

# Workers Weekly

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

## Responding to the Queen's Speech

**G**ordon Brown's statement to parliament on July 11, 2007, was reiterated by the Queen in her speech to parliament on November 6. Brown talked of education,

health care and housing, also reaffirming the plan to bring in new "anti terror" legislation.

Brown's rhetoric was the usual promises about a better education system which is in a fast changing world there providing

"opportunities for all", meanwhile tuition fees and private academies are destroying the right to education. Brown talked of the new Pensions Bill, while pensioners are living in poverty not having their rights to

be cared for and provided for by the society. Brown talked of building new housing for 3 million families while council waiting lists are huge and people are left in hostels, hospitals and

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## A VITALITY WHICH WILL BROOK NO OBSTACLES IN SAFEGUARDING THE HEALTH SERVICE



**T**he demonstration on Saturday, November 3, to Defend the NHS was marked by its vibrancy and high spirits, and its character throughout was that of a determination to safeguard the NHS' future. The march

and rally had been styled a celebration also, and everything had been done to give it this celebratory character. But neither desperation nor euphoria was appropriate among the ten thousand demonstrators. This was a not celebra-

tion of government reforms but of the constant fight of health workers on every level against anti-social reforms and for pro-social reforms. One could say that every placard, banner and slogan had a purpose, had a message to unite

health workers, patients and public together in refusing to accept the direction in which the NHS is being taken by the government

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### Commentary

## 90th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution: Opening the Path to Socialism World Wide

**N**OVEMBER 7 MARKED THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION which broke out in Russia in 1917 in the midst of the First World War.\* The October Revolution was the act of the working people of Russia who, led by Lenin's Communist Party, empowered themselves and became the decision-makers in their own country. The October Revolution showed in practice that the working people could rule themselves, and that it was only the working people, and principally the working

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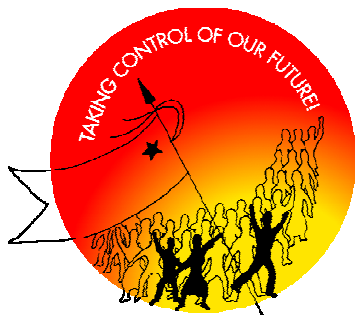
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## YOUTH+ STUDENT

page of the  
**Workers'  
Weekly  
Youth Group**

# Brown's Morality against the Youth and their Right to Be

**W**hat is the "morality" that Gordon Brown and the establishment in general push on the people of the society, in particular the youth? What is its aim? And what are the youth's values and principles that stand in the face of this so-called "morality"?

The government, authorities, religious institutions, have been pushing on the youth their so-called values in the shape of "morality". This moral high ground is being used to prescribe a definition of what is "good" and "bad", and further marginalise people into categories of existence. For example: drug user, criminal, mentally ill, smoker, drinker. All of these things are seen by the status quo as "bad", and to be young is to exist to conform to the moral definition of "good" or else be put into a category.

One example over which much debate and confusion has been pushed by the state and their media, and which has of recent times been once again brought to the fore, is that of the morality of drugs and drug-taking, something which has been very much associated with youth culture. The establishment is wanting to make drugs and people who take them the issue, rather than examining the context of the world as it is, looking at the social environment, allowing calm and rational debate, and giving the youth the space to affirm their right to be. It is not to be considered to challenge why someone taking drugs

is considered a "bad" person, or a "menace to society". Instead there is a moralistic evaluation taken which ends up criminalising the person.

This is a wholly dogmatic approach which does not challenge the fundamentals of drug taking. The debate is taken out of context with a "morality" which appears from on high, or appears as god-given. It is true that there are many social problems with which drug taking is associated. But the youth are condemned out of hand, as if something from within their being was impelling them to both take drugs and act irresponsibly. The whole issue of providing precise and detailed information about drugs, their effects and so on, and allowing personal choice on this basis, is not raised. Instead a hysteria is created and the youth are criminalised. At the same time, the youth are encouraged into channels which, because of the social context, actually harm the youth and their interests.

The youth cannot accept this imposed morality, which actually is aimed to legitimise the unravelling of the fabric of society. It is an archaic morality which is anachronistic and out of place. Despite the fact that it stakes a high moral purpose, particularly after the out-and-out imperialistic character of Tony Blair's government, and Gordon Brown's claims to set a moral compass for society, it actually contributes to the wrecking of society and to its taking measures which can only be

described as fascist in character.

Rather, the youth have to affirm their own values, their revolutionary spirit, as part of asserting their right to be, and hence of necessity deal with this imposed social problem, as well as all others, which is part of the liberation and emancipation of the human personality and allows them the freedom to play an participatory role in shaping the future. This is a morality which is consistent with the most advanced social force, the working class, and which challenges the historical crib which is imposed by those in authority and those that say that the youth must abide by an imposed moral code.

Those who govern society would like the youth simply to exist within the boundaries of their pushed morality to serve them as "good citizens" who conform to their rules and norms. Through media, education and cultural forms there are attempts to push this "moral code". For example, in citizenship lessons at school youth are taught how to be "good citizens" with no discussion or input from the students of what this means or what should be discussed. "Citizenship" is taught from a book and preaches and lectures the establishment's so-called "morality".

In the establishment's terms, to be moral is to confirm to what they want for society. In other words, they want the youth to support their wars, their privatisation and their globalisation. They want the youth to grow to be slaves of

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# Black History Month and Eurocentrism



the society, to cut themselves off from the world and just get on with their jobs. While if the youth do not conform to this they are attacked as the problem and are “bad”, something is wrong with the youth.

However, the youth have a will-to-be. The youth in schools, universities, workplaces, have contact with the world around them, and see that there are problems, that not only they are being mistreated but this “morality” is being used to attack people around the world in the name of what is “good”. As has been witnessed in the anti-war movement and in the movement to challenge tuition fees, globalisation and everything else that these “moral guardians” stand for, the youth are taking stands that do not conform to Brown’s version of morality, but embody their own principles and their conscience as inhabitants of the real world.

The youth must continue to exercise their right to be, and challenge and reject such moral dogma. They must put forward their own conclusions about the world, act together in the face of the attempts to cocoon the youth, to consciously and actively participate in whatever forum they may be in, whether it be school, university or workplace.

The attempts of Gordon Brown and the authority he represents to preach and mould the direction the youth take must be combated with the youth taking up the questions of what is archaic and taking society down the road of reaction. They must negate this, clash with it, and take up the programme for the progress of society. WWYG calls upon the youth to take up such a programme, participate in working it out, including taking up the banner of modern communism and building a new society in which they are at the forefront.

**T**his October has marked the twentieth anniversary of the start of Black History Month (BHM) in Britain. The London Strategic Policy Committee, the successor to the Greater London Council, initially launched BHM in London in 1987, as one means to address the legacy of colonialism, as identified in the African Jubilee Year Declaration. It has now been widely adopted throughout the country by local authorities, the heritage sector and even the government itself.

This year, for example, Gordon Brown stated that in his view BHM “has, as always, a valuable role to play in increasing awareness across the country about the significance of the UK’s black heritage and the contribution of Black African and Caribbean communities to our country”. He went on to say that it is even more important because this year “marks the vote to end the slave trade in the British Empire”, adding that “when Britain voted to end this trade in 1807, it was one of the first countries to do so”, and drawing the conclusion “that is just one striking example of why Black History Month is important. By learning about our history, we can acknowledge the values we share, and celebrate the diversity that now exists in the UK.”

It is difficult to see how the Prime Minister, apparently trained as a historian, can draw such conclusions, since an examination of the events connected with the abolition vote in 1807 suggest that the values of the working people of Britain then were very different from those held by the rich and their government. That while the rich and their governments zealously defended the enslavement and colonial conquest of Africa,

Asia and elsewhere, the working people struggled to oppose it, recognising that it was in their interests to defend the rights of all against a common enemy. Two centuries later, very little has changed, in this regard, and despite government proclamations to the contrary there are no “shared” or “universal” values and, as history shows, never were. Even a cursory examination of human history shows that it is mainly concerned with the struggle that takes place between different social classes and that this struggle also takes place in the realm of ideas and values, which also change over time.

Gordon Brown’s remarks and the government’s leading role in the bicentennial events show that, as part of the Labour government’s declared intention to “make Britain great” again, there is a continual attempt to whitewash the history of Britain, to laud the British Empire, and that there is a refusal to acknowledge the crimes that have been committed. It is in this context that Tony Blair spoke of the Empire as “a remarkable achievement” and Brown commented that “the days of Britain apologising for its colonial past are over” and that rather what he referred to as “British values” should be celebrated. In fact the government’s celebration of these Eurocentric values, sometimes referred to as “universal” values, is a return to the so-called civilising mission of the 19th century, a justification of the export and imposition of the values of neo-liberal globalisation to the African continent, to Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, wherever the dictate of the monopolies demands.

The history of those of African and Caribbean origin did not start

with slavery, nor with its abolition, and indeed it could be argued that this history of the African continent, the birthplace of humanity and many vital scientific developments is necessarily of interest to us all. Nor can this history be presented as one of “contribution to our country”, as if it is not both significant in its own right and integral to British and world history. The history of Africa and the Caribbean during the last 500 years demonstrates precisely the determination of peoples to follow their own path, defend their own values, and refuse to be dictated to by those who presume to be their superiors. The history of those of African and Caribbean origin in Britain, during the same period, shows time and again that they have shared weal and woe with other working people and consequently fought together not just for their own rights but in defence of the rights of all.

It is necessary to fight against the Eurocentrism and racism which permeate every aspect of life and are a reflection and legacy of enslavement and colonialism, of the crimes which have been and are still being committed on the grounds of “celebrating British values”. It is precisely to justify, spread disinformation on and obscure the present-day relations of neo-liberal exploitation that the “celebration of British values” is being promoted. What is clear is that the history and culture of any one section of the people cannot just be ghettoised as part of the “multi-cultural” agenda of the government, nor can it be seen only as of concern to some. Rather it is a question that must be taken up as part and parcel of the movement for the enlightenment of us all.



**WHOSE NHS! OUR NHS!**

**WHOSE NHS! OUR NHS!**

# A Vitality Which Will Brook No Obstacles in Safeguarding the Health Service



*Continued from page 1*

and local trusts and to stop it being used to pay the rich in a many different ways.

Whose NHS? Our NHS! Who decides? We decide! This was the profound issue raised by the slogans and asked and answered on the demonstration. Health workers, patients and people should all unite and take the initiative into their own hands to decide how to safeguard the future of the NHS today. It gives the impetus to involving people in discussing solutions based on the real problems and needs to improve health care and eliminate inequalities, with the perspective that it is our NHS and we should decide its future. At the same time, it challenges the constant "modernisation" schemes which are not intended to address real problems but are aimed at transforming the NHS into a health care system controlled by the monopoly corporations. It is this movement for empowerment of health workers and patients that is harbinger to the new society based on empow-

erment of the working class and people to take the decisions on the health service and all important matters in society as a future prospect.

At the rally in Trafalgar Square, a theme had been set, with people speaking about their love for the NHS. *I love the NHS* was the slogan on the platform. But what kind of love were they speaking about? They spoke about the NHS, their experience and their concerns for its future under a government that is determined to privatise it. The love that is required is social love, the values of the working class movement. Only this love is a reality. This love is for the right of all in society to have all their needs met for health care, the values of all for one and one for all.

It was announced from the platform that this was the largest manifestation of the "nhs together" campaign to date. This shows that by taking up the defence of the health service's future, the working class movement is responding to its own developing consciousness as a movement that takes up responsibility for society and the





## WHOSE NHS! OUR NHS!



needs of all for a modern health care system. It was a demonstration and is a movement that unites health workers in public and private sectors, and of all nationalities, in defending the rights of all against a health service being increasingly used to pay the rich at the expense of meeting those needs. It unites young and old from all walks of life, people of different political beliefs all united in this movement to safeguard the future of the NHS.

The determination of the health workers who gave the demonstration such vitality is that ways shall be found to take this spirit to unite all the forces into all campaigns, into every nook and cranny of the

movement, to imbue the movement with the spirit and the passion to provide solutions to overcoming every obstacle to its advance. This is a matter of conscious participation, of collectivising experience, of combating disinformation, of smashing the silence about the extent of privatisation. It is a matter of relying on the potential, the power, of the people themselves, health workers and society as a whole, in effecting change, in defending the NHS, in upholding the public good and the demand that social programmes are motivated not by private enrichment but by social love.

It is our NHS! We will decide!

## Responding to the Queen's Speech

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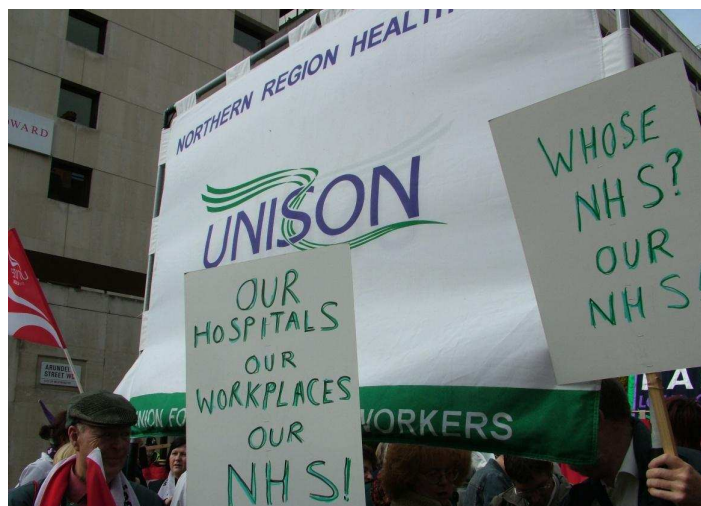
on the streets. Brown also proposed the Climate Change Bill, while the government has a record of inaction on climate change and refusing to curb the irresponsibility of the monopolies.

On the NHS, Brown appears to advocate high quality care for patients while selling off the NHS to the private sector. Brown also promised a Bill to stop children falling under the poverty line, while the reality is that a third of children live under the poverty line. Brown also presented an outline of what the government were going to do in regards to "terrorism": new measures to ensure more terrorist "suspects" are incarcerated; increased penalties for "terrorists" charged with other criminal offences; increase in the period of interrogation without charge; and the use of "intercept material" – meaning that while lauding the "liberty" which is Britain's "gift to the world", Brown is attacking the rights of all in the name of preserving "our way of life".

What is objectively happening in terms of the anti-social offensive against the people is made the target of lip-service by the government. The offensive against the people is increased, on the one hand, while the rhetoric and hypocrisy on the other is an attempt to hoodwink the people that their

problems are being addressed. This is all done with a high moral tone by Gordon Brown, which signals a profound attack on the rights of all the people and an upholding of all the values of a colonial power and a Britain whose bounds are set "wider still and wider". This is the vile oppression of the working class and people at home and the exporting of an enslaving and exploiting civilising mission by the "mother of the free".

From proposals for the government's programme, it can be seen that the working class and people need to fight on the basis of the rights of all. Brown and the Queen presented a united front on attacking the working class and people, the power of the executive being derived from the royal prerogative and the absolutism of parliament against the people from the monarch in parliament. The working class and people must unite under one banner also, which is the banner of modern communism. Their programme is the complete emancipation of humanity. The battles to safeguard the future of the NHS, to increase investments in social programmes that do not go to paying the rich, to defend the rights of all, must be stepped up at this time and united into one tide so as to defeat the programme of New Labour which is blocking the people from taking matters into their own hands.



# Interview with a Delegate from the STWC Annual Conference

**WW:** What were the aims of the Stop the War Annual Conference 2007, and in the light of these what were the aims of your delegation in going to the conference

**Delegate:** This was a very crucial conference, if not the most crucial, for the Stop the War Coalition, coming six years after its founding and with the stepping down of Tony Blair and the claims of the new Prime Minister that he was disengaging from Iraq.

I think it could be said that it reflected the whole trial of strength with these warmongers two weeks after they tried and failed to ban the National Demonstration at the opening of Parliament which called for the immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. In particular, it was a call to the movement to activate the British people against the increasing build up of their occupation forces in Afghanistan and the indications that British troops in Iraq are being drawn into US plans for a fresh aggression against Iran.

The aims of our delegation were to fully participate in conference's achieving these aims, and also consolidate the position that started to be addressed by the movement last year at the People's Assembly in opposing the attack on Muslims. We put forward a motion on this that was passed by conference that put this attack on Muslims in the context of defending the rights of all as integral to the anti-war movement.

**WW:** What were the main issues addressed at the conference?

**Delegate:** Firstly, there was the issue coming from the October 8 demonstration that democracy is taking shape in the movement in the form that the state has no legitimacy in trying to ban our demonstrations and that conference gave a warning on any further attempts to stop our

right to demonstrate opposition to their wars and occupations.

Secondly, conference also gave a warning against attempts by the government to support an attack on Iran. In fact, I think this was probably the greatest contribution of this year's conference in that it clearly reflected the resolve of the British people to oppose any attack on Iran by this Anglo-US Alliance.

Thirdly, the conference condemned the US and British government for the millions they have slaughtered in this "war on terror", as well as the atrocities and torture, and attacks on civil liberties and rights of the people at home.

**WW:** On the issue of Iran, what was the sentiment and the line given by the conference?

**Delegate:** The sentiment was of unanimous support for defending Iran, and condemnation of any sanctions or threats of war against Iran by the US and Britain. The line of the conference was "Hands off Iran" and almost all of the speakers there reflected this. I think the issue that this conference settled was that the Stop the War Coalition refused to join in with the government and media in demonising Iran even though some forces that claim to be on the left or even "communist" came to the conference to pressurise for that. I think conference was very clear that this demonisation of Iran is part of the preparation for war and should be rejected.

**WW:** Out of the issues discussed, what were the clear calls of the conference?

**Delegate:** Well, I think people should read the resolutions and I think everyone should use these as a starting point for discussion and activities.

For example, I think the motion from our stop the war coalition very much reflects our discussion of get-

## RESOLUTION

### South Tyneside Stop the War Coalition

### Defending the Rights of All is Integral to the Success of the Anti-War Movement

Recognising that the aim of the government and media in striving to create and incite divisions in Britain is an attempt to shatter the coherence and resistance to the wars of occupation and attacks on rights and freedoms as well as to the attacks on public services, the environment and the all-round well being. It is an attempt to render the people as spectators, or victims.

It is the case that the state is singling out those of the Muslim faith and outlook for attack under the guise of waging war against "Islamic extremism" and then criminally carrying out arbitrary arrest and detention with "anti-terror" laws. To call such measures

"laws" is also travesty of justice itself when they are based on racial profiling which require little or no evidence, reducing legal process to one of the denunciation by secret police just as in the Middle Ages.

The antidote to both roles that the ruling circles are trying to assign to the people as spectator and victim is that the whole polity in Britain has to put forward solutions and strive to become the decision-making force and realise its aim in achieving an anti-war government.

Conference calls on the Stop the War Coalition and anti-war movement to continue to take bold steps together in defence of the rights of all.

ting people to reject any role as spectator, or victim, and become involved in the movement in discussing and finding solutions as the progenitors of a new world we are all fighting for. This has the aim of the coalition to achieve an anti-war government integral to which is defending the rights of all.

There was the call to support the World Against War conference in London on December 1, which conference highlighted, with the "aim of bringing together all those fighting for peace, sovereign self-determination and social justice around the world today". The conference also called to step up the opposition to Israeli occupation of Palestine with the National Lobby on November 28. And there are other events and actions coming shortly to oppose any attack on Iran.

**WW:** How can the working class and people take up these calls?

**Delegate:** I really believe that what is crucial is that people start thinking about these issues and that they start to get other people thinking about them and discussing with them. It is important for people to investigate things for themselves and analyse and discuss with each other events

as they occur, always questioning the disinformation of the news media, and instead seeking out the facts for themselves. This has become much easier with the internet and I know *Workers' Daily Internet Edition* and *WW* have this aim and role, as well as giving analysis that is aimed at returning to the movement its own consciousness in developed and scientific form. In my own stop the war coalition we hold forums, publish a magazine, have actions and hold events which involve people in thinking about and discussing these issues. It is interesting that now, in our group, challenging the ideas of the status quo has become such a habit that it is developing its own consciousness, ideas and political stands. The movement itself as a whole must and will more and more do so also, in order that it can carry through this very important work.

**WW:** Can you elaborate on the question of organising for an anti-war government?

**Delegate:** Firstly, this is a very good question and I think it is a question that needs to be elaborated in the movement much more.

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## Britain and Palestine: A Criminal History of Intervention

# 90th Anniversary of Balfour Declaration

*November 2 was the 90th anniversary of the infamous Balfour Declaration of 1917. We are reprinting an extract from the article "Britain and Palestine: A Criminal History of Intervention" which appeared in Workers' Weekly, September 16-23, 2006.*

**B**ritain's interest in Palestine in modern times can be said to have begun in the first half of the 19th century. In 1839, the British Foreign Secretary, Viscount Palmerston, began encouraging Jewish immigration to Palestine, which was then part of the declining Ottoman Empire, as part of Britain's policy of supporting this crumbling empire in order to thwart the strategic and territorial ambitions of its economic and political rivals, at that time especially France and Russia. Palmerston argued that Jewish immigrants would owe some allegiance to Britain and would therefore give Britain an indirect influence over Palestine, which occupied an important strategic position in the eastern Mediterranean. He reasoned that Jewish immigration under British influence would in time also create a buffer zone between Egypt and the rest of the Middle East, thus preventing the emergence of Egypt as a strong regional power in the area, which might become a threat to Britain's interests. In order to further this aim, Palmerston proposed that the Palestinian people should be removed from Palestine and resettled in northern Iraq. Although no deportation of the Palestinian population took place at that time, Britain's

involvement in the creation of the Palestinian "problem" was clearly demonstrated, as was its pragmatic utilisation of the Zionist movement, which in this period was still in its embryonic stage.

As today, the intervention of Britain and other western powers in Palestine and the Middle East in the 19th century created major instability in the area. As the Zionist movement developed at the end of the 19th century, it sought to reach a closer agreement with British imperialism over the future of Palestine. In the opening years of the 20th century, the Zionist movement established close links with David Lloyd George, the future Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, the future Foreign Secretary, Herbert Samuel, a future High Commissioner for Palestine and Sir Mark Sykes, who became Chief Secretary of the War Cabinet. The evidence shows that one of the aims of Britain's political leaders during the First World War, in order to safeguard Britain's interests in the region, including the Suez Canal, was to annex Palestine and "plant" millions of Jewish settlers.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, Palestine therefore remained an important prize to be fought over by Britain and the other big powers. In 1915, the British government made a secret



agreement concerning the future of Palestine with the Sherifian monarchy of Arabia (the McMahon-Hussein correspondence), in which in order to gain an alliance with Arab peoples during the war it promised "to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs in all the regions within the limits demanded by the Sherif of Mecca". However, the following year another secret agreement was made between Britain and France, with the support of the other Entente powers, to divide the entire Middle East region into two "spheres of influence" and place Palestine under international, although largely British, control (the Sykes-Picot agreement). When this secret agreement was made public by the Bolsheviks following the Russian Revolution, the British government sent a reassuring message to Sherif Hussein stating that "the Entente Powers are determined that the Arab race shall be given full opportunity of once again forming a nation in the world ... So far as Palestine is concerned, we are determined that no people shall be subject to another". Even when Allied troops occupied Palestine and other parts of the Middle East formerly under Ottoman rule, such as modern Syria and Lebanon, the British government stated that "the wish and desire of His Majesty's Government that the future government of these regions should be based upon the principle of the consent of the governed, and this policy has and will continue to have support of

His Majesty's Government". As if that were not clear enough, at the end of the war the British and French governments issued a joint declaration stating that the war in the Middle East had been fought in order to achieve "the complete and definite emancipation of the [Arab] peoples and the establishment of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous populations".

However, not only had the British government been duplicitous concerning the future of Palestine and the rights of the Arab peoples to self-determination, it had also made entirely contrary declarations of support for the Zionist movement. In 1917, the Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, issued a letter on behalf of the government, the infamous "Balfour Declaration", declaring its support for the "Zionist aspirations" and the establishment of "a national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine. This Declaration was itself a response to a proposal from the Zionists. According to the Division for Palestinian Rights, established by the General Assembly of the United Nations: "The pivotal role of the Balfour Declaration in virtually every phase of the Palestinian issue cannot be exaggerated... It ultimately led to partition and to the problem as it exists today. Any understanding of the Palestine issue, therefore, requires some examination of this Declaration, which can be considered the root of the problem of Palestine."

# 90th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution: Opening the Path to Socialism World Wide

*Continued from page 1*

class, that could solve the grave economic, social and political problems that faced the country. As a result of the October Revolution, Russia was able to extricate itself from the bloody conflict of the First World War, for the first time provide its mainly agricultural population with land, and create the economic conditions to provide food and other necessities for its people. The October Revolution also had major global significance and was a major blow for the entire imperialist system. It meant that one of the leading world powers, a sixth of the world's land mass, became a beacon for working and oppressed people throughout the world. The October Revolution therefore acted as an inspiration to millions in all continents and, within a few years, communist parties were established throughout the world, not just in the advanced industrial countries such as Britain but also in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The October Revolution was, in essence, the culmination of a trial of strength between the old and the new in Russia, between the working people on the one hand and the Provisional Government, a coalition representing the monopolies but including those who claimed to speak for "labour", on the other. In Russia the working people had established their own democratic institutions in the Soviets, or people's councils, which had developed out of their own experience of the need for the people themselves to develop new institutions for their own empowerment. The October Revolution was therefore also the culmination of a trial of strength between two forms of democracy – the old bourgeois democracy of the Provisional Government, which prevented the people from becoming the decision-makers and kept

power in the hands of the rich, and the new revolutionary people's democracy of the Soviets, which were based in the factories, farms and workplaces and in the military, which allowed the ordinary people to decide their own future.

During the course of 1917, the people of Russia were able to see from their own experience that although the old Tsarist government had been overthrown, a new government of the rich had taken power which refused to stop the slaughter of millions of Russians in the war, refused to provide land for the tiller and was unable to provide the conditions to feed its own citizens. Led by Lenin's Communist Party, the working people were made conscious of the fact that "Peace, Bread and Land" would only come about if the demand "All Power to the Soviets" became a reality, that is to say, if the people were empowered and the Soviets, rather than appealing to, or working in collaboration with, the Provisional Government actually took power themselves.

The great achievement of the Communist Party was that it was able to provide the Russian people with the organisation, consciousness and analysis that was required in rapidly changing circumstances. It did not lose its bearings or conviction, and worked alongside and was trusted by the advanced sections of the working class. The October Revolution was made by the masses of the Russian people but it was the Communist Party which made them conscious of their historic mission.

The 90th anniversary of the Great October Revolution should be the occasion not just to celebrate a great historic event, indeed the defining event in the 20th century, but also an occasion to draw the appropriate lessons from the past in order to create the conditions to usher in a socialist Britain in the 21st century.

\*(At that time, Russia still used the old Julian calendar)

## Interview with a Delegate from the STWC Annual Conference

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My own view is that the starting point of this question means the people in the anti-war movement have to keep the initiative in their own hands. Also, people have to be fully involved in bringing about this programme for an anti-war government. So then this means building community forums, people's assemblies and getting people together to stand for an anti-war programme amongst the polity and in parliament, which all contributes to the development of this programme. Then the movement has experience of standing anti-war candidates in the last general election. So people see the beginnings of a real opposition in the Parliament to the war and on other questions. This inspires people and has not gone unnoticed by the workers' movement, because it raises the question that the work-

ers can build their own opposition in parliament. Therefore, this has to be addressed and raises the need for worker politicians who stand for working class values, standing against war, against privatisation, and for the principles and values of humanity, social love, dignity, getting people to consciously participate and upholding that every human being have their rights recognised. We see that workers like the communication workers are already playing an important role, and this is indicative of the decisive role that workers will play in bringing about an anti-war government.

So, I think the important thing is that in the everyday work of the movement, whilst we must rise to the occasion in a trial of strength with the warmongers, at the same time we involve the collectives of the working class and people to advance and bring to fruition the anti-war and pro-social programme.

## Forthcoming World Against War Conference Saturday 1 December

Stop the War is proud to host the World Against War conference in London on December 1, which aims to bring together all those fighting for peace, self-determination and social justice around the world today. Speakers already lined up include former UN officials in Iraq, Denis Halliday and Hans von Sponeck. Peace and anti-war groups from South America, the Middle East, USA, South Asia, Africa, Canada and across Europe have been invited to send representatives. The World Against War conference will take place at Westminster Central Hall, adjacent to the Houses of Parliament. Booking forms will be available soon but you can reserve your place by calling the Stop the War national office on 020 7278 6694.

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