

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

British Government Must End its Interference in Zimbabwe

The government has made several pronouncements on the recent second round of the presidential election in Zimbabwe. Indeed

both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary spoke before the election, held on June 27, declaring that in their view, violence had prevented

any election being viable and calling for further UN intervention in the country. The Prime Minister referred to Zimbabwe as a “criminal

regime run by a criminal cabal”. Since the election, the Minister for Africa, Lord Malloch Brown, has also

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124th Durham Miners Gala and Big Meeting:

The Workers Must Step Up and Strengthen the Work to Take Responsibility for the Fate of Society



Bands stop to play at the New Crown on their way to the racecourse, 2006

- Statement of Northern Regional Committee of RCPB(ML), July 12, 2008 -

The 124th Durham miners Gala comes on the eve of the 25th anniversary of the great miners' strike of 1984-5. The

strike produced an unprecedented conflict between the state and miners of which much has been written in terms that it was a defeat for

the miners and the working class in Britain. However, today its legacy can be viewed not only in terms of a defeat, but more impor-

tantly in its lesson as to the sharp

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Detainees of the “war on terror”

Contempt for the Rule of Law

THE CONTEMPT OF THE GOVERNMENT, AS CONSTITUTED OF THE BIG PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES IN THE COMMONS, for the rule of law as exemplified by its “war on terror” is to be vigorously

condemned. The remedy of the working class and people building the movement against all the injustices perpetrated under the government’s “anti-terror” legislation must be further developed on the basis of fighting for the rights of all. This “anti-terror” legislation tears up the legal safeguards fought for since medieval times which protect the individual against arbitrary authority. Far from the government strengthening legislation which acknowledges that all citizens have rights by virtue of being human, it is strengthening the means by which the agencies of the state

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Detainees of the "war on terror"

Contempt for the Rule of Law

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can act with impunity, outside the remit of the rule of law. This is leading to increasing repression on all sections of society within the broad scope of so-called "anti-terrorism". This attack on the rights of all has nothing to do with providing society with security against terror and the disruption of the social order. The opposite is the case, and the Muslim community, that is, those sections of society whose national and cultural background is of the Islamic faith and outlook, is the minority which is being spearheaded for attack. This is because on the one hand, the stands of principle of that faith are a challenge to the allegedly universal values which the government is promoting, and which it demands must be espoused by all citizens. On the other hand, the portrayal by the government of so-called "Islamic extremism" as inimical to the "British way of

life" is an attempt to drive a wedge between the people on the basis of religion and other factors. It is an attempt to prevent the people uniting to solve the problems facing society and to destroy any coherence which facilitates the united will of the people.

With the people's unity to resist the anti-social offensive and the attacks on the rights of all under assault, the ruling elite is planning and implementing the wrecking of society. This refers to the people's coherence in building a social economy, the rule of law which embodies the will of the people and the defence of the rights of collectives and individuals, and the responsibility of the state to provide all the means to protect and nurture its citizens and to involve them in decision-making and building a secure future. The contempt of the government for the rule of law is part and parcel of this wrecking of society, of rule by exception, blaming "extremism" and the like for the problems of



Demonstrators at the Labour Party Conference in Manchester on September 23 2006, protesting at the violation of the human rights of the Guantanamo Bay detainees

society and of a broad assault on the people's rights by arbitrary and unaccountable authority.

In contrast, the progressive concept of a modern society abhors and will not tolerate the abuse, distortion and corruption evidenced in the legal system under which alleged suspects are held for long periods without charge or trial, of hearings whereby the defence is denied access to "evidence" on security or other grounds, of humiliation, degrading treatment or torture of prisoners or those under other forms of detention, or of the mental damage caused to the human person and their families and loved ones which are the result of racism or inhuman treatment by the state.

The modern conception of the rule of law is grounded in upholding a legality and legal processes that defend the rights of all. The so-called "balance" which the

government and ruling elite promotes between rights of "criminals and victims" is no balance at all. The "anti-terror" legislation has all along been in contempt of this modern conception, and is designed to make criminals of and dehumanise those who are desperate victims of the wrecking of society and the injustices on nations, collectives and human persons perpetrated by a state which will not recognise or guarantee their rights, and seeks to criminalise resistance to injustice.

The hysteria generated in this context by the government and mass media which is designed to prevent reasoned discussion and consequent action on the people's security and on defence of the people's rights, is to be condemned. The working class and people must reject the attack on the rule of law under the guise of upholding society's security and its "British way of life". They must fight for respect for and a guarantee of human rights, for elementary principles of justice, and against the impunity of the state and its authorities, on the basis of defending the rights of all.



Vigil held at Stockwell tube station in South London for Jean Charles de Menezes on January 22, 2006, six months after de Menezes was shot dead by state forces

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British Government Must End its Interference in Zimbabwe

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issued several statements and attended the recent summit meeting of the African Union, held in Egypt.

In short, the government has openly given its support to the opposition candidate in Zimbabwe's election and interfered in that country's internal affairs, as well as striving to bring maximum pressure on neighbouring countries and on the deliberations of the AU. In this regard, the government is continuing with the attempts it has made for many years to determine what political and economic course is followed by Zimbabwe. At the present time, it is declaring that Robert Mugabe, the president of Zimbabwe, must stand aside, and that the candidate and political party that is acceptable to Britain, the US and the EU must be installed in power. Then, it is promised, sanctions will be lifted and the rebuilding and reconstruction of Zimbabwe can begin. This is outright blackmail. The sanctions, which play no small part in harming Zimbabwe's economy, must be lifted immediately, and the issue of "aid" must not be used as a tool to attempt to coerce the Zimbabwean government in acceding to the demands of Britain and the EU.

Miliband's disinformation

Most recently, Foreign Secretary David Miliband, visiting South Africa ahead of the G8 summit in Japan, called for "international consensus that the Mugabe regime is not a legitimate representation of the will of the people of Zimbabwe". He further called for a UN resolution to back international sanctions against President Mugabe's

government. He repeats the disinformation that the outcome of the March 29 election has caused a crisis, but neglects to comment on the legitimacy of the Zimbabwean election process or on the nature of the package called "free and fair elections" that Britain seeks to impose as the allegedly universal yardstick of democracy.

Propaganda campaign mounted

A great propaganda campaign has been mounted in the monopoly media in this country, as has been the case for many years, as though Zimbabwe were a major issue in world politics that dwarfs the tragedies of Iraq and Afghanistan. Little or nothing is said about Britain's colonial domination of Zimbabwe and the fact that no reparation has been made, nor the fact that the Labour government has reneged on promises and agreements made in the past to provide financial support for land redistribution in Zimbabwe. Much is made of that country's recent economic problems, although the causes of these problems and the role of Britain, the US and the international financial institutions in which they hold sway is never mentioned. The picture that is presented is one of a "criminal regime" that is attempting to prevent the so-called Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) from coming to power, but nothing is said about the nature of that organisation, nor the role that the British government, the Westminster Foundation and other foreign organisations have played in its rise to prominence. It could be argued that it is impossible to have "free and fair elections" in Zimbabwe while the British government and other foreign agencies are openly supporting one party and its candidate in that election.

Nevertheless, the government has declared itself content with the first round of elections held earlier this year, which it refers to as "legitimate" since the result, although not producing an outright winner, favoured the candidate of the MDC.

One of the key issues is that the problems confronting Zimbabwe must be solved by the people of that country themselves, without interference and bullying from the big powers. It is external interference that has created all the conditions for the instability and violence which has accompanied the recent elections. The government and media have of course made a great deal of fuss about the violent incidents that have occurred. This is in contrast to their attitude towards the violence that accompanied the elections, held in breach of international law, in occupied Iraq and Afghanistan, most of it perpetrated by the occupying forces under the leadership of the US and Britain. At the same time, as the Minister for Africa made clear, the government has not ruled out the use of violence and "whatever it takes" to bring about regime change in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabweans must decide

The outcome of the recent AU summit appears to have been a commitment by African governments to resist the pressure and bullying of Britain and the other big powers. The AU called for dialogue and government of national unity in Zimbabwe, a position that was immediately opposed by the EU, which

declared that it would only recognise a government led by the MDC candidate, Morgan Tsvangirai. More recently it has been reported that talks between the government of Zimbabwe and the MDC are being held, and South African president Thabo Mbeki, who has acted as the main mediator on behalf of the AU and the neighbouring states of the Southern African Development Community, reiterated the view that Zimbabweans must decide for themselves the composition of their government. Others, he added, could not dictate the outcome of the discussions.

In regard to Zimbabwe, the important principle which must be upheld is the right of the people of that country to choose their own path of development and government, free from the meddling of Britain and the other big powers. As the spokesman of the government of Zimbabwe recently pointed out, Zimbabwe is no longer a British colony and the British government has no right to interfere in its internal politics. The attempt of the government to impose its "universal values" in Africa by issuing threats and bullying and destabilising Zimbabwe must be totally condemned.



124th Durham Miners Gala and Big Meeting:

THE WORKERS MUST STEP UP AND STRENGTHEN THE WORK TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FATE OF SOCIETY

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struggle over which is the crucial social force who are prepared to shoulder responsibility for the fate of society. That pride in the dignity of labour which was characteristic of the miners in their heroic and protracted struggle, and which is also being upheld by miners today, is embodied in the traditions of the Gala and Big Meeting. That the cause of the working class represents the way out of the crisis and the future of society is also the spirit of the Gala as it develops and renews these traditions.

The miners' union itself is mindful of these responsibilities. In December 2007, British miners were involved in organising the first ever international miners' conference which was held in Calcutta, India, with mining unions taking part from across the world. On March 15, 2008, miners marked the 24th anniversary since David Jones and Joe Green were killed on picket lines with their annual lecture. The NUM remembered the two heroes of the strike who died supporting their union and fighting against the politically motivated rundown of the mining industry. Chris Kitchen, NUM National Secretary, pointed out that it is the miners and their union that have taken up the fight for an energy policy that encompasses the maintenance of the nation's deep mined coal and extensive investment in clean coal technology. "Britain's coal reserves must be exploited in the interests of the nation which means taking the industry back into public ownership," he said. In May, miners at the newly reopened Hatfield Colliery voted overwhelmingly for recognition of their union at the pit.

Whilst coal production in Britain has fallen to its lowest level for 200 years at below 15 million

tons, by contrast Britain imported 51 million tonnes of coal. As the energy crisis deepens, it becomes clearer with every passing day that society must follow the lead of the working class and not that of monopoly capitalism which has led society further down the road of economic disaster, fascism and war since the end of the miners' strike.

It is the workers who must take the lead in building the nation anew and defeating the stranglehold of finance capital and the monopolies on the society. An important lesson, not only of the miners' strike, but of the history of class struggle in the whole 20th century, is that the workers must strengthen their political and economic organisation. How to strengthen the unions as defence organisations on a new mass basis in which the workers consciously participate is a crucial question of the day, when the ruling class is intent on wrecking society. What kind of modern political party is needed so that the working class can put its stamp on the running of society, and empower the people to be the decision-makers is also of vital importance. It is the burning question of the day. It is clear that the workers cannot hand over responsibility and initiative to any other force, organisation or party that excludes them from decision-making.

Only the working class organised as an independent force that resolves the political crisis of representative democracy in its favour can save the day. For this, the workers need their own political, ideological and organisational centre. The Northern Regional Committee of RCPB(ML) calls on all class conscious workers to build a workers' opposition that has its own motion and self-consciousness. The state of society is crying out for new worker politicians that



Cuban health trade union representative addresses Gala, 2003

can intervene in the political process to fight for the programme of the working class. We call on all at the Gala and Big Meeting to join and strengthen the work to take up responsibility for the fate of society. Such a programme fights to accomplish crucial tasks at this juncture of history: to guarantee the rights of all, for an economy that stops paying the rich and increases investments in social

programmes, and the establishment of an anti-war government. **Only the Working Class Can Save the Day!**

For Renewal of the Political Process!

For the Rights of All Guaranteed in Law!

Stop Paying the Rich! Increase Investments in Social Programmes!

For an Anti-War Government!



Public Meeting and Social CELEBRATE THE HISTORIC VICTORY OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE!

June 25 - July 27 is the month of solidarity with the Korean people. On June 25, 1950, US and south Korean troops invaded the north signalling the start of the Korean War. On July 27, 1953, the victory of the Korean people was marked by the signing of the Armistice Agreement. The US presence in the south and its hostility to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) remains the obstacle to the peaceful reunification of the Korean nation. You are warmly invited to participate in this meeting to express solidarity with the Korean people's struggle to win complete freedom and independence.

SAKLATVALA HALL, Dominion Road, Southall, UB2 5AA
Saturday, July 26, 2008, 3.00 pm

Speakers from Friends of Korea. Guest: Jang Song Chol, 3rd Secretary, DPRK Embassy, London. Plus contributions and discussion, followed by a cultural programme and barbecue.

Organised by Friends of Korea

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Address: 170 Wandsworth Road, London, SW8 2LA

Phone: 0845 644 1979 (Local rate from outside London)
or 020 7627 0599