

# Workers Weekly

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

## Opening in London of Exhibition of Art Works from the DPRK

**T**he opening took place on July 18 at La Galleria of Pall Mall in London of an exhibition of paintings, posters, ceramics and tapestry

from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

The exhibition runs until September 2, 2007.

The exhibition is under the

curatorship of David Heather, and was declared open by the recently appointed present Ambassador of the DPRK to Britain, His Excellency Ja Song Nam. Also

present at the preview were two of the people's artists featured in the exhibition, and officials from the Embassy in London.

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## THE FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE FACE OF THE FLOODING CRISIS



A Symposium and Concert entitled 'Confronting the Crisis of Climate Change' was held on July 1 at Cecil Sharp House, London. A diverse range of people took part in the day's discussions from composers to scientists.

**T**he government and the Environment Agency are to be condemned for their complacency in the face of one of the worst environmental crises in Britain in living memory. Their stated attitude, typified by the

Prime Minister, is that "we will do what we can" and to mouth expressions of sympathy. After the floods in South Yorkshire, the Environment Agency under sustained criticism took the official line that these were exceptional

circumstances, and that although of course it was regrettable that people were suffering the effects and dangers of flooding, in general the flood defences had done well where the problems were only of "normal" dimensions.

Much the same attitude is being taken with the floods in Gloucestershire, Worcester, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and

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### Commentary

## Blair and the Middle East

**T**HE FORMER PRIME MINISTER, TONY BLAIR, undertook a two-day tour of the Middle East in his new role special envoy to

the so-called Quartet, which comprises the United States, the European Union, the UN and Russia. The Quartet has assumed the role of intervening in the region and in particular interfering with regard to the right to statehood of the Palestinian people. The Quartet's "Roadmap", introduced in 2002, has established a plan to eventually create a Palestinian state alongside the state of Israel. The Quartet has stated that its objective is to promote an end to what it refers to as the "conflict" in the region. More specifically, it is to "help Palestinians as they build the institutions and

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## Climate Change and the Flood Crisis in Britain

# Flood Crisis, Climate Change, and What Is To Be Done



**A**s floods invaded hundreds of homes and left a third of a million without drinking water, 350,000 without basic supplies, 50,000 without power, thousands more people homeless and cause £2bn worth of damage, and are still not over, what was the cause of this mass water rainfall? What has been done to not only provide for those affected by the floods, but to address the root causes of this unprecedented weather?

The greatest flood of modern times worsened as rivers burst their banks and deluged more people, buildings and countryside with storm water. A month's worth and more of rainfall fell inside an hour. What became obvious, as *The Independent* of July 24 wrote, is that the government and civil authorities were "struggling to cope, not only with the sheer physical scale of the disaster itself but with the very concept of it". The last big flood was in 1947, and was not near the scale of this recent flood, so in this sense this onslaught of rainfall is unfamiliar and new, yet this intense flood is exactly what has been forecast for a decade or more.

No one can yet attribute the flood events of the previous weeks directly to global warming; but the catastrophic "extreme rainfall events" of the summer of 2007 on June 24 and July 20, are entirely consistent with repeated predictions of what climate change will bring.

"It is nearly 10 years since the scientists of the UK Climate Impacts Programme first gave their detailed forecast of what global warming had in store for Britain in the 21st century – and high up on the list was rainfall, increasing both in frequency and in intensity," *The Independent* wrote.

"This was thought most likely to happen in winter, with summers predicted to be hotter and dryer. But yesterday Peter Stott of the Met Office's Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research, an author of a new scientific paper linking increases in rainfall to climate change, commented: 'It is possible under climate change that there could be an increase of extreme rainfall even under general drying.'

"The paper by Dr Stott and other authors, reported in *The*

*Independent* yesterday, detects for the first time a 'human fingerprint' in rainfall increases in recent decades in the mid-latitudes of the Northern Hemisphere – that is, it finds they were partly caused by global warming, itself caused by emissions of greenhouse gases."

Scientists have been fully aware of extreme rainfall predictions, attributed to climate change, and has steadily reinforced the warnings. *The Independent* pointed out, "One of the most important came from a group of experts commissioned to look at the risks by the Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir David King, under the Government's Foresight Programme, in 2004. Their report, *Future Flooding*, said that unless precautions were taken, more severe floods brought about by climate change could massively increase the number of people and the amount of property at risk." Yet the Environment Agency and government have not acted according to these findings: the Environment Agency failed to install defences in areas known to be at risk. Only later did the government promote action: Hilary Benn, the secretary of state for the

environment announced an independent inquiry into the impact of changing weather, coastal and river flood defences and drainage systems, and the co-ordination of the siting of water and power works. For those who have experienced the impact of the floods this is too little too late. It may be viewed as incompetent for ministers to go back to square one because a review only three years ago had recommended the agency be given an over-arching role in handling floods. The idea had been accepted by the government but not implemented.

On Monday, Gordon Brown denied that flood defence budgets had been cut, pledging that £600million that would rise to £800m, when what is actually needed, as suggested by the Environment Agency and other bodies is £1billion.

Although the effects of climate change are not at the top of the government's agenda, coming behind war, privatisation with which to pay the monopolies, climate change is certainly affecting the people both directly and indirectly. Our mother earth is in dan-

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# Climate Change and the Flood Crisis in Britain

## Flood Crisis, Climate Change, and What Is To Be Done

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ger and as these floods show so too are we. This is our cry to build sustainable ways of producing energy that is carbon efficient, to build public transport systems that are nationalised and carbon efficient. The workers and people have mother earth, their earth, at the top of their agenda. This was highlighted in the recent Durham Miners' Gala where union leaders addressed the environment as a priority concern, suggesting coal as a clean way to produce energy.

The workers and people in solidarity with those who have been ravaged by this rainfall should step up the fight for their agenda which holds the earth and its atmosphere as one with humanity's survival and prosperity. The workers and people realise what the earth provides for us is not to be jeopardised by a ruling elite that does not represent their interests. The earth belongs to the people and humans and animals alike are threatened by the careless and egocentric actions of a few. The workers must inherit the earth, but we cannot take that for granted. The world is crying as we see it in environmental turbulence, and war; there are answers and there is a way out of the various crises. This is why the workers must take up the programme to become the decision-makers, creating an anti-war government, creating an environmentally sound government, creating a pro-social government. Only by leading the way can we empower ourselves to show that we are the ones who hold the answers to all human questions. We are the problem solvers and we shall solve the major and minor problems of our day.

## THE FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE FACE OF THE FLOODING CRISIS

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other areas.

Individuals are just supposed to get on with things, cope, and find a way to get to work so that business can continue. People, not relying on the government, have been acting together and organising themselves.

While the government has left the flood victims to fend for themselves, the emergency services have been going all out in a self-sacrificing manner to ensure that the people are rescued and that the hardship they are experiencing is ameliorated.

Meanwhile Gordon Brown has merely said that assistance will be provided to help get things back to normal "as quickly as possible", quoting some figure for flood defence budgets and looking to further increases

"if necessary". In other words, the sheer scale and depth of the problem is in no way appreciated, come to terms with or acted upon by government. The government did no more than promise to "do something to help" the disaster funds which were independently set up after the floods in South Yorkshire, Hull and elsewhere, and there is no indication that funds will be provided on the scale needed now. Furthermore, the immediate issues are avoided.

It is clear that the attitude from the official circles that "we will do what we can" is the norm. Despite that fact that the crisis of climate change has become one of the foremost issues in society, the government has taken no responsibility to respond to the scientific evidence and put in place a national plan, expediting alternative sources of energy. Instead, it is making the issue one of individual carbon footprints and exhorting individuals to change their attitude and behaviour. Gordon Brown has indicated that building on flood plains will not only continue but be stepped up, without the recognition that measures must be taken to harness nature to human ends.

Environmental funding has also been cut in the period preceding this crisis. And during the crisis people have been left, for example, without a supply of drinking water. The pitiful amount of money that the government is to provide to the "forgotten city" of Hull has already been mentioned. All this points towards the failure of the state and the government. Some charities have pointed out

that, despite all the technological potential in this country, they are treating the crisis in the same manner as they would flooding in the developing world. Facts are facts, and scientific predictions on the implications of climate change back up these facts. Yet the government and the Environment Agency persist in speaking of the crisis as it is one that can only be expected "once in every 150 years", to quote Gordon Brown. If, in addition, it were true that the problem is "19th century infrastructure", as he also said, this is an even more telling indictment of the lack of investment by 20th century governments, in particular the present Labour government, in these vital social programmes.

The government is exposed, and the question is how should the authority be held to account? Who should pay the costs? What is required from a responsible government is a conscious plan in which the shaping and management of the environment in the interest of human beings goes hand in hand with conservation and rendering nature its due respect.

Faced with the failure of government to take responsibility, the people are organising themselves to deal with the situation and become activated. They are overcoming the fragmentation of society that prevails, and are becoming conscious that it is the government's failure of social responsibility that is an issue they themselves must take up for solution in order to overcome this crisis and avert future ones.



**Catcliffe near Sheffield on June 26 this year**





## Climate Change and the Flood Crisis in Britain

# Mother Earth and the Human Factor/Social Consciousness

Paper presented by Michael Chant\* to the  
Symposium Confronting the Crisis of Climate  
Change, London, July 1, 2007

**T**oday we are focusing on the dangers for the human species and the environment – in a word, the importance to humanity at this critical time of safeguarding Mother Earth, her human offspring and the whole of life and its delicate balance. It is common ground that harming either the whole earth or the mass of humanity will bring ruination and devastation to human existence. The conclusion is that there is an urgent need to halt and reverse this destructive trend. What I wish to emphasise is that to counter the trend is to counter the striving for private enrichment and domination of human and natural resources of the world by the vested interests that totally disregard the warnings of impending disasters. It is to develop a counter trend of political and social responsibility that begins with the people.

Of course, there is also the cynicism generated by the powers-that-be, that the coming and present dangers are all unfounded, which works as a kind of double-bluff when it is said that talk of impending disaster is simply a means for governments to manipulate the people. While it is true that governments do have an agenda which they will use the spectre of climate change to push as well as through other means, it is important not to succumb to this cynicism, and in particular to throw the baby out with the bath-water. Equally, the powers-that-be generate hysteria, that disaster is so close that humankind is going to be overwhelmed, and in generating hysteria the precise aim is to overwhelm the people so that they are not able to think and do not take action to bring about solutions. It is therefore also important not to succumb to marginalisation and powerlessness. Empowerment is the key. The fundamental point of the working people having a decisive say and control over all political and economic decisions in a socialised economy is extremely key. Therefore, to develop the widespread concern over the crisis of climate change, and environmen-

tal despoliation into a conscious movement for people's empowerment is certainly the order of the day. Otherwise, how is the people's will to be enforced?

In opposition comes the disinformation of the ruling elite which controls the mass media, working to articulate the issue to create hysteria, disinform the people and push the agenda of monopolies. This disinformation is used, for example, to try and induce a change of behaviour. The point here is that the onus is being put on the individual as the source of the problem, not that this is an issue for the society and humanity as a whole, i.e. that everything is

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ok apart from the behaviour of individuals, who must consume less in terms of energy and material goods. This lets society off the hook, and induces guilt of the individual. In emphasising that the human factor/social consciousness must be activated, one is also saying that the emphasis must be put on the responsibility of society and not individuals to take up the problems and solve them. It was once infamously said that there is no such thing as society (only individuals and family values). This is actually the nub of the problem. Once the objective reality of society is denied, then that coherence which comes from social organisation is also destroyed, and individuals are made to think that it is "up to them" and behave accordingly, i.e. that they have no alternative but to fend for themselves.

This is not to downplay the initiative of the people in raising the issue, taking action themselves

# Climate Change and the Flood Crisis in Britain

and demanding that governments take action. Far from it. But the power-that-be create this gulf between themselves and the society they are meant to represent, so the two proceed along different tracks. As long as the people are appealed to as individuals, for example the issue being for the individual to reduce their "carbon footprint" and "do their bit", then the ability to deal with the problem at a fundamental level lacks coherence, and the state, with its huge power, is not prevented from pressing ahead with its neo-liberal agenda. In fact, along with this disempowerment go the attempts to split the people ideologically or on the grounds of tactics, which also deflects from and attempts to cover up the huge war agenda and the brute grabbing of resources by these state machines and the contention between them.

Along with the increase in wars and aggression and nuclear weapons, climate change is now one of the most crucial issues affecting the whole human species. It can be said that these issues are in fact very much intertwined. Not only is war and aggression a great despoiler and polluter, but it is a vast machine to destroy produced values, to lay waste to precious resources, and a huge diversion of expenditure away from the people's well-being and returning investment to Mother Earth, to the natural and social environments. It is the greatest attack on the globe and all the working people.

The earth is a dynamical system. It has its identity as a whole, which must be respected. There is society, with its social consciousness, and the individual as a part of society, the human factor. And there is the whole earth: the dynamic of the precious relationship between the human societies and the whole earth of which they are part. For example, in the economic sphere, the agenda of working people must be to build a harmonious national economy based on need and the claims of individuals. This contrasts with the agenda of neo-liberal globalisation and its law of the jungle, its

imposition of anti-worker, anti-social and anti-national regimes. As in the required development of national economies, so with the whole earth: more must be put in than is taken out, not the opposite. There is a need for a definite pattern of organisation, for self-determination for the human species in equilibrium with its environment. The earth is crying out for sustainable development in the interests of humanity and the whole earth.

Modern social organisation presents the opportunity for solution, with the interconnectedness of the world, particularly of society. This should not be made a fetish as anything else should not be made a fetish. That is to say, local solutions need to be tied in with both global and national solutions. At all levels, the issue of self-determination is fundamental. This principle, however, cannot be realised without determined resistance against all blocks to social progress, of which the block to the people determining their own future is also fundamental.

The issue is not even so much global warming. One must look at the threats to the human species and to the dignity and balance of the earth as a whole. The people world-wide must be in a position

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to develop their unity in assessing these threats, resisting all those that wilfully and irresponsibly escalate these threats, and work out how to take a path which gives them the power to take action. In other words, they must be in a position to set a human-centred agenda, and concern for humanity and its world, its varied and pre-



Michael Chant addresses the Symposium

cious environment which nurtures humanity and society which gives humanity its social consciousness has to be the determining factor. Building resistance and planting the alternative – the two go hand in hand.

The issue is that the problem has to be framed in the way that reality actually poses it, and to discuss how it is posed is actually the starting point. That is really the point of today's symposium. Sometimes it is very difficult to make this start because the problem is posed in such a way as to divide people into two camps, for and against (or to divide the polity into hostile camps in the interests of getting political parties elected), when, one might say, there is a grain of truth (or falsity) in each camp. One might cite the issue of whether global warming is or is not man-made. In other words, one can become either aloof or fatalistic, or hysterical. One example of the implications of this is the debate over bio-fuels. This is now quite a well-known example. The argument of cutting down on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and moving to renewable energy is being used to divert from food production, push genetic engineering and massively exacerbate the problem of food insecurity. As one writer has put it, only by framing the problem in the context of "liveability" does the impact on poor people become apparent. In other words, the prob-

lem is not posed in conformity with reality; it is being posed out of the context of the relation of human beings to their natural and social environments.

It is necessary to mention both the natural and social environments because the issue is not simply one of a balance or equilibrium between the human beings and the natural world. It is also one of the relationship between human beings and the society in which they live, in which the relations between rich and poor, between the powerful and the disempowered, determine the direction of society and determine who is to be responsible for the fate of humanity and the natural world.

There are serious issues to address, but it cannot be said that is the people who are asleep and those in power who are simply taking advantage of them. The people, in the face of the irresponsibility of vested interests – interests, that is to say, which are vested in making the biggest return on capital – do have the ingenuity to turn around even the most pessimistic projections. Human revolutions have, in the past, for instance, overcome the direst Malthusian warnings, and they can today overcome the most dire predictions of the chaos caused by the depletion of energy resources, for example. But "resource wars" are a serious

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# Climate Change and the Flood Crisis in Britain

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warning that something fundamental has to change in the organisation of society and who makes the life and death decisions. It can and is argued, for example, that the agenda of the "war on terror", amongst other things, is a programme to control precious energy resources.

This is not all. It is ironic that

**Along with the increase in wars and aggression and nuclear weapons, climate change is now one of the most crucial issues affecting the whole human species. It can be said that these issues are in fact very much intertwined. Not only is war and aggression a great despoiler and polluter, but it is a vast machine to destroy produced values, to lay waste to precious resources, and a huge diversion of expenditure away from the people's well-being and returning investment to Mother Earth, to the natural and social environments. It is the greatest attack on the globe and all the working people.**

while those advocating the "war on terror" frequently target so-called "failed and failing states", these self-same states are failing their citizens totally when it comes to the effects of spectacular natural events. The example of the US administration's response to the threat and then the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina – and more generally the crisis of climate change – is precisely one of a failed state, a state failing to safeguard the lives, livelihoods and well-being of its inhabitants. In our own case of the recent flooding in this country, the Environment Agency and others have displayed astonishing complacency, while the people and the

public services which have put the human factor in command are the ones that have shown initiative. I am indebted to an article by Phil England for bringing to my attention a quote from Raymond Williams used in the 2006 Camp for Climate Action publication *Time Up*: "To be truly radical is to make hope possible, rather than despair convincing."

To arrive at the solution and get to the roots of the problem, one has to look at the considerations. What guides what the people must demand and what they must do? A theoretical consideration is that putting the human factor in command has enabled humanity in the past to overcome what have seemed insuperable crises, of war, of feeding the population, of housing and guaranteeing them security. Humankind's ingenuity has ensured that the collectives of the people have been able to provide solutions. But the demand for the people to be the decision makers and become empowered is at the same time under the greatest threat at present. But that only underlines that what is essential is that the initiative must lie with the people and not those with the economic and political power who have usurped that power by virtue of not only the ownership of capital but of armed might, the control of the media and so on.

When these considerations are taken into account, it must be said that only if working people themselves have the decision-making power and control over the production and distribution of social product can the serious problems facing Mother Earth and our societies be provided with solutions. Of fundamental importance is that a people must be sovereign to exercise control over its natural and human resources. The fundamental principle in this regard is then that of recognition of the inviolable right of all peoples to determine their own affairs nationally and internationally. The people must be in a position to provide legal guarantees for the protection of the environment in the interests of humanity. There is a pressing and fundamental issue of how to

release the productive forces, material and social, under the command of society to deal with the general crisis.

The issue is which will prevail: the political will of the government to pay the rich and of the powerful countries to continue to exploit and divide up the world between themselves, and to use the environment as a political instrument, or the political will of the entire world's people? The aim is that human rights need to be recognised as fundamental and that the political process be renewed so that the will of the people is the key political force.

In summary, to confront the crisis of climate change and the threat to Mother Earth and the human species, the people first

and foremost must determine to set their own agenda and implement their own decisions. The people must organise to become the decision-makers! People are in motion at many levels to this end, organising to take ownership of their own future. It is this trend which must be cherished, fostered, widened and deepened. Respect for the dignity of Mother Earth and for the dignity of human beings go hand in hand. To eliminate imbalance and degradation, which actually favours no one, let us activate the human factor/social consciousness to advance to a situation where the people are in control and global balance is restored in their favour.

*\* Michael Chant is editor of Workers' Weekly.*



**The Symposium was held to discuss the challenge confronting the human species posed by climate change. A panel of concerned scientists, cultural workers and activists in the fields of global warming and safeguarding the natural and social environments presented a series of papers and a full discussion held with contributions from everyone present. A Concert was held in the evening where all the music was specially written to the theme of 'Climate Change - Confront the Crisis'.**



## Review

# Artists, Art and Culture of North Korea

Summer Exhibition 18 July to 2 September 2007  
La Galleria, 5b Pall Mall, London SW1Y 4UY

The opening of the Artists, Art & Culture of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Exhibition took place on Wednesday, July 18. Featuring some ten artists with work in painting, ceramics and tapestry, the exhibition brings together the best of North Korean art. The exhibition, according to the brochure, "is an attempt to create contact with this mysterious and fascinating country, which is DPRK a unique culture in its own right". The brochure, *Contemporary DPR Korean Art*, goes on to say, "Korean art is an oriental way of expressing art, but having a strong personality of its own, different to its neighbouring China or Japan. ... While Poster art unequivocally and forcefully presents political and ideological position, painting emphasises tradition, full of motifs like landscapes, countryside, mountains, flowers and birds, the impressive tiger or lion (so naturalistic and richly coloured, testifying respect for these animals), female figures with traditional clothes."

The painting *Enthusiasm*, by artist Pak Hyon Cho, depicts a young woman reading under a tree, emphasising the dignity of women and their equal thirst for knowledge and education. Another painting entitled *Sculpture Workers*, by Kim Song Min, who was present at the preview, depicts the positive spirit of Korean workers showing both pride and enjoyment in their work. All the artworks on exhibition are from artists from the Mansudae Art Studio, the largest art studio in Pyongyang. "The atmosphere

inside the art centre is based on reciprocal respect and solidarity," the brochure points out. "There are functional and artistic hierarchies but everyone shares the space and the experience."

Discussing some of the most striking art works and propaganda posters, the brochure points out, "One of the most represented subjects in the exhibition is the army." It explains that this is because in the DPRK, the army is seen as a "pillar of society, not only as an element of national defence, but also as an indispensable support for civilian protection and help for the citizens' everyday activities". These posters on display are a "celebrated moment of national pride, images that aim to strike the observer's conscience, almost always with a slogan, producing a real witness of the Korean traditional painting expression, underlining, graphically, the meaning of an important and impressive message".

Reflecting on the course of contemporary painting in the DPRK, the brochure says, "In the past, the subjects were almost only political and social, and it was Kim Jong Il who said that 'a picture must be painted in such a way that the viewer can understand its meaning. If the people who see the picture can't grasp its meaning, they cannot say it is a good picture, no matter how talented is its creator.'"

This, in our view, brings to light the necessity here in Britain for a culture that belongs to the people which they can access and relate to. When artistic production is not in the hands of the people there is

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## Opening in London of Exhibition of Art Works from the DPRK

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The exhibition is an unprecedented opportunity for people in Britain from all backgrounds to see for themselves the works of art which are produced in the DPRK. It is a very valuable opportunity to experience this culture in artistic form without preconceptions, and become acquainted with the values and preoccupations of Korean artists and their methods of work.

The exhibition is therefore an important contribution to the friendship between the British and Korean peoples and to deepening the understanding of the way of life of the Korean people. In this way, it can be said also to be an important contribution to opposing those who wish to promote enmity between the working people of the DPRK and other working people the world over, and to use this enmity to justify aggression against and hostility to the DPRK.



'Sculpture Workers' by Kim Song Min



## Commentary

# Blair and the Middle East

*Continued from page 1*

economy of a viable state in Gaza and the West Bank, able to take its place as a peaceful and prosperous partner to Israel and its other neighbours”.

Blair has been appointed as the Quartet's representative, therefore, allegedly to “help create viable and lasting government institutions representing all Palestinians, a robust economy, and a climate of law and order for the Palestinian people”. In other words, to continue to interfere in the internal affairs of the Palestinian people, to create and exacerbate divisions and to make sure that any future Palestinian state does not threaten the interests of the Israeli Zionists and is subservient to and dependent on the Britain, the US and the other big powers. Indeed, representatives of the US made it clear before the present trip that their new representative will have no contact with Hamas, the majority party in the last elections to the Palestinian Authority, which subsequently formed a government of national unity, because this organisation does not accept the dictate of the big powers and is prepared to militantly resist US-Israeli aggression and sabotage in order to defend the rights of the Palestinian people. For this reason it is labelled a “terrorist” organisation by Britain and the US, who are intent on maintaining their dominant position in the region. Russia and some European countries have adopted a different position in regard to Hamas and are attempting to advance their own interests in the region, for example by advocating an international force to police the Palestinian territories.

During the visit, Blair visited Israel, Jordan and the West Bank and met both Israeli leaders and President Mahmoud Abbas and



**Demonstrators in Palestine on Palestinian Land Day**

other representatives of the Palestinian Authority. It was noticeable that Blair was widely praised by the government of Israel, whilst representatives of the Palestinian Authority reportedly told him that unless he addressed the issue of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory he would make little headway. The former Hamas Prime Minister, Ismail Haniya, stated that Blair should take the opportunity to “correct the mistakes he made as Britain's prime minister”. He added, “We are ready for dialogue with Blair, and even the Quartet. All we want is justice for the Palestinian people.” Other Palestinian representatives expressed the view that Blair would lose all credibility if he failed to talk with Hamas, which has won the support of the majority of Palestinians, noting that he was already seen as the main ally of US imperialism in the region.

The government is of course fully behind Blair's new post in the Middle East, which clearly builds on the role that Britain played whilst he was Prime Minister. Every attempt has been made to make the Palestinian Authority dependent on the big powers, and Britain and the US in particular. Everything is done to present the British government and its former prime minister as the best friend of the Palestinian people and an “honest broker” in the Middle East. But history tells a different story. It was successive British governments before 1948 which created modern Israel and deprived the Palestinian people of their land, sovereignty and rights, and it has been British govern-

ments since that time which have supported and armed the Israeli Zionists and continued to deny the Palestinian people their rights. Britain and the US, as well as the other big powers have used Israel as a means to create instability throughout the region and to ensure that they are provided with the justification to continue intervention throughout the Middle East.

Faced with the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people for their rights, Britain and the US in particular are now attempting to create a Palestinian Authority which is to their liking and under their influence and yet again are ignoring the rights and wishes of the Palestinian people. The attitude of the British and US governments and their representative, Tony Blair, towards Hamas shows that all their talk about “exporting democracy” and so-called “universal values” is simply a means of imposing their domination over others. There can be no illusions about the “good offices” of Blair or other representatives of the other big powers. What must be demanded is an end to big power interference throughout the Middle East and justice for the Palestinian people.

## Review Artists, Art and Culture of North Korea

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no expression of their experience and therefore no stimulation for the mind in terms of what does the art mean or represent or what does it advance, nor does it begin from its appeal to the senses and the people's appreciation of it. As long as the prevailing artistic values are set by the rich and powerful, there can be no innovative or progressive moves forward in the modern art which takes its lead from these values. Owners of art galleries such as Saatchi simply serve their own interests with so-called modern art that is so far removed from having true meaning or appealing to the senses. By virtue of being different countries with different cultures, the art created in Britain will be different from that of Democratic People's Republic of Korea, reflecting the experience of Britain. But what is common is that to live and be truly free we must affirm our right to create and appreciate art as part of our identity and culture, and thereby contribute in our own conditions to the movement for emancipation.



**'Enthusiasm' by artist Pak Hyon Cho**

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