

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

## Investment in Health and Education are Vital to the Well-Being of the People and the Socialised Economy

**I**t has been pointed out many times as the government contributes billions of pounds of public funds to the bailout of the banks, and the featherbedding of the super-

rich, that this stands in stark contradiction to the tight constraints put on social programmes. Previously it was the case that the government could always decide to go to war,

maintaining troops in Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world, irrespective of the calls of the state treasury.

The government's argument is that the banking system is essential

to the functioning of the economy. The implication is that funding for social programmes is an optional extra, its level to be decided by the limitations of the

*Continued on page 3*

## GORDON BROWN POSES AS SAVIOUR OF THE OLD ORDER AT THE G-20 SUMMIT



Anti-war demonstration on the 3rd anniversary of invasion of Iraq, 2006

**G**ordon Brown, in the wake of the G20 crisis talks in Washington, is trying to portray himself as the hero of the hour, and the G20 agreement as "historic". The fact is that the imperialist system has been

plunged into one of its worst crises since the depression of the 1930s spawned fascism and war. It is impossible that the factors which have exacerbated the crisis can be implemented in a revised fashion to save the day for the

socialised economy and the working people of the world.

The proposals are coming from Brown and Darling as ideologues for the Anglo-US monopoly capitalist system, and have as their aim to pull the chestnuts out

of the fire for this system. Far from the issue being one of the free-market economy, in the sense of allowing a laissez-faire system

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### US Election Results:

## Obama Emerges as Champion of the US Ruling Circles

**I**N THE NOVEMBER 4 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, BARACK OBAMA EMERGED AS CHAMPION of the US ruling circles, becoming the President-elect of the United States. He is the first African American to run and be elected, securing a plurality of votes cast. He will be inaugurated as president January 20, 2009. With his election as President, analysing what Obama stands for, including his conception of change, is critical. What role will he play in advancing the war aims of the imperialists? How will the role of president as commander in chief

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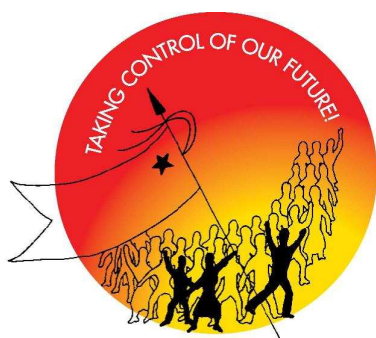
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## YOUTH+STUDENT

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**Workers'  
Weekly  
Youth Group**

# NUS Day of Action: "Students in the Red"

**S**tudents across the country demonstrated on November 5 in a "Students in the Red" day of action organised by the National Union of Students (NUS). The government has previously promised a review of the student funding system to take place next year; the action was held in the period running up to this expected review.

The BBC reported that the demonstrations were to "urge the government to scrap the current fee system" (1). This is disinformative when seen in context.

"Broke and Broken", the NUS critique of the current system exposing its failures, was launched at this year's higher education summit in September. Indeed, ever since the mid nineties, when the conditions were being prepared for the introduction of tuition fees in 1998, the NUS argued that fees would:

- Negatively affect students and graduates;
- Cause financial concerns to determine choices;
- Frame education solely in commercial, individualist terms;
- Create a two-tier education system for the rich and poor;
- Hinder wider participation;
- Limit social mobility.

Given the ten years' experience since their introduction, the NUS still concludes this to be the case (2).

As well as exposing the realities of the current system, the NUS report raises the need for an alternative, and is now collecting stu-

dents' views on the matter (3), as well as organising discussion events to develop an alternative policy.

To reduce the day of action to simply a protest against the current fee system is to ignore the fact that students, out of their experience, are developing ways to take up politics themselves in the form of starting to set their own agenda, discuss alternatives and influence decision-making on this basis, rather than confining themselves to reactive protest. By ignoring this fact, such disinformative reporting is a factor in students' marginalisation.

### Who decides?

"When top-up fees were brought in," says the NUS, "the government promised a review of the system in 2009. NUS sees this as an opportunity to fix the broken system and create a fairer way of funding education. Opponents of NUS will use the review to push their interests and increase top-up fees from £3,070 to £10,000 per year! For the sake of current students, future students and the future of Britain's economy, we must win in this review."

Though the NUS does not back up its figures here, the dichotomy drawn is not false. It mirrors a real division in outlook between that of the government and big business on the one hand and students on the other. In whose interest is the funding system run? Who decides?

The perspective of big business is to generate the skilled workers required for domination of the

"global market" at no loss of profit to itself. The government reflects this in its contradiction between "widening participation" while pressuring funding and shifting the burden onto students and their families.

### Education is a right!

The perspective of students is that education is not a privilege, but a right; not an individual choice, but a social necessity. Higher education should be broadened on a universal basis, not through the creation of a two-tier system. Rather than crippling students and their families with further debt, which is a factor in the current economic crisis, funding for this important social programme should be drawn directly from the social product.

Students are learning from experience that the way forward is to take up politics themselves on the basis of their own agenda, and are beginning to look for ways to address this key issue. WWYG calls on all students to join in and strengthen this movement so that it achieves its aims.

### Notes

1. "Students protest over finances", <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/7708987.stm>
2. <http://www.nus.org.uk/en/Campaigns/Broke-and-Broken/Why-are-we-campaigning>
3. To download the consultation document, see [http://resource.nusonline.co.uk/media/resource/EFC\\_Consultation%20Paper%20\(2\).doc](http://resource.nusonline.co.uk/media/resource/EFC_Consultation%20Paper%20(2).doc)



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# Workers' Weekly

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# The Proposed Cuts at South Tyneside Foundation NHS Trust

- Statement of Branch Secretaries of Unison and the GMB unions -

On Thursday, November 6, representatives of the board met with the representatives of the staff side unions at South Tyneside Foundation NHS Trust. The Trust board wanted to discuss a scoping document for Review of Estates and Facilities at South Tyneside District Hospital. The scoping document which was placed on the table by the facilities Director David Watts for discussion identified as a target £1.3 m + target reductions for Estates and Facilities to be delivered by March 2009 with plans put in place in December. Management side claimed that the cost of the estates and facilities was higher than average of other trusts out side of London, but also because they are in financial difficulties following the change to the "Payment by Results" system to all Trusts by the government where by they only get ad hoc payments for treatments and operations made instead of annual funding on the basis of the population they serve. Outrageously, the increasing cost of fuel at the hospital which will cost them in the order of £1 million extra this year is expected to come out of hospital patient care and staffing budget.

The unions expressed their concern that the proposals would lead to a large number of redundancies and failed to see how the hospital could carry out its functions with such a reduction in support services. Staff side said they would meet with members to discuss the situation and respond to management if and how they wanted to respond.

Management said it was their intention to issue 90 days notice

for the ending of all contracted overtime at the Trust and that they would also be inviting voluntary redundancies from all employees of the South Tyneside Foundation Trust for information only at this stage.

## Fight for services

These proposed massive cuts in support services come after the closure of Ward 23 and the moving of gynaecological beds onto surgery wards. Ironically, it also comes after the Trust has been awarded three stars by monitor for its "services and efficiency".

It was pointed out at staff meetings by a union representative: "Why should we pay with cuts to our jobs which are vital to the health service because the government is no longer taking up responsibility to fund the NHS properly. Let's be clear, whether people accept voluntary redundancy, or the directors impose compulsory redundancies this will not solve the problem of the financial crisis which is caused by the government's refusal to guarantee the funding of the health service."

Discussions at the hospital were in the context that the security of the health workers lies in their fight and that this is "our hospital, our work place and our NHS".

The staff side unions jointly condemn this direction of cutting back clinical and support services to hospitals and other health care services. They call on all health workers and patients to fight to retain their hospitals' clinical services and support infrastructure.

Discussions with staff and meetings with management continue at the Trust.

# Investment in Health and Education are Vital to the Well-Being of the People and the Socialised Economy

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government's budget. The Blairite doctrine of "investment with reform" was a formula for privatisation and paying the rich. In the health service, it has spawned "payment by results", the need to eliminate "budget deficits", and the "purchaser/provider" split. In education, it has generated the involvement of big business in setting the direction for education, an assault on the humanities, and higher education and public schools chasing lucrative funding in the interests of "competition".

The government's programmes in both these respects, in regard to banking and to social programmes, have been a crucial factor in exacerbating the crisis of monopoly capitalism and the dictate of the financial oligarchy. The unfettered havoc of the financiers and the cutbacks and capping of spending in health and education have both been extremely detrimental to the well-being of the people and the socialised economy. Just as the destruction of the manufacturing base and the loss of jobs is in a negative feedback loop with the crisis of the economy, so are the attacks on the social programmes which are the right of the people.

It might appear that Brown and Darling are reversing their positions by telling the world to increase spending. But the reality tells a different story. For example, some time ago the media and the government machine were full of the "scandal" of NHS Trusts "overspending" on their budgets, budgets which were not decided by them and over which health workers, professionals and the people whose claims for health care must be met as of right, had no control. Cutbacks,

"efficiencies" and the like were the result. Now, instead of a "deficit" there is a "surplus". Having made these cutbacks and "efficiencies", the Trusts are being told that they must not spend all this "surplus". NHS organisations will not be permitted by the government to invest more than £400 million of the £1.7 billion "surplus" in the next financial year and will not even get the full increase in resources which was pledged to them by the Treasury. Loss of jobs, cutbacks in PCTs and decreased patient care will be the result. This is supposed to prepare the NHS for a decrease in funding in future years. Compare this with the £500 billion supposedly to rescue the banks.

In education, the reality is that science and humanity courses have been and are being shut down constantly. Yet the government claims that everything is sound and healthy.

One conclusion that can be drawn is that the big parliamentary parties are not fit to govern. If only these parties can come to power, then the political system stands in need of renewal from top to bottom. Another conclusion that can be drawn is the need for the sovereignty to be vested in the people so that they themselves can decide on the direction for the economy, and to put into practice their sentiment to stop paying the rich and to increase investments in social programmes. Since the government is doing the exact opposite on both these counts, we call on the working class and people to organise so that the political programme of stop paying the rich and increase investments in social programmes becomes a reality over the heads of the monopolies, their dictate and the state which is instituted to implement this dictate.



## FIDEL CASTRO ON THE G20 SUMMIT

# Reflections by Fidel Castro on the G20 Summit

(extract)

The fact is that the Summit's final declaration was worked out by previously chosen economic advisors, very much in line with the neoliberal ideas, while Bush in his statements prior to the summit and after its conclusion claimed more power and more money for the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other world institutions under strict control of the United States and its closest allies. That country had decided to inject 700 billion dollars to bailout its banks and multinational corpora-

tions. Europe had offered an identical or even higher figure. Japan, its strongest pillar in Asia, has promised a 100 billion dollars contribution. In the case of the People's Republic of China, which is developing increasing and convenient relations with Latin American countries, they are expecting another contribution of 100 billion dollars from its reserves.

Where would so many dollars, euros and pound sterling come from if not from the deep indebt-

edness of new generations? How can the structure of the new world economy be built on paper money, which is what is really circulating in the short run, when the country issuing it is suffering from an enormous fiscal deficit? Would it be worthwhile travelling by air to a place on the planet named

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**What is really incredible is the final declaration adopted by consensus in the conclave. It is obviously the participants' full acceptance of Bush's demands made before and during the summit. Some of the attending countries had no choice but to adopt it; in their desperate struggle for development, they did not want to be isolated from the richest and most powerful and their financial institutions, which are the majority in the G20.**

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Washington to meet with a President with only 60 more days left in government and signing a document previously designed to be adopted at the Washington Museum? Could the US radio, TV and press be right not to pay special attention to this old imperialist game in the much-trumpeted meeting?

What is really incredible is the final declaration adopted by consensus in the conclave. It is obviously the participants' full acceptance of Bush's demands made before and during the summit. Some of the attending countries had no choice but to adopt it; in their desperate struggle for development, they did not want to be isolated from the richest and most powerful and their financial institutions, which are the majority in the G20.

Bush was really euphoric as he spoke. He used demagogic phrases which mirror the final declaration.

He said: "The first decision I had to make was who was coming to the meeting. And obviously I decided that we ought to have the

G20 nations, as opposed to the G8 or the G13. But once you make the decision to have the G20 then the fundamental question is, with that many nations, from six different continents, who all represent different stages of economic development, would it be possible to reach agreements, and not only agreements, would I be possible to reach agreements that were substantive? And I'm pleased to report the answer to that question was, absolutely."

"The United States has taken some extraordinary measures. Those of you who have followed my career know that I'm a free market person –until you are told that if you don't take decisive measures then it's conceivable that our country could go into a depression greater than the Great Depression."

"[ ] we just started on the \$700 billion fund to start getting money out to our banks."

"[ ] we all understand the need to work on pro-growth economic policies."

"Transparency is very important so that investors and regulators are able to know the truth."

The rest of what Bush said goes more or less along this line.

The final declaration of the summit, which takes half an hour to read in public due to its length, is clearly defined in a number of selected paragraphs:

"We, the leaders of the G20 have held a first meeting in Washington, on November 15, in the light of serious challenges to the world economy and financial markets"

"[ ] we should lay the foundations for a reform that will make this global crisis less likely to happen again in the future. Our work should be guided by the principles of the free market, free trade and investment."

"[ ] the market players sought to obtain more benefits failing to make an adequate assessment of the risks and they failed"

"The authorities, regulators and supervisors from some developed nations did not realise or adequately warned about the risks created in the financial markets"

# FIDEL CASTRO ON THE G20 SUMMIT

"insufficient and poorly coordinated macroeconomic policies as well as inadequate structure reforms, led to an unsustainable macroeconomic global result."

"Many emerging economies, which have helped sustain the world economy, are increasingly suffering from the world brakes."

"We note the important role of the IMF in response to the crisis; we salute the new short-term liquidity mechanism and urge the constant reviewing of its instruments to ensure flexibility."

"We shall encourage the World Bank and other multilateral developing banks to use their full capacity in support of their agenda for assistance"

"We will make sure that the IMF, the World Bank and other multilateral developing banks have the necessary resources to continue playing their role in the solution of the crisis."

"We shall exercise a strong monitoring of the credit agencies through the development of an

"We concede that these reforms will only be successful if they are based on a serious commitment to the principles of free market, including the rule of law, respect for private property, free trade and investment, efficient and competitive markets and effectively regulated financial systems."

"We shall refrain from erecting new barriers to investment and trade in goods and services."

"We are aware of the impact of the current crisis on the developing nations, especially on those most vulnerable."

"We are certain that as we advance through cooperation, collaboration and multilateralism we will overcome the challenges and restore stability and prosperity to the world economy."

This technocratic language is beyond grasp of the masses.

The empire is treated courteously; its abusive methods are not criticised.

The IMF, the World Bank and the multilateral credit organisations are praised despite the fact that they generate debts, enormous bureaucratic expenses and investments while supplying raw materials to the large multinationals which are also responsible for the crisis.

This goes on like that until the last paragraph. It's a boring declaration full of the usual rhetoric. It doesn't say anything. It was signed by Bush, the champion of neoliberalism, the man responsible for genocidal wars and massacres, who has invested in his bloody adventures all the money that would have sufficed to change the economic face of the world.

The document does not have a word on the absurd policy promoted by the United States of turning food into fuel; or the unequal exchange of which the Third World countries are victims; or about the useless arms race, the production and trade of weapons, the breakup of the ecological balance and the extremely serious threats to peace that bring the world to the brink of annihilation.

Only a short four-word phrase in the long document mentions the

## Obama Emerges as Champion of the US Ruling Circles

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### be further strengthened?

One of the things which stood out about the election campaign is the constant emphasis on "one nation", or as John McCain put it, "country first". In his victory speech, Obama again put forward the notion of a single national will, saying, "The road ahead will be long. Our climb will be steep. We may not get there in one year or even in one term. But, America, I have never been more hopeful than I am tonight that we will get there. I promise you, we as a people will get there. There will be setbacks and false starts. There are many who won't agree with every decision or policy I make as president. And we know the government can't solve every problem. But I will always be honest with you about the challenges we face. I will listen to you, especially when we disagree.

And, above all, I will ask you to join in the work of remaking this nation." He emphasised that "we will rise or fall as one nation, one people".

Obama here is indicating that even when the popular will stands against him, he is the one to make the decisions. The people are to join in the "remaking of this nation". But in whose image will the nation be — that of the US empire-builders, with their president as Commander in Chief, or that of the working class and people?

It can be seen that US administrations equate the popular will with their notion of national will and try to get the popular will to submit to them that way. The conflict taking place, often referred to as that between "Wall Street" and "Main Street", is to be eliminated in the name of this "national will," this "one nation". The challenge each presidential candidate faced during the campaign was to give a convincing rendering of the national will in a manner that transforms the power of the US presidency in particular and the US in general into an effective instrument to keep all contenders for that power within the US and abroad under its dictatorship. Obama emerged as the champion of the ruling circles and will now carry forward this transformation.

*\* Voice of Revolution is a publication of the US Marxist-Leninist Organisation.*

**From my point of view the privileges of the empire were not even touched. Having the necessary patience to read it completely, one can see that is simply a pious appeal to the ethic of the most powerful country on earth, both technologically and militarily, at the time of economic globalisation; it's like begging the wolf not to eat up little red riding hood.**

international code of conduct."

"We pledge to protect the integrity of the world financial markets by reinforcing protection to the investor and the consumer."

"We are determined to advance in the reform of the Bretton Woods institutions so that they reflect the changes in the world economy to increase their legitimacy and effectiveness."

"We shall meet again on April 30, 2009, to examine the implementation of the principles and decisions made today."

need "to face climate change."

The declaration reflects the demand of the countries attending the conclave to meet again in April 2009, in the United Kingdom, Japan or any other country that meets the necessary requirements —nobody knows which—to examine the situation of the world finances, dreaming that the cyclical crisis with their dramatic consequences never happen again.

Now is the time for the theoreticians from the left and the right to offer their passionate or dispassionate criteria on the document.

From my point of view the

privileges of the empire were not even touched. Having the necessary patience to read it completely, one can see that is simply a pious appeal to the ethic of the most powerful country on earth, both technologically and militarily, at the time of economic globalisation; it's like begging the wolf not to eat up little red riding hood.

*Fidel Castro Ruz  
November 16, 2008  
4:12 p.m.*



# GORDON BROWN POSES AS SAVIOUR OF THE OLD ORDER AT THE G-20 SUMMIT

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to flourish, Brown and Darling are emerging as the champions of state monopoly capitalism. This is their "route map" to so-called economic recovery, to stimulate all economies to "rapid effect". If the cause of the crisis is not addressed, then solutions cannot be found. This being the case, the Prime Minister's words of triumph must have another purpose. Everything will not be all right with the world, and the people do not believe that it can.

These words are to disorientate the workers on the one hand, to persuade them despite all the evidence that, "By the actions we take, savings are safe, people will be able to keep their jobs, they will not lose their homes in all or our countries. These are extraordinary

times and they require extraordinary measures." The implication is that the workers of Britain should once again put their trust in a "Labour Party", and distrust their own experience and their confidence that a socialised economy under their control will have no need of monopoly capital and the politicians who abjectly serve it. At the same time, Brown's words are a declaration that the world should re-order itself at the behest of international finance capital, and that Anglo-US state monopoly capital must continue to call the shots, and in particular London should remain the world centre for finance capital. It is clear that neither the developing world, the newly resurgent Latin America, nor indeed the other powers of "Old Europe" will accept this dictate.

It is reported that detailed agreements on the reform of the world financial system, including global regulation of the biggest banks and an overhaul of the way the International Monetary Fund (IMF) operates, will have to wait a further G20 summit in the spring of next year. What a surprise! By then, Britain will hold the chairmanship of this anachronistic group and Brown said that the meeting could take place in London. His "road to a new



Bretton Woods" is in reality a road to war, retrogression, barbarism and subjugation of the peoples. It is most likely that Brown also has an eye on the President-elect of the United States and the world-dominating alliance he dreams they will forge together. He is reported as saying that his master plan is "very much in line" with the thinking of Obama in this "difficult period".

## Organised as class

This monstrous economic and financial crisis has not been called an economic "9/11" for nothing. The events of 9/11, for which US imperialism and its cohorts must be held responsible, signalled reaction all along the line, an assault on the rights of all, and attacks and aggression against those states which Anglo-US imperialism declared were their enemies. The people's resistance against economic aggression and violence must now be stepped up, in the sense that the governments of the US and the big powers, at the same time as contradictions between them becoming sharper, will again spearhead their attempts at making the working people and the masses of the world shoulder the burden of the crisis.

But the working class must not relinquish its conviction, in these circumstances, that organised as a class with their independent aim and programme, their sense of justice and injustice must and will prevail. This sense of injustice is targeted at the rapacious plundering of the world by the big monopolies, and the squandering by the rich and powerful of the wealth that working people produce, the incoherence and anti-conscious-

ness that they attempt to impose on the world. It is targeted at the wresting of the wealth they produce, by virtue of the private ownership of the means of production, and the domination of the most parasitic finance capital, to make the rich more obscenely rich. This parasitism it is which has become totally unsustainable under the present arrangements.

## Taking the lead

The workers must use this opportunity to organise that their sense of justice, which is embodied in the public good, the collective, and defence of the rights of all, prevails. To do so means that they must organise for their own empowerment, that the working class movement has to seize the initiative, and do away with the pious words, platitudes and endless diversions that attempt to shackle a ball and chain onto the organisation and ability of the workers to go for a different world in their own image, and go for it now.

The Gordon Browns of this world have nothing to offer the workers and their aspiration to vest sovereignty in the people, and usher in a world fit for human beings. The time to end all the illusions about cure coming from the gods of plague is now. *Workers' Weekly* calls on the working class to take the lead in organising to oppose the monopoly capitalist parasites and the politicians who do their every bidding, up to and including shovelling obscene amounts of produced wealth to prop them up. State power must lie in the hands of the working class, and the people must be the decision-makers!



## FOR AN END TO DOMINATION AND PLUNDER

# Behind The Crisis in the Congo Lies the Contention of the Big Powers



**D**uring the last few weeks, government ministers have made several statements on the current situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, following the visit to that country of David Miliband, the Foreign Secretary, and his French counterpart Bernard Couchner at the beginning of November. At the same time, the media has been full of reports concerning the recent outbreaks of violence in the country that has led to many deaths and a mounting refugee crisis, said to be affecting over 250,000 people.

There is still some speculation in the media that British troops might be sent on some “humanitarian mission” to a country where there are already 17,000 UN troops (MONUC), officially designated as “peacekeepers”. The Foreign Secretary has stated that there will be no imminent deployment of British troops, but did not rule out the possibility of the use of EU armed forces in the future. At the present time, the government is stressing the need for a political solution to the problems in the region as well as a strengthening of MONUC but its main activity appears to be considerable hand wringing and the shedding of crocodile tears for the people of the Congo.

The current crisis in the Congo is only the latest consequence of the vicious exploitation by the big monopolies of a country that has an abundance of natural resources, but is currently one of the poorest in the world. It is a region that has been ruthlessly plundered by the big powers since the creation of the so-called Congo Free State at the end of the 19th century. British capital played a key role in facilitating the initial exploitation of Congo under the auspices of the Belgian monarch Leopold II, which led to the death of some 10 million of its population before 1914.

In the last ten years it is estimated that over 5 million have lost their lives as British and other monopolies have through their proxies contended over the Congo’s mineral resources such as gold, diamonds, cobalt and coltan. Coltan (colombite-tantalite ore), 80% of the reserves of which are found in the eastern DRC, is essential in the pinhead capacitors used in mobile phones for example.

### There should be no illusions

The scramble for Africa’s resources during the colonial period also created artificial borders, displaced populations and created

national tensions. These problems were further exacerbated in the period when they might have been addressed, because the US and its allies imposed the dictatorship of Mobutu on the Congo for over 30 years, in order to continue to exploit its mineral resources. When Mobutu no longer served their purposes, the big powers shifted their support to others who could and plunged the Congo into a major conflict which has now lasted over a decade and embroiled most of Congo’s neighbours.

When the Foreign Secretary returned from his visit to the DR Congo, he was asked on BBC Radio to acknowledge that the main cause of the problems in that country can be found in the plundering activities of the big monopolies, many of them British in origin. Not surprisingly, he was extremely reluctant to accept that this was the case, preferring instead to hypocritically emphasise the need for political stability in the region. But facts are stubborn things, and in the last ten years the UN itself has published two reports that pointed to the role of British monopolies, including De Beers, Anglo-American, Barclays, and Afrimex in the Congo conflict. Numerous reports

also, including those by the UN, have shown that it is the demand and contention for Congo’s resources that are continuing to fuel conflict and instability in the region. As was pointed out by the BBC interviewer, the Labour government has itself been criticised for doing nothing to end the illegal plundering of Congo’s resources by British-based multinationals and in 2006 was found guilty by the House of Commons International Development committee of failing to carry out sufficiently thorough investigations of multinationals named in the UN reports.

The facts show that behind the catastrophic events that are taking place in the Congo can be found the rapacious tentacles of the big monopolies, which have had that country in their grip for over a century, whilst the governments of Britain and the other big powers act as their agents and staunchest supporters. There should be no illusions over the crocodile tears of Miliband and other government ministers. What must be demanded and fought for is for an end to the domination of the monopolies, and an end to the plunder of Africa’s resources. This is an essential part of the programme of the working class.



# Miliband's Visit to the Middle East: Further Imperialist Machinations



**Mass demonstration against the US-Israeli state terror in Lebanon with British complicity, held in London on August 5, 2006**

**D**uring the past week, Foreign Secretary David Miliband has been visiting Israel, occupied Palestine, Syria and Lebanon as part of what the Foreign Office refers to as the Middle East peace process.

It should be noted that the Foreign Secretary visited the area following the terrorist attack on Syria by the United States just a few weeks ago and while the Zionist regime in Israel is attempting to blockade the population of Gaza into submission, depriving them of food, medicine, electricity and other necessities and carrying out other crimes in the occupied territories and elsewhere. However, there are no reports of Miliband condemning these atrocities, nor even commenting on them. His visit can therefore clearly be seen as part of the continuing attacks by the Zionist regime and the Anglo-American alliance on the people of this region. The government's approach to the so-called Middle East peace process was set out in a speech entitled "Prospects in the Middle East" delivered by Miliband just before his visit to the region when he addressed the Labour Friends of Israel in London on November 4.

## Determined opposition

What is immediately clear from Miliband's speech is his recognition that the policy of the Anglo-American alliance has run into the determined opposition of the people of the region. That policy has been to continually support the Zionist regimes of

Israel as a cat's paw in the region and against neighbouring countries; and to attempt to force the Palestinians to relinquish their national rights. It is a policy that has resulted in great crimes being committed against the Palestinian and other peoples of the region and one that has led to instability throughout the Middle East. Nevertheless, it is an approach that Anglo-American imperialism continues to adopt and justify on the most spurious grounds. Despite his best attempts, Miliband failed to find any historical justification for the denial of the rights of the Palestinian people. Rather, he commenced his discourse by stating that the creation of the Israel was a cause for jubilation, that it "was one of the world's liveliest democracies", and that "a stable Middle East starts with a secure Israel at its heart".

## Historical injustices

For the government, the principle of the right of self-determination for the people of Palestine and other countries does not exist. In this case, the interests of Anglo-American imperialism, which are based on the existence of a Zionist state of Israel, must prevail. History itself can be distorted to serve these interests, as Miliband demonstrated in his speech when he quoted the findings of the colonial Peel Commission of 1937 to the effect that Palestine should be partitioned. He omitted to mention that this decision was made by a government-appointed body, and

only after the British government had encouraged the migration of thousands of Jewish settlers into Palestine, facilitated the purchase and theft of Palestinian land, viciously suppressed major uprisings against its illegal rule in Palestine and committed many other crimes which created a major injustice. These historical injustices in the region remain to be resolved, but Miliband wants to entrench them.

## Right to self-determination

The Foreign Secretary now suggests that what is required to solve the problem of Palestine is a "comprehensive approach", a "new alignment" in the region, involving amongst other things, agreements between Israel and its neighbours Lebanon and particularly Syria. But here what is required by the Anglo-American alliance is that Syria should cease supporting the patriotic forces in Palestine and Iraq, as well as those in Lebanon itself. Miliband's visit and the attack by the US on Syria can therefore be seen as complementing each other. Anglo-American activity in

the region and Miliband's visit must also be seen in the context of the threats that are continually issued against Iran, which were again made in Miliband's speech, and the attempts of the alliance to create the conditions for further attacks on Iran. The visit of David Miliband should also be seen as paving the way for further machinations that will undoubtedly follow the inauguration of the new US president in January.

Miliband claims that "to find a way forward, we need first to acknowledge the past", but the British government and its allies show no sign of acknowledging the crimes which it and its predecessors have carried out in regard to Palestine. Rather it continues to pose as an honest broker and the best friend of the peoples of this region, while continually creating the conditions for new crimes and atrocities to take place. It is the duty of the working class and people to empower themselves so as to chart a new course, a modern foreign policy which recognises the right of all peoples to determine their own affairs.

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