

# Workers Weekly

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

## No to the Criminalisation of Dissent!

**T**he actions of the police at the Heathrow Climate Camp have shown how it is the state which is the violent party. After the injunction sought by BAA against the

protest was thrown out by the courts, nevertheless the police acted as though the protesters were the problem and were the criminals in this matter. Freedom of assembly and

freedom of speech came under assault on the arbitrary grounds of what is acceptable to those in authority.

Furthermore, the issues of global warming and the

irresponsibility of those in authority that the Climate Camp and other actions were taking a stand over is by no means a sideline matter. Global warming

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## THE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" AND BROWN'S LABOUR GOVERNMENT



On May 5 this year, workers marched in celebration of May Day holding banners declaring "End the occupation of Iraq".

**I**t had been suggested that when Gordon Brown made his first trip as Prime Minister to visit George Bush, it would embody a break with American foreign policy, that Britain and the US would no longer be "joined at the hip".

However, while having given the appearance that Britain would go its own way, after mounting pressure to withdraw from Iraq, Brown is focusing on the "historic" links between the two countries and predicting the links

would become even stronger. At the same time, he is advocating a "cold war" style propaganda battle in the Muslim world and against "international terrorism", describing terrorism as a "crime against humanity". But whose is

the crime? Is not the aggression against and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan which is the crime against humanity and against

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### Commentary

## No to the Criminalisation of Asylum Seekers! No One Is Illegal!

**A**FTER A WEEK OF PROTESTS AT THE BEGINNING OF AUGUST at the Campsfield House immigration detention

centre in Oxfordshire, some 26 of the detainees escaped in desperation. The detained refugees fled after a fire in the centre's makeshift kitchen. Over 150 of the people who have been locked up at Campsfield had gone on hunger strike in the previous week as a means of taking a stand against the inhuman conditions under which they were being detained.

Detainees at Campsfield House had released a statement which said:

"Detainees at Campsfield will be having a sit-out protest at 11.45 tonight [31 July 2007], followed by a

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## No to the Criminalisation of Dissent!

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is a serious danger that faces humanity at this time. It is outrageous that those taking action conscious of their social responsibility should be made the target of police attack and brutality and that their protest and dissent from the prevailing outlook of the state should be criminalised.

These actions by the police are part and parcel of the authorities defining what is "civilised" and acceptable. This is done in order to try and limit protest and dissent to an empty letter, and to attempt to render it impotent. Such actions organised by the state attempt to block the power of the people's movements to alter the course of events and what those in authority decree. It is further an attempt to make the issue not the criminal irresponsibility of those

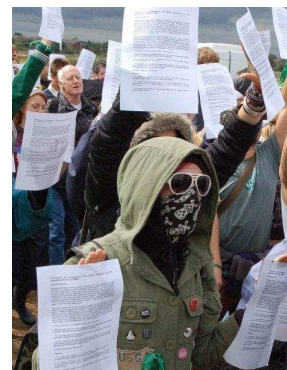
in power, but the "behaviour" of the protesters.

As the events at the Climate Camp have shown, the people are not going to be intimidated or deflected from their just stands through such violence and attempts at criminalisation. The movement for a different world, one in which the interests of human beings are put at the centre of considerations and mechanisms are in place to empower the people as the decision-makers, is gaining momentum, whether or not the state authorities choose to use force and violence, and in defiance of them. It is evident that it is precisely this different world and the people's initiative that the state criminals and warmongers fear. In this respect, the attempts to tear down and cordon off the tented protest in Parliament Square against the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and the crimes of the warmongers represent the same fear.

The police must not be allowed to act with impunity, and the movement against social irresponsibility is determined that this shall not be so. It is also the case that this movement is defying the police violence and taking a stand against the criminalisation of protest and dissent. It is this movement which can and must prevail!



# The People Will Not Be Silenced on Climate Change



**T**he Climate Change Camp at Heathrow Airport ran from August 12 to August 21. Other venues such as the BAA and BP headquarters, and the Airbus factory in Broughton, Flintshire, were also the target of protests.

The importance of discussing and acting on the matter of climate change was being pre-empted by an attack on protesters, in the form of new measures which aim to stop environment activists from protesting. The British airport authority attempted moves to have anybody from 15 environment organisations arrested for being in the airport or if they were on the Piccadilly line and sections of the M25 and M4 motorway. This attack on civil liberties however has not halted or silenced the 5,000 strong protesters who took part in direct actions across Britain.

Starting at the end of July, BAA served injunctions on four protesters, members of the various organisations such as Plane Stupid, No Third Runway Action Group, Heathrow Campaign Group, and umbrella organisations including RSPB, the National Trust and others. Members of all groups would be banned from setting up camp in the area of Heathrow. The protesters would be allowed to converge at three protest points around the airport. They would not be allowed to use sirens claxons or megaphones,

or go within 100 metres of the airport. The issue for the protesters is not only one of what they are fighting for but an issue that they should be free to fight for it. One of the organisers stated that he was "stunned" and at the breadth of the injunction. "It seems that having totally lost the argument on climate change they are resorting to bullying tactics. It is by far the biggest crackdown on civil liberties we have seen in terms of peaceful protest."

The airport has become a target as the new proposed third runway would see the rise in flights from 430,000 a year to 800,000. This would have a huge impact on carbon emissions. The protests are also geared towards the corporations who profit unjustly from the aviation industry. This plan for a third runway would also leave people in the area's surrounding Heathrow with a "huge rumble" going over their homes. This will also have serious ramifications for the village of Sipson and part of Harmondsworth which would both cease to exist, destroying valuable parts of the people's heritage.

Despite BAA's attempts to curb the actions protests, the actions went ahead as planned, with full vigour. Demonstrations were held all over the country.

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**Commentary****No to the Criminalisation of Asylum Seekers! No One Is Illegal!**

**Under the slogan 'Strangers into citizens', demonstrators marched to Trafalgar Square, London, in May this year demanding that all people be recognised as citizens on the basis of their being human.**



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hunger strike tomorrow.

"Newport immigration court, which is used for bail hearings and appeals involving Campsfield detainees, is very discriminatory compared to other courts in the UK: the bail application and appeal success rate there is less than 5%.

"Living conditions for detainees are appalling. Campsfield is a health hazard with 70% infection with flu. Paracetamol is the only medicine made available; two weeks ago even this ran out. Campsfield was rife with scabies, but only staff were issued with gloves.

"Although detainees are held civil detainees, not convicted prisoners or prisoners on remand, food, toilets and showers are a lot worse than in prisons.

"Some detainees are being held even though they have won an appeal against deportation. Others have clearly stated that they want to go back to their country of origin but have still been waiting in Campsfield for months."

Following news that nine detainees who escaped from Campsfield remained free, Campaign to Close Campsfield spokesperson Bill MacKeith said:

"We are sorry to hear some of the escaped detainees have been redetained. There is no one in Campsfield who should be detained.

"It remains the case that most people in Campsfield are people seeking asylum, as is their right under law, and for many their case has not been fully resolved.

"As regards the so-called 'foreign criminals': once a person, of whatever nationality has served a sentence, they should be freed. To try to deport people of non-UK nationality after they have served their sentence is a double punish-

ment and therefore unacceptable. In any case, many of the so-called crimes for which people now in Campsfield have been convicted are ones created by the government in order to criminalise asylum seekers: to arrive in the UK with false papers, which is the only way to arrive for many people, has been turned into a 'criminal offence'. Yet according to the United Nations Convention on Refugees (1951) Article 31, people arriving with incorrect documentation should not be penalised."

On August 7, members of the Campaign to Close Campsfield held a very successful demonstration outside the immigrant prison, in an effort to redress the balance of reportage on the escapes that took place, and to show the detainees that not everyone goes along with the mood of hysteria. There were loud shouts of "freedom" and "thank you very much!" from the main accommodation block, which we addressed by megaphone across the prison's unused, weed-grown football pitch. Quite a few members of the local media turned up. The event was featured on regional BBC and ITV, and on local radio stations.

A demonstration also took place on August 7 at lunchtime outside Lindholme Detention Centre, near Doncaster, following the Campsfield breakouts. Protesters showed solidarity with the people detained inside for no other crime than entering Britain seeking asylum.

Members of the Campaign to Close Campsfield (Immigration Removal Centre near Kidlington) demonstrated outside the centre on Saturday 25 August at noon, as they have done every month for the past 13 years.

An Anti-Deportation march also took place in Manchester on Saturday August 11 in defence of

all asylum seekers. The demands of the march were: No to deportations! Stop starving asylum seekers! No immigration controls! For the right to work, No to destitution! The demonstration was called by the North West Asylum Seekers Defence Group (NWDG), No One Is Illegal, Ethiopia Support Project, Sukula Family Must Stay Campaign, Samina Altaf Will Stay Campaign, the International Organisation of Iranian Refugees and Bolton NUT.

Since New Labour came to power it has created over 1,000 new crimes. These in particular criminalise the weakest members of society, especially migrants.

"A very high proportion" (say Asylum Welcome and Bail for Immigration Detainees) of the so-called criminals held in Campsfield have been jailed for the new "crime" of using false documents to enter the country. Making this a crime is unconscionable. And it blatantly violates Article 31 of the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees, which says governments must not penalise refugees who arrive on false papers.

These outrageous detention centres are a profound indictment of the government and those in authority who advocate and organise them. They are prisons in all but name, and in fact in so many respects are worse than prisons, both in their conditions, in their treatment of those detained and in the injustice of their very conception. They criminalise what is not and never can be criminal, they presume "guilt" from the outset, they are an affront against human dignity, and they have the effect of destroying the mental health and very lives of many who are incarcerated there, not to mention the wrenching apart of families and the denigration of the

human personality (or the suffering of whole families when the subject is the target of a control order, or house arrest). They demonstrate the deep racism, chauvinism and inhumanity of those in authority for whom "foreign" and "criminal" are almost synonymous, and who create such hysteria and a hue and cry that all foreign nationals who have the misfortune to serve a penal sentence should then be automatically deported. As the Institute of Race Relations points out, no section of our society is more vulnerable than asylum seekers and undocumented migrants: "Forced by circumstances beyond their control to seek a life outside their home countries, prevented by our laws from entering legally and from working, denied a fair hearing by the asylum system, excluded from health and safety protection at work, kept from social care and welfare, unhoused and destitute, vilified by the media and therefore dehumanised in the popular imagination, their hopes of another life are finally extinguished."

It has been remarked that these conditions are reminiscent of the darkest days of apartheid in South Africa. And like those days too, the whole of concerned humanity finds them repugnant. We salute those who have heroically taken a stand against their conditions of incarceration, and also those who have staged protests month after month and all who are upholding the principle that No One Is Illegal and are fighting for its implementation.

**No to the Culture of Fear!  
No to Criminalisation of Asylum Seekers!**

**No One Is Illegal!  
Defend the Rights of All!**

(Main source for information in article: Campaign to Close Campsfield, [www.closecampsfield.org.uk](http://www.closecampsfield.org.uk))

## THE RIGHTS OF THE ELDERLY: A DUTY OF CARE

# The Rights of the Elderly: A Duty of Care

**A**fter paying taxes their whole lives, thousands of elderly citizens are having to use their life savings to fund nursing home care. Despite an order by Ann Abraham, the Health Service ombudsman, to health authorities and trusts to follow health department guidance to prevent elderly and disabled people from paying out of their own pockets for care that should be given free of charge, today in 2007

tens of thousands of elderly people are still being placed in nursing home care by local social services, means tested, and then charged to the point that they often see their life savings disappear completely. We must ask what happened to the 1946 NHS Act to provide free health care "from cradle to grave".

In 1999, Pamela Coughlan, who was grievously injured in a road traffic accident in 1971,

fought and won a landmark test case in the Appeal Court against North and East Devon Health Authority who had wanted to close her Exeter nursing home (where she had been promised a "home for life"), and hand her over to social services. The Court ruled this unlawful.

A key problem is that under the current law, "social care" requires the person to pay for it, whilst for "health care" the NHS is responsible for the funding of the full package. According to campaigners fighting to highlight this issue, health authorities are making a case that many patients leaving hospital to move into care homes are in need of social care rather than health care, thus negating their responsibility to pay the fees. Meanwhile, well-meaning relatives who are dealing with elderly parents, siblings or grandparents in hospitals, are unwittingly allowing them to be discharged into care homes without getting a guarantee that the NHS will pay. The confusion has already led to elderly retirees selling their homes to pay for care they believed they would get free after decades of working and paying taxes to the state.

However, concerned families have started fighting back in the form of campaign groups. Robin Lovelock who set up a website advising families faced with huge bills, stated, "We advise people not to be rude but to give the NHS the one-page 'flyer' from our site which points out the law." Lovelock also said that "We've had cases where someone has told us that the hospital is pressurising them to find a suitable nursing home as quickly as possible, as an NHS bed costs £2000 a week." Good care homes cost around half that. If patients own their own home they would be expected to pay for care by selling their home. When their savings are exhausted, only then do the council step in and pay. This pressure on NHS beds shows that the government and respective authorities put the onus on money, making it a question of finance rather than health care. While the elderly and dis-

abled are full members of the society, the society is not providing for them. Instead, their certain right to be cared for by the society is subverted by a greedy elite who see health care as a private finance concern in which to make huge profits. Meanwhile those who contributed most to the society, i.e. the workers, see their homes and savings being stolen by the state and the private sector.

Whether or not a person needs "health care" or "social care" is not the issue. The people of the society should have their rights fully recognised to be provided for by the society, in both health and

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social needs. The elderly are being robbed after a life of giving and working for the society. Those who are the thieves, the monopolies and the state which represent them, are putting the livelihoods of the elderly and disabled out to dry, without any concern. As a society all must be protected and enabled to fulfil their potential in terms of health and as human beings as a whole. The present government with its agenda to push all health care into the private sector will not provide the elderly with an answer to their calls for justice. Only the people have the power to create a situation where the rights of the elderly and all other sections of the people receive as much they give to the society. The people must become the decision makers at the helm of a democratic society which has the concern of all the members and their needs at its centre.



# SOCIETY MUST CARE FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUFFERERS

The Mental Health Act 2007:

## Society Must Care for Mental Health Sufferers, Not Make their Behaviour a Law and Order Question

**T**he new Mental Health Act 2007 has been widely condemned by human rights and community groups, such as Mind, as reprehensible. Not only does the Act mean that service users will not have to be considered "treatable" to be detained in hospital, but the Act brings in draconian measures which will allow the detainment of patients in their homes. The Act is not geared towards supporting or offering services to service users and instead is a basis on which mental health sufferers will have their rights violated as suffers and as human beings. The legislation is yet another means to further marginalise mental health sufferers and make their behaviour a law and order question, instead of providing much needed services. As Paul Farmer, chief executive of Mind, states: "People with mental health problems need better health services not more legislation."

Community groups are concerned that this latest development will drive those in need away from seeking help for fear of being subject to forced treatment. Figures by the Department of Health reveal that more people

than ever before were compulsorily admitted to hospital under the Mental Health Act in 2005/2006. The number of these detentions has been rising year on year since that Act's introduction in 1983, contrary to any government suggestion that there would be no such increase.

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Professionals' authority to detain patients within the community has also been widened in one of the most disturbing clauses in the new Act. This is the introduction of Compulsory Treatment



Orders (CTOs). These measures allow doctors to specify a treatment and lifestyle plan that the service user would be obliged to adhere to in their own homes. "Based on the history of how services are used by our communities it will probably mean people being effectively imprisoned within their homes, lonely, isolated and rejected," said Rev Paul Grey from the New Testament Church of God in Nuneaton. These CTOs will also sweep far more people than suggested into compulsory treatment, diverting resources away from services which should be provided when a person becomes "mentally ill". The government says that CTOs will only be applied to a small group of people, around 1,400, yet research by the Kings Fund health think-tank showed that the figure is likely to be much higher. The organisation Mind thinks that even the Kings Fund estimate is conservative, stating, "With more and more people being detained under the Mental Health Act, government estimates of the use of CTOs are simply not believable."

In the debate about the Bill, service users, mental health staff

and community groups expressed anger and frustration over the government's continued commitment to reform proposals that experts believe are seriously misguided. For eight years, the views of doctors, psychiatrists, charities, researchers, and most importantly the service users themselves have been ignored. "It is very disappointing that the government has not taken on board the concerns that were clearly outlined to them during our meetings with the Department of Health," said Pastor Desmond Hall, chair of Christians Together in Brent. "It feels like a lot of our time was taken up without taking us seriously. This does not send out a good message to our communities."

The government's own research has shown that CTOs have no therapeutic value. There are particular concerns about national minority communities; a Count Me census showed that African Caribbean people were 38% more likely to be sectioned than others, and research shows that they are also more likely to be subject to CTOs. Health experts

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# THE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" AND BROWN'S LABOUR GOVERNMENT

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peace? Is it not preparation for a new war against Iran, the blockades of Cuba and the DPRK, the violation of people's sovereignty around the world in the name "humanitarianism", the rape and plunder of the world's resources and the wilful irresponsibility of global warming and the devastation of people's lives, and the massive imperialist-sourced poverty which are the crimes against humanity?

The ground for Gordon Brown's "moral compass" had been prepared by some few words casting doubts on the "war on terror". But the resurrection of the concept of a new Cold War, targeting the resistance against Anglo-US imperialism, not only shows the flimsiness of the avoidance of the phrase "war on terror", but that Brown and Bush are intent on escalating the dangers facing the world's people, hanging on to power at all costs and asserting the supremacy of retrogressive and reactionary values.

## No illusions

While the relationship of Blair and Bush was revealed as a more personal one, so Brown has been at pains to promote the image of a more business-like relationship. But there can be no illusions that Brown serves the Anglo-American agenda of the neo-liberal concerns any less than Blair's government did.

On Iraq, Brown said that Britain would honour its so-called responsibilities but admitted there

had been problems with political reconciliation and that the reconstruction effort had taken longer than expected. He said that Britain's decision in the Basra region would be based on the military advice from its commanders on the ground. Later, British officials insisted that the departure timetable was not being accelerated and said it was too soon to speculate on the plans that would be set out in October. Initially, they would mean handing military control to the Iraqis and moving to "overwatch". This stance of Brown reveals that there is no attempt by the government to let the Iraqi people decide their own fate, and the fate of those 5,500 troops stationed in Iraq is left off the agenda at least until October.

At the same press conference where Brown gave the illusion that he was changing course on Iraq, Bush stated that American troops could be there for a "long time". The monsters that are the Anglo-American warmongers, serving the interests of the rich, have shown no signs of withdrawing from a foreign policy which has seen over a million Iraqi civilians dead, and in Afghanistan, 4 million people displaced from their homes, whilst more troops are put in danger every day to fight so-called "insurgents".

## The "joint inheritance"

Gordon Brown en route to meeting George W Bush invoked the words of Winston Churchill by reaffirming his belief in the "joint inheritance" that binds Britain and the United States. Gordon Brown



could not have been clearer when he said: "When, at my meeting with President Bush, I talk of a joint inheritance – not just of shared history but shared values founded on a shared destiny – I mean the idea that everyone is created equal, that there should be freedom of expression for all faiths, that arts and culture should celebrate diversity, that government should be open and accountable, that there should be opportunity for all – for all men and all women – and a belief in free trade." The actions of the US and Britain, especially over the past 10 years, have demonstrated just how bankrupt these words are in the present-day world. Capitalism has developed into imperialism, liberalism into neo-liberalism, the people today are at the centre of history, Anglo-US imperialism is morbidly preoccupied with its own demise, it is trampling on the sovereignty of peoples and waging war against faiths, cultures and peoples that dare to differ from its programme of world empire, and trying to settle scores with past defeats. Yet Gordon Brown can shamelessly mouth the values of the English-speaking "joint inheritance" and a manifest destiny as lofty and progressive.

## The Brown-Bush project

It is chilling to note that the words Gordon Brown quotes made by Churchill in 1946 presaged the opening of the Cold War and rampant anti-communism after the defeat of Nazi fascism in the Second World War. It was a

speech that spoke about communist "fifth columns" as a "peril to Christian civilisation", which referred to the power of the British empire, which put on a pedestal the "whole strength of the English-speaking world and all its connections". Most infamously, it spoke of the "iron curtain" through which imperialism hoped to isolate, demonise and wipe out communism. This is the project that Gordon Brown and George Bush were meeting to resurrect, with talk of a "generation-long battle" against terrorism, a "great ideological struggle" and, in the words of Bush, "this war against extremists and radicals".

## Defeat the pro-war agenda

The gangsterism of the representatives of the Anglo-American imperialist agenda is not going to change. Gordon Brown's Labour, as Tony Blair's "New" Labour, is a party dedicated to this agenda, which stands for war, aggression, violation of sovereignty and the values of neo-liberalism. Indeed, Brown emphasised the issue of "shared values" with the US administration and the congruence of their global interests one of the main issues in the "special relationship".

However, the working class and people have time and again demonstrated their resolve to reject this agenda, and to have some political force come to power to declare that "change" is the order of the day is an attempt to divert the anger of the people's movements. Gordon Brown's bol-

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## THE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" AND BROWN'S LABOUR GOVERNMENT

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stering of the "special relationship" with US imperialism, the mission to consolidate the Anglo-American imperialist entity, is demonstrating that the issue is still to defeat the pro-war agenda of New Labour, fight for an anti-war government, an independent foreign policy and organise for working class power and people's empowerment.

### Resistance stepped up

The working class and people will not be fooled again by the promotion of an Anglo-American joint inheritance in a crusade against the rest of the uncivilised or totalitarian and extremist world. Too many peoples and nations have stood up and declared their national and collective dignity and rights and for Brown and Bush to try and hoist this tattered banner is mere bravado. But it is bravado backed up by political power and military might with which they intend to cause disaster for the world's people, always under the banner of the highest-sounding morality when it comes to the British Prime Minister.

The resistance of the working class and people must be stepped up, along with the movement to focus on positive progressive change and implementing an alternative agenda from the grass roots up. *Workers' Weekly* calls on the working class and people, in unity with the people's struggles against imperialism throughout the world, to take up responsibility for bringing about a world of peace, justice and the guaranteeing of rights of all. The programme of New Labour, with its emphasis on the "special relationship" with US imperialism, must be defeated as a crucial step towards this goal. It is the people who must be the decision-makers, in order to implement their own agenda.

## The Mental Health Act 2007:

## Society Must Care for Mental Health Sufferers, Not Make their Behaviour a Law and Order Question

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have warned this new law will pose real "dangers" to such communities.

Although the Act has been passed, receiving the Royal Assent on July 19, the fight for a social mental health service goes on. As Rev Paul Grey stated, "The state has to remember that it is there to serve those who have a voice as well as those who do not. Until this happens we will continue to back any calls for justice within mental health services, including supporting calls for a judicial review."

How the Act will operate in practice, especially given the problem of resources and the lack of recognition of society's responsibility, remains to be seen. However, it is certain that the fight is ongoing against bad legislation that will in practice

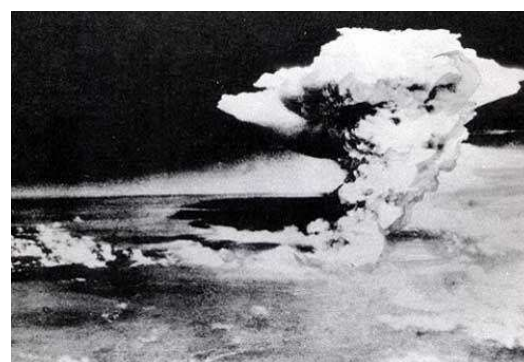
do damage to communities and individuals. What is required is for society to take up care and responsibility for mental health sufferers, and for government to legislate to guarantee the resources for the appropriate social bodies to be able to fulfil this responsibility. The outlook underlying the government's legislation is that there is a class of people separate from so-called normality. Social control is therefore necessary, the argument goes, over those with a "mental disorder" or "illness". The role of mental health professionals in this scenario is to be agents of this social control and provide the rest of society with protection against those with disorders or illnesses. In this scenario, again society is let off the hook. The fact that society is the conditioning factor for the stresses that lead to mental health suffering for the vulnerable and sensitive is left out of

account. With the loss of coherence that this denial brings about, degrees of stress and outright physical illness as a result are the norm, not the exception.

It cannot be accepted that an individual's behaviour or departure from the prevailing ideological and cultural norms as decreed by those in power should be made the target of punitive legislation. Instead of being stigmatised and tragic cases promoted to justify the prohibition of basic freedoms, mental health sufferers, as with everyone with special needs of various degrees and kinds, should be affirmed as human beings and be given every support, including the right of self-determination. As a whole, the people must ensure that a human-centred society prevails and organise to bring such a society into being, in unity with all those that are oppressed by the present anti-social political and economic system.



**Left:**  
Hiroshima,  
Japan  
August 5,  
2007:  
Gathering in  
front of the  
cenotaph for  
atomic bomb  
victims.



**Above right:**  
Hiroshima,  
Japan  
August 6,  
1945.  
Photograph  
taken from  
one of the  
three B-29s  
which participated in the bombing attack, about  
80km from the hypocentre, at an altitude of  
12,000 m.



**Below right:** "They examined us, but didn't give us any medical treatment." US Forces Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission only gathered data to investigate the effects of the bomb on the human body.

# Using "Climate Change" to Pay the Rich – It Must Stop!

**A**ccording to news agencies, European power companies are making billions of euros over and above their previous levels of profit through the measures taken in the European Union which are declared to be combating global warming by cutting emissions of carbon gases.

The electricity generators are given, free of charge, permits to emit millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide which are currently worth around 20 euros a tonne, but are then charging consumers as if they had been made to pay for the permits.

Michael Grubb, Chief Economist at the Carbon Trust and Director of Climate Strategies, calculates that this practice which he says is economically justifiable gives the industry windfall profits of some 20 billion euros (13.5 billion pounds) a year. "It is free money," he told Reuters. "It's how you'd expect companies to behave, but politically and morally it is going to be hard to justify making so much money out of a scheme designed to reduce emissions – with consumers footing the bill."

But Chris Rogers, head of European utilities at Morgan Stanley, says this understates the scale of excess profits because it is based on coal-powered generation and ignores the low carbon generators such as nuclear and wind who nevertheless get the carbon-inflated price for their electricity. "Let's just say that in Phase II of the EU trading scheme the power utilities will still be making very healthy profits. The compact they have to strike with governments is that they will invest this in clean energy," he said.

Under Phase I of the EU's emissions trading scheme running through 2007 smokestack industries including power generators were allocated free permits to emit carbon and allowed to sell any surplus to those who exceeded their ceilings. Under Phase II which runs from 2008 to 2012 ceilings have been reduced and a small percentage will

be auctioned, although the vast majority will still be handed out free.

News of the vast windfall profits has generated controversy in the Netherlands and Germany but in Britain the utility companies have repeatedly said that rising energy bills are due to supply problems – notably from Russia. "The power companies have got away with it because the price rises are disguised by rising gas prices and because people don't respond in the short term to higher power prices," said Matt Lockwood of the Institute for Public Policy Research.

Figures from the EU's statistics agency Eurostat suggest that carbon represents about 12 percent of domestic electricity prices in Germany and six percent in Britain. "Carbon allowances have a value even if they are handed out for free," said Cambridge University economist Karsten Neuhoff. "The question should be why give them away for free in the first place," he added.

One of the answers given, according to the news agencies, is that it was a bribe to the power companies to accept the scheme in the first place. Another is as a transition payment for firms which had bought coal-fired power stations which will lose value in a decarbonising world.

Germany's E.ON – the world's biggest utility company – has after a boardroom battle come out in favour of 100 percent auction of emission allowances after 2012. "It is going to be extremely hard for utilities to explain and justify their pricing actions publicly," said Grubb, who judged the scheme a success despite the problems. "But there will be tensions between using these profits in a way the public and politicians find acceptable and how shareholders would like to see them being used," he added.

The rich are using the crisis of global warming to ensure an even greater share of the social product created by the people finds its way into their pockets. It must be

## The People Will Not Be Silenced on Climate Change

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### The protests

- Five protesters blockaded the entrance to Sizewell A and Sizewell B nuclear power plants. After protesters locked themselves into concrete blocks weighing up to 100kg, they were forcibly removed by internal civil nuclear police. Melanie Harrison who works for the CND said that they (police) dragged her across the floor while she screamed, "You're going to break my arm."

- 15 protesters occupied the Oxford head quarters of Climate Care, the company who run British airways carbon offsetting scheme. Dressed as red herrings the protesters entered offices and delivered a report called "The Carbon Neutral Myth", produced by Carbon Trade Watch. They had a two-hour round-table discussion with the managing director and other senior staff.

- Other demonstrations took place in London. Ten protesters, also dressed as red herrings, distributed leaflets at the offices of the Carbon Neutral Company in King's Cross, which campaigners accuse of misleading consumers into believing that carbon offsetting is an effective means of tackling carbon emissions. In St James's Square, seven protesters were arrested and taken to Charing Cross police station after gluing themselves to two entrances of BP's head office. They had treacle poured over their bodies to symbolise oil being wasted by the petroleum industry.

- 20 campaigners demonstrated at the offices of Bridgepoint Capital, the private equity firm that bought Leeds-Bradford International Airport for £145.5m in May. Dressed in Yorkshire flat-caps, and armed with baskets of Yorkshire puddings that they distributed to staff, the protesters spent 45 minutes chanting under a banner that read "Yorkshire's flooding, ya daft puddings!"

- After the clashes with police on Sunday, in which at least four people were injured by violent police,



the protests climaxed in the blockade of BAA's offices at Heathrow. The protesters forced the closure of these offices for 24 hours.

So why were these draconian measures attacking people's civil liberties being pursued, and why were the police so violently protecting these companies? The aviation industry and the corporations behind it are part of the whole monopoly agenda to make maximum profit at the expense of the workforce and indeed the environment on which we rely. BAA attempted to justify its moves to curb the protests by stating that it did not want the demonstrators to cause "unlawful disruption". This is not credible when in fact this injunction was an attempt to impinge on the protesters' right to assert their voice. This right is part of the struggle to not only protest, but to be part of the whole collective of society in which decisions are made based on implementing change through a democratic process, which must be created. In this offensive against the people who have asserted their right to oppose this parasitic feeding, the police on behalf of the authorities show where they stand in relation to the people versus the monopolies. One can see this Labour government as one that upholds the "values" of these corporate entities to exploit and plunder the world's resources.

With climate change becoming a reality in the shape of the floods in Yorkshire and elsewhere, the working class and people must hold these corporations to account, and the demonstrations are a good starting point. The working class and people must uphold and fully support the right to protest, and organise within this movement, to empower people to take up the role of decision makers, to create a society from the grass roots to the top where we own the resources and decide on the basis of human need what happens to those resources. The working class and people must confront the crisis of climate change! It is they who have solutions!