anti-fascism as a form of “violent extremism” points to a sharp shift in the political orientation of the ruling class in every country. In the United States, President Donald Trump has called for the illegalisation of anti-fascist group Antifa, while defending the “fine people” who participate in neo-Nazi torchlight parades. In recent weeks, Trump has re-tweeted statements by the British far-right’s Katie Hopkins who called for a “Final Solution” against Muslims after the Manchester bombing and who works closely with British fascists including anti-Muslim demagogue Tommy Robinson and Generation Identity UK.

Allington, Hirsh and McAndrew declare that the “anti-fascism” which defines the “sectarian far left” is extremist because it “rests on highly specific and not widely shared understandings of what fascism is, and why it should be opposed.”

Leon Trotsky is targeted as the chief author of this “highly specific” theory of fascism. Allington and Hirsh allege that Trotsky “underestimated” anti-Semitism. Trotsky, “had difficulty understanding that antisemitism and racism were key organising principles for fascism—especially in Germany, where the Nazis saw the Jews not as mere scapegoats but as an enemy whose destruction was an end in itself.” Trotsky’s “understanding of fascism only as a doomed strategy employed by financiers to save the capitalist system in its moribund final stages led him both to minimise differences between it and social democracy and to look forward to the ‘immediate revolutionary situation’ that he imagined would necessarily follow the supposedly inevitable internal collapse of

the Nazi regime.”

Allington and Hirsh are bitterly opposed to Trotsky’s analysis and definition of fascism because it discloses fascism’s objective socio-economic roots in decaying capitalism, i.e., imperialism, and its ultimate target, the working class.

The academics’ assertion that Trotsky “minimised” differences between social-democracy and fascism is contradicted by hundreds of pages of Trotsky’s writings between 1931 and 1933. As is their claim that he passively awaited the internal collapse of the Nazi regime. For more than three years, Trotsky intervened to urge a change in the political line of the German Communist Party (KPD) to prevent the Nazis from seizing power. Against the Social Democratic Party (SPD), with its frightened appeals to the Weimar state, and the KPD’s fatalistic denunciations of the SPD as “social-fascist,” Trotsky advocated a United Front in Germany, warning that fascism could only be stopped by the revolutionary mobilisation of the working class.

As for Trotsky’s “difficulty understanding” the role of racism and anti-Semitism, Trotsky explained that Hitler’s demagogic attacks on “the plots of bankers and journalists of the Mosaic persuasion” were part of the “beggar’s bowl of National Socialism,” pitched to the resentments, despair and fury of the German petty bourgeoisie. “As the ruined nobility sought solace in the gentility of its blood, so the pauperised petty bourgeoisie befuddles itself with fairy tales concerning the special superiority of its race.” Hitler used anti-Semitism to mobilise the petty-bourgeois masses, hurling them against the working class to smash its organisations and crush Marxism.

A dragnet against left-wing ideas

Allington, McAndrew and Hirsh’s report creates an ideological dragnet for criminalising a broad range of common left-wing views based on the claim that such views encourage violence. They formulate a series of politically loaded “survey instruments” that purport to “prove” that: “[T]hose who express strong agreement with revolutionary workerist ideas are far more likely to express sympathy with violent extremist tactics than those who express strong disagreement.”

To “test” support for violence among those on the left, Allington et al compiled a list of “extremist” statements said to embody the ideology of the “sectarian far-left.” Their list was assembled from a review of three publications—*Socialist Worker* (published by the Socialist Workers Party), *Weekly Worker* (published by the Communist Party of Great Britain-CPGB) and *Counterfire* (published by a split-off from the SWP that now leads the Stop the War Coalition)—and from “discussions” they “recalled” having with members of “far-left” groups.

One of the researchers (Hirsh) “is a former Trotskyist activist,” the authors disclose, and so drew on his own “experience.” In other words, Hirsh has acted as a stool pigeon, using information gleaned from his time in Alliance for Workers Liberty to help the UK Home Office target his former comrades and criminalise the left.

The most striking feature of the list of “revolutionary workerist” and “extremist” statements is that they reflect views held by substantial sections of the working class:

- The greatest threat to democracy has always come from the far right
- We should always support striking workers
- Parliamentary politics are a dead end
- Capitalism is essentially bad and must be destroyed
- Industry should produce for need and not for profit
- Terrorists carry out attacks in the UK because of British government policy
- Zionism is a form of racism
- I stand in solidarity with all targets of US military action
- We must drive fascists off the streets
- The current political system can’t be reformed - it must be replaced

- This country needs revolutionary change
- Mainstream newspapers and TV channels tell lies to protect the ruling class
- The wealthy make life worse for the rest of us
- I would like to see workers rise up against their bosses
- Protesting against the Government makes the world a better place

Allington, Hirsh and McAndrew concede they found “no evidence” that the “far-left” had either the capacity “or the inclination” for political violence. Yet they concluded, “nonetheless the revolutionary workerist ideology” of far-left groups “may from a certain point of view be considered extremist in and of itself.” Such views “imply scapegoating, mistrust of existing institutions, and de-emphasis on effective forms of civic engagement.”

The academics openly invoke “thought crime” for the suppression of such left-wing “extremist” beliefs: “[W]e argue that the *objective* of revolution and the *construction of narratives* in which certain social groups are positioned as the enemy of the majority, as well as the *categorisation* of the UK and its allies as a threat to world peace, can potentially act to legitimate certain forms of violence when carried out in the UK.” (emphasis added)

The authors tested support for a selection of “revolutionary workerist ideas” among two YouGov survey groups—those who self-identified as “very left-wing” and a “political omnibus” selection of “nationally representative British adults” comprising a range of political views.

They report with concern that of the “omnibus sample,” “just 41 percent were in an overall position of disagreement” with a final list of five revolutionary workerist statements provided in the survey. That is, more than half of the population agree with revolutionary workerist statements!

The authors go on to note that “23 percent of members of the nationally-representative political omnibus sample agreed with the statement ‘Capitalism is essentially bad and must be destroyed’, while 45 percent agreed that ‘The wealthy make life worse for the rest of us’. While that is much lower than the 67 percent and 81 percent of members of the ‘very left-wing’ sample who agreed with the same statements (respectively), it remains a remarkably high level of agreement for a clear statement of revolutionary anti-capitalism and a conspiratorial view of the world in which social problems are blamed on a wealthy minority.”

The authors have therefore set out to brand as suspect views held by millions of people.

Among the “very left-wing” survey group they polled, “28 percent were members of the Labour Party, while 5 percent identified themselves as members of the Green Party, and 16 percent identified themselves as members of trade unions.” Meanwhile, “51 percent reported that they read the *Guardian* or the *Observer*, while very small percentages reported that they read the publications of the sectarian far left, with 5 percent reporting that they read the *Socialist Worker*, 3 percent reporting that they read the *Socialist*, and 1 percent each reporting that they read *Counterfire*, *Solidarity*, and the *Weekly Worker*.”

The “very left wing” YouGov sample group was, “substantially younger, more highly educated, far more likely to have voted Remain in the 2016 EU membership referendum, and (insofar as this is reflected in NRS [National Readership Survey] social grade) rather more middle class.”

If the ideas of socialism find such widespread sympathy, this reflects the experience of millions amid deepening austerity, militarism and war. A list of “extremist violence” perpetrated by the British state in recent years includes the one million deaths caused by the illegal US and UK-led wars against Iraq and Afghanistan, the 130,000 “preventable deaths” caused by Tory austerity since 2012, and the social murder of 72 people whose lives were taken in the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017. While the British public is polled for its “sympathy for violence,” the UK government and

opposition benches are stuffed with MPs and war criminals who bear direct responsibility for these atrocities.

A blueprint for state repression

The CCE and its commissioned academics have produced a report that seeks to justify state repression against the left. Sweeping censorship—and more—will be needed, they argue, because the far-left’s “anti-civic ideology” and its “extreme scepticism towards electoral democracy and the rule of law” threatens to incite terrorism: “Even without the direct promotion of violence, we suggest that beliefs of [far-left sectarian groups] could plausibly provide vulnerable individuals with a motivation to break the law... the most lethal examples of recent terrorist actions from the far right have been perpetrated not by organised fascist groups but by ‘lone wolf’ attackers radicalised through exposure to ideologies circulating online... The findings of this study give no reason to assume that left-wing ideas would be incapable of playing an analogous role.”

The far-left’s *ideas* are dangerous, extremist, and can lead others to commit terrorism. The authoritarian pedigree of this argument is unmistakable. It is worth recalling that Hitler and his Nazi henchmen blamed “communist terrorism” for the Reichstag Fire of February 27, 1933, invoking the very same concept of thought crime. In his speech to the Reichstag introducing the Enabling Act, Hitler declared that the Reichstag Fire (among a list of fantastical attacks) was “morally sanctioned by Communist theory.” “The mobilization of the most primitive instincts leads to a link between the concepts of a political theory and the actions of real criminals,” he ranted. A wave of Nazi terror followed.

In the concluding section of their study, Allington et al warn that “far-left sectarian” groups can win a mass following: “[O]ur findings suggest that opportunities may exist for political entrepreneurs to radicalise those open to revolutionary workerism and ‘anti-imperialism’. We observe that capitalising on such opportunities would require strategies to recruit outside the ecological niche currently occupied by sectarian far left groups, although we note that online media can potentially provide a dissemination and recruitment infrastructure that bypasses traditional channels.”

Amid a resurgence of the international class struggle and with social tensions in the UK and across Europe at breaking point, the paper submitted to the CCE makes an unmistakable warning to the ruling class: mass opposition to social inequality, imperialist war and the rise of the far-right threatens to meet up with the political ideology developed by the “far-left.” The revolutionary socialist theories of Lenin and Trotsky would lead in these circumstances to the “weaponisation of the working class.”

The Socialist Equality Party and the *World Socialist Web Site* are not named in the report, but there is no other political tendency whose theoretical, political and organisational initiatives are directly based on the “ideologies” of vanguardism, anti-imperialism and on the “highly specific understanding” of fascism elaborated by Leon Trotsky. The WSWS is the most widely read socialist publication on the internet, winning support among growing sections of the working class throughout the world. The SWP, Counterfire and the ex-Stalinist CPGB long ago repudiated any genuine association with Lenin and Trotsky. The citing of their publications only underscores the broad parameters being staked out as part of the CCE’s war on the left.

The parallel with current events in Germany is striking. There, the *Verfassungsschutz* (Office for the Protection of the Constitution) has listed the Socialist Equality Party (SGP), the German section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, as a “left-wing extremist” organisation for the second year running. The SGP has been identified as extremist and in violation of the Basic Law, despite the state’s acknowledgement that its activities are entirely legal.

After the SGP launched a legal suit against the Federal Ministry of the Interior, challenging its classification as “left-wing extremist,” the *Verfassungsschutz* commissioned a lawyer who prepared a 56-page report justifying its decision. The report argues that the SGP’s ideas and “comprehensive analysis” are unconstitutional citing its “struggle for a democratic, egalitarian, socialist society” and “agitation against alleged ‘imperialism’ and ‘militarism’.” A statement issued by the SGP on July 26 explained, “The German government is attempting to impose a ban on thought, including ‘thinking in class categories’ and ‘belief in the existence of irreconcilably opposed competing classes’.”

In Germany, the Ministry of the Interior commissioned a lawyer to assemble its case against the SGP. In Britain, the Home Office has turned to the caste of professional anti-communists in academia. They are intellectual guns for hire, furnishing the Home Office and domestic intelligence agencies with spurious research to target all those opposed to capitalist austerity, imperialist war and the rise of fascism and the far-right. Hirsh’s participation in such a deeply reactionary project points to a broader social process: the integration of an entire layer of pseudo-left and ex-pseudo-left academics with imperialism and its state preparations against the working class.

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