

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

**Britain backs Kosovo "independence":**

## **Oppose Big Power Interference in Self-Determination of the Peoples**

**O**n Sunday, February 17, 2008, it was announced to the world that Kosovo had now

become an "independent" nation, all under the guidance of the EU and US. Whether this is correct or incorrect for

Serbia is a question for the Serbian people both Serbs and Kosovars. But for the British people there must be an

understanding that Britain is a participant in this interference in Serbia's

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## **SALUTE TO FIDEL, THE CUBAN PEOPLE AND THEIR CUBAN REVOLUTION!**



**F**idel Castro Ruz has resigned as President of the Council of State, but will proudly remain as a participant in the battle of ideas. Since 1959, the Cuban revolution has been a beacon for humanity with the socialist nature

of the revolution being announced in 1961. Cuba's revolution grew out of the anti-colonial struggles, and defeated fascism by winning the fight against the Batista regime.

Cuba has had to struggle

against 49 years of American interference, facing the US administrations' use of terrorism, war and threats of war. Standing against an imperial power such as the US has only served to make the Cuban revolution stronger

with the people united in defence of their revolution.

The resignation of Fidel has prompted the US and European media to present disinformation

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### **Northern Rock Nationalisation:**

## **The Parasitism of Finance Capital and the Necessity for the People to Decide the Direction of the Economy**

**O**N SUNDAY, THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO NATIONALISE NORTHERN ROCK. £25 billion had

already been lent to Northern Rock by the Bank of England, as financial instability swept through the capitalist system, and broke against this former mortgage-lender that had become a leading light in selling debt.

This is the latest chapter in the saga of Northern Rock, which has seen the government do everything possible to ensure that the owners of capital are supported, to the full extent of the government's powers. It underlines that there is a need for the working class to organise for a change in the direction of the economy, and create the conditions for the people to decide on the direction of the economy. In the present system, the

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# Britain backs Kosovo "independence": Oppose Big Power Interference in Self-Determination of the Peoples

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affairs, and, as with Iraq and Afghanistan, what is the "gift" of the imperialist powers cannot be considered liberation.

Rather than a sovereign state, what has actually been created is a kind of protectorate, namely Kosovo, which is now having the EU govern its affairs, taking over from the UN who have been there since the criminal NATO bombing in 1999. 16,000 NATO troops are to stay stationed in Kosovo, and plans for thousands of EU officials to be sent to Kosovo are underway.

## Britain's stand

Kosovo has also become a point contention between the big powers with Russia and most likely China against the move while the US, Britain and other EU powers are spearheading the so-called independence of Kosovo. This is causing contradictions not only between "East" and "West" but also between the western powers themselves, as countries such as Spain defy the recognition of Kosovo.

What is behind Britain's stand is being covered up by an insistence that Kosovo is a special case clearly different from other questions of independence. Foreign Secretary David Miliband stated that "...this is a unique case, and I think it's not one that can be equated to the Basque issue or some of the other issues that have been raised". It is clear

from the double standards and the habitual negation of international law that there is an ulterior motive behind Britain's involvement, consistent with Britain's aggression and "export of democracy" around the world, both now and historically.

## Disintegration as the aim

What is behind the interference of the big powers in this region? The big powers have not abandoned their quest for domination in Eastern Europe. The Balkans is a strategic region, control of which is key for control over Europe. The US now has bases in several countries in the Balkans. These bases can be used to strike at parts of Europe making the US more powerful in that region. It is the interference of these foreign powers in Eastern Europe that has caused untold tragedy. This foreign power interference in the region is creating tensions between Serbs and Kosovars and dividing the population on ethnicity grounds.

The problems between the Serbs and Kosovars are for themselves to solve through their own struggle to unite and build the society that they desire. Occupation has never liberated anyone, and so the problems that the Kosovars have will continue under occupation and Kosovo will become an instrument of the big powers. Without self-determination stemming from the people themselves in their struggles for national affirmation and renewal, such moves will only lead to disintegration,

enmity and being enslaved and violated by foreign interests.

The "mainstream media" present the creation of Kosovo as an historic event, as an achievement for Kosovars, with photographs of elated Kosovars and a rhetoric that all is well and good now that Kosova has its "independence". A big lie is promoted that left to themselves, the peoples would be at each other's throats, and with this dogma, the criminal role of big power politics and imperialist war is covered over and truth turned on its head. This history as such is a distortion of what is the reality for the people of Serbia, which is now divided, and under the tutelage of foreign powers, while the Kosovan people will not achieve the affirmation of their identity and the ability to decide their own affairs that they desire in these circumstances.

## What "independence"?

That the US imperialists should single out Kosovo to mouth support for its "independence" while they maraud throughout the world placing suffering peoples under the US jackboot is just a painful farce, and demonstrates to the whole world that there are ulterior motives here, not least the attempt to smash the unity of the people against them into smithereens. It boggles the mind that US imperialist chieftain George W Bush should even have a conception of what independence means. The big powers of the EU are, for their own interests, attempting to



create a Europe where the rule of the monopolies holds sway. Russia and China who seek a multi-polar world point out that this move to separate Kosovo from Serbia is against international law, citing UN Security Council Resolution 1244, which, though couched in big-power terms, lays down a procedure for greater "self-government" by Kosovo that is very questionable whether it has been followed. These contradictions are being battled between the ruling elites, while the people of these contested nations such as Serbia, Iraq and Afghanistan are having to deal with occupation, divide and rule, and overall violation of sovereignty.

## Upholding non-interference

The British working class and people must see these events for what they are, understand the context of this so-called "independence", oppose the disinformation and distortion of the situation, and see through the agenda and methods of the big powers. For the working class and people in Britain, organising for an anti-war government that upholds the principle of non-interference and upholds the right to self-determination for the people of the Balkans, and the rest of the world, is of utmost importance as the big powers march the world's people further down the path to world war.

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## Northern Rock Nationalisation:

# The Parasitism of Finance Capital and the Necessity for the People to Decide the Direction of the Economy

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financial parasites are turning the whole of the socialised economy into a reservoir of funding for their enrichment. Crisis is the fellow-traveller of this system, and the present financial crisis is an indication that this sucking of the wealth from the socialised economy by the financial parasites is unsustainable. The situation is calling out for the workers to rise to the occasion to take the lead in turning things around.

A Bill is going through parliament to "nationalise" Northern Rock. But what kind of "nationalisation" is it? It is certainly not "public ownership" in the sense either that is under the direction or control of the people, nor that the bank is being governed for the public good. The question is: who decides? Who is in control? Alistair Darling speaks of "temporary public ownership". This can be translated to mean a period where the government takes the risks that the finance capitalists are unwilling to take before handing Northern Rock back under their direct say and control. Meanwhile further social product is appropriated to keep this parasitic outfit in existence. Ways and means could be found to protect and guarantee the mortgages of home-buyers, if that is the issue, without focusing on guaranteeing the return to the institutional shareholders, such as the hedge funds, which have major stakes in Northern Rock.

The calls for nationalisation have been made in the sense that control of such institutions should be in place to completely curtail its operations of speculation and the selling of debt as assets, to protect the workers of Northern Rock and the ordinary mortgage holders, and end the siphoning of funds to the finance capitalists. The government has taken the form of "nationalisa-

tion", and given it the content of paying the rich. "Northern Rock will continue to operate as a bank on a commercial basis," said the Chancellor. The new Board of the bank will operate "at arm's length" from the government, in other words, with commercial autonomy. And to emphasise the point, he appointed "troubleshooter" Ron Sandler, chairman at a "derivatives" trading concern, whose record was established as chief executive of Lloyd's London insurance market from 1995 to 1999. According to reports, Sandler is also a director of Belgian-Dutch bank Fortis, which was part of the consortium with the Royal Bank of Scotland that bought AMN AMRO last year in the world's biggest bank takeover. He is to be paid £90,000 per month.

The government's primary concern is for the finance capitalists,

**In the present system, the financial parasites are turning the whole of the socialised economy into a reservoir of funding for their enrichment... The situation is calling out for the workers to rise to the occasion to take the lead in turning things around.**

particularly the parasite capitalists whose capital is not directly connected with wealth-creation but rather as gamblers and leaches on the body of the socialised economy. It is not with the plight of those in debt.

When more than £77 billion was wiped off the value of Britain's stock market on January 21, the Chancellor, Alistair Darling, made a statement to the House of Commons on Northern Rock. His proposal was that the government provided a guarantee to make private financing possible in the cur-

rent market conditions. The plan was that Northern Rock would raise the funds it needs from investors by selling assets. The Treasury would guarantee payment to these investors in the event that the assets were insufficient to meet its obligations, for which Northern Rock would pay the Treasury a fee. This was a proposal for the government to act as a "backstop" so that shareholders and other providers of capital would face no risk in investing. In the event, even this attractive proposition was not enough to tempt sufficient capital from the providers of capital, and the "backstop" has turned out to be that the taxpayer is taking the burden for ensuring the "commercial success" of Northern Rock.

Who benefits from the "nationalisation" of the assets of Northern Rock? What is the government guaranteeing?

The government continues to insist that the problem is "global market conditions", and that it continues to provide guarantees because of the "destabilising risk" of collapse to the rest of the financial system. In doing so, it is underlining and strengthening the anti-conscious factor. It is stating that the economy is not under human conscious control and cannot be expected to be so. Markets must be allowed to create their havoc. That the parasitism of the whole system of international usury and gambling under the name of high finance is the underlying cause of this crisis does not enter into their equation. But the widespread danger of recession as the international parasites eat into and threaten to destroy the host economies does not seem to register on the Chancellor's antennae.

According to the Chancellor, under nationalisation, "the taxpayer will secure the entire proceeds from the future sale of the business in return for bearing the risks in this period of market uncertainty". The government will underwrite the risk in this period of adverse "market conditions", to remove the risks to the "wider financial system", and return it to the "private sector" thereafter. Thus the plan is to nurse this stricken parasite back into health, rather than addressing the

health of the social economy, and then let it back once more into the wild to continue its blood-sucking activities.

According to press reports, the government faces a £100 million

**The issue is not that this particular bank, Northern Rock, overstretched itself by borrowing too much credit with a short-term repayment period. It is that the whole mechanism of parcelling up debts as assets, and the outlook that the greater the debt, the more healthy the financial institution, cannot but give rise to crisis without furthering impoverishing the working people.**

bill in fees from lawyers and bankers for the advice given to the Treasury during its attempts to first sell the bank and then on nationalisation, and that "taxpayer exposure" now stands at a staggering £110bn, that is, the actual amount of debt owned by Northern Rock, which is now classified as public sector debt. Such is the greed and fetish for competition between these finance capitalists that rival concerns are voicing displeasure at being put at a "competitive disadvantage". Questions are being raised as to whether the government will go on to assist other financial concerns facing huge losses, and indeed the Bill introduced into the Commons is not Northern Rock specific.

One of the most crucial factors as far as the government is concerned is London's standing as a global financial centre. The city financiers cannot afford serious damage to Britain's reputation, in the face of the growth of other centres such as Frankfurt. In this respect, there are not a few hurdles for it to overcome from the finance capitalists and big business of the European Union, with their strict rules on state aid, based on the dogmas of neo-liberalism. The financial press is also warning of difficult times from the shareholders demanding compensation, as well as from the bidders such as Virgin

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# Salute to Fidel, the Cuban People and their Cuban Revolution!

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and complete distortion of the truth about Cuba, and its solid revolution.

This disinformation is designed to cover up the achievements of such a glorious revolution and promote the idea of interference in Cuba.

They call Fidel a "dictator", failing to report on the truly democratic system by which Fidel has been elected. There is the National Assembly of People's Power consisting of 609 members who are voted for by public referendum and serve for a term of five years. The National Assembly elects the members of the Council of Ministers (the Cabinet) and the Council of State which form the executive branch of the state. Prior to his resignation Fidel was elected president of both these bodies. To be President of Cuba and the Council of State therefore, is to have been an elected member of the National Assembly and therefore to have been elected by over 50% of the electorate in their own constituency. In turn, the president has to be elected by the vote of the parliament.

## Leader and collective

On being called a "dictator", Fidel stated: "I don't understand why I'm called a dictator; what is a dictator? It's someone who makes arbitrary decisions, who acts over and above the law under no restraint but his own desires and whims. And in that case Pope John Paul II who was always opposed to war could be accused of being a dictator and president Bush be considered a defender of peace, a friend of the poor, and most democratic of rulers. That's the way the industrialised countries in Europe treat him, without realising that Bush can make terrible decisions without consulting the senate or the House of Representatives or even his cabinet. Not even Roman emperors



had the power of the president of the United States! Any American president has more possibility of giving orders and decisive dramatic orders than I have."

Fidel continues: "Look, I don't make unilateral decisions. This isn't a presidential government. We have a council of State. My function as a leader exists within a collective. In our country the important decisions are always studied, discussed and made collectively. I can't appoint ministers or ambassadors....I have authority of course, I have influence, for historical reasons, but I don't give orders or rule by decree."

## Fidel's contribution

The monopoly media also neglect to acknowledge the achievements of the revolution. The achievements of the Cuban people in the area of health and education are particularly glorious. Cuba has 70,000 doctors, and has 90,000 students studying in the area of health. Cuba is also aiming to have 15 students to a class in secondary schools. This is not to mention the internationalist character of Cuba that has sent thousands of doctors, and teachers in to work in solidarity with other developing nations. More than half a million Cubans have gone on internationalist missions as technicians and combatants.

For the Cuban people and millions around the world, Fidel Castro's contribution to the revolution in Cuba and to internationalism will be celebrated. He will be upheld as a person who has dedicated his entire life to fighting injustice and oppression of every kind, to standing up to US imperialism and inspiring countless others to do the same, to serving the people, and to putting into practice the aim of bringing into being a world fit for human beings.

# The Parasitism of Finance Capital and the Necessity for the People to Decide the Direction of the Economy

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whom the government turned down.

The issue is not that this particular bank, Northern Rock, overstretched itself by borrowing too much credit with a short-term repayment period. It is that the whole mechanism of parcelling up debts as assets, and the outlook that the greater the debt, the more healthy the financial institution, cannot but give rise to crisis without furthering impoverishing the working people. With the working people further impoverished, the need to suck more added-value from the labour of the people becomes ever more urgent. Now the claims on the social product in the case of Northern Rock by the financiers will take priority, as they are guaranteed by the state.

The "nationalisation" of Northern Rock highlights in a particularly stark fashion that class interests are paramount, and are clashing in two outlooks on the direction of the economy. It underlines that the Labour Party is acting as executive of the rich, enforcing the will of the monopoly capitalist class. It is totally at odds with the will of the working people, which are headed by the working class.

Workers therefore need to discuss this situation, not just from the point of view of guaranteeing jobs and curbing excesses, but with the outlook of the necessity for change, and actually

organising to change the direction of the economy. It is their outlook which embraces the public good, not the outlook of saving Northern Rock for the finance capitalists. They must set the agenda within the political programme to stop paying the rich and increase investments in social programmes. Their outlook must be to achieve that political power so that their will is supreme, to outlaw parasitism, get rid of the dogmas of neo-liberalism and winning in the global market place, and actually come forward with the solutions to the problems facing society. To guarantee the right to housing, rather than making housing the means for the enrichment of the finance capitalists is one such solution. This means that the workers themselves have to organise to occupy the centre-stage of political affairs. In this respect, the crisis of political representation for the working class is shown to be one of the most important issues to resolve for the ending of the crisis of this society and its economic system so that the dictate of the super-rich is seriously challenged head on.

The experience of Northern Rock must be fully grasped by the working class and people, that those who hold political power will do everything to serve the rich but blame the poor for all the ills of society, and penalise the disadvantaged and vulnerable. It points the way for the workers to sum up this experience and organise themselves to be in the position to dictate the direction of the economy for the public good.

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