

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

Free Palestine! End the Occupation! End the Siege of Gaza!

May 15 marks the 60th anniversary of Nakba day, the day of Catastrophe for the Palestinian people, the day following the

declaration of independence by the state of Israel. Join the national demonstration in London on May 10!

The Nakba occurred when

Zionist terrorist bands trained, equipped and supported by the British mandate authorities began staging attacks against Palestinian civilians. The Zionists

committed massacres against the Palestinian people, resulting in the dispossession of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians of their

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UNITE TO TURN THE SITUATION AROUND!



Contingent on the London May Day demonstration

The demonstrations celebrating May Day, up and down the country, on May 1-5, represented the spirit and determination of the working class affirming

its international day of unity and struggle. This is a forward looking festival of the class, building on the present stage of the communist and workers' movement,

and pledging to take up for solution the problems of the day and to turn the situation around. It is a day whose significance needs to be grasped by the class in the spir-

it of renewal, of beginning afresh, of settling scores with the old

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Commentary

Brown's "Global Society" Is Unconscionable

ON APRIL 18, DURING HIS TRIP TO THE US, GORDON BROWN DELIVERED A KEYNOTE SPEECH on foreign

policy at the John F Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston. The speech was billed in some quarters as an attempt to lay to rest Tony Blair's spurious justifications for military intervention expressed in a speech in Chicago in 1999, as the big powers of NATO bombed and invaded Yugoslavia. But it could not be said that Brown turned his back on intervention, military or otherwise in Boston, quite the contrary, his speech was a demand for increased global intervention, "hard-headed internationalism" (an echo of "hard power"!) in order that Britain and the other

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ancestral land. Another 350,000 were dispossessed in 1967 following the Six-Day War during which Israel occupied the Gaza Strip, West Bank, Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights. Today there are over five million Palestinians in the Diaspora. A great many have lived in refugee camps for generations.

The Israeli Zionists have imposed a blockade on Gaza which starves one and a half million inhabitants of food and essential resources. Across Gaza and the West Bank, Palestinians are living in the most abject conditions, under which Israel has set up walls and checkpoints that separate farmers from their lands, students from their schools

and universities, patients from their hospitals and families from each other. These concerted attempts to commit genocide against the Palestinian people, and smash all the means of existence for Palestine, are a crime against humanity.

Workers' Weekly vigorously reaffirms its support for the just cause of the Palestinian people, for their right to be, and salutes the heroic Palestinian resistance. We call on the British working class and people to raise their voices ever stronger against the crimes of Israeli Zionism and their Anglo-US backers. The people must hold the British government to account for its part in the crimes against the Palestinian people and fight for an anti-war government.



Free Palestine National Demonstration Saturday 10 May

Assemble 1pm Temple tube. Rally in Trafalgar Square

- End the siege of Gaza
- End Israeli occupation
- For the right of return of refugees

Organised by: British Muslim Initiative, Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Palestinian Forum in Britain

International May Day

In the United States, thousands of dockworkers at all 29 West Coast ports, including Los Angeles and Long Beach, took the day off work in a protest against the war in Iraq, effectively shutting down operations at the busy complexes.

In Canada, locals 1005 and 7135 of the United Steelworkers (USW) led a May Day rally and march to protest against the massive loss of manufacturing jobs in the Hamilton area and across Canada. On May 3, about 1,500 people took to the streets of Toronto in a day of action demanding justice, dignity and respect for all workers and their families. On May 1, about 800 people marked May Day by participating in a rally and March Against Capitalism in Montreal. On May 3 in Montreal, more than 50,000 people gathered to reiterate their claims on society on the

occasion of May Day.

Cuban President Raúl Castro headed the May Day event in the José Martí Plaza de la Revolución, culminating in a parade of more than one million Cubans resident in the capital. A bloc of young people and students led off the march, whose slogan was Unity, Strength and Victory, in support of the Revolution.

Working people in different parts of the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) held colourful functions to mark May Day. A national meeting was held at the People's Palace of Culture.

More than 300,000 workers celebrated May Day in Caracas, Venezuela, on May 1. Waving red flags and pro-revolution banners, against imperialism, and for socialism and peace, a rally also celebrated a decree by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez increasing

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Mass demonstration in Chicago, United States

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People gathered in Managua, Nicaragua

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the minimum wage by 30% giving Venezuela the highest minimum wage in Latin America.

Thousands rallied across Europe on May 1, in traditional May Day protests. Riot police use water cannon and tear gas to disperse workers during a demonstration in Istanbul. In Russia, 10,000 people took part in May Day demonstrations against the rising cost of living and demanded wage increases. In France, thousands of demonstrators took part in May Day protests against President Nicolas Sarkozy. In Paris, the two large French trade unions, CGT and CFDT, held a joint protest for the first time in four years. Several thousand took part in a march which arrived at the Place de La Republique in central Paris in the afternoon. In the Serbian capital Belgrade, some 10,000 people marched in a call for better living standards. In Greece, public transport services and ships and flights by the state carrier Olympic Airlines were paralysed across the country by the demonstrations in Athens.



UNITE TO TURN THE SITUATION AROUND!

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conscience of the obsolescent forces, a conscience which these outdated forces, stuck in conceptions which became anachronistic over a century ago, also seek to impose on the working class and their organisations.

The festival of May Day also stands against the trivialisation of politics and political affairs. The working class on this day also affirms that to oppose and remove the blocks to the working class movement, to overcome the crisis of working class representation, to address the fundamental flaw in the political processes and institutions which claim to be democratic, but which precisely keep the working people away from the levers of political power, it is necessary for the workers themselves to become political. The workers cannot hand over political affairs to any condescending saviours. But neither is this the whole story. The workers cannot accept the organisations, parliamentary political parties, state institutions as they find them. They must themselves consciously participate in building what is new, discussing what will transform society according to their needs.

Summing up experience

To begin to turn the situation around, workers will continually have to sum up their experience of taking a stand and fighting against the claims of the monopolies and of finance capital to dictate over the economy and have political affairs run in the interests of this dictate. They will have to be guided by the reality that the existing arrange-



Head of Newcastle May Day demonstration

ments in society which can be seen to be in crisis need to be changed to favour their interests and the general interests of society, and the socialised economy. Every attempt by the workers themselves to come to positions of power is a step forward, but it has to be recognised that the arrangements which serve the status quo are themselves a block to this advance. For example, the exercise of the right for the workers to become decision-makers from the grassroots up in matters which affect their lives, and that of their region and of the economy as a whole, is blocked by arrangements which give them no say or make participation impossible in anything but name. It is the same with the exercise of the right for the workers, along with the electorate at large, to select candidates from their peers who will represent and effectively fight for their interests. For the workers to take a stand and fight for the rights of all is a necessary and indispensable requirement for being able to confront the old arrangements, look reality in the eye and challenge them with initiatives that come from the workers and their collectives themselves.

Pride and dignity

May Day is a festival where the working class affirms that it has a programme for the renewal of society, a programme whose substance is anything but a series of policy objectives, a programme which comes from the needs, the claims and the rights of the working people themselves, and the

content of which is adopted by them. The determination and conviction of the workers and their collectives comes in organising for the actual success of this programme. In this respect, the affirmation on May Day of the pride and dignity of the working class and the building of the organisation and consciousness that embody that pride and dignity is the spirit and perspective which informs the forward march of the class to achieve its aims.

Independent programme

Let the year till May Day 2009 be a year of creating the conditions to turn the situation around! It can be done! *Workers' Weekly* calls on the working class to develop the workers' opposition to the political programme which enforces the economic demands, system and arrangements of the monopolies, achieved through the private ownership of socialised production, and to take up its own independent programme around which it unites all the working people. This independent programme of the working class is anti-war, pro-social, pro-worker and is founded on the defence of the rights of all. It bears the stamp of the working class which exploits no one nationally or internationally, which envisions a society that meets the claims of all its members through social consciousness and organisation and guarantees the right of all by virtue of their humanity.

**Success to this programme!
Unite to turn the situation around!**

Brown's "Global Society" Is Unconscionable

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big powers might manage the consequences of neo-liberal globalisation in the conditions of the 21st century.

At one level Brown's speech was merely the latest in a long line delivered by British prime ministers, urging the US government to act in concert with Britain and the other big powers, rather than unilaterally, to fashion the world in the interests of the big monopolies. In this respect, the current Prime Minister said nothing new. His argument is that neo-liberal globalisation has created such global inter-dependence and global problems that the big powers, and even some emerging powers, cannot act alone but must co-operate. For Gordon Brown, global problems require global solutions, co-operation and reforms.

Demand for alternative

Although Gordon Brown is able to identify some of the problems of the modern world: poverty, environmental decay, instability, economic crisis, for him these are merely unfortunate side effects of neo-liberal globalisation, challenges which can be met and overcome by the big powers acting in concert. Thus the unequal economic development of the big powers, the emergence of new powers in Asia, the growing global polarisation between rich and poor, the huge cross-continental flows of capital are all phenomena that can allegedly be managed, in order to "create a globalisation that is inclusive for all". The means to achieve this feat, Brown asserts, is to "agree new global rules and create new global institutions so that not some but all can benefit from change".

The fact is that it is the global capitalist system itself and the domination of the world by the monopolies and the governments that represent them that is producing economic and environmental disasters, instability and wars and cultural devastation. It is this system and this situation which is also producing growing international opposition, a global movement

and demand for an alternative. In actual fact, Gordon Brown is as subservient to the demands of the US as Tony Blair was. He is also an ideologue for Anglo-US imperialism, part of the empire that wages war with impunity and gives itself the right to interfere with people's lives everywhere.

Acting against the people

Brown specifically refers to the significance of "people power" and its ability to create a "new world order". It is in order to head off and crush such a movement and demand, to suppress the new and defend the old that Brown proposes new rules and institutions. These rules and institutions will be based on what Brown and others refer to as "shared" or "universal" values, that is on the defence of the values and institutions of neo-liberal globalisation, the so-called free market and political system of representative democracy and a narrow conception of human rights based on the preservation of the status quo. In short, Brown envisages new global institutions that will act against the world's peoples while claiming to act in their name.

In his battle for hearts and minds Brown claims that his "shared values" of liberty and justice incorporate the philosophies of all major religions and a variety of politicians. He even quotes Gerrard Winstanley, the famous publicist of the principles of the True Levellers or Diggers, the early communist organisation formed during the English Revolution in the 17th century. Brown wishes only to mention Winstanley's moral reference to the "light in man" perhaps not realising that Winstanley not only said that "the spirit of light in man loves freedom and hates bondage" but also argued amongst other things that "oppression was always the occasion why the spirit of freedom in the people desired change of government". The point here is that Brown is at pains to coerce and co-opt Winstanley into what the Prime Minister has referred to as liberty as a "British heritage" and is obliged to spread disinformation in order to do so.



Scenes from
London May Day
demonstration



Build the alternative

Brown's proposed global rules and institutions are more about strengthening and widening the powers of the UN, including its use of sanctions and military force. He proposes a new UN "crisis recovery fund" and a new global peace and reconstructions corps that can be used to rebuild "failed states", as well as a new IMF for economic crisis prevention and a new World Bank "for development and the environment". The emphasis here is on managing the consequences of globalisation, and in particular increased intervention under the guise of preventing "failed states", averting future genocide and "ensuring a global response to terrorism". He even proposes a "new cultural effort on the scale of the cultural Cold War in the '40s, '50s and '60s...to make the case for democracy and human rights", in order to prove that "violent extremism is unnecessary and wrong". But this is not the only idea that Brown borrows from that

period, since he also calls for "a new deal as bold as the Marshall Plan" based on economic and political agreements between rich and poor countries, which would demand that the poor followed the diktat of the rich in return for aid for education and health.

For Gordon Brown "renewal and reform", despite all his fine words about embracing the future, means delving into the past to maintain the present arrangements. He seeks to stem the tide of history and manage something unmanageable, the anarchy and devastation that are the fellow traveller of global capitalism. The working class and people must reject this rhetoric which in reality attempts to embroil them in the empire-building agenda of Anglo-US imperialism. The creation of a truly global society can only be established by building the alternative and the new, creating the conditions for the world's peoples to empower themselves and take centre stage so as to end once and for all the era of monopoly dictate.

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