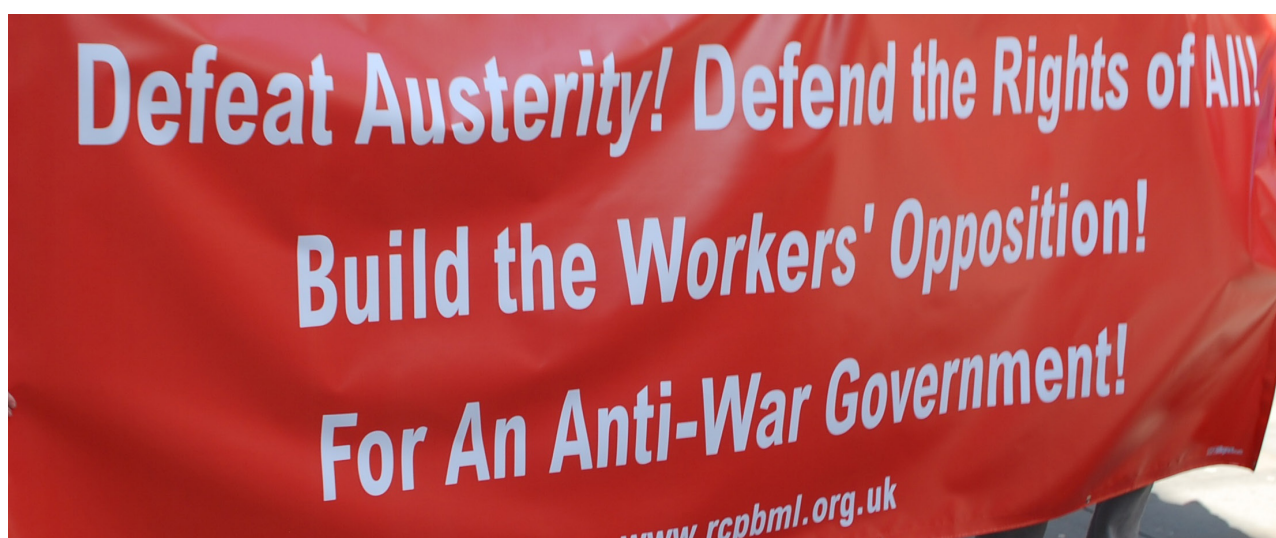


The Line of March

Monthly Publication of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

September 2015
Volume 5 Number 5

**DEFEAT AUSTERITY! FOR A NEW
DIRECTION FOR SOCIETY!**



**NO TO THE
TRADE UNION BILL!
FIGHT FOR
THE RIGHTS OF ALL!**

CONTENTS

TUC CONGRESS 2015

Necessity to Defeat Austerity and
Fight for a New Direction for
Society Page 3

THE BATTLE FOR THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE NHS

Justice for Lewisham
Hospital! Page 12

NO TO THE GOVERNMENT'S TRADE UNION BILL!

All Must Take a Stand in Defence
of the Right to Organise and the
Rights of All! Page 4

NO TO IMPERIALIST WAR!

Britain Must End All Interference
in Ukraine and Withdraw from
NATO Page 13

Reviewing and Resisting the Trade
Union Bill Page 5

DPRK'S ROLE IN MAINTAINING PEACE IN EAST ASIA AGAINST US IMPERIALIST HOSTILITY

Anniversaries of the Liberation
of Korea from Japan and the
Founding of Democratic Korea Page 14

FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHTS OF ALL

Britain and Other Big Powers Must
Accept Responsibility for Global
Refugee Crisis Which They
Themselves Have Created Page 6

Criminal Role of Anglo-US
Imperialism Page 7

The Shameful Position of Cameron
on the Refugee Crisis Page 8

Theresa May's Attempts to Dehumanise the
Most Vulnerable Page 9

WORKERS' FORUM

Jeremy Corbyn and the
New Politics Page 10

The Working Class Festival Which
Is the Durham Miners Gala Page 11

TUC CONGRESS 2015:

Necessity to Defeat Austerity and Fight for a New Direction for Society

The 147th TUC Congress is taking place at the Brighton Centre from Sunday, September 13, to Wednesday, September 16. As Congress 2015 convenes it is essential that the organised workers make all the necessary preparations to defeat the austerity agenda and march in step with the growing movement for the alternative to austerity. The necessity is to defeat austerity and fight for a new direction for the economy and for society.

The mass demonstrations against the Conservative government's austerity agenda following the General Election have shown the mood of resistance that exists in the country. As part of this there is also a TUC mass demonstration planned for October 4 in Manchester against austerity and the Trade Union Bill.

Delegates will come together to discuss motions submitted by the constituent trade unions that are grouped into five sections referring to the fight for jobs and a new economy, the fight for fair pay and a living wage, defending public services and welfare benefits, respect against bullying and dictat and a voice at work, the need for strong unions and TUC organisation. There will be a debate about the fight against the Trade Union Bill currently before Parliament and the campaign to oppose this attack on the rights of working people and their unions. The General Council theme announced for this year's Congress is "Great jobs for everyone". The TUC says, "Economic growth might be back but millions of workers have seen the worst decline in real wages since Victorian times. The government looks increasingly out of touch with the concerns of ordinary people, ignoring the damage to the economy too. It is against this backdrop that the trade union movement will come together, in Brighton in September this year, to debate, discuss and decide how we can take action and organise to defend the people we represent and set out a vision for a better way."

However, this vision for a better way must be based on a new direction for the economy, and a recognition that workers constitute the future for society. These times call for the rejection of programmes that defend and promote



someone else's agenda whether this be the Cameron government's, the monopolies', or that of any other force that opposes the public good and harms the social and natural environment. There is a very serious situation looming, whilst the ruling elite are talking about recovery which itself a cruel joke played on the workers. The financial oligarchy, the monopolies and their Conservative government backers are wrecking the economy with their "austerity" drive so that this gap between the rich and poor is growing as everything is done to fund the rich at the expense of society and the public good.

The new Trade Union Bill further confirms that there is no recognition of any rights of the workers, let alone recognition that the working class is the producer in a socialised economy. The Bill's aim at this stage is to prevent the workers from bringing their numbers and organisation into play in their resistance against the anti-social measures that they are trying to force through. The Cameron government aims to present the trade unions as the ones who are abusing their power by striking to defend the public services and pensions. The Bill, along with all the trade union Acts, should be scrapped and the right to organise and workers' rights must be recognised fully along with the rights of all.

The thinking and outlook of the organised workers' movement has to go beyond the problems that the government and the big corporations impose in terms of limiting productivity, jobs, wage rises and so forth. The fact that the government wants to deny the right of the workers

to organise actually confirms that working people are at the centre of the creation of wealth of the economy and society and have the potential to protect their interests. The workers have to underline their place in charting a way out of the crisis and creating an alternative society by emerging as the force that has the answer to the problems facing a society presently at the mercy of the monopolies. This goes beyond the aspiration of simply being on the boards of directors, or influencing share holders, to one of actually being the decision makers in society. The workers must take up the issue of working class representation and democratic renewal, so that political forms and institutions serve working people and not the rich and powerful.

The Line of March calls on the delegates to play their role in the challenge facing the working class to resist the assault of the monopolies. The TUC Congress 2015 must make a clear statement that it opposes the neo-liberal anti-social offensive, that there is a necessity for a new direction for the economy which opposes and reverses the wrecking of the manufacturing base, and the privatisation of the NHS and education. Rather the economy must serve the working class and people with the guaranteeing of jobs and a livelihood, decent pensions, guaranteed funding for social care for children, the elderly, the frail and vulnerable and those in need, including everyone who is differently



abled. The iniquitous wrecking of society must be ended, along with the growing gap between rich and poor, the attack on social programmes in order to pay the rich and the entrenching of class privilege. The TUC must take a stand against the militarisation of the economy, the use of force to resolve international affairs, and for respecting the sovereignty and the right of countries to determine their own affairs without outside interference.

The times are calling for a new direction for society in which the working class and people are empowered to make the decisions. This involves challenging the domination of the ruling capitalist elite. The working class is the future – that must be the spirit of TUC Congress 2015.

NO TO THE GOVERNMENT'S TRADE UNION BILL!

All Must Take a Stand in Defence of the Right to Organise and the Rights of All!

The Trade Union Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on July 15 by the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, Sajid Javid. It is stated to “make provision about industrial action, trade unions, employers' associations and the functions of the Certification Officer”. This was the Bill's 1st reading, so no debate took place at this stage. The date for the second reading debate has not yet been announced.

Nevertheless, the workers' movement and all concerned with the right to organise and to fight effectively for the rights of all are taking the bill's threats very seriously. Last week a public meeting, “Reviewing and Resisting the Trade Union Bill”, was organised in London on July 29 by the Institute of Employment Rights (IER), the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom (CTUF), the Centre for Labour and Social Studies (CLASS) and The People's Assembly Against Austerity.

As soon as the Bill was announced at its first reading in Parliament with its measures to impose a minimum 50% turnout – and public sector strikes would need the backing of at least 40% of those eligible to vote – the trade unions pointed out that it was aimed at making strikes almost impossible for them to organise. The BBC commen-

tators also admitted that what was being presented in the Commons “represents the biggest shake-up in the rules on industrial action in 30 years”. It includes measures to to give employers 14 days' notice of strike action and allow them to bring in agency staff to cover for striking workers. The legislation could also cut the amount of money unions have to mount political campaigns – or donate to parties – with members actively having to “opt in” to pay the so-called political levy, which is currently automatic unless members opt-out. It also contains measures to limit the amount of facility time available for union organisation in work places making it even more difficult for workers to organise their unions to stand up for the rights and interests of their members.

The government tried to claim that the legislation had the public behind it and Conservative efforts to ensure strikes were only called as “a last resort” and the Bill claims that it is “compatible” with the European Convention on Human Rights. However, it is not hard to see through this propaganda aimed against the worker's “right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.” Also, strikes are already “a last resort” of workers. The archaic system of postal balloting imposed on the

trade unions costs a large amount of union resources which is not imposed on monopoly corporations and public employers when they take measures against the interests of the workers. Then strikes are only undertaken because workers are faced with constant attacks on their public services and their jobs, terms and conditions of work and pensions. The government are driving this dictatorial neo-liberal agenda of austerity without taking account of the majority in the workplaces and in society. What the government is aiming at with this legislation is to make it even harder for workers to resist this agenda which is to serve the corporate elite over the needs of all in society. The legislation has to be seen as part of the imposition of the austerity, cuts and privatisation of the public sector and increased expropriation of the wages and conditions of working people across all sectors of the economy. By focusing on “reforming the trade unions” they are also trying to blame this wrecking of society and of public services on the trade unions to deflect the anger from themselves. It is the government that is attacking democratic rights to uphold monopoly right over public right. But it wants to turn truth on its head and claim that it is imposing “democracy” and “human rights” on the trade unions.

This deception is at the heart of the propaganda on the Trade Union Bill. Dave Hopper, General Secretary of the Durham Miners Association pointed out at the Durham Miners Gala on July 11 that this legislation was to “shackle” the trade unions. He said: “How can a government elected by a tiny percentage of the electorate demand that a trade union ballot can only be valid if a certain percentage of people vote. It is even more hypocritical when we consider that in Parliament there are no secret ballots and no requirement for a certain percentage of MPs to vote.”

So then, when one considers that this legislation has nothing to do with democracy, or human rights and that as can be seen the ruling elite care nothing for such considerations when it suits their plans to impose austerity, what are they intending with this legislation? What really concerns them is to prevent the workers from bringing their numbers and organisation into play in their resistance against the anti-social measures that they are trying to force through. Whilst they want to present the trade unions as the ones who are abusing their power by striking to defend the public services and pensions and so on. The actual abuse of power is caused by presenting this Bill for which the government have no mandate.



It should also be noted that the provisions of the Bill will extend to both Wales and Scotland on the grounds that they are not devolved matters. Thus it can be said to further abuse the national rights of the workers and their organisations in these countries to decide how to organise their own affairs, as well as flying in the face of the recognised right of freedom of association. This is particularly so in the light of the cynical formality of the Secretary of State having to certify that the provisions of the Bill do not contravene the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights (which is not a European Union body or declaration).

The aim of the government, on behalf of the monopoly elite they represent, is to wipe out any issue of organised workers having a say in anything at work and in society. They want to stop workers being able to organise in any way while they enable the diktat of the ruling elite to ride roughshod over the public sector workers, further excluding them from decisions, cutting jobs, pay and privatising services. Experience shows that already there is an offensive against the right of trade unionists and the representatives of the workforce to organise and speak out both in respect of the interests of the workers and employees and in respect of upholding the public good and the interests of society as a whole. The issue is how to build resistance and defend the workers' organisations against this new and increased offensive.

The question then facing the working class movement is how to be effective in building the opposition to the offensive against workers organising to defend their rights and the rights of all. The Workers' Opposition has to be built on the basis of a new alternative direction for the economy and for society. There is a growing resistance to the neo-liberal austerity agenda and at the same time, the concern is widespread on how block these attempts to target the trade unions which are at the centre of the resistance. ***The government must not be allowed to succeed with its Trade Union Bill! All must organise and take a stand!***

Reviewing and Resisting the Trade Union Bill

Meeting at NUT's Mander Hall, central London—Trade unions, MPs and workers' movement organisations came together at the packed meeting on July 29 – it was standing room only – at the NUT's Mander Hall in central London to question the legislation and discuss how to intervene to try to stop the bill. The

meeting also addressed what must be done if the bill becomes law. Speaker after speaker stressed that there must be unified resistance to the bill and that far from being irrelevant trade unions are too important and their support too strong to allow the attacks to succeed.

PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka was among the

speakers at the meeting organised by the Institute of Employment Rights (IER) together with the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom (CTUF) and the Centre for Labour and Social Studies (CLASS). Mark Serwotka told the meeting of more than 1,000 people that all have to mobilise against the bill.

“We have to debate what we are going to do if this bill becomes law,” he said. “The first strike when they try to break a picket we should bus in tens of thousands of people.”

Unite general secretary Len McCluskey spoke of how, if needs be, the unions will have to break the law to oppose government attacks on trade union rights. “The time for rhetoric will quickly disappear. Our moment is here. And if necessary we will need to defy the law,” he said.

John McDonnell MP, chair of the PCS parliamentary group, said the secret of success in fighting the government is solidarity. “Those who protested at Canary Wharf to get that construction worker (Graeme Smith) his job back – that’s how to fight,” he said.

There was sustained applause for sacked PCS National Gallery rep Candy Udwin as she got up to speak to outline how she and members at the gallery had taken more than 50 days’ strike action against privatisation and were preparing to keep fighting.

Chair of the IER, John Hendy QC, was clear that the bill would not be defeated by lawyers. “The trade unions must mobilise as in the past,” he said.

Unison general secretary Dave Prentis was unequivocal about challenging the bill: “This bill is an attack on democracy. The whole trade union movement have to sign up in blood to oppose this bill. If we don’t kill this bill through parliament we must go to European courts.”

Speakers urged everyone to join the TUC rally at the Tory Party conference in Manchester on October 4 and the anti-austerity demonstration outside parliament on the day of the spending review on November 25 when the government plans to outline a further £20 billions of cuts.

(Campaign for Trade Union Freedom)

FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHTS OF ALL

Britain and Other Big Powers Must Accept Responsibility for Global Refugee Crisis Which They Themselves Have Created

The Cameron government appears to be increasingly isolated for its approach to the refugee crisis affecting Europe, a crisis that it, and its predecessors and allies are largely responsible for creating. The government still maintains that it has no responsibility for the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing from Syria, Libya, Afghanistan and many other countries where British governments and those of the other big powers have intervened militarily, or by other means created war, instability and poverty.

In an interview with *The Guardian*, Prime Minister David Cameron spoke in response to questions concerning the now viral photo of Aylan Kurdi, the drowned Syrian child refugee lying dead on a Turkish beach. Cameron made great efforts to explain that his government had provided refuge for “a number of genuine asylum seekers from Syrian refugee camps”, a number known to be 216. Cameron’s response, implying that there are also in existence asylum seekers and refugees from the Syrian conflict that the government considers not to be genuine, has provoked public outrage. The public concern over the horrendous humanitarian tragedy has sparked a wave of “refugees welcome”

demonstrations and manifestations. This concern, together with the pressure from other EU members, appears to have shamed David Cameron into promising that Britain will accept “thousands” more Syrian refugees. A shift is also seen in the reporting of the crisis, with a recognition that this is a refugee crisis, not an issue of “economic migrants”, as the government and its spokespeople had been intent on insisting.

However, Cameron also argued that for the government, which has continued its predecessor’s policy of destabilising Syria, “the most important thing is to try to bring peace and stability to that part of the world”. There is no doubt that peace and stability is what is required, but it has been intervention by Britain and its allies in what was originally an internal Syrian conflict which has led to over 7 million people being displaced and over 4 million refugees, as well as hundreds of thousands of deaths. It is therefore difficult to see how a policy of destabilising the government of Syria and supporting those who are fighting against it is likely to bring “peace and stability” to that country. As for accepting refugees from Syria, Cameron’s inhumane stance has been starkly put into perspective by

the statistics that there are over 2 million people who have fled from Syria who are currently present in Turkey, and other European countries have refugees numbered in the thousands and hundreds of thousands.

According to the government it is doing everything possible to avert the global refugee crisis. In this regard the Prime Minister stated, “We are taking action right across the board, helping countries from which these people are coming, stabilising them and trying to make sure there are worthwhile jobs and stronger economies there.” But where and how is the government taking such action? Certainly not through the bombing and destabilisation of Libya, which has brought complete anarchy to that country, at least two rival governments and increased instability across North Africa and the Sahel. Clearly not by military intervention in Afghanistan, Iraq, Ukraine or Kosovo, countries that are also producing thousands of refugees, nor by championing neo-liberal globalisation and its Eurocentric values around the world, which has forced millions of people to seek their livelihoods abroad.

In response to the global crisis of some 60 million displaced people and refugees the main response of the government has been to dehumanise those in need, spread disinformation about the crisis, and do everything possible to develop security measures to keep vulnerable people at

arms length, preferably in France. It is an approach that is now coming under sustained assault. There has been condemnation of the government’s approach from the Catholic Church, the prospective leaders of the Labour Party, as well as Conservative backbenchers and local councillors, the Refugee Council and other organisations. There is no doubt that people are shocked not only by the images presented in the media but also by the callousness and inhumanity of the government’s response.

The government must be condemned for its refusal to do more to take responsibility for the global refugee crisis. It has insulted public opinion in its crassly in-humanitarian attitude in treating as less than human beings those who are refugees from war zones and tragic situations. The aggressive, unjust, racist and militaristic actions of the neo-liberal establishment has created the conditions for these crises. Military intervention, the use of force and an illegal policy of regime change carried out by Britain and the other big powers have created a global crisis and only the cessation of all such intervention can resolve matters. It is the task of the workers and all democratic people to play the leading role in bringing stability and people-centred values to the world by creating the conditions for a pro-people anti-war government.

Criminal Role of Anglo-US Imperialism

The photograph of three-year-old Alan Kurdi revealed the naked inhumanity of conditions in the world. The current refugee crisis is said to be the greatest in the history of the modern world, even greater than the exodus caused by the ravages of World War II.

Disinformation on the “European crisis” seeks to absolve the US, Britain and other NATO powers from responsibility. To deepen the diversion, the refugees from the war, nation-wrecking and anarchy unleashed by the US imperialists and NATO powers including Britain against Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Libya, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan and now Yemen are called “migrants”. The term suggests that millions willingly leave their homelands for Europe for economic reasons, dying accidentally en route from hunger and dangerous sea voyages. This obscures the causes from which they are starving, persecuted and subjected to the most brutal, violent, inhumane treatment on the part of the allegedly civilised Western interventionists from the US, Britain and allies.

A suggestion is given that they are escaping from “something” but the “something” is not clearly revealed other than some dark group called ISIL. Ignored is the reality that Anglo-US imperialism for a century through predatory wars and other means of interference has not allowed West Asia and North Africa to cast off the remnants of colonialism and embark on modern nation-building projects. Since the end of the bi-polar division of the world in particular, every time the peoples have advanced their projects, the interference, bombs, troops and mercenaries

of the Anglo-US imperialists have smashed them.

Following World War II, to destroy the modern path of nation-building, the imperialists introduced the spirit of sectarian and racist violence throughout the region using the backward banner of Zionism. A select number of Jewish refugees from Europe were diverted to Palestine to establish themselves there. On this basis a racist state was created, first on a small area of Palestine that soon expanded in all directions generating millions of new refugees, at first mostly Palestinians.

As Anglo-US imperialism became more desperate to control the region for itself, it staged a coup d’état in Iran and imposed the brutal Pahlavi dictatorship. Then after 1990, to establish its own unipolar striving for domination, the US unleashed direct wars to smash Yugoslavia and contend with the Germans and French for control over the Balkans and then Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and now Syria. The Palestinian refugees scattered in camps in various countries have been joined by millions more as these states disintegrate under the predatory wars of the US joined by their NATO thugs including Britain. A critical mass has been reached with over two million Syrian refugees in Turkey alone and millions more in Lebanon, Jordan and elsewhere with few resources to deal with the situation. Desperate to escape the anarchy and violence and certain death that the imperialist wars and their well-financed and armed thugs have brought to their homelands, they have begun the perilous journeys in search of safety in Europe. *(The Marxist-Leninist)*

The Shameful Position of Cameron on the Refugee Crisis

The Prime Minister's statement to the House of Commons on Monday, September 7, on refugees demonstrated that he and his government are completely out of touch with the sentiment and values of the vast majority of people in Britain. It also demonstrated that any measures that the government may take in regard to refugees from Syria will be undertaken as part of the government's overall aim of regime change in that country. In this regard it was not at all accidental that the Prime Minister's statement on refugees was followed immediately by the announcement of the assassination of two British citizens in Syria and the likelihood of more assassinations in the future. Indeed the Prime Minister used both statements to argue the case for more military intervention in Syria, on the basis of Britain's "self-defence" and hinted that the government would soon again bring this matter before parliament.

David Cameron's statements have been based on the premise that the government's aim of regime change in Syria is entirely just and that it is the government of Syria that is responsible for the emergence of the so-called ISIL, rather than Britain and its allies that present themselves as the "friends of Syria". But the fact is that both the major conflict in Syria and ISIL have been exacerbated beyond all proportion as a consequence of the intervention of Britain, the other big powers and their allies. It is they who have fuelled the civil war, directly and indirectly created the conditions for the emergence of ISIL and created the current crisis that has led to millions of displaced people and millions of refugees.

As the Prime Minister made clear, the British government is one of the major funders of the refugee camps on the borders of Syria, just as it is one of the major funders of the opposition to the Syrian government, and it is from these camps that it intends to admit 20,000 refugees, and that this is not immediate but is ludicrously over the next five years. And even this has been wrung from Cameron kicking and screaming, as he made it clear that the government does not "believe it is right to take part in the European relocation quota because we think that a better answer for Britain ... is to take people directly from the camps. In that way we will not encourage more people to make this perilous journey." As was pointed out during the Commons debate, Germany has taken in 10,000 refugees in one day.

The government's approach will make no difference to the numbers in the camps, already well over 3 million, nor the numbers of refugees fleeing to Europe, over 300,000 already this year, and Cameron was adamant that the government would not enter into any wider EU agreement regarding refugee quotas. It was also evident that the government had only set aside minimal funding from its "aid" budget for these plans. As Cameron stressed on numerous



occasions, "aid" is something that must be used in what he referred to as Britain's "national interest". And in the debate he insulted Caroline Lucas's pledge on behalf of the people of Brighton and Hove as being very willing to accept more refugees provided the government guarantee the funding, as it must, by saying, "I notice that Brighton is very keen to be generous with other people's money."

The Prime Minister also had no concern for those seeking refuge from other countries, labelling all those not originating from Syria as "economic migrants" who were "seeking a better life". It was clear from his statement that those seeking refuge from the consequences of the government's military intervention in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and Libya were not in any way connected with Britain's "national interest" and were not therefore the subject of the statement. The government takes no responsibility for those who are the victims of the consequences of neo-liberal globalisation, or Britain's economic and political intervention in Africa, Asia and other parts of the world.

Cameron and his government must be condemned for their stunningly callous indifference to human suffering that is the consequence of the global intervention carried out by successive British governments and their allies, as well as a consequence of neo-liberal globalisation. They must also be condemned for the cynical use of the refugee crisis as a means to further the aim of regime change in Syria. The government must be held to account for these crimes.

The people of Britain and many other countries are showing what it means to uphold enlightened human values in the 21st century, what is required is a government that also upholds such values. It is the task of the workers and all progressive people to continue their struggles to establish such a government, a government based on the sovereignty of the people, an anti-war government. It is this empowerment of the working class and people which will fundamentally resolve the global catastrophes which a social system which is a blight on humankind is giving rise to.



Theresa May's Attempts to Dehumanise the Most Vulnerable

As the refugee crisis was building from crisis to crisis, Theresa May, the Home Secretary, signed an agreement towards the end of August on behalf of the British government with the government of France to introduce new measures, including an Anglo-French “control and command” centre, to prevent refugees and asylum seekers reaching Britain from France. May is quoted as saying that the British and French police will “relentlessly pursue” what were referred to as people-smuggling gangs, in yet another effort to criminalise the global refugee crisis that has been created by Britain and the other big powers. May announced more police and other security measures would also be implemented and added that she was aware that such measures in France were likely to force the vulnerable to seek refuge in other EU countries.

May's visit to France was organised so that she would not meet anyone seeking refuge or asylum, while for their part the refugees in Calais organised a demonstration and are reported to have chanted “we are not animals”, and “open the borders”. French police are said to have dispersed the demonstration with tear gas. The actions of the government in Britain appear to be designed both to criminalise those seeking refuge and to force EU countries other than Britain to deal with the refugee crisis. At the same time as the Anglo-French agreement was signed the German interior minister announced that Germany was preparing to accommodate some 800,000 asylum seekers by the end of 2015. Commentators have pointed out that many other countries in Europe accommodate many more refugees and asylum seekers than Britain does, as do countries such as Turkey and Lebanon. Even Greece with all its economic problems has dealt with over 120,000 migrants and refugees this year.

The Cameron government not only attempts to criminalise those seeking refuge or entering Britain without papers, it also treats thousands that do arrive as criminals. The recent Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of

Prisons for England and Wales (HMCIP), Nick Hardwick, presents a damning indictment of the government's use of what are referred to as Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs), in effect prisons/detention centres for some 3,500 people who have entered the country unofficially, or without papers, as well as those who are awaiting judgement on asylum application, or who are awaiting deportation.

In fact last year only 53% of those detained were subsequently deported from Britain, and according to the report facilities were totally insufficient to prepare those detained for release or for return to their countries of origin. HMCIP drew particular attention to the government's policy of using the centres for indefinite detention of inmates, a practice that the government frowns upon in other countries and which can be seen as a form of torture. HMCIP stated: “The detrimental impact of this policy on a detainee's mental state and family life cannot be adequately quantified, and it is noteworthy that Britain remains one of very few countries that continue to use indefinite detention.”

HMCIP also reported that those detained were denied appropriate legal and medical facilities and denied access to social media and Skype, so were unable to contact family or friends. The Report stated that in some cases “security was disproportionate”, referring to a “prison-like environment” in some IRCs and an “oppressive” regime in one. The report also drew attention to the particularly repressive and inhuman conditions facing women and children in detention centres and noted that the UN's Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women had been denied access to the notorious Yarl's Wood IRC earlier this year. That facility was the subject of another damning report also published earlier in the year. In that document HMCIP again drew attention to the fact that over 50% of the women detained were subsequently released into the community. This, it added “raised questions about the validity of their detention in the first place”. It also highlighted the fact that the Home Office had broken its own guidelines by detain-

ing nearly 100 pregnant women, only a few of whom had subsequently been deported. The report concluded, “Yarl’s Wood is rightly a place of national concern.”

In fact, the recent escalation in the scale of the crisis has proved, if proof were needed, that the government’s entire approach to refugees, migrants and asylum seekers is a matter of serious national concern. It is an approach that is illustrated by Cameron’s statement about “swarms” of migrants and preventing people “breaking in to Britain”. It is exemplified by the government’s willingness to spend millions of pounds on security measures in Calais, which for centuries has been part of France not Britain. Even the Mayor of Calais accused David Cameron of treating the region with contempt.

The Line of March calls on everyone to add their voices



of condemnation against the government for its inhuman and criminal approach to those who are most vulnerable. We call on everyone to join in the various manifestations, such as the national demonstration on September 12.

WORKERS' FORUM

Jeremy Corbyn and the New Politics

Jeremy Corbyn has been elected Leader of the Labour Party on the first ballot with 59.5% of the vote. In his victory speech he said, “We are a party organically linked together between the unions and party membership and all the affiliated organisations. That is where we get our strength from.” It remains crucial that the organised workers get behind the anti-austerity agenda that Corbyn’s campaign has represented. Space has opened up for the independent programme of the working class. It is necessary to occupy that space and expand the space for the advance of the historic mission of the working class to build a new and just society and solve its problems in its favour and that of the people as a whole.

A feature of the campaign of Jeremy Corbyn has been his readiness to take a stand on the important problems facing society, rather than follow the path of expediency or the outlook that the ends justify the means.

For example, Corbyn has released documents on: Defence Diversification; Protecting Our Planet; Mental Health; Northern Future; Railways; The Economy in 2020; Working with Women; A Better Future for Young People; The Arts. He has also made constructive comments on a number of other issues, and, as he says, poses a problem for the press because he always answers their questions.

Jeremy Corbyn has said that a fuse has been lit for a new kind of politics. With this outcome, his campaign has stressed, it is clear that a fundamental change of approach to politics is long overdue. The characteristic of this new politics is acts of conscious participation by the working class and the whole electorate. It is a characteristic that is opposed to pragmatism and takes a stand on principle.

The fact that Jeremy Corbyn clearly stands for an anti-austerity programme captured the imagination. The

issue is to build the movement to oppose the neo-liberal austerity agenda of Cameron acting on behalf of monopoly capital, an agenda which is wrecking society and the economy, and to advance the movement for the empowerment of the working class and people.

The opposition to what Jeremy Corbyn has been presenting to the electorate has been aimed at stifling the initiative of the people in finding their bearings and making advances. It is an attempt to prevent discussion on the problems facing the people and society, and embargo envisioning that there is an alternative to the anti-social, anti-worker, pro-war agenda of the ruling elite. It is an attempt to deny the reality of the nature of the capitalist economy which is serving the rich and decimating social programmes.

At the very least, Corbyn’s candidacy has challenged the complacency and authoritarianism of the Westminster consensus. It has shown that the working class and people will support the position of putting the well-being of the people and the advance of society in the first place, and not be taken in by the mantra that “tough decisions” need to be taken to reduce the deficit, pay the rich, and submit to monopoly dictate.

The issue is for the people to prepare to defeat the austerity agenda of the Cameron government by building the movement, and crucially to engage in discussion and take action in order to further the concerns of the people and to develop the people’s involvement in political affairs. Ultimately, the goal is to empower the people to be the decision-makers at every level in society, have a real say in governance and determine the direction of the economy so that it serves the public good.

The issue of building a social movement is consistent with the right of the electorate to participate in political

affairs, to elect and be elected, for their will to be transformed into the legal will through a political system that serves their interests.

What people have seen in Jeremy Corbyn is someone who is part of and comes out of the movement against war, against the neo-liberal agenda and for progress, the public good and new political arrangements. Just as the SNP in Scotland, standing for national rights and against austerity, swept all before it in the general election, so Corbyn has galvanised discussion on the problems facing society.

With Jeremy Corbyn's victory, the opportunity presents itself to actually turn things around, consistent with the mood and demands of the times. Things will not be the same, as the overwhelming support for him, especially



from the youth, has shown that there is unbounded potential to challenge the austerity agenda, block the anti-social offensive and fight for the alternative, for democratic renewal and a new society.

The Working Class Festival Which Is the Durham Miners Gala

In the wake of the May 7 Conservative electoral coup, the 131st Durham Miners Gala and Big Meeting on July 11 affirmed the role of the working class as being at the centre of modern developments. The Gala was massive – an estimated 150,000 people – and with an optimistic and independent spirit.

As Dave Hopper, the General Secretary of the Durham Miners' Association, wrote in the Gala's souvenir brochure, "Despite all the attempts by the Tory press and media to write us out of history, we are still here in massive numbers to celebrate our community spirit and carry our socialist message on behalf of the working class."

Dave Hopper's message continued, "Capitalism has failed the people.

"The banking system was brought to its knees by the relentless drive to extort profit from the efforts of working people and now the bankers continue their parasitic activity while the poorest are made to pay.

"Politicians of all parties are all talking about aspirations as if aspirations are exclusive to the middle class. The subtext, of course, is the daft idea that the lower classes have no aspirations and are content to live off benefits. But we all have aspirations. Aspirations to live in an equal society where there is adequate social housing, schools and healthcare for everyone and where the sick and disabled are looked after and those who are unemployed are treated with dignity.

"Capitalism has proved incapable of providing such a society, so surely we must start with the aspiration to create a socialist society and demonstrate to the 15 million who did not vote in this election that there is an alternative to the career politicians.

"It is not going to be easy but they have drawn the battle lines. We have to resist these attacks on the weakest in our society and give our youth an opportunity in life. So let's start the fight back at today's Gala."

The characteristic of the Gala is that working people take over the city of Durham for the day. The culture of the

workers, upholding the spirit of the miners decades after the neo-liberal anti-social offensive wiped out the mining industry, is represented by brass and silver bands, as well as pipe bands. Every tune that is played is transformed into something positive by these bands. And the miners lodge banners are carried with pride and verve to add to the excitement. Other trade union banners are present in numbers. It is clear that there is no despondency after May 7, but a determination to affirm the dignity of what it means to be human and be a worker, and to fight for the rights of all.

Speakers on the platform at the large open space of the Racecourse included Jeremy Corbyn, Labour Party leadership candidate, Matt Wrack of the Fire Brigades Union, Tosh McDonald, president of ASLEF, Chris Keates, general secretary of NASUWT, and Len McCluskey, general secretary of Unite. The meeting was chaired by the general secretary of the Durham Miners' Association, Dave Hopper. Delegations from Cuba and Venezuela also spoke to the meeting from the platform.

In his closing speech to the gathering, Len McCluskey said of Unite's support for Jeremy Corbyn: "Anyone who thinks that Jeremy's policies are too left, or could not win popular support in our country. Watch this space.

"People call Jeremy and Unite the extreme left. Is it extreme to oppose austerity, wrecking the lives of millions? Is it extreme to stand for higher taxes on the wealthy to help tackle the inequality? Extreme to support our NHS? Extreme to oppose criminal wars like Iraq? And is it extreme to support proper rights for trade unionism? No, comrades, it isn't. We stand for the common sense of our age. We stand for the values of equality, decency, fairness and social justice."

The *Workers' Weekly* issue of July 11, distributed in its hundreds at the Gala, had the title "No to Austerity! For a New Direction for Society!" It concluded: "In summary, the need is to build the Workers' Opposition in the fight to end austerity, bring about a new direction for society

that stands up for public right over monopoly right and takes up the challenge to effect democratic renewal and empower the people to make the decisions. The Gala embodies accepting this challenge that the working class must get further organised and build the Workers' Opposition around which all forces can rally to defeat austerity, defend the rights of all and at the same time fight for an anti-war government. Truly the role of the working class is that of 'the hewer of society'!"

Long may the Durham Miners Gala continue and flourish!



THE BATTLE FOR THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE NHS

Justice for Lewisham Hospital!

The Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign is posing the urgent question: is Lewisham Hospital at risk again? With this in mind it has launched a new petition.

The Campaign (SLHC) says that it has launched this petition as “we are on high alert”. The SLHC fears that plans are being made, once again, that involve closing Lewisham Hospital and selling off its site. It will be remembered that the Campaign won a famous victory in the courts in a judicial review of the government's plans to run down, potentially threatening closure, of the hospital, particularly its A&E and Maternity departments. The courts ruled that the Trust Special Administrator for South London Health Care Trust (of which Lewisham was not a part) acted outside his powers in involving Lewisham Hospital in the plans to overcome that Trust's financial difficulties. The government then, showing contempt for the will of the people and the deliberations of the judges, passed legislation giving Trust Special Administrators worryingly extra powers. Thus the government acted according to the mantra of hospitals competing to provide health care on the one hand, but dragging in “financially sound” hospitals into the affairs of those in “financial crisis” on the other. Of course, the government has had its sights set on favouring private interests benefiting from the provision of health care. This is even more so now that the Conservative have formed a majority government and is escalating the neo-liberal pro-austerity agenda.

Specifically, the Chief Executive of NHS England, Simon Stevens, has given the commitment that the NHS will make so-called “efficiency savings” amounting to £22 billion over the next five years. The government is backing this target. It is being said that the proportion of this to be borne by South East London is of the order of £1 billion.

So it is in this context the SLHC is issuing a warning and calling for signing of a new petition. The strength of the Campaign has been that it has mobilised and relied on the people in the community, and on that basis formed links with other similar campaigns across England and Wales.

A health strategy document has been put out by the six Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) that deal with the

six London boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley and Bromley. This was in line with the requirement of NHS England that all CCGs provide a five-year strategy. This strategy programme is entitled *Our Healthier South East London (OHSEL)*.

SLHC notes that while this document does not explicitly talk in terms of closing Lewisham Hospital, it uses arguments for reconfiguring local NHS services very similar to those used by the government-imposed Trust Special Administrator.

In 2012, the proposal was to close essential acute services at Lewisham Hospital including A&E, maternity, intensive care and children's wards. These proposals were quashed in the High Court just over two years ago on July 31, 2013. The new strategy aims to save over £1 billion by 2020 including a loss of over 400 acute beds. Full public consultation on this has not been guaranteed.

The Campaign stresses: “The message from Lewisham once again is that we *need* our hospital at the heart of our 300,000-strong community.”

SLHC writes that what is being proposed in the OHSEL strategy is very unclear. It aims to replace hospital care by more care in the community. The Campaign is naturally not against better care in the community, and it is good to keep people out of hospital who do not need to be there. But, the SLHC stresses, there is *no evidence* that community-based care can replace hospital services to any significant degree. Furthermore, social care faces further government cuts of 30%.

No new or convincing arguments are being made that would justify closing Lewisham Hospital. Indeed, there is considerable population growth in the area which has not been taken into account in the five-year plans. No capacity exists in surrounding hospitals to take on the extra patients. In short, it is unsafe and goes against the right to health care to close a major hospital when people desperately need it.

It is extremely worrying and disconcerting that London Health chiefs have regularly referred to the failure to close Lewisham as “unfinished business”. Now is the time to

be wary. This is a warning shot. The Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign is watching developments carefully and is ready to fight again to defend the hospital and maternity services which belong to the people of Lewisham. Despite the victories that the Campaign and the people of Lewisham have won, the SLHC has remained vigilant, being aware that the pro-austerity agenda makes the threat of further closures a real possibility.

The SLHC is calling on everyone concerned to sign its petition, which it has launched to highlight the current situation and show how essential Lewisham Hospital still is for the community. *The Line of March* adds its voice and

encourages people to sign and publicise the petition. It can be found on the Save Lewisham Hospital website.



NO TO IMPERIALIST WAR!

Britain Must End All Interference in Ukraine and Withdraw from NATO

In the latter part of July, NATO forces launched massive troop exercises involving over 2,000 troops from 18 countries in Ukraine. The provocative sabre-rattling has been condemned by the Russian Foreign Minister. A statement described NATO's actions as "fuelling revanchist moods among the party of war in Kiev and will jeopardise the outlined progress in the peaceful settlement of a deep internal crisis in Ukraine".

The latest provocation is occurring just weeks after the recent NATO meeting in Brussels, where the Defence Secretary, Michael Fallon, announced that the government will step up its programme of training for the Ukrainian armed forces. Fallon also announced that a UK-led NATO Trust Fund, co-chaired with Canada and Germany will provide millions of pounds to allow the Ukrainian armed forces improved communications capability and the ability to develop a Regional Airspace Security Programme.

Those announcements come just days after he outlined plans for the UK to contribute a minimum of 1,000 troops to NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) every year into the next decade. The VJTF was launched at NATO Summit Newport last year and is envisaged as a "spearhead force" aimed specifically against Russia but also deployable elsewhere. From 2017, when Britain will lead the VJTF, it will contribute some 3,000 troops from all sectors of the armed forces. These will be deployed at two regional headquarters in Poland and Romania and to units

in the three Baltic States, as well as Poland, Romania and Bulgaria. Fallon also committed Royal Air Force Typhoon jets to "Baltic Air Policing" next year for the third year running. According to Fallon such measures "will mean more Ukrainian soldiers receiving vital training that will help them resist Russian aggression". He added that the government's commitment to the warmongering NATO alliance "shows that Britain stands at the heart of NATO and continues to support Ukraine's territorial integrity".

Since the Newport Summit in Wales during September last year, NATO has increased its warmongering activities in Eastern Europe, both to strengthen the military capacity of Ukraine, and other countries in the region, and as part of its efforts to encircle and threaten Russia. In early June, Britain and 17 other countries staged provocative military exercises in the Baltic region just a hundred miles from Russia's borders and the strategic naval base at Kaliningrad, involving thousands of troops accompanied by naval and air support. These were reported to be the largest military exercises in the region for a quarter of a century and are presented as a deterrent to alleged future "aggression" by Russia. However, NATO's sabre-rattling in the region has occurred on almost a continual basis for many months. In June, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg announced that NATO forces in Eastern Europe would soon be tripled from its current strength of 13,000 to close to 40,000 troops. Initially it was announced that the VJTF

would consist of only 4,000 troops. Recently both Poland and Lithuania have called for US weapons to be stationed on their soil and this week the US government announced that it would be sending tanks, artillery and other weapons to all three Baltic states as well as to Poland, Romania and Bulgaria.

And ambassadors from all 28 NATO states met in Brussels on July 28 at Turkey's request in the context of the air-strikes carried out by Turkey, a NATO member, on Isis, the so-called Islamic State, and PKK, the Kurdistan Workers' Party. This presages a further escalation of conflict and aggression in the region, and comes after David Cameron admitted that British pilots have been flying and will continue to fly US fighter jets to bomb targets in Syria against the express decision of the House of Commons.

As regards the warmongering posturing by NATO amounting to the encirclement of Russia, not surprisingly this has contributed to greater instability in the region and an increasingly belligerent war of words between NATO and Russia. For its part the Russian government has also mounted military exercises and spoken of strengthening its nuclear capability, which NATO has then presented as signs of "Russian aggression". Russian president Vladimir Putin was reported to have recently remarked, "If someone threatens our territories, it means that we will have to aim our armed forces accordingly at the territories from where the threat is coming. How else could it be? It is NATO that's approaching our borders, it's not like we are moving anywhere."

The British government and its NATO allies present the situation as one of "Russian aggression" in Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea. They claim that Russia is providing military support for its "proxies" in Ukraine and is solely responsible for the bloodshed and instabili-

ty throughout the region. This "aggression" it is claimed must be met by the resolve of NATO, which it is alleged is the defender of the "rules-based international system". If unchecked, the British government and its allies claim that "Russian aggression" will threaten neighbouring states in the Baltic as well as Poland and others. The fact is that Ukraine is a country that NATO and the EU wish to incorporate within their economic and military orbit. Britain, the EU and IMF have already taken financial measures to secure economic incorporation. This has been accompanied with the political intervention that culminated in the ousting of the former president and the promotion of openly fascist organisations and elements that have links to, or are part of the Ukrainian government and state apparatus. The British government and its NATO allies are continuing to support the fascists and to militarise Ukraine not just for economic purposes but as part of their efforts militarise Eastern Europe in order to encircle and weaken Russia.

The sabre-rattling by NATO, deployment of increasing numbers of troops and weapons in Eastern Europe and continual militarisation of Ukraine is creating an extremely unstable and dangerous situation, as well as considerable loss of life. There is also much talk of a renewed Cold War and even discussion about the deployment of nuclear weapons, most significantly at the recent Brussels Summit. There can be little doubt that contention between Russia and NATO is intensifying, with NATO using any Russian responses to its provocations as an excuse for even greater sabre-rattling.

In these circumstances all peace-loving people must be extremely vigilant and step up the preparations to stay the hands of the warmongers and create the conditions for Britain's withdrawal from NATO and ushering in an anti-war government.

DPRK'S ROLE IN MAINTAINING PEACE IN EAST ASIA AGAINST US IMPERIALIST HOSTILITY

Anniversaries of the Liberation of Korea from Japan and the Founding of Democratic Korea

70th Anniversary of the Liberation of Korea from Japan

August 15, 2015, marked the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Korea from Japan. The Korean people, who had won victory over the Japanese imperialists by their own efforts, had by September 6, 1945, declared a Korean People's Republic. The Korean people affirmed their will to never again be a subject people.

However, August 15, 1945, also marked the day on which the US unilaterally divided Korea at the 38th parallel. On September 8, the US military arrived in Korea and declared the Korean People's Republic illegal. The US

installed a puppet government headed by Syngman Rhee in the southern part of Korea which they occupied and on August 15, 1948, they declared it the Republic of Korea. This divided the Korean nation, so as to smash the structures the people were putting in place to establish a new government of their choosing.

Founding of Democratic Korea, September 9, 1948

The Korean people rebelled and on September 9, 1948, responded by establishing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) as a bulwark against the interference of the US imperialists in Korean affairs.



Kim Il Sung signing the Armistice Agreement at Panmunjom on July 27, 1953

Korea and countering the US imperialists' threats and hostility is a crucial and outstanding factor for peace in East Asia and globally. The goal of the reunification of Korea "by our nation itself" would enable the 75 million Korean people to take their rightful place as a fully independent nation that stands for peace and friendly relations between nations and peoples.

Friends of Korea at Marx Memorial Library

With this in mind, the Co-ordinating Committee of Friends of Korea in Britain organised a public meeting on Saturday, August 8, at the historic Marx Memorial Library in Clerkenwell, London. The meeting was chaired by Andy Brooks (Chair of Friends of Korea), and

a presentation was given by Dermot Hudson, Vice-Chair, on the background to the Korean people's liberation and the immediate sabotage of this momentous historical event by the US imperialists. Secretary of Friends of Korea, Michael Chant, gave a keynote speech which called on all progressive and democratic forces to support the goal of the movement for the peaceful reunification of Korea and to acquaint themselves with the actual situation in the DPRK in opposition to the disinformation promoted by its enemies. John McLeod, who represents the Socialist Labour Party on the Co-ordinating Committee, also gave a heartfelt presentation.

The guest of honour was His Excellency Hyon Hak Bong, Ambassador of the DPR Korea to the UK. Ambassador Hyon not only gave an excellent and penetrating speech, but captivated the audience during the question and answer session with his analysis, information and good humour.

The United States Must Sign a Peace Treaty with the DPRK (North Korea) and Bring to an End the Korean War Once and For All!

The continued existence of the DPRK today, as an increasingly industrialised and thriving country, is a miracle worked by the people and their leadership in the face of the criminality of the US imperialists and others who have continually conspired to destroy it. The most infamous of these attempts was the Korean War of 1950-1953. The US imperialists and their allies sought to destroy and subjugate the DPRK through their aggression and brutality. However, the DPRK fought these aggressors to a standstill and forced them to sign an Armistice Agreement.

After the war, the DPRK carried forward the revolution and socialist construction through many stages under very difficult conditions. These included military threats and economic blockades imposed by the big powers led by US imperialism under the aegis of the United Nations. With fidelity to their principles and profound conviction in the justness of their cause, the Korean people have prevailed over the difficulties and adversities. Today they are following their own chosen path which puts the people at the centre stage of development.

The DPRK continues to take the initiative, as it has done since 1953, in de-escalating the tensions between north and south despite the hostility of the US and the provocations of south Korea. It continues to put forward proposals to bring about peace and a just reunification of the Korean Peninsula. It is high time that the US signed a peace treaty with the DPRK as mandated by the Armistice Agreement of 1953. A peace treaty would reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula and pave the way for the people of Korea to advance on the road to the peaceful reunification of their country, free from outside interference.

The DPRK's consistent stand in opposing the US military presence in the south of



His Excellency Hyon Hak Bong addressing the Friends of Korea meeting at Marx House



John Buckle Centre

Centre for communism and communist and progressive literature from Britain and around the world

Please contact us by phone or email before visiting.

170 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2LA

Tel: 020 7627 0599

E-mail: jbbooks@btconnect.com

The title *The Line of March* is taken from the programmatic document of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), "The Line of March to a New Society". It signifies that the goal of the movements of the working class and people and their struggles is indeed a new society, a society that puts human beings and their rights at the centre of all considerations. It signifies that the movements of the working class and people are aimed at removing the obstacles which are placed on the progress of this line of march.

Order Your Copy of Line of March Now!

Subscription rates within Britain (including p&p) are £35.95 per year. Political contributions to support this important work are also welcome. Cheques should be made payable to 'RCPB(ML)' and sent to 170 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2LA. For any subscription applications from abroad or for bulk subscriptions, please contact RCPB(ML) directly. For all other enquiries regarding the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), please visit our Website: www.rcpbml.org.uk

Workers' Weekly

Newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

Website: www.rcpbml.org.uk

Published weekly online

Workers' Weekly Email Edition Subscribe by e-mail weekly

Address: 170 Wandsworth Road, London, SW8 2LA. Phone: 020 7627 0599

Workers' Daily News Feed

Daily On Line News Feed of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

Website: www.rcpbml.org.uk

e-mail: office@rcpbml.org.uk

Published by RCPB(ML)
170 Wandsworth Road,
London SW8 2LA
Tel: 020 7627 0599

The **Line of March** 

Monthly Publication of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)