

The Line of March

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For An Anti-War Government! Fight for the Alternative!
Build the Workers' Opposition!
Let Us Take a Bold Step Together in Defence of
the Rights of All!
Hail May Day! Workers of All Countries, Unite!

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Hail May Day! For a New Direction for Society!



On the occasion of May Day, 2011, our Party, RCPB(ML), extends a revolutionary salute to the working class and to all humanity fighting for the New, fighting for the alternative, fighting to bring into being, establish and consolidate a new society, in which the concerns of the people take pride of place, in which the people decide!

May Day is the day of unity in struggle of the working class nationally and internationally. It is the day when workers pledge to reject the world outlook of the rich and the owners of capital, and instead implement their own world outlook of a world without exploitation and oppression, a different kind of society, one based on the rights of every human being by virtue of their being human.

RCPB(ML) calls on workers throughout the country to make this May Day a significant day nationally and regionally in the fight for the alternative, in the implementation of the independent programme of the working class to *Stop Paying the Rich – Increase Investments in Social Programmes!*

No one can forget that this May Day in Britain takes place shortly after the March for the Alternative, when half a million organised workers and their allies affirmed that there was an alternative, that they would fight for it, and that they would not allow a society which stood for cuts to the wellbeing of the people, to public services, to wages, conditions, pensions, health and education.

What the working class demands is a change in the direction of the economic and political affairs of society. The present direction has brought only insecurity, the wrecking of the manufacturing base, the refusal of successive governments to take up social responsibility and the demand that the working people fend for themselves and shoulder the burden of all the problems. But the working class is on the move, and is marching for the alternative, for public right not the "right" of the monopolies to dictate economic and political affairs, for government to end the fraud of "eliminating the deficit". The working class which produces the social wealth is on the move to affirm that this social wealth be

put in the hands of the working class and people to meet the claims of all for a modern standard of living and public services.

The situation must be ended where the voice of the working class and its allies fighting for the alternative is excluded from any decisive say. What is required is the building of an effective Workers' Opposition around the alternative. The ideology of the rich cannot be allowed to hold sway; the wisdom and collective experience and organisation of the working class must challenge it with its demands, with its thinking, with its numbers and unity. The Workers' Opposition must develop its own practical politics around its independent programme to defend the rights of all, to defend public services, to defend pensions, to safeguard the future of the health service and the education system, to bring into being an anti-war government.

The aggression against Libya has underlined with full force once again that Britain needs an anti-war government. How necessary it is to settle scores with the imperialist chauvinism that unashamedly carries out what is declared to be a “humanitarian” war! The importance of the defence of the principles of sovereignty, independence, self-determination, non-use of force in the solution of conflict and non-interference in the internal affairs of the countries cannot be over-stated.

Let us go all out to make May Day a day of putting on the agenda the building of the Workers' Opposition, of planting the alternative on the soil of Britain, upholding the spirit of the working class that *An Injury to One Is An Injury to All!* Let us celebrate that new world that begs to come into being as an urgent necessity! Let us strengthen our unity with the workers of all lands, fighting in defence of the rights of all!

For An Anti-War Government!

Fight for the Alternative!

Build the Workers' Opposition!

Let Us Take a Bold Step Together in Defence of the Rights of All!

Hail May Day!

Workers of All Countries, Unite!

RCPB(ML) Call to the Workers' Movement and All Concerned People

On March 26, over half a million people demonstrated under the banner, "March for the Alternative". The question on everyone's minds is how to build on this magnificent manifestation of the mass unity in action of the working class.

The major striking feature of the demonstration was that very consciousness that there is an alternative, and that it is the broad working class and its allies who represent this alternative. It was their voice that was heard on March 26, a voice that affirms that there is a different way of running society, and that it is not just a question of dealing with tax dodgers and fat cats. The March for the Alternative was a manifestation in its own right, a demonstration of the pro-social, pro-human, spirit of the working class, half-a-million who represent the majority of society taking a stand against the ruling elite.

It is this voice of the working class and its allies fighting for the alternative which is being excluded from government. Just imagine if the half-a-million who marched for the alternative were to put into effect their thinking on the direction of the economy, apply their collective wisdom to the social and political problems of society. Just imagine if they were able to bring into being some new mechanism



whereby the organised workers' movement were able to decide on the direction of society. Their viewpoints would be brought to bear, they would be able to sum up their experience, and resolve the affairs of society in their favour. They would be the decision-makers.

The cuts to social programmes and public services are a manifestation of the ideology of the rich in practice. This much is common knowledge. It follows that to oppose this anti-social programme of the rich effectively, the workers must have their own independent programme which reflects their interests and ideology. This is what is meant by the alternative. It is this debate as to what is this alternative that must be engaged in by working people in the course of their developing practical politics to defend the rights of all, to defend public services, to defend pensions, to safeguard the future of the health service and the education system, to ensure peace and security for all.

Fight the cuts, yes! Defend public services, of course! But release the initiative of the workers throughout society to consciously participate in summing up their experience, to discuss what the rich do not want them to discuss, to dare to envision the alternative. This is what the times are calling for!

RCPB(ML) gives the call to its members,





supporters, activists and friends, to the working class as a whole, to all social forces which stand opposed to the anti-social offensive of the rich ruling elite of the owners of capital, to develop and broaden this discussion on the alternative for which they have been marching, for which they are fighting. The working class and people are fed up with the establishment saying that there is no alternative. There is an alternative! It is the very opposite of what the establishment is doing. Let us discuss how to change the situation and turn things around, let us unite not just to fight the cuts but to make the voice of the working class and its allies heard. This voice is demanding the pro-social alternative. Let us discuss this alternative and the solutions it proposes.



Responding to the Party's Call:

On the Fight for the Alternative

The North East Line of March Forum met on April 16, and there were reports on the present situation following the March 26 demonstration when more than 500,000 from the workers' and people's movement marched for the alternative. Thousands of working people also travelled to London from the North East to take part. That the fight for the alternative was becoming the battleground for the working class movement was further confirmed by the national health conference of Unison as well as the RCN and other conferences held since. Also, actions by the Gateshead Public Service Alliance and South Tyneside Public Service Alliance had both received an overwhelming response from the people in these areas to safeguard the future of the NHS against the market system and privatisation that the government was trying to further impose and for keeping the private out of public.

The meeting discussed the space that the Party had identified in the *Call to the Workers' Movement and All Concerned People* that was opening up to build the Workers' Opposition and expand the space for communism in Britain. Topics included a report on the discussions had with doctors and other health worker activists and the importance of building serious discussions for the alternative amongst these circles. The importance of uniting health professionals around the most advanced and class conscious workers in health and looking to give priority to new mechanisms that unite the health workers' movement around a direction that can resolve the affairs of health in favour of society.



The meeting also discussed May Day and the importance of intervening under the banner of *Fight for the Alternative, Stop Paying the Rich* and *For and Anti-War Government* with the main content of distributing the Party's new publication *The Line of March*.

The meeting concluded with great optimism for the tasks ahead in meeting the challenge to make the voice of the working class and its allies heard in the fight for the alternative in Britain.



Britain Needs an Anti-War Government

In a speech to Parliament before the Easter recess, William Hague, the Foreign Secretary, continued to champion the government's role in NATO's military attacks on a sovereign state, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Although Hague continued to speak of how hundreds of air strikes had "prevented a huge loss of life and averted a humanitarian catastrophe", it is common knowledge that many lives have already been lost. NATO has even refused to express any regret for attacking and killing those fighting against the Libyan government. The government's alleged humanitarian concern is simply a smokescreen to camouflage its stated aim of regime change, which is to be brought about by openly supporting the Libyan anti-government forces.

Although the government makes much of the fact that it is acting legally under the vague terms of UN Security Council Resolution 1973, NATO is acting outside of the provisions of the UN Charter, which was established to defend the sovereignty of all countries and non-interference, to prevent aggression and to outlaw crimes against peace. In this regard, it is noteworthy that even the UNSC Resolution calls for a ceasefire, a provision that the Anglo-Americans and their allies have assiduously ignored by continuing to support an armed rebellion against the Libyan government and sidelining organisations such as the African Union which have attempted to bring it about.

The Foreign Secretary also announced that the government had sent another diplomatic mission to the opposition forces in Benghazi and was preparing to supply them with communications equipment and other assistance. In this, it was not out of step with its allies, France, Italy and Qatar, which have already recognised the so-called National Transitional Council. In fact, it is reported that the latter two have already brokered agreements regarding the export of Libyan oil. For its part, the US government has also working closely with the opposition, has already authorised "covert" support and indicated that it may arm the opposition forces. There are reports that suggest these forces are already being armed and trained by the US and Egypt. The head of AFRICOM stated that because of what appears to be a military stalemate US troops could be deployed.

For the Anglo-Americans, Libya is not just an important producer of oil and gas but a vitally important strategic location. It is the only African state in the Mediterranean region that is not a member of NATO's Mediterranean Partnership Dialogue Programme and one of only five African countries that has not been integrated into AFRICOM (US Africa Command), a position it shares with Cote d'Ivoire. The current military onslaught is therefore designed not just to strengthen the position of all the big



powers in the region but particularly to strengthen US/NATO domination of the Mediterranean and consequently in Africa and West Asia.

The British government, as Hague pointed out, still regards the unrest which has swept through parts of North Africa and the wider region, and which has principally been waged against regimes it backs, as a great opportunity. An opportunity not to support the legitimate demands of the people of this region for genuine empowerment and an end to foreign intervention, but in order to strengthen the hold of the Anglo-Americans over their proxies, or to establish new clients that provide strategic and economic advantage, or support their hostile intentions against Iran. It is in this context that it views events in such countries as Bahrain and Yemen. The British government has issued many pious statements about the situation in Bahrain, where the US 5th Fleet is based. But the Anglo-Americans backed the military occupation of that country, led by Saudi Arabia, which has been used to crush popular opposition to the absolute monarchy. In short, the Anglo-Americans continue to be the major supporters and military backers of the dictatorial regimes in Bahrain, Yemen and elsewhere, just as they were of the regimes in Tunisia and Egypt. The British government also continues to use these regimes, such as the monarchy in Qatar, to provide support for its warmongering activities in Libya.

The government is continuing on the warmongering and interventionist course of its predecessors and as the major ally of the US. It is intent on destabilising the world, even subverting the UN for this purpose, in the interest of the economic and geo-political interest of the big monopolies. It must be prevented from pursuing its dangerous path – there is therefore an urgent need to struggle to establish an anti-war government.

Condemn the Armed Intervention in Libya!

Joint Statement of the New Communist Party of Britain and the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), March 26, 2011

Our two parties call on the working class and people to condemn the British government as well as the governments of the US, France, Canada and other countries for the military attacks on Libya. The Members of Parliament who this week voted overwhelmingly in support of what amount to crimes against peace must also be condemned. These attacks, which have included bombardment from the air and sea using the military might of some of the most powerful armed forces in the world, are being carried out under a UN mandate and with the alleged aim of protecting civilians. However, it is clear to the whole world that they are a cynical attempt to bring about regime change, as part of an attempt to re-divide the natural resources of this country and gain strategic advantage in the region. The attacks have already led to many civilian deaths as well as the destruction of the resources and infrastructure of the Libyan people.

There can be no justification for such barbaric attacks, carried out on a daily basis with overwhelming force against a sovereign country. The fact that Anglo-American war chieftains have openly admitted that they are seeking regime change and the assassination of Colonel Gaddafi makes a mockery of any claim that armed aggression is being carried for humanitarian reasons. The UN Charter was originally conceived in order to prevent crimes against peace and provides no basis for foreign intervention carried out in order to support armed rebellions. The Anglo-US imperialists and the other big powers who shout the loudest

about the rule of law and their “universal values” have once again shown that they adhere to no other principle but “might is right”. They put the defence of their own neo-liberal interests first, while international law and the UN itself can be manipulated or ignored as best suits their purposes.

The hypocrisy and deceit of the British government and its allies, broadcast through the monopoly-controlled media has now reached unprecedented levels. On the one hand, the government claims that it is the greatest champion of those protesting against reactionary regimes in North Africa and the Middle East and, on the other, claims that it has reacted in Libya because these same reactionary regimes organised in the League of Arab States have called on it to do so. Armed intervention in Libya is also in stark contrast to the complete disregard that the Anglo-Americans and their allies have shown for the civilian population of Palestine, who have been driven from their homeland or massacred on an almost daily basis for the over sixty years.

The military attack on Libya shows that Britain and the other big powers will let no international norm stand in the way of intervening militarily in pursuit of their interests. It shows that the big powers are still intent on dominating world affairs and dictating matters in their interests, as well as contending to divide up the world’s resources between them. It is not for nothing that Cameron and Hague speak about the great opportunity presented by the recent uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East. In

these circumstances, they seek to consolidate and strengthen their position throughout the region, impose political and economic arrangements that are to their liking and divert the aspirations and struggles of the people from threatening their interests. Justice-loving people can be under no illusion that Britain and the other big powers are supporters of the people’s empowerment and sovereignty.

The military attacks on Libya and the continued interference of the Britain and its allies throughout the region must cease. Now is the time to demand and organise for an anti-war government in Britain!

***Hands Off Libya!
End All Use of Force and
Armed Intervention!***



The Westminster Voting System Referendum:

The Need is for a Real Alternative Based on No Election without Selection

That the party-dominated political system is in a profound crisis of legitimacy has become increasingly apparent over recent years. Political parties provide the link between the electorate and the government, so says the theory of representative democracy. However, the situation has become so dysfunctional, practice so out of line with theory, that political parties no longer express the political will of the people at election time. In reality, the big three Westminster parties no longer even hold that theory in practice. The conversion of the big parties into a political cartel, which has grown like a cancer in the heart of the political system, means that even the arrangement of party-in-power versus party-in-opposition no longer carries any meaning.

In this situation, the notion that elections are “free and fair” is seriously faltering. The existing First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) system is a tried and tested component of keeping the people away from power. However, disaffection is rife and the demand is emerging for alternatives. The demands of early last century for the right to vote have been superseded by a demand for a decisive say in the electoral process itself.

A space for change therefore exists around the electoral system as a part of the wider issue of democratic renewal. This is the context of the referendum on the Alternative Vote (AV) system on May 5. In this voting system, candidates are ranked in order of preference rather than casting a single vote for one candidate as in the FPTP system. It is argued by some that AV gives rise to a fairer reflection of the vote for a particular seat than FPTP. However, it is not a proportional voting system, and as a winner-takes-all voting system is subject to the same shortcomings as FPTP, such as the tendency to disproportionately allocate seats to the largest parties.

Simulations of AV for the last General Election, such as that by the Electoral Reform Society, tend to conclude that AV would have rebalanced the numbers of seats between the three big parties, but those won by small parties would have been the same. In other words, the cartel parties would have preserved their domination of political power, but each of the cartel parties would have fared a little differently relative to its competitors.

The AV referendum is both a reflection of this and an attempt by the big parties to occupy the space for change in their collusion and contention for power. The contradiction between collusion and contention is severe, and AV has itself arisen out of the inability of the big parties to sort out which kind of voting system best serves their interests.

The Liberal Democrats have traditionally supported Proportional Representation, from which, as the smallest member of the cartel, they stood to gain substantially. But even this modest reform has proven too much for the establishment as a whole. The two biggest parties have tended to side with the status quo. AV has arisen as a compromise, but the parties have ended up divided on the issue, with Liberals in favour, Conservatives

against and Labour somewhere in between, unable to sort out divisions even with its own ranks.

The AV debate, therefore, on the terms presented, reduces the issue to the narrowest of yes/no questions, one which serves to divide the electorate. The choice between FPTP and AV solves nothing.

The Right to Participate in Governance

Voting Yes or No in the AV referendum will in no way affect the nub of the matter, namely the right of the electorate to participate in governance, to participate in formulating policy and ending the situation whereby no government can claim or even seeks to claim a mandate for its actions, and is unaccountable except in a very crude way on polling day. With the Westminster consensus over every crucial question, this is no answer.

Neither AV nor FPTP brings the end of the elector as a spectator to politics any the closer.

The Crisis in Working Class Representation

A glaring feature which requires addressing and which is also being left out of the debate, is that of the crisis of working class representation. Whose voice is being heard at Westminster?

As the March 26 “March for the Alternative” has shown, the working class has its own solution to the crisis, its own alternative, its own programme for the direction of the economy and the political affairs of the country. The reform which is urgently required is one which will facilitate that voice being heard and heeded in government. It has become quite a scandal the way that the personages in government have not come from the ranks of the people, who have chosen them as the best fighters for their interests, but rather have risen to power as Special Advisers to Ministers, or the like.

There need to be changes in the electoral mechanisms which will put a stop to this unacceptable situation, and allow the electorate to participate firstly in discussing which candidates from workplaces and educational institutions, as well as from among the ranks of the youth and pensioners, are suitable to be chosen to stand. There need to be mechanisms to allow the electorate to participate in setting the policies and agenda which these candidates will represent. And there need to be mechanisms in place so that the electorate can discuss on an ongoing basis the accountability of their elected representative, and participate in continuing to set the agenda. In short, the marginalisation of the electorate must be ended on the basis of the principle that *The*

People Decide!

An Alternative Perspective

The referendum provides an opportunity for people to participate in discussing the disempowering political system and develop their demand for a say and an alternative from their own perspective. The people's perspective on elections and the political process as a whole is that of working out the mechanisms needed to guarantee the rights of people to elect, be elected and participate in decision-making. This runs counter to the perspective of the ruling elite and the party cartel to further concentrate political power in their hands and bar the people from this power.

The need is for all-sided democratic renewal of the political process. On the electoral front, this is embodied in the call for

no election without selection. To elect candidates without having any role in their selection or setting of the agenda of the issues surrounding the election is out of step with the times and increasingly meaningless.

The choosing of candidates should not be the prerogative of the political parties. The role of political parties should be to politicise the electorate. Candidates should instead be chosen, for example, in the workplaces and educational institutions as direct representatives of the rights and interests of objective collectives of the people.

The alternative will be brought into being as people actually work to put forward candidates from their collectives and create their own mechanisms for democratic renewal that place themselves at the centre of the political process. These mechanisms will facilitate the selection process and assist the electorate in making an informed vote on a level playing field.

Education Bill 2011

Government Goes All-Out to Create a Business-Centric Education System

The coalition has presented its Education Bill, which in their words "is an important step in implementing the government's education reform programme and helping to create an education system that delivers ever higher standards for all children." It was introduced into the House of Commons on Wednesday 26 January and is now in Committee.

In *The Importance of Teaching*, the white paper on which the Bill is based, the government laments a "grim fatalism" they see in society, a belief that "deprivation must be destiny". "But education provides a route to liberation from these imposed constraints," they stress.

However, behind the rhetoric of liberation lies the reality that what they are further instituting is an education system where the most powerful monopolies, either directly through new arrangements, or indirectly via market forces, are being freed to both control and plunder the system for their own narrow interests.

Running through the Bill and the preceding white paper is a notion of "best" and "success" based in the aim of competitiveness of the powerful monopolies, which in turn leads to their concept of "raising standards". As they say themselves in the opening paragraph of their paper, what "really matters is how we're doing compared with our international competitors."

This provides the thread to the various elements of the Bill, the main aspects being: discipline and control over school students; so-called autonomy of schools through the creation of Academies and "Free Schools"; and concentration of control over the school and college system as a whole under the sign-board of accountability.

On discipline, the government outlines the further criminali-

sation of the youth in schools. The powers that the Bill gives to staff over students have been described as unprecedented by various commentators. It gives teachers a police-style power to stop and search students for items banned under school rules, such as mobile phones, and the manner in which searches take place is to be changed. It also repeals the requirement for schools to give 24 hours' written notice of a detention to students' parents. The right to appeal exclusion is to be eroded through the abolition of exclusion appeal panels and their replacement by review panels, which will not be able to overrule a school's exclusion decision.

On "autonomy" for schools, the government is going all-out to push Academies and what they call "Free" Schools as the direction in which they are aiming to take the secondary school system.

Academies are schools independent of Local Education Authority control, funded by a combination of public and private money. Originally introduced under Tony Blair as a key part of his "Third Way" agenda, Academy status was at first foisted onto schools deemed as "failed or failing". Free Schools, which can be set up by community groups, businesses, charities, religious organisations and other sponsors, are a variation on the same theme.

The present government has taken the Academy programme to a new level, switching to actively encouraging schools to request conversion to Academy status. The Academies Act 2010, one of the coalition's first acts on taking power, made it possible for all state schools in England to become Academies.

The present Bill takes this even further. It expands the Academies programme to allow 16-19 and alternative provision Academies. It makes it easier for schools to become Academies and

changes the regulations on the amount of consultation needed. The requirement for academies to have a specialism has also been removed. Furthermore, the Bill increases the Secretary of State's ability to make land available for Academies and Free Schools.

In fact, the Bill introduces a presumption that any new school will open as an Academy or Free School.

It is clear that the government is pushing Academies and Free Schools as the new model for the education system. There appear to be two main aspects to this. The first is to further blur the distinction between public and private education and create new public-private partnership style arrangements where both schools become a lucrative source of profit and business gets a bigger say in how schools and the education system as a whole are run.

As Peter Wilby pointed out in an article in the *Guardian* around the time of the election, "Though profit-making companies are barred from being trustees of state-funded schools such as academies, several are exploring the option of forming not-for-profit trusts, allowing them to run schools directly, and then to make money by selling services to the trusts."

The second aspect centres on the issue of accountability. The thinking behind the programme, and similar programmes in the US and Sweden (such as Chartered Schools in the US), is a theory of trading autonomy for accountability. While state schools are supposed to be less autonomous, it is the government that is accountable. The notion is that Academies, etc., gain a degree of independence in return for being held accountable for their results and finances. This not only makes schools more businesslike in nature, but allows the government to shift accountability away from itself and abrogate its responsibility for providing education.

On the other hand, and this time under the banner of increasing accountability and transparency, the government is further strengthening its control over the education system to implement its agenda.

As they explain: "The Bill will abolish five arm's length bodies and where some of their functions need to be retained, they will fall to the Secretary of State, accountable through him to Parliament. The Bill will focus school inspections on four core areas of: achievement, teaching, leadership and management, and behaviour and safety. It will make sure the Secretary of State has the powers he needs to intervene in schools that are failing their pupils."

The government is going all-out to institute a business-centric model for education. The Education Bill can be summarised as a Bill for more big government, a government strengthening its powers to carry out the will of big business to further plunder and control the school and college system, and ensure that the student body remains compliant in the name of "discipline".

Trade Union Response

Commenting on the Education Bill, NUT General Secretary Christine Blower said:

"Despite the Education Secretary's claims that he wants to remove the 'dead hand' of Government from schools, this Bill appears to do exactly the opposite and will lead to a greater centralisation of power.

"... No longer requiring school governing bodies to have staff and local authority elected governors on their board will lead to schools becoming less democratically accountable in how they are run.

"If the role of the local authority and the Schools Adjudicator is weakened we will end up with an admissions free for all. This is a gift to Academies and Free Schools which will be even less responsive and accountable in terms of both admissions and complaints.

"... We welcome protection for teachers and the intention to remove bureaucracy but, as ever, the devil will be in the detail. While the [General Teaching Council for England] didn't exactly win the hearts and minds of teachers there is no mention of what it will be replaced by. It will however be a problem if it is the Secretary of State, who will then be acting as judge and jury for the teaching profession.

"... This Bill rides roughshod over the premise of a democratically accountable education system. It will see the rights of parents and pupils vastly reduced and it is a backward step for society."

Regarding the Bill as a whole, the reaction of teaching and student unions has been critical. To take one example, Chris Keates, General Secretary of the NASUWT, said:

"The Bill sets out a horrifying vision for the future of education in this country.

"The core values and ethos of state education, social justice, democratic accountability and equality, and the principle that education is a service held and managed in trust for the public, are all left in tatters by the provisions in this Bill.

"The public and parents are disenfranchised. Children's rights are undermined. Parliamentary scrutiny is sidelined.

"There can be no doubt that a climate is being created for the free market to flourish.

"The concept of education free at the point of delivery is under attack by this Coalition Government.

"There is little to distinguish between the privatising changes being introduced by stealth in the NHS and the naked attempt in this Bill to limit access to education on the basis of ability to pay."

Note: For more information on the Bill, see

<http://www.shift-learning.co.uk/useful-links/137-the-education-bill-2011.html>



Salute the Paris Commune

The Paris Commune of 1871 represents an inspiring chapter in the history of the workers' and communist movement, where the proletariat for the first time held political power for a matter of two months or more.

It is well known that Marx characterised the actions of the Parisian workers as "storming the heavens". It is a quality that well characterises the spirit of those communards, and of the revolutionaries since those times of 140 years ago who have made the capture of political power, of the ability to set the direction for one's society, their aim.

This courage to refuse to bow to authority when the conditions are clashing with that authority is the spirit of the communards. And it is that courage to organise and to take a stand in keeping with the requirements of the times that imbues the communists of all ages who stand in the vanguard of the movement. It is the most precious quality in our own times, that courage of the communards to storm the heavens.

The communards of 1871 were able to plant the red flag: "Vive La Commune!" It would not exhibit the same courage today to say that the issue simply remains to keep planting the flag. Courage is required today not simply to keep the red flag waving in the face of the cowards who flinch, or the falsifiers of history who sneer at the red flag and who equate it with the black swastika. Courage is required today to bring out from the movement of the revolutionaries of the past, indeed the whole movement of humanity for progress, what is best and is most pure. Courage is required to show our colours by our deeds and set the line of march to a new society, and deal a blow to all the filth, violence, reaction and obscurantism

that the warmongers, the owners of capital and their ideologues place as obstacles to the progress of this line of march.

Karl Marx declared: "Workingmen's Paris, with its Commune, will forever be celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society." This new society is the destiny of humanity in its struggle against the common enemies of imperialism, monopoly capital and all its apologists. Marx brings out the real essence of the Paris Commune. The workers of Paris did not simply set out to take their place as the rulers of the same old society. They set out not to reorder the old society, but to build a new society, a society with a new human person at its centre.

This is the shining example of the Paris Commune, as it has been of all those who through these 140 years have been prepared to stake their lives on bringing this new society, this new humanity into being. It is the spirit of the republicans of the Spanish Civil War, of the International Brigaders, whose 75th anniversary we celebrate this year, and of all those who fought fascism. These examples underline the challenge facing the communist and workers' movement, to show with their deeds what the alternative represents, what the new society represents, not as some far-off model, but planted on the soil of Britain and internationally.

It is the duty of the communist and workers' movement to take up this challenge, to have the courage of their convictions, to lift high the banner of the Paris Commune and carry it forward, to fight and work to build a society where the working class and people are the decision-makers.

Long Live the Commune!

Workers of All Countries, Unite!

March to Save the NHS

OUR HEALTH SERVICE - NOT FOR SALE - MARCH TO SAVE THE NHS

Tuesday 17 May, 5.30pm

**Assemble University College Hospital, Gower St, WC1 (Euston/Euston Square);
March to Department of Health in Whitehall**

The date has been chosen to be during the government's so-called listening period and before the Whitsun parliamentary recess.

Below is a letter from Wendy Savage, Frank Dobson and Unite inviting trade unions, anti-cuts groups, NHS campaigns, London MPs and others to back the march.

Andrew Lansley's Health and Social Care Bill threatens to break up our health service and hand it to private healthcare companies.

The Bill would open up the entire health service to the private sector. Private companies will be widely used to commission local services. "Any willing providers" will be encouraged to cherry pick profitable parts of the NHS. Hospitals and other health services will be run as independent providers with the power to charge for services which have been free up to now, with no limit on their earnings from private practice, while at the

same time threatening health workers' pay and conditions.

As private companies calculate how much profit is to be made, 50,000 NHS jobs are being cut and front line services are under threat.

The government has now been forced to retreat in the face of a huge groundswell of nationwide opposition. Cameron and Clegg had to intervene to say they want to "pause, listen, reflect and improve" the plans, but it is clear they would like to limit the debate to minor cosmetic changes.

We have to seize this opportunity to step up public opposition to demand the Bill is dropped and to force the government to really listen. Our NHS is precious and these plans will destroy it. We appeal to everyone to join us on 17 May and to speak out against these threats in whatever way they can.

*Wendy Savage - Joint Chair Keep Our NHS Public,
Frank Dobson MP, Unite Health Sector National Committee*

Building Friendship with the DPRK and Celebrating its Successes

On April 9, a successful public seminar was organised in London by Friends of Korea on the occasion of the 99th anniversary of the birth of President Kim Il Sung, who was born on April 15, 1912.

The meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chair of Friends of Korea, Dermot Hudson, who welcomed the several score participants to the seminar. He pointed out that it also marked another important anniversary, that of the 79th anniversary of the Korean People's Army on April 25. These days the DPRK is on the frontline against imperialism, so it is a very worthy anniversary. He also introduced the participating organisations who were presenting papers, the Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist), the UK Korean Friendship Association, the New Communist Party, the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) and the Socialist Labour Party, as well as the Juche Idea Study Group, England. He pointed out that the DPRK is gearing up to mark the hundredth anniversary of the birth of President Kim Il Sung, and that the DPRK is pressing ahead with the goal of building a great prosperous and powerful socialist nation and improving the living standards of the people. The successes of the DPRK are bound up with the life and activities of President Kim Il Sung, he declared.

Dermot Hudson then introduced Michael Chant, Secretary of the Friends of Korea, and National Secretary of RCPB(ML). Michael Chant pointed out that in 2011, the DPRK is pursuing its all-sided project which is aimed at consolidating the gains of the revolution, and also decisively improving the people's well-being. Everything is being done for the improvement of the people's livelihood, and building a thriving nation, on the strength of self-reliance based on modern science and technology. He elaborated how over the past 65 years, the DPRK has been built into a modern nation with advanced techniques, and gave examples from the fields of industry and agriculture. Michael Chant gave some account of the education system, the role of women, and that there is no more vital task than that of national reunification. He praised the optimistic and revolutionary spirit, with the outlook that "the gates of final victory are in sight". We in Britain are also uplifted by this optimism, he affirmed, and that the onward march of the revolutionary forces is an engine of great innovation to overcome obstacles and provide solutions to the problems of opening the path to a great prosperous and powerful society, and to a new society on a world scale.

Ella Rule of CPGB(ML) next spoke. She pointed out that the DPRK is a small country in a very hostile world, subjected to all kinds of bullying, under the threat of war, constant military exercises, and the most frightful sanctions. Yet it continues to thrive. Ella Rule dealt with the role of intellectuals in the revolutionary movement, and the importance of ideology.

Andy Brooks of NCP gave a detailed account of the Korean revolution, which will always be remembered by working people. He pointed out that Kim Il Sung founded the modern Korean communist movement. He also pioneered international co-operation, Andy Brooks said, for instance in the assistance rendered to the African and Arab peoples. The work of President Kim Il Sung lives on.

Next John McLeod of the Socialist Labour Party spoke. He underlined the importance of building friendship with the DPRK. One of the main obstacles to this work, he suggested, as the disinformation propagated about the origins of the Korean War. There is a manufactured consensus that the North started the war, but the real aggression was organised in the first place by the south and the US, ambitious to control the whole of the Korean Peninsula. There were skirmishes instigated by the south and the US long before June 25, 1950, and the US committed enormous crimes during the course of the war. He gave the particular example of Sinchon. It is important, he said, to extend friendship by teaching people what really happened in the Korean war, such as crimes against the civilian population, slaughtering many tens of thousands of the Korean people.

Dermot Hudson in his presentation spoke of the mass celebrations on the Day of the Sun, the birthday of Kim Il Sung, which are colourful and vibrant, and take place across the world. Dermot Hudson gave a very valuable and interesting account, though necessarily short, of the history of President Kim Il Sung, both a man of action and a theoretician.

Finally, Shaun Pickford of the Juche Idea Study Group spoke. With the arrival of Obama, he said, the leopard has not changed its spots, and this underlined the importance of Songun, the army-first politics, which guarantees the security of the DPRK. Let all friends of Korea pool resources, he said, to surmount the vast wall of lies about Korea with clear and transparent information. President Kim Il Sung, he concluded, fought for the freedom and dignity of humanity.

Michael Chant made some concluding remarks about the mission and the work of Friends of Korea, whose basis of unity is in standing as one with the struggles of the DPRK to defend its independence and sovereignty. The work of Friends of Korea in its modest way in combating disinformation is important in the context of supporting the Korean people and their leadership in their heroic defence of their own chosen social system.

A message from the seminar to Kim Jong Il, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and Chairman of the National Defence Commission, was adopted by acclaim.

In the course of contributions and questions, participants outlined some of the work being done also in other parts of Britain and in the anti-war movement of combat the disinformation about the DPRK.

Long Live the Cuban Socialist Revolution!

From the Central Committee,
Communist Party of Cuba

To the world parties, political
forces and social movements,
friends of the Cuban
Revolution

The 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba was held from April, 16-19, 2011, coinciding with the 50 Years of the Victory of Playa Giron and the Proclamation of the Socialist Character of the Cuban Revolution.

Over one thousand national delegates and guests took part representing near 800 thousand members, organised in 61 thousand grass root organisations in the different sectors throughout the Cuban society.

The Central Report, presented by the Army General Raul Castro Ruz, makes a deeply self-critical and timely analysis of the current crucial situation of the historical process of the construction of socialism in Cuba. In this context, essential aspects are specified in order to stress the need to continue the economic and social transformations aimed at updating the economic model and strengthening the economic and social structures that guarantee the progress in building the new socialist society. In essence, the Central Report to the Congress was designed to identify the cardinal problems faced by our country and their solution.

Discussions on the crucial topics ratified the consequent application of the creative thinking of the Party's founder, the historical leader and Commander in Chief of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz.

On the other hand, it was stressed that the ongoing updating of our process is essentially conceived from the concrete historical and cultural particularities of Cuba, subjected to a tight economic, commercial and financial blockade for almost 50 years, and not from the mechanical copy of similar experiences in other parts of the world.

The Congress endorsed the Guidelines for the Economic and Social Policy of the Party and the Revolution, which was preceded by a broad popular debate of the Draft that went on for five months, with the participation of over eight million people (some of them participated more than once) and about three million interventions took place, with 781,644 contributions, thus ensuring the free expression of the participants on their dissatisfactions and discrepancies.

All the proposals made by the people were analysed. 87.4% of the statements made in such debates were taken into consid-

eration, while out of the remaining 12.6%, some will be further studied and some were not being considered for the time being.

With the majority support from the people, the effectiveness of the predominance of the socialist state ownership over the means of production and planning as essential basis for the national economy were ratified. The staunch will of the Socialist State was confirmed to maintain the social conquests obtained as a result of the revolutionary deed, an expression of the humanistic spirit of our social project and to sustain the free access of all citizens on equal footing to education, public health, large-scale practice of sports and culture.

The process that, in fact, became a referendum for all the people, as a result of which the 68% of the original Guidelines were modified, confirmed the confidence and unity of the immense majority of the Cuban people for the Communist Party and the Revolution, that will not leave anyone unprotected. Once again, the validity of comrade Fidel's words was proven: **"... the Party's strength lies on its close and permanent link to the masses..."**

Undoubtedly, it was a democratic and transparent process with a broad people's participation and was held based on the principle that **the people led by the Party are the ones who decide the country's destiny.**

In a gradual way for a period of several years and without haste, the measures to implement the New Economic and Social Model in the country will be undertaken.

The delegates to the Congress considered Fidel Castro Ruz's will to be excluded from the list of candidates of the Central Committee and his decision to continue being **"a member of the party and a soldier of ideas"**.

Comrades **Raul Castro Ruz and Jose Ramon Machado Ventura** were elected as First and Second Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, respectively.

A Central Committee with 115 members was elected and half of it was renewed – women accounting for 41.7%. A Political Bureau with 15 members and a Central Committee Secretary were also elected. This election was not improvised, but resulted from a policy aimed at slowly introducing a real representation of the Cuban people and, above all, the new generation that could ensure, together with the Historical Generation, the continuation of socialism in Cuba.

The Congress approved the holding of the National Conference of the Party on January 28, 2012, as a continuation of the 6th Congress of the Party.

Its main objective will be to strengthen the Party based on the principle that the Communist Party of Cuba directs and controls, but not manages. Thus, the Conference must adopt the necessary measures to adjust the Statutes, the internal norms, structure,



Message of Congratulations from the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

To the Central Committee, Communist Party of Cuba

The Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) sends its warmest congratulations to the Communist Party of Cuba on the successful holding of its 6th Congress.

It is a matter of great joy to us that the Congress, with over 1,000 delegates and guests, addressed the issues facing the Cuban Revolution at this time, and so decisively charted the way ahead.

That this is the case, and that the Congress representing the spirit of the Cuban people and embodying the socialist character of the Cuban revolution has been so pro-active in facing up to the needs of the times, fills us and the world's progressive forces, with great optimism.

How could it be otherwise? The entire concrete historical experience of the past 50 years in which the creative thinking of the Party and the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, Comrade Fidel, has been applied to overcoming every obstacle, including an inhuman and spiteful blockade, demonstrates the resilience of the Party and the people, their ability to look reality in the eye and draw warranted conclusions.

So today, the 6th Congress has provided guidelines for the ongoing construction of socialism in Cuba. It has once again answered the question posed by the concrete conditions and

by society, *Who Decides?*, with the firm declaration and conviction that *The People led by the Party Decide!*

May we offer our warmest congratulations to Comrades Raul Castro Ruz and Jose Ramon Machado Ventura on their election as First and Second Secretaries respectively of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party.

And may we pay the most sincere tribute on this occasion also to Comrade Fidel Castro Ruz, whose exploits and leadership have long been legendary, and who has a place not only in the hearts of the Cuban people but of the people the whole world over who desire nothing less than a different world in which fascism and war will never again hold sway and the people's concerns take pride of place.

It imbues us with great confidence in the future of the Cuban revolution that the torch is being handed on with the decisions taken by the 6th Congress.

The importance of the defence of the principles of sovereignty, independence, self-determination, non-use of force in the solution of conflict and non-interference in the internal affairs of the countries, as the Congress has stressed, cannot be over-estimated.

Comrades, we pledge to do all in our power in Britain also, to organise the working class and people to make sure these principles cannot be violated, and to march along the path to socialism inspired by your example of providing urgent problems with valid and creative solutions.

All hail to the successful holding of your historic 6th Congress!

Long Live the Cuban Socialist Revolution!

working methods and styles of the Party to today's historical circumstances in our country, and to give special attention to the training and development of the leading cadres, as a priority and strategic condition for the whole Party and as a determining factor for the future of the Revolution.

The Conference must discuss and pass the fundamental definitions related to the Party's foreign policy and international relations. By the same token, the Congress reiterated Cuba's invariable position to defend the universal principles of sovereignty, independence, self-determination, non-use of force in the solution of conflict and non-interference in the internal affairs of the countries.

It ratified the disposition to dialogue with the United States government about any topic of common interest, on the basis of mutual recognition and respect, and without conditions.

The Congress passed the Resolution on the Improvement of the Organs of the People's Power, the Electoral System and the Political and Administrative Division.

Friends from all over the world,

The 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba confirmed that for its members and patriots, the nation, independence and socialism are indissolubly united and will always be the main banner of unrelenting defence of the Cuban revolutionary process.

In his closing speech, the recently elected First Secretary Raul Castro Ruz, reiterated the militant solidarity of the Cubans towards the sister nations of the Third World and their support to the Communist Parties and other progressive forces around the world that pursue an indefatigable struggle for a better world.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to express our appreciation to the political parties and forces, social movements, personalities and friends for their encouraging messages and support received in the course of this momentous event.

Department of International Relations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba

Havana, April 20, 2011



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