

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

Workers in Britain Celebrate May Day: Day of the International Working Class

Thousands of people joined the traditional demonstration in London on May 1 from Clerkenwell Green to Trafalgar Square.

Clerkenwell Green is the site of Marx House, which houses the Marx Memorial Library, and has historic associations with Marx, Engels and Lenin, and

with the communist, workers' and anti-fascist movements. The Green once more thronged with colourful contingents from the trade unions and trades councils,

with significant international contingents, for example from the Tamils of Sri Lanka, and of Turkish parties and

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NO TO ISRAELI WAR CRIMES! PALESTINE WILL BE FREE!



On Saturday, May 16, people are taking to the streets of London to remember Gaza, demand the end of the Zionist siege, to condemn Israeli war crimes and their Anglo-US backers, and to support the right of the Palestinian people to

their homeland.

The state of Israel came into existence 61 years ago on May 14, 1948. The anniversary of the Nakba, the Catastrophe, is observed by Palestinians on May 15. In the months before and after May 15, 1948, Israeli forces drove

around 750,000 Palestinians from their homes. Over 500 villages were emptied of their Palestinian population and most of them were destroyed so that those expelled had no homes to return to. 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. Now, Israel's war against the Palestinian people has reached

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Commentary

Miliband Speaks at the UN on the Middle East – What Plot against the Palestinian People is Unfolding?

The Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, was one of the principal speakers during the UN Security Council debate on the Middle East on Monday. The debate was called by the Foreign Minister of Russia, a member of the so-called Quartet with a special concern with Middle East, which also includes the United States, the EU and the UN. The debate was held in advance of diplomatic efforts initiated by the United States that will include a major speech by Obama in Cairo and visits to the White House from the Israeli prime minister, the Palestinian leader and the

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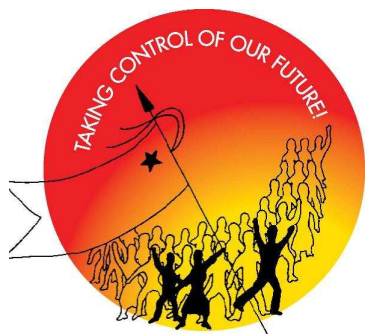
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Study Rates Britain Low on Youth Wellbeing

Researchers at York University for the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) have compiled a new table of youth wellbeing, relating to the conditions of young people aged up to 19, in which Britain comes in 24th place out of 29 European countries (27 EU countries with the addition of Norway and Iceland).

CPAG has published a briefing, "Child wellbeing and child poverty", drawn from the table. It begins by saying: "Enhancing children's lives and improving child wellbeing should be the central objective of children's policy."

"Wellbeing" in the study is used to describe the quality of childhoods as they are lived. That Britain, one of the world's richest countries in terms of GDP, both in total and per capita, should by any measure be placed so low in terms of wellbeing of the young is a damning condemnation of the decline of society.

The following criteria were used to draw up the table:

- Health
- Subjective wellbeing
- Relationships
- Material resources
- Behaviour and risk
- Education
- Housing and environment

In particular, the categories health, material resources, education, housing and environment represent the broad section of

social programmes to which the economy should be directed. The need is also to invest in developing culture: the cultural level of society as a whole and the cultural level of its youngest members, reflecting itself in the remaining categories.

The financial crisis, and the vast sums handed over to the

YOUTH+ STUDENT page of the Workers' Weekly Youth Group

banks and big business, has brought into sharp relief how the economy is instead directed to paying the rich.

It is always possible to question the methodology of such assessments or the logic of simple rankings. This is not the point here, however. The table and briefing bring out what the real-life experience of the population has already revealed: that the material and cultural level of youth is being driven down to the

lowest levels, while youth are being blocked from building a bright future for themselves. The need is to work out a way out of this situation.

The CPAG briefing calls for much more radical action to tackle child poverty, stressing: "Given that child poverty has an impact on every element of wellbeing, reducing poverty is essential to improve wellbeing." Further: "There is nothing inevitable about the UK doing badly on child wellbeing; the challenge should be to reverse this situation and put children front and centre of policy-making."

Stopping paying the rich and increasing investments in social programmes including culture is the starting-point for working out the alternative for the youth. To put youth front and centre of policy-making requires youth to be in the forefront of society. All blocks to young people building a bright future for themselves have to be broken down. The increasingly sophisticated young population, born to modern society, are fully capable of organising themselves. Society must enable their participation to the fullest extent possible according to their level, so that youth are no longer marginalised and are able to take control of the future they are to inherit.

May Day Observed in DPRK

Senior Party and state officials significantly observed May Day together with working people across the country.

Kim Yong Nam, Choe Thae Bok, Kim Jung Rin, Choe Yong Rim, the chairperson of a friendly party, leading officials of the Cabinet, ministries, national institutions and local party and power bodies and working people's organisations visited the Kim Jong Thae Electric Locomotive Complex, the State Academy of Sciences, the Pyongyang 326 Electric Wire Factory, the Migok Cooperative Farm in Sariwon City, the Pyongyang Textile Mill and other organs, factories, enterprises and farms on May 1 and congratulated the workers, agricultural workers and intellectuals on the holiday.

The senior Party and state officials laid floral baskets and bouquets before the statues of President Kim Il Sung. Going round monuments to the revolutionary exploits of the three commanders of Mt Paektu, rooms devoted to histories and other places, they were briefed on the proud path covered by organs, factories, enterprises and farms under the leadership of the Workers' Party of Korea.

They met innovators to congratulate them on their successful work and gave a pep talk to them.

They also enjoyed art performances and played tug of war, Korean chess and other colourful sports and amusement games, encouraging working people.

(Korean Central News Agency)

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Miliband Speaks at the UN on the Middle East – What Plot against the Palestinian People is Unfolding?

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Egyptian president. It is widely reported that Obama will launch a new plan for a settlement between Zionist Israel and the Palestinian people, while at the same time the US has renewed sanctions against Syria, which it accuses of interfering both in Iraq and in the occupied territories. These new initiatives in the Middle East come as the US, Britain and their allies are stepping up their military activities in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Miliband's speech can therefore be seen as part of the attempts by the Anglo-Americans to maintain the status quo in regard to Palestine, in particular to continue to support Zionist Israel and to refuse to recognise the right of the Palestinian people to determine their own affairs and live in their own homeland. It is also part of a campaign to present the resolution of the problems in the Middle East as being entirely dependent on the actions of the US government, which it is claimed is working for a wider settlement between Zionist Israel and states throughout the region.

Miliband's sophistry

According to Miliband, the situation in the Middle East is a consequence of the alleged wrong-doing of the Palestinians, as much as Zionist Israel, while he also took the opportunity to criticise the activities of Hezbollah, the Lebanese patriotic organisation, as well as those of the government of Iran. Not only does the British government fail to condemn the genocidal acts of the Zionist regime, most graphically illustrated in its recent bombardment of Gaza, it also fails to take any responsibility for its own actions and those of previous British governments, which have

been responsible for dispossessing the Palestinian people, and creating and arming Zionist Israel which has maintained that dispossession and which has acted as the cat's paw of the big powers, and chiefly the Anglo-American alliance, throughout the region.

The British government continues to support what it refers to as a "two-state solution" to the problem of Palestine, even though at present this is not accepted by the government of Israel, while it claims that it is providing "aid" and other support to the Palestinian Authority, which has jurisdiction only in the West Bank. In fact, the Anglo-Americans and their allies have implemented a policy of divide and rule in regard to the Palestinian political organisations, while at the same time demanding that international recognition for these organisations requires embracing a political agenda that is dictated by the big powers.

Not in our name

The preferred stance of British governments has been to present themselves as both an honest broker and the greatest friend of the Palestinian people. But history has shown them in their true colours. Indeed, during the recent onslaught on the people of Gaza, Miliband far from condemning the war crimes of the Israeli government went as far as to place the blame on the Palestinian people and the government of Gaza. The British government remains the greatest enemy of the Palestinians and one of the principal supporters of Israeli Zionism. The working class and people must demand an end to this stance, which is not in their name. The right to be of the Palestinian people must be upheld, and the British government has no business whatsoever standing in the way of this right.

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organisations, and with choirs and bands adding to this festival of the international working class.

The demonstration stretched many hundreds of yards as it marched to the May Day rally in Trafalgar Square, to be addressed by representatives of SERTUC (the South and East Region TUC) and others. Activists of RCPB(ML) distributed copies of the May First issue of Workers' Weekly with its call to the working class to take up responsibility for leading the way out of the crisis.

Amongst the contingents was one of the Ford Visteon workers, with a call for everyone to support their struggle, as they occupied their factory in Enfield after workers had already occupied the Belfast factory. They distributed a leaflet explaining that they had occupied their factory on April 1, when the previous day in a meeting lasting just six minutes they were told that the European company was going into administration and that the workers had to depart, without being paid their wages. The 600 workers were demanding that they be paid proper redundancy payments, as a minimum, that their skills should be utilised, and that the government invest in this rather

than throwing money at bankers. The Ford Visteon workers received the support of other Ford plants throughout Britain, and from workplaces and community groups all over the world. As a result of the occupation, Visteon agreed to meet workers' representatives, and offered enhanced redundancy packages. The issue of pensions remained to be resolved, and the workers pledged to continue their struggle until outstanding issues were finalised.

Also on the demonstration were workers from the Justice for Cleaners Campaign, demanding an end to low pay for migrant workers, and an end to deportations and the destruction of families.

In Chesterfield on May 4, the 32nd People's Gala and May Day Demonstration was held, marking 25 years of the miners' strike with an exhibition of photographs, and speakers who included Luis Marron Oroza, the Political Counsellor at the Cuban Embassy.

In the north east, the annual May First rally was held in Jarrow on the evening of May 1, followed by the May Day march and rally through Newcastle the following day, where once again many copies of the May First issue of Workers' Weekly were distributed, with activists engaging in serious discussion on the theme of the Party's statement.



NO TO ISRAELI WAR CRIMES! PALESTINE WILL BE FREE!

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unprecedented levels, with over six million refugees still in exile and with millions within Israel living as second-class citizens.

The people of the world are demanding an end to Israel's war crimes, which have brought death and destruction to the Palestinian people. The latest war crimes in Gaza left thousands dead and injured, and the continued siege of Gaza is a crime amounting to genocide. The Israeli assault on Palestinian freedom, human rights and international law in the West Bank have also never ceased for a moment, even when thousands of Palestinians in Gaza were being brutally murdered. There has been increasing repression of Palestinians in Jerusalem amid growing attempts to destroy the Aqsa Mosque. But as long as the Israeli oppression of the Palestinians continues there will be resistance.

Britain too must be condemned for its historical role in this great tragedy of a people, who have heroically persisted in their struggle for their rights and their homeland. After World War I, Britain was granted a mandate to administer Palestine by the newly formed League of Nations. Under British rule, the Jewish colonisation of Palestine gathered pace and by the mid 1930s Jews made up nearly 30% of the population compared with around 10% twenty years earlier. On the eve of World War II, it was the British government which proposed the partition of Palestine.

The criminal role of the British government has continued to this day for its own strategic purposes. For over 60 years, it has shored up Israeli governments with arms and support. In the recent atrocities committed by the Israeli Zionists, the British government not only failed to condemn the onslaught by Israel on Gaza, but tried to place the blame on the Palestinian people's elected administration and the resistance of the Palestinians, whilst calling for an end to the violence on both sides under the guise of being

"balanced".

It must be emphasised that the territory of Palestine occupies an important strategic position for the Anglo-Americans, at the junction of Europe, Asia and Africa. It is being made the focus of the worldwide threat of so-called "Islamic extremism", and while warning of war the US and Britain are creating the conditions for further involvement in the region, with talk of the dire consequences of "inaction". Similarly, the democratically elected government of Hamas is being made the source of the problem, for instance by Tony Blair and others, and further aggression and intervention planned in the name of "stopping weapons flows to Hamas in Gaza". In his role as "Middle East Quartet Envoy", Blair is announcing that a new policy for the region is to be unveiled in the coming weeks. US imperialism and the British government will not stop short at plunging the region into a new war, as Obama, with a new-found sense of legitimacy, sets out to achieve what the hated and discredited Bush regime failed to accomplish in terms of military interventions in the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

The Palestinians are asserting their right to exist as a people, their right to resist an unjust, illegal and brutal occupation, their right as human beings to affirm their dignity, and their right to affirm their identity and national unity.

On the occasion of the 61st anniversary of the Nakba, RCPB(ML) calls on the working class and people to add their weight to the movement to bring an end to the Zionist regime and win justice for the Palestinian people, including the right of return for the Palestinian diaspora. They must be especially vigilant about the role of the British government and that of the Anglo-US alliance, which are planning stepped-up interventions in the Middle East under the signboard of achieving a lasting peace. The working class and people must ultimately become the decision-makers in this country, in order to stay the hand of the warmongers.

MAY DAY PHOTOS 2009



Photos from top: May Day March in London. PHOTO: Proletarian; **Two photos from Revolution Square in Havana on May Day. Banner calls for increased productivity and efficiency in the Cuban economy; Head of the London march.** PHOTO: New Worker; **May Day Demonstration in Newcastle, May 2.** PHOTO: Workers' Weekly



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e-mail: office@rcpbml.org.uk

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Phone: 020 7627 0599