

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

Oppose Plans for "Patriotism" Lessons: The Youth Want To Build Their Own History

Workers' Weekly Youth Group

The government are seeking to use history lessons to teach "patriotism". Under

government plans these lessons would be used to teach "Britishness", a move which follows on from the introduction

of citizenship lessons, used to teach young people "British values". This is a step further down the road of reaction,

where anyone who does not adhere to this sense of "Britishness" is an outcast,

Continued on page 2

NO TO THE NEW COUNTER-TERRORISM BILL! REPEAL ALL "ANTI-TERRORISM" LEGISLATION!

On January 24, Home Secretary Jacqui Smith unveiled the Counter-Terrorism Bill 2008. The publishing of this Bill marks the introduction of the sixth piece of draconian "anti-terror" legislation since 2000. Included in this most

recent legislation is the granting to the Home Secretary of the power, without any necessity to receive the approval of Parliament, to order the detention of a suspect ("persons reasonably suspected to be a terrorist") for 42 days without any charge being



Banner of RCPB(ML), opposing Blair's justification for increased repression, on demonstration outside Parliament, March 18 2006.

brought. It appears that this period itself may subsequently be extended by periods of seven days (up to 60 days). Of course, the "suspect" may then be charged with "terrorism offences", and the Home Secretary is given the power to

amend a list of these "offences", and these already include "conspiracy", "incitement" and so on. These measures are a further attack on people's rights and civil

Continued on page 3

Condoleezza Rice in Britain:

NATO Must Get Out of Afghanistan!

CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE US SECRETARY OF STATE, ARRIVED IN LONDON on Wednesday ahead of her meet-

ing with the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, and the Foreign Secretary, David Miliband. Their talks were to focus mainly on the situation in Afghanistan, as well Iraq, Iran and Kosovo, and were held ahead of a meeting of NATO defence ministers on the following weekend in Vilnius, Lithuania, and a scheduled NATO summit meeting in Bucharest in April.

It is widely reported that the aim of Rice's visit was to pull Britain into line in closer support of the illegal US-led occupation of Afghanistan. The US has recently been forced to deploy even more troops in that country,

Continued on page 4

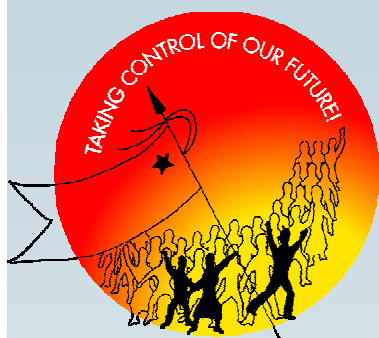
[inside]

WWYG: Oppose plans for "patriotism" lessons 2

The Counter-Terrorism Bill 2008 3

Friends of Korea meeting 4

Published by RCPB(ML)
170 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2LA
Registered as a newspaper
Printed by Millennium Press



YOUTH+ STUDENT

page of the
Workers'
Weekly
Youth Group

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Continued from page 1

and not only are they marginalised but criminalised, as we have seen with the use of "anti-terror" laws and SOCPA (The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act).

So what is the idea behind this "Britishness" and the plans to teach "patriotism"? The nation-building project that began with Henry VIII in a bid to build an English nation was the backdrop of colonialism which built an empire that the bourgeoisie could exploit, and involved the subjugation of the sovereign nations of Scotland, Wales and Ireland. It is from this mind-set that today's bourgeoisie takes its stand, promoting its values of plunder and faith in our colonial past, while aspiring to these same values today of "making Britain great again". This "history as such" is based on lies and distortion, drumming in the idea that Britain's empire was built by the great and the good and brought civilisation to the invaded occupied countries and their peoples.

No to disinformation

Like the citizenship lessons introduced under Blair, these "patriotism" lessons will be used to indoctrinate pupils with these "British values" in an attempt to stifle opposition to the dreams of empire building. For teachers, this would be teaching straightforward disinformation, which has prompted three-quarters of

Two students
at the "London
United" Vigil,
July 14, 2005



teachers to state they had an obligation to alert their pupils to the dangers of patriotic sentiments. Dr Hand from the Institute of Education said, "Students tend to feel strongly that their feelings about their country are their own business and schools have no right to try and influence them."

Youth must decide

Students have shown this sentiment in opposing the indoctrination by the way they reacted to citizenship lessons. In many of these lessons across the country, students rejected the dictate of the lesson and opened up discussion on the issues they were really concerned about. In one school, pupils led an anti-Nike campaign concerned with the use of slave labour in sweatshops in developing countries. This experience illuminates the fact that there is only so far that this indoctrination process can go before the youth start to think for themselves and reject the status quo being imposed on them.

In fighting against anti-conscious acceptance, the youth are posing their own questions, taking up for solution how the questions of today pose themselves. One important question to be posed in the light of this forced history being preached in schools is the question of modern nation-building. It can be posed in the light of what does this modern nation-building mean for the youth as part of the working

class? The complete antithesis of what the bourgeoisie perpetrate is that it is the people themselves that should decide the direction of the nation, that the working class should take the lead in constituting itself as the nation. So what is building a modern nation state? It can be said that a modern nation state can only be laid by the working class and that it is they that will settle scores with the bourgeoisie's old conscience, that is based upon colonialism, and put forward the concept of modern sovereign states where Wales and Scotland will win their independence back, or indeed the working class may decide to enter a voluntary union. All of these matters must be discussed by the youth who need to build their own future. The youth are doing this by realising the necessity for change, and by acting consciously according to the laws of social history.

The youth must continue to challenge and must create the conditions for conscious participation in their lessons. The youth must not leave the decision making up to the government, as it is they who must decide on the content and direction of their education, and on the future of their world, where nations can live side by side in friendship, and with the mutual aspirations of the working class.

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Workers' Weekly

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

Website: www.rcpbml.org.uk

February 9, 2008 Volume 38, Number 4

Subscription rates within Britain (including p&p): 4 issues - £2.95, 6 months - £18.95, Yearly - £33.95.
For any subscription applications from abroad or for bulk subscriptions, please contact *Workers' Weekly* directly.
Cheques should be made payable to 'RCPB(ML)' and sent to 170 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2LA.

THE COUNTER-TERRORISM BILL 2008

No to the New Counter-Terrorism Bill! Repeal All "Anti-Terrorism" Legislation!

Continued from page 1

liberties, and contribute to further dragging society back to a system of medieval justice when ordinary people are subject to arbitrary fiat, and held prisoner against all human principle and conscience.

In 2000, the Terrorism Act was introduced. The subsequent Acts have had the 2000 Act as their reference point and have built on its provisions. It should be noted that this Act predates 9/11 which supposedly initiated the Anglo-US "war on terror". It demonstrates that the ruling elite began the 21st century by making "terrorism" the issue, and that when on September 11, 2001, Tony Blair declared that "mass terrorism" had become the main enemy of western civilisation, this was already a well worked-out line. This so-called "anti-terrorism" legislation and the pretext of the threat of terror has become one of the main weapons in the state's arsenal to quell and criminalise the people's resistance to injustice and attempt to split the people's struggles.

In this raft of "anti-terrorism" laws, terrorism has been defined not only as the use of force, as was the government's former definition, for political ends, but has been widened beyond all recognition, so that the Acts illegalise acts of "glorifying terrorism" and such like, including for ideological and other aims. As for the pre-charge period of detention, Section 41 of the 2000 Terrorism Act allowed police to detain a person without charge for up to 48 hours. This period could be extended to 7 days, with the permission of a judge. Section 44 of the Act provided the police and Home Secretary with the power to define any area or time period where the police could stop and search for items that could be used for terrorism. This laid the foundation for a huge attack on civil liberties. Up

to 2005, 750 people had been arrested under the legislation with only 22 convictions. After 9/11, the Criminal Justice Act 2003 extended the detention without charge period to 14 days, and the Terrorism Act 2006 raised it to 28 days. Tony Blair's attempt to extend it to 90 days was famously defeated.

Many arrested under this legislation, as well as civil liberties campaigners, have seen that every time people resist these anti-human laws, then the government puts the legislation under more scrutiny and passes one more Act to screw down the level of repression still further. As one man arrested under the "anti-terror" legislation said, "Once the status quo is there the legislation is very easy to use. In other words, they put in certain 'safeguards' to appear to be protecting civil liberties, such as having to get the permission of Parliament, to extend the pre-charge detention to sixty days, and so once this becomes

Included in this most recent legislation is the granting to the Home Secretary of the power, without any necessity to receive the approval of Parliament, to order the detention of a suspect ("persons reasonably suspected to be a terrorist") for 42 days without any charge being brought.

accepted it is easy for the authorities to extend the amount of time they can detain someone."

Now most people who have been convicted under the laws are caught under the provisions relating to preparation, or instigation. This can mean that having a book that is considered to be "terrorist" literature, such as an encyclopaedia of Afghanistan, is deemed to

be an offence under the legislation. The case of Samina Malik was one such case where she was convicted under section 58 of the Terrorism Act 2000 of "possessing records likely to be useful in terrorism".

This indicates that acts of terror are not the main issue, as the government keeps insisting. The bottom line is the state's conception that to qualify for recognition of their human rights, people are having to conform to the government's definition of "our way of life" and espouse their definition of "British values". The Counter-Terrorism Bill 2008 is being introduced in the context of stepped up resistance to arbitrary state authority and impunity, and would legalise methods and extend the scope of control and state intervention in the lives of the target population. It will be used to zero in on the Muslim community as the "enemy within"; and with the co-operation of the media seek to further demonise this part of the British working class, which includes foreign nationals.

The Bill includes measures to list released "suspect terrorists" who will have to keep in touch with the police, which are part of stricter monitoring arrangements. It also ensures that full use of DNA can be made in "terrorism investigations" without having to charge the person. This adds to the long list of "security measures" that the New Labour government aims to convince the people are in their best interests. The issue is presented as one of striking a balance between "security" and civil liberties, whereas the people desire both security, which comes from their own struggle in defence of the rights of all, and to have their rights guaranteed. Pitting these against each other as though on opposite sides of a seesaw makes no sense and shows an ulterior motive in removing civil liberties.

The Bill is yet another way to codify the practices of an inhuman and medieval authority, which the 2008 Bill would grant the power to hold a person for up to 60 days without charging them and

without any suggestion of a fair trial. Locking anyone up without charge is against basic human rights and means that the rule of law is thrown out of the window. Holding someone for one day without charge is inhumane, but it can be said that 60 days will not be the limit, as the history of continual extensions shows. The authori-

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ties will find the means to detain someone for a further period of time by holding them, for instance, on the basis of another "investigation".

This is not to mention the many foreign nationals detained without charge or trial for up to seven years, based on "secret evidence" with the use of control orders that are keeping people locked in hospitals or tiny flats, with a humiliating tag on their leg, and only certain visitors allowed to call. The Law Lords ruled this unlawful in 2004, as defying the European Convention on Human Rights, as enacted into British law in the Human Rights Act. This shows that the government is determined to strengthen the hand of the state and impose their dictate. It highlights the utilisation of an unwritten constitution that does not vest sovereignty in the people and stands against their struggles. This is one factor in the arbitrary authority of the state in its clash with the people and their resistance.

This Bill and the other pieces of "anti-terrorism" legislation before it are an attack on all, even though in their implementation they single out definite sections of the people. The working class and people must oppose all the attempts to split and divide their

Continued on page 4

Condoleezza Rice in Britain: NATO Must Get Out of Afghanistan!

Continued from page 1

a sign that the resistance of the Afghan people is becoming stronger and more successful. As a consequence, the US imperialists have been demanding that other NATO members should also increase troop numbers and re-deploy existing troops according to the US diktat, a demand that has been rejected by France and Germany in particular. The US has even publicly criticised some NATO members and admitted that there is no guarantee that the continued occupation of Afghanistan can be maintained in the face of growing Afghan resistance, while the Canadian government, a staunch ally of the US threatened to withdraw its troops if other NATO members did not send reinforcements. There are at present over 42,000 NATO troops occupying Afghanistan, the vast majority from the US but nearly 8,000 from Britain, while NATO commanders are demanding an increase of at least 7,500.

Setbacks for the alliance

As the main ally of the US, the government has voiced similar concerns and has also announced increases in troop numbers over recent months. Last December in a statement to Parliament, Gordon Brown argued that "there must be greater burden sharing by all partners and allies" and stressed the need for increasing "Afghan ownership" of the state apparatus, tacit recognition that the Afghan people have not, and will not, tolerate continued foreign occupation. Since then other government ministers have made similar demands.

The Anglo-American alliance has also suffered another setback with the recent rejection by the government of President Hamid Karzai of their chosen envoy Lord Ashdown. Ashdown had been officially proposed as the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to Afghanistan, but apparently without any consultation with



the allegedly sovereign government of that country. It is therefore expected that the talks meeting between Rice, Brown and Miliband will also discuss the question of his replacement, for what is seen as a significant role that might involve overtures to the Afghan resistance forces. This rejection came at the same time that President Karzai was criticising the deployment of British troops in the southern Helmand Province, suggesting that they had in fact made matters worse.

Such opposition from the main ally of the Anglo-American alliance in Afghanistan has added to the problems facing the US, Britain and the other big powers, who openly acknowledge that they cannot agree amongst themselves, and are facing growing demands at home for an end to the illegal occupation of the country. Recently the US Defence Secretary was even criticising the performance of its main allies in the south of Afghanistan, the troops of Britain, Canada and Holland. It is also being more openly accepted that Karzai's government has limited credibility or jurisdiction in Afghanistan.

Stand of working class

The visit of Condoleezza Rice to Britain is therefore taking place as the Anglo-American alliance faces something of a crisis in Afghanistan in the face of the growing resistance to occupation, but also at a time when the Labour government has already signalled its willingness to continue to act as the main ally of the US in its criminal warmongering activities. The meeting of Rice, Brown and Miliband is aimed to strengthen the hand of the occupation forces and to launch further criminal attacks on the peoples of Afghanistan and the entire region and must be opposed.

The stand of the working class must be to condemn this visit of the representative of US imperialism to Britain; to condemn the continued occupation of Afghanistan and to redouble its efforts to fight for an anti-war government.

No to the New Counter-Terrorism Bill! Repeal All "Anti-Terrorism" Legislation!

Continued from page 3

ranks. In opposing the 2008 Bill and calling for a repeal of all the "Anti-Terrorism" legislation, and fighting to uphold a modern conception of the rule of law, the working class and people seek to defend the rights of all. There is a strong movement to condemn and end the illegal detention of those unjustly caught by the provision of this legislation, and it is a movement that fights against this latest appalling Bill with the realisa-

tion that an injury to one is an injury to all. These are the aims and ideals of the movement which are being held high, and this movement must unite with all other movements for progress and change.

Workers' Weekly calls on all democratic people to condemn and oppose the 2008 Counter-Terrorism Bill and demand the repeal of all the "anti-terrorism" legislation. Free all those held under the "anti-terror" laws!

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

Friendship and Solidarity with the Korean People!

Meeting on the DPRK and its Advances

The Friends of Korea are holding a public meeting on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), on the occasion of the anniversary of the birth of its leader Comrade Kim Jong Il. The programme includes a film show, a speech on the significance of the DPRK, and ample opportunity for contributions and discussion. Guest of honour will be Jong In Song, Counsellor at the DPRK Embassy in London. The meeting will conclude with a cultural programme and food.

**Saturday, February 16,
2008, 3.00 pm**

**Saklatvala Hall, Dominion Road,
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All welcome!
Organised by Friends of Korea.

Workers' Daily Internet Edition

**Daily On Line Newspaper of the Revolutionary
Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)**

Web site: www.rcpbml.org.uk

e-mail: office@rcpbml.org.uk

WDIE sent by e-mail daily (Text e-mail): 1 issue free, 6 months £5, Yearly £10
Address: 170 Wandsworth Road, London, SW8 2LA

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or **020 7627 0599**