

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

100th Anniversary of International Women's Day:

Marking International Women's Day 2010 in Reaffirming the Rights of All

- Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), March 8, 2010 -

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the decision to establish

International Women's Day to highlight the struggles of women for their political,

economic and social rights, and against imperialist war. On this day, women are affirming that

their place in society is as second to none, and are at the

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THE WESTMINSTER CARTEL DECLARES THAT THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN HAS BEGUN!



Anti-war demonstration outside the Manchester Labour Party conference, September 20 2008

The Labour Party has now been in office for some 13 years. The Labour government has presided over and exacerbated the worst economic crisis for over seventy years, embroiled

Britain in a series of illegal wars and engaged in a range of criminal activities including war crimes, torture and corruption. It is now almost totally discredited and is finding it difficult to drum

up support based on its past record in office. It has declared its election slogan as "a future fair for all".

Why, one may ask, has the past not been fair for all, and what will

be done to change what the future has in store? What is also on the mind of the electorate is if the

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Report

Oxford Political Forum: Democratic Renewal

THE OXFORD MARXIST-LENINIST STUDY GROUP has been holding a series of political forums on democratic renewal, having the aim of raising the level of political discussion.

The series was launched with an examination of the scandal over MPs' fraudulent expense claims. The issue taken up was how to change the situation in a way that favours the people. The system of representative democracy as it exists is the essence of fraud and corruption and the system which brings

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forefront in the struggle day in and day out in striving to create a society in which the rights of all are recognised. Women are affirming that the problems and aspirations facing women are not their concern alone, but are the concern of, and have a concrete reality in the context of, the entire society.

Within the Party, as in society as a whole and as a reflection of it, women are also taking a forefront role. They are combating the negative debate about the role of women, that at once denigrates their being and attempts to make them a reserve for the chauvinism and capital-centred ideology of the ruling elite. They are taking a lead in resolving the effects of the anti-social offensive at the workplace, in social programmes, amongst the youth and against the social fabric, as well as working to put culture in its rightful place as part of the whole movement of society for its emancipation. They are thinking seriously about the role of the modern communist party in providing consciousness and organisation to the struggle to advance along the line of march to a new society. They are

affirming in the midst of the objective situation facing the working class and people that personal problems need to be taken up as collective problems, and are hard at work in developing discussion as a guide to action in a situation where stress and hysteria are created and promoted in order to make women and the whole of society lose their bearings and succumb to the outlook of the ruling elite that provides no alternative from the values of the status quo.

RCPB(ML) congratulates its women cadres on their stands, and on this occasion sends its heartfelt revolutionary greetings to all women throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, and across the world, fighting to defend the rights of all and to take a stand and organise against monopoly right and monopoly dictate.

In contempt of the very principle of International Women's Day, that women are fighting to create another world and this is what is being celebrated, Gordon Brown's contribution on IWD was that "Britain's top companies" must increase the number of women in senior management. The government's outlook is that it provides the opportunities for women to take their place in the



Million Women Rise march, London, March 6, 2010

very system that is the source of women's oppression, of brutal attacks on their rights as human beings and as women, and all that remains is that more women should have the opportunity to become "female entrepreneurs" and be enabled to enforce monopoly dictate. Far from providing rights with a guarantee, the government – the parliamentary parties of all stripes – is cajoling women that the issue is one of juggling career and family, of espousing so-called "family values" which are putting the onus on women to take up a backward and chauvinist ideology, to espouse so-called "British values" and impose them on all women, both in this country and abroad.

The people are being distanced increasingly from political power, their collectives, including those of women, are being deprived of the right to set the direction for society, and to put an end to imperialist war. The parties in power are denying the forefront role of women in the struggle for increased investment in social programmes, of opposition to the injustices and crimes of war and aggression. This abuse of power from the top is destroying the very fabric of society, fostering violence against women, increasing women's

impoverishment, while the government washes its hands of any social responsibility. The issue of migrant women is an added insult, as witness their treatment in Yarl's Wood; not to mention that under the guise of upholding "liberation", the status quo launches attacks on women's identity and their right to be.

The facts about the situation facing women show that violence against women, rapes, gender inequality, and so on have increased this century in Britain. This is an historic injustice, and exposes the lip-service paid to the liberation of women. The whole society must condemn and are condemning these injustices, and must fight for a society fit for all human beings, where children are cared for as born to society, and all the care necessary for children, women, the family are provided by society, as well as education, health care, shelter, freedom from violence, and from war.

Hail International Women's Day! Hail the struggle of women, of workers, of youth to build a society free of exploitation and oppression, in which women are no longer fair game and in which the full human potential of women, children and men can flourish!

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The Westminster Cartel Declares that the Election Campaign Has Begun!

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future is fair for the financial oligarchy, how can it then be fair for the working class and people? In other words, New Labour is in crisis about creating public opinion in its favour, and its somewhat tortured syntax also reflects this crisis. Facts revealed in a recent government-commissioned report have shown that Britain is now actually more unequal than at any time since the Second World War, that a third of all children live in poverty and over 10% live in "extreme poverty". In this context how has New Labour stood for "the many not the few" in its many recent years in office? It did not matter how much it reiterated this in the past, just as it does not now cut any ice that it wishes the future would be fair for all. Objective reality overwhelms these claims.

Gordon Brown is still claiming, "Markets are essential." But he now claims that "markets need morals" and that allegedly they "can serve the public". The hidden hand of the market is no longer enough. However, the conclusion that he draws from these a-historical views which fly in the face of the people's direct experience is another piece of warped logic, that the people's money should continue to be used to pay the large financial institutions. Far from accepting responsibility to work for the public good, another hidden hand is conjured up, that paying the rich will somehow "serve the public".

The Conservative Party has made efforts to distance itself from the most recent Conservative governments and is attempting to present itself as a "centre" party that can continue to pay the rich but also govern more efficiently and even with a greater social conscience than the Labour Party. It is the Conservatives who now speak of "social action" and the "big society", as well as a return to cut-

ting bureaucracy, limiting the power of the state and delivering "individual freedom".

The Conservatives are trying to present themselves as the party of change, while Labour avows that things will change. What kind of change are these parties speaking of? Meanwhile, the Lib Dems are being portrayed as the "king makers" in a hung parliament. No champion for the ruling elite can be found. The kind of change that these parties stand for is exemplified, among other things, by the chorus of condemnation of the BA cabin crews, who are taking a stand for the livelihoods, and against the effects of the anti-social offensive on the whole of society. Are these the voters the Tories are looking for who have never voted Conservative before? Are these part of the "all" for whom the future will be fair?

What change?

The change these parties are looking for is to stamp out this resistance of the workers, to invoke even more the concept of the "nation" these workers and many others are supposed to be injuring, in order to step up the anti-social offensive in the interests of the monopolies, putting the state even more at the disposal of the dictates of the financial oligarchy. The CEOs of these monopolies are shuffled around like football managers, except these CEOs have no loyalty to anything but the making of maximum capitalist profit and in fights to the death with other monopolies. The change the parties stand for is a slashing in social programmes and public spending in the name of fanatically cutting the budget deficit, of halving the national debt.

The general consensus between all the major parties on the need to continue paying the rich and maintain the capital-centred system, as well as the fact that are held in contempt by the elec-



Thousands of people protesting outside the Bank of England against the G20 Summit being held there on May 1 2009.

torate, has created the prospect of an election in which it will be increasingly difficult for the ruling class to resolve its contradictions. Nor will it be easy for the rich to find a champion who has any credibility. It is in these circumstances that much fuss is now being made about the possibility of a hung parliament, with some commentators even alleging that this is itself a recipe for "strong government".

Need for alternative

The current election campaign period is exposing once again the entirely fraudulent and anti-people character of representative democracy, a political system in which the majority of people are excluded from the decision-making process and only permitted to act as voting cattle every few years, in order to provide what is referred to as a mandate for one of the members of the cartel of the major parties. What is becoming exposed is the fact that the major parties, while claiming that they are concerned with change, are committed to maintaining the status quo. Indeed the rivalry between them has often been characterised by the fact they all claim that they will be the most zealous in implementing sweeping cuts in essential social programmes, in order to decrease the national debt and continue to pay the big banks and financial institutions.

The times cry out for an alternative, for an economy and society that is people centred not capital centred and where the working people who are the creators of all wealth are also the decision makers about what hap-

pens to this wealth but also about all the other key issues too. This is also the path that will end the economic crises, rebuild the national economy and remove Britain from its toadying alliance with the US and criminal interventions and interference in other countries

The challenge

But not only are these considerations not the aim of the big parties, they are bent on continuing both the system and the policies which have produced the current dire situation. Their aim remains that the financial institutions must have first claim on the wealth of the country, even though this will continue to exacerbate the situation, not those who have produced it.

But there can be no illusions about the nature of this election, nor its likely outcome. What is clear is that neither serves the interests of the majority of people, nor the requirements of the times. What is required is an alternative to the cartel system of big parties and the fraudulent electoral system, as well as an alternative to the entire capital-centred society. The election provides the opportunity for the working class and people to take up this necessary work by putting forward their own demands for democratic renewal of the political process, by selecting their own candidates and worker politicians, and by organising for an anti-war government that genuinely represents the interests of the people.

It is on this basis that RCPB(ML) is calling on the advanced elements and class

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conscious workers to participate in the election with the aim, number one, of blocking the plans of those in power to elect and consolidate a pro-war government, and, number two, to advance the workers' movement, the movement of worker politicians, to constitute themselves as a Workers' Opposition to the self-serving parties in power who prostrate themselves before the barons of monopoly capital, and would get the whole electorate to do the same. Already in the 2005 general election, record numbers of independent candidates, candidates of small parties, anti-war candidates and others who were determined to take a stand against the Westminster cartel, participated. In this coming election, all the signs are that this trend will continue and gain immeasurably in strength. Alliances are being formed whose essence is to challenge the stranglehold of the Westminster cartel on government. Those that hold these alliances in disdain in speaking of a "derisory" number of votes these challenges to the status quo receive may well be in for a rude awakening.

In effect, the ruling elite is throwing down a challenge to the electorate to accept that it is only the Westminster cartel who must occupy the space for change, which no one can deny the times are crying out for. The people are getting prepared to accept this challenge and unite in the process of working for an anti-war government and for democratic renewal. All power to those forces who are taking up this challenge! Let us see what the outcome of this class struggle in the arena of the general election will be!

**No to the Westminster cartel!
All out for democratic renewal!
Fight for the election of an anti-war government!**

Oxford Political Forum: Democratic Renewal

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establishment parties to power has had its day and must go.

The series continued with the need to organise for an anti-war government, with representatives of the people standing as anti-war candidates. Nowhere is the necessity to organise for the alternative more apparent than in the drive to war. In Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere, the British government is creating havoc in attempting to impose by force what it defines as representative democracy according to the doctrine of "universal values".

The forums moved on to discuss the nature and history of governance in Britain. The archaic Westminster system of parliamentary democracy based on the "Monarch in Parliament", with its Royal Prerogative, was examined.

A modern political party must at minimum be one that politicises the electorate to be able to raise its involvement in the political life of the country. A political party consistent with the requirements of the present is a modern mass party, whose role is to politicise the masses and organise them for a definite aim. Such a party works to enable the people to set the agenda and select candidates for election.

The forum then took up the question of rights and a modern constitution. It was argued how rights must be seen as what is required for people to be fully human. Modern society requires a definition of rights consistent with the reality that all human beings are born to society, and have definite claims on society.

The requirement for a modern constitution was approached from the perspective of how the demand for the recognition of rights should be carried forward and what social and political



Clockwise: At the front of the Save Whittington Hospital march, February 27; Palestinian women on International Women's Day; A Million Women Rise march in London on March 8



system should exist to provide rights with a guarantee. A modern constitution, a product of the people in their struggle for rights, is required.

The current series concluded by raising the issue of the class struggle taking place on the central questions of who are the decision-makers, and what the legitimacy of the political process consists in. More than ever, the system of "representative democracy" is being used to marginalise the electorate from political power. The crisis of legitimacy cannot be resolved under archaic institutions. The electorate must reject the political theory on which the present system is based, and participate themselves in working out their own political theory, which acts as a guide to action in the people coming them-

selves to power.

The working class and people must occupy the space for change in organising to build a movement for the alternative, in which it is they who are empowered to set the agenda. The participation in elections is participating in the arena of class struggle, and to assist the working class and people to challenge the old arrangements, fight for democratic renewal of the political processes and institutions, and put forward the demands for an anti-war government, and to stop paying the rich and increase investments in social programmes. It is to take a stand against the alliance with US imperialism, and against the Europe of the monopolies, and affirm that the vision of a socialist Britain in modern colours is what society calls for.

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