

# BEIRUT ASSASSINATION

## Syria puts the blame on Israel

by our Arab Affairs Correspondent

**LEBANESE Falangist leader Pierre Gemayel was gunned down in broad daylight in the streets of a Christian suburb of the capital, Beirut, on Tuesday. In a well-planned assassination, Gemayel's vehicle was rammed and then hit-men riddled it with bullets.**

While his followers gather in the Gemayel clan's home village for the funeral, reactionary Lebanese politicians and the imperialist media have wasted no time in blaming Syria for the assassination. But the Syrians themselves have denounced the murder as "despicable" accusing Israeli intelligence of the killing.

In New York Syria's UN envoy Bashar Al-Jaafari said: "Syria has nothing to do with this. It is affected directly or indirectly by such horrible crimes committed in Lebanon. It is not in our interest to see escalation in Lebanon. We want stability and national unity in Lebanon. We want it to preserve its identity and establish a national unity government to lead the country to a better future".

One has to always ask the question who is the "beneficiary" of the crime, Al Jaafari added. "Israel, only two days ago, on Friday, was condemned in the UN General Assembly for its crimes in Gaza. So there was a unanimous international voice to condemn Is-

raeli terrorism committed in the occupied territories. Therefore, it is in the interest of the Israeli assassinating hand to turn the spotlight on somebody else," the Syrian envoy declared.

The leader of the fascist Falange was Industry Minister in the unpopular ruling coalition that came to power after last year's imperialist-inspired "cedar revolution", which forced Syria to withdraw its peace-keeping troops from Lebanon. The Falange, which was founded by Gemayel's grandfather in 1936, led the reactionary and mainly Christian forces during a bloody 15-year long civil war which ended in 1990 with the reactionary forces conceding that their old hegemony was over.

Falange influence declined within the Maronite Christian community with the end of the civil conflict. Though still a major player with other Maronite parties in right-wing blocs, the Falange has split and the Maronite community as a whole no longer looks exclusively to Israel, France or the United States for



• The bullet riddled car.

support. General Michel Aoun, who made his name as a commander during the civil war, was briefly premier in sectarian Lebanese governments during the late 1980s.

### sympathy

Though his supporters are Maronite he has won considerable sympathy and support from the Muslims. His Free Patriotic Movement party has 21 MPs who call for a secular republic and they are now allied to the pro-Syrian Hezbollah which is exclusively based within the Shia Muslim community.

Though Gemayel was an outspoken opponent of Syrian influence in Leba-

non, Syria has nothing to gain from an assassination that could trigger another civil war. The same can't be said for Israel.

When Israel invaded Lebanon last summer it was clearly banking on its old Maronite allies turning on Hezbollah during the fighting. That didn't happen and the war ended in a humiliating defeat for Tel Aviv and renewed demands from General Aoun and Hezbollah for new elections. Re-opening the old wounds to provoke a new civil war would help Israel make a come-back in Lebanon and push Hezbollah, Syria and their Iranian allies onto the defensive. It would also scupper Iranian efforts like this

weekend's summit between puppet Iraqi "president" Jalal Talabani and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Tehran, which is plainly aimed at detaching the puppet regime in Iraq from Anglo-American imperialism.

Washington and Tel Aviv would welcome any opportunity to divert Arab attention away from Iraq and Palestine and that's why they stoked the flames of civil strife in Lebanon in the past.

But no one in Lebanon is queuing up for it. All the major families on both sides lost sons in the last civil war which left the country in ruins and the south in Israeli hands. It

took years to get the Israelis out – and when they did go in 2000 they still held on to the Shebaa Farms, the source of continuing conflict with Hezbollah.

Lebanon has proclaimed three days of mourning for Pierre Gemayel and this week's Independence Day ceremonies have been cancelled. President Emile Lahoud, who is a friend of Syria, went on television on Tuesday to warn that Gemayel's murder was part of a "conspiracy" that began with the February 2005 assassination of former premier Rafik Hariri.

"I tell the Lebanese that today is the time for them to unite or else all of Lebanon will lose," Lahoud declared. "We will do the impossible to uncover the criminals because they are against all the Lebanese".

## FUND

Our fund is looking good for the second week in a row with £741.79 in the bag this week. This brings our November total so far to £1,444.59 and leaves £1,555.41 to raise to meet our monthly target of £3,000 in the next two weeks.

First we thank a south west London Comrade for £200, a Nottingham veteran comrade for £30, an Essex friend for £10 and our friendly Cumbrian bees for £15. The collection at last Saturday's celebration of the Great October Revolution raised £468.

We send a special thank you to a south London veteran comrade for £27.40. This was in response to a note in last week's fund column mentioning that our regular north London veteran paper seller, who used to give £27.40 every week, is no longer able to do so.

We do not normally divulge donors' names in this column but, prompted by an enquiry from the south London comrade, we make an exception to tell you that our north London veteran former paper seller is Comrade Otto Cahn – a lifelong communist activist who came to Britain as a refugee from Germany in the 1930s. Since then he has given everything he can in terms of both time and money to the movement. We salute him. Although he does not make it into the office anymore we still keep in touch by phone. We sincerely thank both of these pensioners.

Please send whatever you can to support this paper to the New Worker Fund, PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ.

## Suddenly seeing the light

by Daphne Liddle

**TONY BLAIR has admitted that the Iraq invasion has been "a disaster"; Home Secretary John Reid has admitted that the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan are connected to the increased threat of terrorism and Margaret Hodge accused her boss, Blair, of "moral imperialism".**

To most people in Britain these remarks are statements of the "bleeding obvious" but to hear them from the lips of the highest of New Labour orthodoxy is clear evidence that their façade of denial is falling apart and their "centre cannot hold" much longer.

It is true that after these remarks they were all quick to qualify them in a vain attempt to retract and retreat.

Blair accidentally told the

truth during an interview with Sir David Frost on al-Jazeera's new English language channel last weekend. Frost challenged him over the daily murders, bombings and kidnappings in Iraq. He said that the military invasion by Britain and the United States – which has cost 2,858 American and 125 British lives had been "pretty much of a disaster".

Blair replied: "It has". But he quickly went on to put the blame on Al Qaeda and Sunni insurgents – pretending that he does not know perfectly well that they are quite different movements, their only common link being a well-grounded hatred of western imperialism.

Blair blustered: "What I say to people is 'why is it difficult in Iraq?' It is not difficult because of some accident in planning. It is difficult because there is a deliberate strategy – Al Qaeda with

Sunni insurgents on one hand, Iranian-backed elements with Shia militias on the other – to create a situation in which the will of the majority for peace is displaced by the will of the minority for war."

The "will of the majority for peace" was shattered by the shock-and-awe bombings by the US and Britain in March 2003 – motivated by the will of the imperialists to grab Iraq's oil. Everything else follows from that. The continued occupation is a continuing act of war against the Iraqi people and they are entitled to defend themselves against it.

Blair has now totally lost the plot. He cannot make up his mind from one day to the next whether Iran and Syria are part of "the axis of evil" or much needed allies in supplying a veil of diplomacy that will allow the imperialists to disentangle themselves

from the disaster of Iraq.

Barking MP Margaret Hodge's criticism of her leader came to light when the *Islington Tribune* reported that she had told the Fabian society that she had had doubts about his approach to foreign affairs since 1998.

She had, the paper said, criticised his "moral imperialism", exporting British attitudes and ideas to other countries. But she had gone along with Blair's claims about the dangers posed by Iraq and the non-existent "weapons of mass destruction" because "he was our leader and I trusted him" – a pathetic abdication of personal responsibility.

Later, allegedly, she added: "I hope this isn't being reported" – destroying any vestige of credibility she had left.

It was on Monday that Reid confessed that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were

"a factor" in young British Muslims turning to extremists – an obvious truth that has always been hotly denied by the Downing Street spin merchants.

Reid was speaking in an interview with the *Evening Standard* in which he offered a markedly different view of terrorism to Tony Blair. It was at a time when Blair had just been visiting the troops in Afghanistan to pledge that they were to stay there "until the job was done", while Chancellor Gordon Brown was in Basra talking about possible troop withdrawals next March.

Then to add to Blair's woes, Attorney General Lord Goldsmith has opposed Blair's renewed efforts to extend the period when "suspected terrorists" can be held for 90 days without charge or trial.

Blair and his authority are clearly falling apart but not before time.

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# THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

## Super nannies

**PRIME Minister Tony Blair last week announced a new measure to deal with anti-social behaviour among young children. He will appoint "super-nannies" to visit the families of badly behaved youngsters and instruct the parents on parenting skills and how to control their children.**

Indirectly, this is an admission that the system of anti-social behaviour orders is not working, if it was, super-nannies would not be needed. But it was the revelation of the details of the super-nanny scheme – just 80 super-nannies to be appointed to sort out the problems of the whole country at a cost of £4 million – that told us what it is really about. It is simply a pathetic cosmetic exercise to make it appear that the Government is actually doing something about our neglected children when they are really dodging a very serious issue that needs proper investment.

The Government and the media are always quick to blame the parents but human beings are social animals whose offspring take a long time to mature. Children need the whole of their community to be involved in rearing, educating and socialising them.

Under capitalism they are deprived even of basic parental care as long as working class parents are forced to work excessively long hours to pay bills and mounting debts. When state welfare was introduced in Britain after the Second World War it boasted care from the cradle to the grave. Since then most of the social care for children has been lost to spending cuts and the only thing we get from the cradle to the grave is debt.

Gone are the after-school clubs, youth clubs, sponsored holidays and other schemes that told children that their society valued them. Now they are left to their own devices while their parents are locked down making profits for the bosses. What does that tell children about their own worth and value to society? No wonder some misbehave!

In socialist societies children are truly valued; they have opportunities for recreation and leisure, for interesting and exciting hobbies that will stretch them to accomplish more than they thought they could. The world of adulthood welcomes them with open arms, with personal time and attention from parents, teachers, trainers and many others to encourage them into a fulfilling future.

Parents are always blamed for their children's behaviour but social support for struggling parents is as rare as hen's teeth. If the Government only provided social support for the desperate parents who request it, the problems of anti-social behaviour would be a lot less. But that would require a lot more than just 80 specialised child psychology experts.

And parents cannot be held responsible for what their children do at school, when the school itself is supposed to be acting *in loco parentis*. There are many reasons why children misbehave in schools but most of them can be resolved with enough time and attention to get to the bottom of the problem. But that needs more teachers and smaller classes – just what Blair was promising when he came to power in 1997!

## Throwing away the key

In a similar vein, the Government is trying to pass a new Bill that will allow them to impose compulsory community treatment and preventive detention on people deemed to have dangerous and severe personality disorders.

This follows a few sensationalised incidents of mental health patients committing serious violent crimes. In almost every case, the patient in question and their families had previously begged mental health services for care and treatment but been denied because of shortages of in-patient beds, doctors and nurses.

If only mental health patients were taken seriously when they ask for help, many tragedies could be prevented – including high numbers of patient suicides. But again, this would involve real investment in resources – and valuing people above profit.

### Ethical invaders

United States troops are receiving ethics training after evidence that Marines have been murdering unarmed civilians. They are being taught "core warrior values" and "the importance of adhering to legal, moral and ethical standards on the battlefield", according to officials.

### Wages of death

A private security company, the Control Risks Group, has been paid over £112 million by the Foreign Office for its work in Iraq over the last three years.

In total the Government has paid more than £158 million to different private security contractors – often regarded as a euphemism for mercenaries – for work in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2003.

The London-based Control Risks Group is led by Sir Michael Rose, former commander of UN forces in Bosnia.

Other firms that received money include

ArmorGroup, chaired by Tory MP Sir Malcolm Rifkind, and the Kroll Security Group.

The charity War on Want has accused the Government of trying to "privatise" the war against Iraq.

### Damage limitation

Not long ago the advertising departments of big companies would try to move heaven and earth to get their brands prominently placed in Hollywood films. But now the American tobacco company Philip Morris is begging film directors not to put its cigarettes in films.

"We do not want our brands or brand imagery depicted in movies and television shows," the company said in advertisements placed in leading Hollywood journals.

This follows the company being ordered to pay hundreds of millions of dollars for the harmful effects of the cigarettes, and studies which show that smoking in films is the main factor in prompting

young people to take up the habit. Philip Morris is now trying to avoid any more law suits.

### Salt in the wounds

Palestinian authorities have accused Israel of trying to make a profit from the recent Beit Hanoun massacre – an unprovoked artillery attack that left 19 civilians dead – by demanding payment for treating eight survivors in Israeli hospitals.

Israel accepted full responsibility for the shelling and admitted this was a mistake. It said it would pay for medical treatment but the authorities in Gaza were outraged when Israeli hospitals demanded upfront financial guarantees.

### Copyright

A London judge last week ruled in a six-year international legal process against an American company that was trying to claim rights over the "lively and expressive music"

made famous on the album by the Buena Vista Social Club.

The Peer International Corporation claimed it owned the rights to 13 songs, dating back to the 1930s, saying they were unlawfully taken over by the Cuban government after Fidel Castro came to power in 1959. Peer said it obtained the English copyright from the heirs of the composers, now dead.

But Editoria Musical de Cuba, on behalf of the Cuban state accused Peer of trying to salvage royalties from songs that had never made a penny for their authors and said it had legally assigned the English copyright to Termidor Music Publications, based in Britain and Germany. "The composers in this case received at most, a few pesos and maybe a drink of rum," said their lawyer.

Mr Justice Lindsay ruled that Peer had had no contact with the composers for a long time but tried to re-establish contact after the success of the Buena Vista Social Club album.

## Bring all Tube contracts back in-house!

**THOUSANDS of Londoners struggled to get to work last Monday as signal failures on the London Underground Central Line led to very few trains running. This was put down to failures by the maintenance company Metronet, which makes £1 million a week from its 30-year contract.**

It was also blamed for serious delays on the Circle and District lines.

The RMT transport union called again for all Tube infrastructure work to be brought back in-house "before the privateer contractors bring the entire system grinding to a halt".

As the capital was plunged into chaos by engineering overruns and infrastructure failure on three of London's essential Tube arteries, RMT renewed its call for the part-privatisation of the network to be scrapped.

"Privatisation of Tube infrastructure has demonstrably failed, failed and failed again," RMT general secre-

tary Bob Crow said today.

"Only last week the PPP Arbitrator issued a damning report on Metronet's failure to deliver, and this morning Londoners have woken up to find huge chunks of the Underground network simply not working.

"Tube infrastructure work needs to be carried out by an organisation whose sole aim is providing a service, not by privateers whose main aim is to drain as much profit as possible out of the system.

"We have said time and time again that the PPP is a complex device designed to convert public money into guaranteed, risk-free profits.

"Today should also serve as a warning that plans to allow privateers to get their hands on the operations of the East London Line should also be scrapped.

"How many more times does this have to happen before the government bows to the inevitable and allows the miserable PPP to be buried once and for all?" Bob Crow said.

## Workers thank Arsenal

**THE REMPLOY Consortium of trade unions today thanked Arsenal Football Club and its supporters for their help in saving the jobs of disabled workers at the Holloway Remploy factory.**

The recent demonstration held by the disabled workers outside the new Arsenal stadium brought a change of mind from the company which has now committed to maintain the employment of the Remploy workers in Holloway.

The Remploy Consortium of trade unions has accepted

the company's assurance that they will rent a new factory equal to the size of the present Holloway site which will enable the disabled workers to be gainfully employed for now and the immediate future.

The old Remploy factory was sold under a compulsory purchase and will be demolished by March 2007. Remploy will rent a local factory and equip it so that the needs of their disabled workers are met in time for the transfer for one site to the other without any loss of pay to the employees.



## Dragons lay siege to Faslane base

by Wendy Lewis

**WALES did itself proud in its contribution to Faslane 365, the year-long blockade of Scotland's nuclear submarine base.**

Incessant rain did not damp the spirits of the 100 or so people who came from South, West, Mid and North Wales to protest at the continuing menace posed by Britain's nuclear weapons.

Councillor Ray Davies, vice-chair of

CND Cymru; Dafydd Iwan, president of Plaid Cymru; Jill Evans MEP, and Welsh Assembly Member Leanne Woods were amongst the elected representatives from Wales who made their opposition to nuclear weapons felt over the three days.

They were joined by giant dragons, clowns, choristers, Quakers, Daughters of Rebecca with blackened faces and voluminous Welsh skirts, school children and pensioners.

by Karen Dabrowska

**STOP THE WAR Coalition last Saturday convened a people's assembly in central London to help tackle the new racism in the United Kingdom which targets the Muslim community.**

The aim of the assembly is to bring people together to discuss the relationship between Islamophobia and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and to organise a campaign in response to war and racism.

It was convened after the head of MI5, Dame Eliza Manningham-Buller, said that more than 200 Al-Qaeda cells were plotting at least 30 major attacks in Britain. The police are working to contend with some 200 networks, totalling over 1,600 identified individuals actively engaged in plotting terrorist acts here and overseas.

She said: "Killing oneself and others is an attractive option for some citizens. The threat is serious, is growing and will be with us for a generation."

Opening the assembly, Stop the War Coalition chairperson Andrew Murray, described Islamophobia as the last resort of the warmongers to make up for their failure. "George Bush said he was getting ready for one last push. We too are ready for one last push to get the troops out of Iraq."

Stop the War Coalition widened its aims to opposition to the racist backlash against Muslims and the defence of civil liberties.

Veteran leftist politician and president of Stop the War Coalition Tony Benn said there was no war on terror. There is a war on Iraq, Afghanistan and a threat to Iran. If the war was a war on terror, the British government would have called for a ceasefire when Israel invaded Lebanon.

"There is a war for power and oil which is being presented as a war on terror," he said.

# People's Assembly tackles new anti Muslim racism

Tony Benn drew the assembly's attention to invasions by the US marines: four invasions of Cuba, four of Nicaragua, seven of Honduras, two of the Dominican Republic, one of Guatemala, two of Panama and four of Columbia.

He criticised attempts to present Islam as a threat to the British way of life. All the great religions preach that we should live together. Now the definition of a moderate Muslim is one who doesn't mind his country being invaded. Every hospital that has been closed could have remained open if there was no war against Iraq.

"The problem with Great Britain is that is cannot win the war on Iraq. But this presents us with a supreme opportunity to build a world where human rights are respected and we deal with environmental problems and poverty", Benn concluded.

A second generation British Muslim of Pakistani origin detained at Guantanamo Bay, Moazzam Begg, received a standing ovation when he addressed the assembly. Begg described Belmarsh Prison in south-east London as "Britain's Guantanamo", where terrorist suspects are held without charge or trial.

On his return from Guantanamo, Begg said his greatest difficulty was seeing "the people I come from demonised in a way which has never happened before. I expected Britain would welcome people who had been persecuted but all the intrinsic values of this country which made me British are being eroded."

"Iraq and Afghanistan have a direct link to what happens in Britain but only Tony



• Saying no to Islamophobia.

Blair does not understand this."

Begg described the ordeal of Ibn Al Shaikh Al Libi, a Libyan captured during Operation Enduring Freedom, who was sent to a torture centre in Cairo. After he was raped and electrodes were applied to his testicles, he allegedly confessed that he worked on obtaining weapons of mass destruction from Saddam Hussein.

This confession was used by Colin Powell to create a link between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda and a justification for entering Iraq.

Sumiya Hensi, a fourth year law student at Dundee University, and Esther Sassaman, a Jewish American

working as a secretary in the university's social work department, addressed the assembly together with their arms around each other, about a Special Branch pilot scheme monitoring Muslim students on campus.

"They come to our events, they question students and intimidate them," Hensi said. "My parents have worked hard in this country, they pay their taxes, this is a real slap in the face."

Sassaman described a petition organised by the students to defend liberty. "This is a pilot project which needs to be stopped before it spreads across Britain."

Green Party MEP Jean Lambert warned that the col-

lective right to protest is deeply restricted, freedom of speech is deeply compromised, passionate speech is now an incitement to terrorism and the British government is compromising its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights, while remaining shamefully silent about Guantanamo Bay. "We need to defend our right to act against an illegal and unjust war."

Tongue in cheek comedian Mark Steele ridiculed the Muslim threat referring to sawn-off veils and veils with serrated edges. "The British government is brilliant at opposing the racism of the past against the Irish, the black people in America and the Spanish Inquisition, but racism is on our doorstep and it is harder to oppose when it is on our doorstep."

"What kind of society asks parents to rat on their children, lecturers to rat on their students?" asked Anas Al-Tikriti former president of the Muslim Association of Britain. His 20 years of work with Muslim youth forced him to conclude that British society faces a much greater risk from fraudsters, rapists, and paedophiles than from Muslim extremists.

Terrorists and extremists are driven by the state of politics (the wars on Iraq, Afghanistan and the oppression of the Palestinians) not verses from the Qur'an.

The convenor of the Stop the War Coalition, Lindsey German, said that the Jews were fully integrated into German society yet this did not prevent their persecution. "Tony Blair and Margaret Beckett have told the Muslims to stand up and be counted.

They have stood against the war. The people who are being attacked are being demonised and we have to fight attempts to make racism acceptable."

The assembly was also addressed by trade unionists, Sami Ranadani a political refugee from Saddam Hussein's Iraq, playwright David Edgar, Yvonne Ridley of the Islam Channel, Rose Gentle from Military Families Against the War, Craig Murray the ex British Ambassador to Uzbekistan and Ismael Patel of Friends of Al-Aqsa.

The assembly's closing statement declared its solidarity with all the Muslims peoples in Britain facing a hurricane of official and unofficial legal, political and physical attacks in a climate of Islamophobic hysteria. It recognises these attacks as being essentially racist and anti-democratic.

It said: "They are driven by the same political agenda as has inspired the criminal and disastrous 'war on terror', which has laid waste Iraq and Afghanistan and presently threatens Iran and elsewhere.

"In particular we condemn the statement made by government ministers designed to isolate, demonise and even criminalise Islamic religious practices, choice of dress and cultural expression. We affirm that such diversity in fact makes an important contribution to the overall development of our society.

"We condemn terrorist atrocities such as the London bombings last year, which are in all circumstances, indefensible. However the assembly believes in common with the majority of the British people, that the key to tackling the treat of such atrocities is a change in the foreign policy of the government.

"It has subordinated this country to the aggressive foreign policy of the Bush government in its invasion of Iraq, its treats to Iran and its support for Israel's aggression against Lebanon."

## London Olympic costs soar

**THE PROJECTED costs of the 2012 London Olympics rose sharply last week due to massive extra security costs and unforeseen VAT bills. Estimates of the likely total costs now range from £3.3 billion to £8 billion.**

The original Olympic bid in 2005 put the cost at £2.3 billion to be funded by the National Lottery and London council taxpayers.

Then the Government drew up a separate project at

just over £1 billion to improve the east London area around the projected Olympic site.

Estimates for the security needed have risen from £190 million to £1.5 billion while regeneration costs are also a lot higher than originally thought.

The plans included a 20 per cent contingency for cost overruns on the building programme but the Treasury now wants this increased to 60 per cent.

London Mayor Ken

Livingstone is opposing this "absolutely breathtakingly ridiculous" increase on the grounds that would "give the green light" to developers to come in over budget. He said that London council tax payers should not have to pay more than the £625 million already pledged.

The Treasury insurers argue that, given the track record of previous Olympic Games around the world, they are not scaremongering.

## Asda workers vote for GMB

**WORKERS employed by the Asda Wal-Mart chain at distribution depots in Erith, south London, and Chepstow have been voting overwhelmingly in favour of recognition for their union, the GMB.**

This follows a big dispute earlier this year in which the union backed their fight against changes to working practices.

Workers in Chepstow voted by 90 per cent in favour of recognition with a 76 per cent turnout while those in Erith voted by 85 per cent with a 78 per cent turnout in secret ballot conducted by the Electoral Reform Society.

This means that pay and terms and conditions of employment in these two depots will now be negotiated be-

tween local management and local GMB representatives and the outcome put to the members for their consideration and decisions.

These two ballots are the first to be held at the 24 Asda Wal-Mart distribution depots under the agreement reached between GMB and Asda Wal-Mart on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2006

## Police tracking Oyster cards

**CIVIL liberties campaigners last week raised concerns over a 300 per cent increase in the police use of Londoners' Oyster travel cards to monitor the public transport journeys of suspects. Officers now routinely use the smart cards as part of their investigations.**

Liberal Democrat MP Lynne Featherstone, who is also a surveillance expert, said: "That's one hell of an increase. Are the people whose personal details are given to them notified in any way? It's another step to-

wards a surveillance society. If there's a valid reason for asking and a valid outcome, let's discuss it in the open."

More than six million Londoners use Oyster cards to travel on buses and Tube trains every day. Heather Brooke, author of the consumer guide *Your Right to Know* said: "I am troubled by how secretly this has been done and the way the police have started to use this as a database almost as a matter of course."

She said that in the United States the use of similar infor-

mation has not always stood up in court because these cards can be borrowed or stolen.

"I can imagine there will be a whole black market in Oyster cards to prove you are somewhere or someone you are not," she added. Brooke also pointed out that although the congestion charge end at 6.30pm every weekday, the surveillance cameras are never turned off. They automatically read number plates and check them against a database of stolen vehicles, outstanding fines and criminal offences.

## Strike leads to new pay deal at JJB Sports

**MEMBERS of the GMB general union employed at JJB Sports in Wigan last week called off their programme of 24-hour strikes and an overtime ban as they voted in favour of a new offer from the management.**

The new deal, which is to be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> August, raises the basic rate for all workers in the depot to £6 per hour - from either £5.20 or £5.50. It also provides for all workers to have access to bonus payments of between 15p per hour

and 90p per hour depending on how busy the depot is and the pace of work in the depot.

At a meeting the workers also demanded that the Employment Agencies Standards (EAS) Inspectorate proceed with criminal charges in the magistrates' court against three local Wigan agencies who supplied workers to replace the strikers.

GMB regional officer Graham Coxon said: "This has been a great victory for the will and fortitude of GMB mem-

bers at JJB Sports, who have been on the minimum wage for far too long. Their action should serve as a beacon to low paid workers everywhere to join GMB and unite to fight for a better deal.

"Our members want to see EAS pressing criminal charges in the courts against the agencies who supplied JJB with agency labour during the dispute. GMB will also raise question in Parliament about how EAS does its job."

## Features

# 50 years ago

## What really happened in Hungary

by Stephen Millies

**WHY DID George W Bush just send New York Governor George Pataki to Budapest to praise the 1956 uprising of the “Hungarian freedom fighters”?**

It's also the 30th anniversary of the heroic Soweto rebellion, in which hundreds of African youth were killed fighting apartheid. But Pataki didn't go to South Africa.

No capitalist politician commemorates the 1919 Hungarian Soviet Republic, which was the second socialist revolution following the victory of the Bolsheviks in Russia.

The Hungarian Soviet Republic lasted 133 days. Allen Dulles, at that time a young US diplomat, played a role in coordinating the invasion that drowned it in blood. In the 1950s, after he became CIA director, Dulles overthrew progressive governments in Guatemala and Iran.

Admiral Miklós Horthy, a leading player in the overthrow of that early soviet republic, later became Hungary's fascist dictator and allied himself to Hitler. Under fascist rule, over 400,000 Hungarian Jews were murdered.

During the Second World War, many Hungarian soldiers who had been press-ganged to fight against the Soviet Union died during the failed Nazi attempt to seize the city of Stalingrad.

The Soviet Red Army finally liberated Hungary from fascism at tremendous cost.

Unlike in Yugoslavia and Albania, the main agent of change in Hungary was the Soviet Army, not revolutionary forces inside the country. The country had been devastated. Few communists had survived the decades of death camps and torture.

Nevertheless, workers took over the factories. Two-thirds of the land had been owned by 40 families while 3 million peasants didn't have any. “Hungary remained one of the last strongholds of feudal or semi-feudal forms of tenure in Europe up until 1945,” wrote scholar Alexander Eckstein in August 1949. Peasants chased the landlords off their huge feudal estates, which were divided up.

Schools were opened to the poor. College enrollment rose 400 percent by 1955. The number of women students increased five times. Workers and peasants were guaranteed 60 per cent of college seats.

Healthcare was made free. A campaign against tuberculosis – called the “Hungarian disease” – saved thousands of lives.

Socialist economic planning made these advances possible. Industrial production increased by 14 per cent per year in the early 1950s, but from a very low base.

Meantime the “Cold War” was intensifying. Pentagon brass were preparing for a nuclear war against the Soviet Union. They launched a massive invasion of Korea in 1950.

Despite the Hungarian Communists' attempts to bring about greater equality, they were under tremendous pressure.

By the mid 1950s, with an infusion of US capital through the Marshall Plan, Western Europe was becoming prosperous again. But Eastern Europe – where the fascist offensive had claimed millions of lives and destroyed most of the infrastructure – remained poor.

Many collective farms had been established in Hungary, but too hastily, alienating the peasants, who didn't have enough tractors to work large spreads because the industrial base was weak.

Mass discontent in Hungary was fanned by the formerly privileged classes who had been expropriated. Struggles within the Communist Party made things worse.

In the background was the extremely influential Catholic Church. This wasn't the church of El Salvador's martyred Archbishop Romero. Hungarian Cardinal Mindszenty was ideologically far to the right; he wrote that Darwin should have been burned at the stake.

A “secret speech” by Nikita Khrushchov at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in February 1956 denounced Stalin – but from the right, seeking an accommodation with the imperialists. It gave a green light to pro-capitalist elements throughout Eastern Europe.

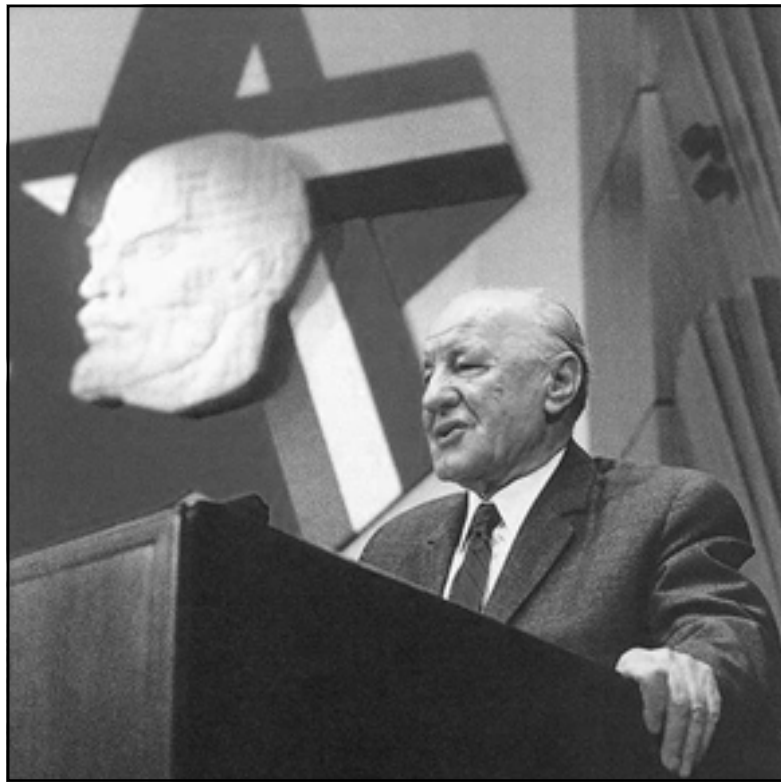
In October Imre Nagy became Hungary's premier and opened the door to reaction—in the same way that Mikhail Gorbachev later did in the USSR.

Workers had grievances in Hungary. But their discontent was misused in a bloody struggle that was welcomed by Wall Street.

Book burnings of Marxist literature were carried out, just as the Nazis had done. Red stars were removed from buildings. Socialist symbols were cut out of the Hungarian flag. And Communists were lynched.

Hungarian workers were told they could keep their socialised factories and other achievements after they “overthrew communism”.

“Workers' councils” allowed pro-capitalist parties like the Smallholders to be brought into



• Above: Janos Kadar. Below: Soviet tanks help defeat the counter revolution.

the government. Fascist Mindszenty was released from prison. Hungarian “freedom fighters” called for UN intervention, which, as in Korea, really meant US intervention.

The Soviet Union was compelled to send in troops to stop this counter-revolution.

The reaction was thrown back. The first job of new Communist leader János Kádár, who himself had been imprisoned under a previous Communist regime, was winning back the workers. A workers' militia was formed.

After 1956 socialist Hungary advanced economically, but Washington spent trillions of US workers' taxes to defeat the socialist bloc, initiating a terribly costly arms race. They were finally victorious in 1989-91 throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

This was a real tragedy for the world working class and nations fighting neocolonialism. Cuba and Democratic Korea suffered terribly, losing most of their foreign trade.

While the new ruling class now flaunts its wealth, the workers gained nothing from these

counter-revolutions. Hungary's unemployment rate skyrocketed from 1.7 per cent in 1990 to 11 per cent in 1996. Fifty thousand Hungarians were made homeless by capitalist “freedom”. Tuberculosis cases increased 18 per cent between 1990 and 1999.

Now current Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany is under attack from even more right-wing forces.

All this shows why it was important to defend the Hungarian workers' state in 1956 and stop the right wing. The counter-revolutionaries had masqueraded as friends of the workers, just as Hitler had disguised his reactionary programme as “national socialism”. But in fact they were totally allied with world imperialism and, as partners of global monopoly capital, were ready to exploit the workers doubly.

Today Bush may boast about the defeat of the socialist bloc in Europe. But the rising resistance to US imperialism all over the globe demonstrates more clearly than any words that the tide is once again turning in favor of the workers and the national liberation struggles.

*Workers World (US)*



**THE REVOLUTION** may be over, but Trong Tan is still singing revolution-themed “red songs”. At 30, Tan has been dubbed “the prince of red music” and one of the nation's most authoritative male vocalists.

He talks to Bui Quynh Hoa about his singing career and future plans. Born into an artless, music-less four-children family in central Thanh Hoa province, Trong Tan (or Vu Trong Tan) soon realised his deep love of music. He took part in many singing contests organised by schools and localities when he was small. He then became a promising lecturer at the Hanoi Music Conservatory and a well-known singer of “red” music with many prestige prizes including second prize of the national classical and chamber music contest in 2000, first prize of the biennial Sao Mai Television Singing Contest in 1999, and first prize of the Hanoi's beautiful voice contest in 1997.

**Bui Quynh Hoa: Could you tell us what brought you to music?**

**Trong Tan:** It wasn't something I meant to happen. In 1995, after graduating high school in Thanh Hoa province, I wanted to submit applications to study at universities of finance or architecture. When I saw the soaring university fees, I couldn't bear to be a financial burden to my family, who didn't have the money to pay for school back then. When I saw that the Hanoi Music Conservatory was free, I applied there. My parents told me I had a love of music as a young boy; I guess it swayed my decision without me even consciously knowing it.

**Bui Quynh Hoa: On stage, your voice is beautiful, expressive and enchanting. What is life off stage like for you?**

**Trong Tan:** It's quite difficult to comment about myself, but I think I'm a simple, open man. I try to avoid anything superficial, and devote myself wholly to music. I don't consider myself especially different from anyone else.

**Bui Quynh Hoa: In your opinion, what characteristics should a successful singer have?**

**Trong Tan:** In addition to a talent for music, academic training and non-stop practice, a successful singer needs to have a pure spirit with a passion for their career. That, with hard work and a devoted fan base, (and of course luck) create success. The real challenge is to be accepted by audiences. For that the singer needs a relevant, catchy song which is suitable to their voice. Good timing also helps. But to keep fans interested, a singer has to constantly bring something new to the table.

**Bui Quynh Hoa: Every star seems to be marked by one hit song they can perform throughout their entire career to drive fans crazy. But some artists seem to hit a wall after one hit and stop creating more. What do you think about this issue?**

# Vietnam: 'Red' music master shares his secrets

**Trong Tan:** A singer has to have their list of hits which fans will never tire of, in order to have a successful career and keep their fans' attention. I agree with People's Artist Tran Hieu's comment: "My most favourite songs are songs that I have not yet sung, I'm going to sing them in the future."

**Bui Quynh Hoa:** What do you think about peoples' comments that you are foolish to keep singing revolutionary songs when your voice could be so valuable in other genres?

**Trong Tan:** First, I would like to say thank you to those who care about my singing career's development. I don't understand why people call me foolish for my choices – I recently co-produced an album with singer Thanh Lam titled *Thanh Lam – Trong Tan* that includes eight semi-classic songs. I maintain my efforts to create original music, but I'm not going to sing something just because someone else wants me to.

**Bui Quynh Hoa:** Do you worry about creating something original in the "red", or revolutionary, music genre?



• Trong Tan.

**Trong Tan:** Art is never limited by anything, and "red" music is art, so there will always be

new paths to plough. Of course, it's difficult to sing revolutionary songs in a new, creative way be-

cause they draw from the same historical periods. But I think a talented singer could bring new feeling to revolutionary songs if they are dedicated enough.

**Bui Quynh Hoa:** What was it like to work with composer Le Minh Son and Thanh Lam, the two stars of Viet Nam's music scene? Was there enormous pressure?

**Trong Tan:** I chose composer Le Minh Son to collaborate with simply because I like his beautiful melodies and simple words that capture Vietnam's countryside. Thanh Lam and I released *Thanh Lam – Trong Tan*, because we wanted to bring audiences a new impression. Surprising audiences with a duet always keeps them on their toes. I felt no pressure at all working with them. We have our own strong forces.

**Bui Quynh Hoa:** Do you enjoy working with other musicians?

**Trong Tan:** Yes, of course. I'm quite willing to work with all other musicians if their style fits mine.

**Bui Quynh Hoa:** What are your plans from here?

**Trong Tan:** I'm going to finish my two projects: a DVD and a CD. The DVD, called *Dong Doi* (Teammate), the first DVD of mine, is being produced by the Thang Long Audio-visual Joint-stock Company. It features 10 top national songs to help tell the story of a soldier's life. I want to release it before the founding anniversary of the Vietnam People's Army, which falls on 22<sup>nd</sup> December. The second one, my *Mua Xuan Que Huong* (Spring in the Country) CD, features 12 popular tracks. The Youth Studio is helping me put it out either before the end of this month or early next month.

**Bui Quynh Hoa:** Along with being one of the most authoritative male vocalists in Vietnam and a promising lecturer at the Hanoi Conservatory, you also have a happy family at the age of 30. What's your secret?

**Trong Tan:** I'm not an expert on family – I just know what makes my own family life work. My wife and I are supportive of each others' endeavours.  
*Vietnam News Service*

## Martial Arts

# Leaving on A Jet Plane

WASHINGTON DC, July 1974. Two years have passed since President Nixon's historic visit to China, and on the White House lawn a Chinese troupe is performing wushu for the (soon to be ex-) president. Among the Chinese performers is an 11-year-old from Beijing named Li Lianjie, who stages a two-man fight for Nixon's pleasure. That boy will later be known as Jet Li.

Like Nixon's career at that moment in 1974, Jet Li's film career is near a turning point – or is it? The publicity campaign for *Fearless*, which came out in early 2006, trumpeted that it would be Li's last martial arts outing. In person, however, Li is less certain. "I have retired from traditional martial arts movies," he says. "I will still make action movies though."

At 43, Li seems about to leave behind the tradition that he helped create. His attitude towards wushu, which has shaped his life and much of his film repertoire for the past three and a half decades, has changed.

"It was when I reached my 30s that I started to think about ways to improve lives – my own and those around me," he says. "I want to show that violence is not the only solution to problems."

Buddhism has had a strong influence on Li in recent years,

and affected the way he sees his career. "In the past, my understanding of martial arts came from the secular, [the sense] that different countries and cultures have different points of view. Since I converted to Buddhism, I have learnt that all views regarding the external world come from within, not from outside. To let go of the self is to let go of the bias in our worldview," he says.

This insight deeply influences Li's most recent film *Fearless*, which he starred in and produced. "My character in *Fearless* is close to my experiences in real life," says Li. "China's economy has been growing fast and peoples' lives are much better than in the past. Yet despite this, a quarter of a million people committed suicide in 2003. *Fearless* was a simple step toward encouraging young people to see clearly through the illusion of life, to discover what is truly important to oneself."

For now Li is concentrating his efforts on charity work. In January, the Red Cross Society of China appointed him a "philanthropic ambassador," recognising his efforts to raise awareness of mental health issues among young people. He has also established his own charity, the ONE Foundation for victims of natural disasters.

Li's newfound altruism has not interrupted his acting career.



• Jet Li – master of wushu.

His next film, *Rogue*, features Li as an assassin who has ignited a bloody crime war between rival Asian mobs. Jason Statham (*Transporter*) plays an FBI agent determined to bring down Li after his partner is murdered. Filmed in Vancouver, *Rogue* is currently in post-production.

Li is also working with Jackie Chan on a modern-day interpretation of the Chinese literary classic *Journey to the West* [Monkey King]. The collaboration is currently in the developmental stages, with Li playing the monk Tang Seng and Chan playing the monkey Sun Wukong, and both stars sharing the title of executive producer.

With the pending Jackie Chan collaboration, Li's retirement from martial arts movies remains to be seen. Regardless, from that historic day on the White House lawn to his recent move back to China, the audience's love affair with Jet Li is easily understood: he and his audience have grown up together and Li's own story continues to develop and flourish. "I've been making movies for 26 years," says Li, "but after all this time, my desire to learn and to do the best I can never wavers. Every new film is a new challenge and I try the best I can to make the movies my fans want to see."

*That's Beijing (China)*

Home News

LETTERS

Dear comrades

There are 1,250,000 people on council housing lists, as well as millions of others needing an affordable home. There is no possibility of any solution to that crisis without a national programme of council house building.

The Labour Party conference for three years running has by a majority called for this but the Blair Cabinet has ignored their members' decisions each time.

There are those who gain massively from the blackmailing, privatising policy of keeping houses in short supply. Furthermore local authorities and the media are denying the public any chance to debate all the facts and benefits of the "fourth option" plan.

The editor welcomes letters from our readers. If you have a contribution to make, please make sure it reaches us before Wednesday. You can send your letters to: PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ, or email party@ncp.clara.net

The Government takes billions from the housing revenue (how much is used to pay for wars?) while millions are enslaved by debts they cannot defeat.

In old China they called it debt slavery; in Britain we call it having a mortgage for at least a lifetime. I am thankful to be a secure council tenant with an elected council as my landlords.

Yours,  
George Marsh,  
Surrey.

Dear comrades

I have started a signature collection against the clauses in Danish law that ultimately decide whom the Danish people can live with.

Danish immigration policies have long been criticised in the world media and now it is time to make our voices heard.

The way the Danish government treats its own nationals is inhumane.

An example of a family of three: the mother is Danish, the father an Iraqi who had lived and worked in Denmark for five years and their one-year-old daughter

were declined residence together in Denmark. They were told their connection was stronger to Iraq and the Danish government recommended that they should reside in Iraq. This was during the war!

Danish people need to be able to live in Denmark with their spouses with no conditions imposed.

Please support the cause; sign at www.petitionOnline.com/ourlove/petition.html And pass this e-mail on to your friends and relatives.

With friendly greetings,  
Maria Gombwe,  
Denmark.

Honored comrades and workers, free people in the world

For more than a week, the Israeli occupation forces have launched a wide brutal aggression against the Palestinian Gaza Strip. This attack has killed tens of innocent citizens and destroyed the infrastructure to the inhabitants of the Strip.

Most of its institutions have been destroyed and this has been done in total conspiracy and with the support of the United States and other international supporting powers to this invasion.

The brutal Israeli aggression has continued this Nazi barbaric attack by committing a massacre in Beit Hanoun on the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> November 2006, killing a number of innocent children, women, old people and men.

The World Federation of Trade Unions, which expresses the goals and aspirations of all the workers in the world, asks you to

condemn the Israeli crimes that are committed against the Palestinian citizens. WFTU also asks you to reaffirm your steadfast solidarity with the just national struggle for the Palestinian people in order to regain their rights, land, freedom and to build its independent national state with Jerusalem as its capital.

The solidarity between the people and workers throughout the world was, and will remain, the strongest and most important legal weapon in the hands of peoples aspiring for freedom and development. Let the honored voices rise against the aggressive brutal Israeli Zionist aggression

Long live the solidarity in struggle between the people and workers of the world!

Victory to the courageous Palestinian Peoples' Resistance!

Muhammad Shaaban  
Azzouz  
President of World  
Federation of Trade  
Unions.

**Housmans**  
Peace Diary 2007

From NCP Lit. PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ. £8.95 plus 50p P&P. Cheques to New Worker.

Diary

- SATURDAY 18 October – THURSDAY 30 November**  
In Gagarin's Trail. Images from the archives of RIA Novosti. Manchester Central Library.
- FRIDAY 27 October – 25 February**  
Belonging: voices of London's refugees. at Museum of London, 150 London Wall, EC2. Free.
- SATURDAY 25 November**  
Free Omar! Brighton's man in Guantanamo. Conference, 11.30am-4pm, 10/11 Pavilion Parade, opp. Brighton Pavilion. Free. 07985 408124.
- SATURDAY 25 November**  
Peace Symposium. 1.30-5pm, John Wesley's Chapel, Horsefair, Bristol.
- SATURDAY 25 November**  
Palestine Day. 1.30-5pm, IAIS, Exeter Univ. Free.
- SUNDAY 26 November**  
Palestinian Solidarity Festival. 3-6pm, Somers Town Community Centre, 150 Ossulysion St, London NW1.
- SUNDAY 26 November**  
London: twinning with Palestine conference. 11-5pm, The London Irish Centre, 50-52 Camden Sq, London.
- WEDNESDAY 29 November**  
Stop starving Palestinians - Stop arming Israel. 3-6pm lobby of Parliament, 7pm public meeting. PSC 020 7700 6192.
- THURSDAY 30 November**  
Beyond the Middle East. Speakers, videos. 7pm, Dylan Thomas Centre, Somerset Place, Swansea Marina, SA 1. £4/£3.
- SATURDAY 2 December**  
National troops home demo. RAF Brize Norton, Oxfordshire. Assemble 12 noon, Carterton. STW.
- FRIDAY 1 December 12-7pm SATURDAY 2 December 11-5pm, World Fair (fair trade).** Camden Centre, Bidborough St, London WC1. £3 donation.
- SATURDAY 2 December**  
Reclaiming our rights. Conference for lawyers & activists. 10-5pm, Libeskind Building, London Metro Univ. Holloway Rd, N7. Low fee. Campaign against criminalising communities 020 7223 4131.
- SATURDAY 2 December**  
Latin America 2006. Conference, 9.30-5pm, Congress Hse, Great Russell St, London WC1. 020 7435 7241.
- TUESDAY 5 December**  
Stop arming Israel. 6.30pm, LSE, Houghton St, London WC2.
- TUESDAY 5 December**  
Climate breakdown. 2.15pm, SOAS, Brunel Gallery, 10 Thornhaugh St, Russell Sq, London. British Pugwash Group 020 7405 7831.
- TUESDAY 5 December**  
Bring the troops home. 5-7pm, Brunyate Room. Southlands College, Roehampton Univ. Stop the War group.
- MONDAY 11 December**  
Block the builders, no Trident replacement. At AWE Aldermaston. CND. 07969 739 812.

Please contact us if you have an item to place in the diary. We advertise meetings for free. Ensure that you let us know before Tuesday, so we can place it in the next issue of the paper.

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Because of a problem on our printing press we are launching an emergency appeal for

**£3,000**

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Please send what you can to:  
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**Latest INFORMATION BULLETIN**

Documents of the Communist and Worker's Parties No. 2/2005 (13)  
The second part of the contributions to the Athens Conference in November 2005.  
£5 post free from NCP, PO 73,

**On the Web...**

New Worker National – www.newworker.org  
NCP Central – www.geocities.com/ncpcentral  
London District NCP – http://londoncommunists.blogspot.com/  
Brighton NCP – http://brightoncommunists.blogspot.com/  
NCP-PCS – www.geocities.ncppcs/pcs1.html

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*The case for communism* £2 plus 50p P&P.  
*All in the family* by Daphne Liddle, £1 plus 50p P&P (New Worker reprint).  
*Arab nationalism and the communist movement* by Andy Brooks, £1 plus 50p P&P (New Worker reprint).

NCP Lit. PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ. (cheques to New Worker)

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# 140 billion trees in 10 years

**In an essential step to counter the climate change threatening Earth and its inhabitants Cuba stands out internationally for reforestation efforts**

by Alberto D Pérez

**QUALIFYING climate change as the main threat to planet Earth in the 21st century, a United Nations meeting in Nairobi, Kenya called for the immediate planting of one billion trees in what would be an essential step in confronting a global disaster.**

The United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in the second week of November in this African capital, affirms that all can participate in this practical step, which would contribute to reducing the negative impact of global warming on the Earth's atmosphere.

To neutralize the destruction caused by human beings on forests and other wooded areas of the planet, it is estimated that 1.3 million square kilometers must be reforested

— equivalent to the size of Peru — and covered with 140 billion trees over a period of 10 consecutive years; that is, 140 billion trees annually must be planted.

Trees are powerful natural filters that capture carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, the element responsible for the global warming underway, bringing the planet closer to an environmental catastrophe.

Global warming is directly threatening agriculture and food production, as well as fish reproduction in the sea. For that reason, warned an Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) representative at the conference, climate change could reduce the planet's ability to feed its population, and famines could break out in diverse regions.

Africa, despite being the least responsible for environmental pollution and global warming, is the continent that could suffer the most as a result of the negative effects of these phenomena.

In addition, the increase in environmental temperatures is causing an increase in the number and ferocity of tropical hurricanes and the melting of the polar icecaps.



• In Cuba they are doing their bit.

The latter process is raising the level of oceans and could pose a real threat of extinction for small island nations, as well as the modification of the coastal morphology of many countries in the

world. Seaside cities are threatened with the flooding of their low-lying areas.

Achim Steiner, executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme, said that this campaign for refor-

estation and environmental rehabilitation — vital to the survival of humanity itself — must come from governments and be assumed by all people in every sector of society.

Steiner emphasized that

the global challenge is to thwart the progress of climate change and to restore the ability of the natural environment to control the substances and processes that are threatening the planet.

Other measures suggested are conservation in the consumption of electricity and fossil fuels, and increased use of alternative renewable energy, such as wind, solar, hydraulic, those using tides and biogas, the latter as part of a range of biofuels.

Cuba is one of the few countries in the world that has been increasing, on a sustained basis, its surface area dedicated to forests, via an effort led by the Ministry of Agriculture with the support of mass organizations, including the Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, the Federation of Cuban Women and youth organizations.

According to the most recent data, 24.3 per cent of Cuba's surface area is planted with trees. This task continues throughout the nation, and makes the island one of the leading countries in the fight against climate change and for a cleaner environment.

*Granma International*

## Sinn Féin 'will not be deflected' by threats

**Sinn Féin leaders Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness told a Belfast press conference, on Monday 13th November that the party would not be "deflected from what we think is the right thing to do", after threats against some members of the Sinn Féin leadership emerged.**

Adding that he had been aware for some time of a possible threat Gerry Adams disclosed that, "a handful of disaffected IRA people", may have linked up with members of republican micro groups and some members of the INLA and that these were the elements behind the threats.

Both Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness confirmed that the Sinn Féin leadership was taking the threats seriously. The Sinn Féin President said: "We work and live in a process which is about change. At different times in the process there is turbulence and this is open to exploitation by elements who have a very malign agenda." But he stressed: "We won't lose sleep over this".

"I would say to republicans out there who have concerns about the present political situation that they should not allow themselves to be manipulated or to have their concerns exploited by those who have very, very,

narrow cul de sac agendas", he said.

Adams went on however to describe those behind the threats as having, "very little weight or influence".

"If you weigh up the sum total of these groups against the thrust of Sinn Féin's support they are decidedly a very tiny minority", Adams said.

Both Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness pointed out that it was important for the political process that progress was made in the coming weeks.

Speaking to *An Phoblacht* on Tuesday Gerry Adams said: "In every stage of struggle, there is always the possibility that, as there are efforts to make advances, elements will seek to prevent that.

"I have no problem whatsoever and in fact would actively encourage very inclusive debate on every dimension of strategy and tactics. But we are not naïve. There are people who are disaffected. They are a tiny minority. They include some former Army people.

"So we have to guard against any of us, including people who have genuine difficulties or concerns, being manipulated by individuals who have a much narrower or short-term agenda."

*An Phoblacht*

## Red salute to Russian Revolution

**WORKING PEOPLE have held events to mark the 89th anniversary of the Great October Russian Revolution across the globe this month and last weekend comrades and friends came to the reception at the NCP's Party Centre in London for their own celebration of the ten days that shook the world.**

As usual the print shop was transformed into a bar and buffet for the event and NCP chairperson Alex Kempshall kicked off the formal part of the evening of tributes to the achievements and sacrifice of the Soviet people throughout the 20th century.

Explo Nani Kofi of the African Liberation Support Campaign Network (ALISC), an old friend of the NCP, spoke of the importance of the October revolution to the national liberation movement. Friends of Korea were well represented with Ella Rule delivering a message on behalf of the Korean Co-ordinating Committee of Friends of Korea in the UK along with solidarity messages sent from vice-chair Dermot Hudson and the DPR Korea embassy staff.

Harpal Brar, the chair-



man of the CPGB (ML) and prolific writer on Soviet history stressed the contribution of Lenin and Stalin to the working class movement and Michael Chant from the RCPB (ML) spoke of the importance of revolutionary struggle in the 21st century.

NCP leader Andy Brooks recalled that the Soviet revolution had, in practice, ended the First World War while the Soviet Red Army had decisively brought about the defeat of

Nazi Germany and the Japanese Empire in the Second World War.

Finally the "red" homemade cake was brought out, as has become customary at NCP socials, and it was appreciated in the usual way.

Of course no NCP event can pass without a mention of the *New Worker* fighting fund. NCP National Treasurer Dolly Shaer recalled her long years of struggle which began when she joined the Young Commu-

nist League in the 1930s in a stirring appeal that raised £468. Friends slowly departed for last trains and buses as night closed but some die-hards kept the bar open till 1.00 am!

• Comrades enjoy a drink and a chat at the bar.

International News

Web: www.newworker.org

Fax 020 7223 4057

## Presidents of China and India meet in New Delhi

CHINESE President Hu Jintao met with Indian President Abdul Kalam in New Delhi on Tuesday evening.

The two presidents said they valued highly bilateral traditional friendship and cultural exchanges, adding that they believed China-India cooperation is of global significance.

Hu said he is convinced that Sino-Indian strategic and cooperative partnership will achieve greater progress in the future.

Kalam said Hu's visit is a historic milestone in bilateral relations which will continue to score achievements in various fields. He added India will spare no effort to inject vigour into Sino-Indian relations and work with China to push forward their partnership.

### friendship year

Before the meeting, the two presidents addressed youth representatives from the two countries at a gathering in celebration of the China-India friendship year.

Hu arrived in New Delhi on Monday evening on a state visit as Kalam's guest, constituting the first visit in 10 years by a Chinese head of state to India.

India is the third leg of Hu's four-nation tour, which has already taken him to Vietnam and Laos. He will later visit Pakistan.

Hu also attended the 14th APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Economic Leaders' Meeting last week in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Xinhua news agency

# Civil war in Nepal ends

by Prithvi Shrestha and Zhang Jianhua in Kathmandu

NEPAL has entered a new era of peace and development following the Nepali government and the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) (Maoist) signed a comprehensive peace accord formally ending 11-year-long civil war.

After signing the agreement in the presence of a large number of journalists, diplomats and intellectuals, both Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and CPN (Maoist) chairman Prachanda expressed their commitment to lead the country toward the path of development by ensuring the institutionalisation of democracy and people's rights through peaceful and partnership approach.

Most importantly, the agreement has ended a decade-long armed conflict and transformed the temporary ceasefire into permanent one. The agreement has also made clear that it is punishable to keep weapons without licence or use them directly and indirectly to create fear among people.

Anyone who forces somebody to do something, abducts and tortures people will be punished, according to the agreement.

Both sides have expressed their commitment to international human rights conventions and humanitarian laws, freedom of expression, religious freedom and people's right to live. It is the joint accord of peace, ceasefire and human rights.

After signing the agreement, Prime Minister Koirala said that Nepali people have set an example for the world in solving conflicts.

"Now my only wish is to hold an election to the constituent assembly for the successful democratic restructuring of the state," he added.

Likewise Prachanda also said that the day when the peace accord was signed was an end to long-standing feud-



• Maoist supporters celebrate.

alism and the beginning of a new era of democratic and progressive Nepal.

People from various walks of life said they believed that the nation entered the agenda of peace after the signing of the agreement.

They also emphasised full implementation of commitments made in the agreement.

"The main challenge before the political leaders now is to implement the agreement earnestly," said Narayan Wagle, editor of *Kantipur*, a leading Nepalese daily.

Daman Nath Dhungana, one of the former mediators in the earlier talks between the government and the CPN (Maoist), said that the politi-

cal parties and the government must prove they are dedicated to the implementation of the agreement.

Human rights activist Sudeep Pathak said he was more confident with the latest agreement as both the Seven-Party Alliance and the CPN (Maoist) would soon be the part of the state.

According to the agreement signed on 8<sup>th</sup> November, they would form an interim legislature by 26<sup>th</sup> November and an interim government by 1<sup>st</sup> December, in which representatives from both the ruling Seven-Party Alliance and the CPN (Maoists) would participate.

Chandi Raj Dhakal, presi-

dent of the Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries, the apex body of Nepali business community, said that they believe no great disturbances in the business activities will occur in the days to come.

The government and the CPN, however, had failed to publish an interim constitution on Tuesday before the deadline due to the delay in signing the peace accord. So some local analysts said it is likely that the work on the interim constitution, interim legislature and interim government would not be accomplished before the deadline.

Xinhua news agency

## Rumsfeld may not be going anywhere too soon

FORMER US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is packing up his office at the Pentagon — but before he heads out of town for an overseas vacation, he should check with his attorney.

Human rights activists have filed a criminal complaint in Germany accusing Rumsfeld, US Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, former CIA Director George Tenet and nine other Americans of war crimes for the torture and abuse of prisoners in US custody.

The groups are suing on behalf of 11 Iraqis who had been imprisoned at Abu Ghraib, and a Saudi held at the US-run prison at Guantanamo. All say they were subjected to a range of torture, humiliation and abuse.

Michael Ratner, president of the New York-based Centre for Constitutional Rights, said: "There has to be some accountability for Donald Rumsfeld" — adding that one cannot have high-ranking US officials

"doing this kind of stuff or the world is chaos, complete chaos."

The legal complaint filed in Germany compels that country's chief federal prosecutor, Monika Harms, to at least consider opening an investigation and, if she decides against prosecuting, to give a solid, legal reason for saying no. And while she is deciding how far to take it, Harms has the power to secretly get an arrest warrant, just in case any of the accused drops in.

### possible

Legal experts say that if Germany issues an arrest warrant, dozens of other countries with whom it has formal or informal extradition agreements could arrest them. While many say it is unlikely that Germany or another US ally would arrest a former US Defence Secretary or the US Attorney General, it is possible under international law.

The legal issue is known as universal jurisdiction, a

concept with growing popularity for prosecuting crimes against humanity, such as torture and genocide. Michael Ratner says: "The idea is that there are some crimes that are so offensive to mankind that any state ought to be allowed to prosecute them." He said that often the countries where the crimes occurred aren't independent enough from the perpetrators to prosecute them.

Human rights activists have pointed out that they have sued in US courts on behalf of Guantanamo detainees and won in the US Supreme Court — only to watch as the White House did everything it could to put off abiding by the rulings. Finally, in September, the Bush administration pushed Congress into passing legislation that denies detainees access to American courts and immunises US personnel from prosecution for violating international anti-torture laws.

Radio Havana Cuba

## Bush faces fury in Indonesia

UNITED STATES President George W Bush arrived in Indonesia on Monday to a storm of angry protests. Thousands of demonstrators took to the streets, waving posters denouncing the US government as "the real terrorist".

From the moment of his arrival in Jakarta, Bush faced intense opposition and even calls for his blood from Indonesian Muslims angry over Washington's war of aggression against Iraq and the American military presence in Afghanistan.

Protesters were physically blocked from getting too close, as a 15,000-strong contingent of security forces locked down the centre of Bogor, a resort town located about 60 km south of Jakarta, the capital. Soldiers lined the highway from the airport to the summer palace while Bush helicoptered to his meeting with Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Bush spent all of seven hours in Indonesia before heading to Hawaii and from there to Washington.

### war zone

Bush's visit turned the usually quiet resort into what some media sources described as "a war zone" — with anti-riot troops clutching assault weapons and patrolling the streets. Roadblocks were set up and razor wire blocked the way to the Bogor summer palace.

Thousands of protesters, including Islamic activists and students, crowded as close to the palace as they could get, while a group of some 50 students tried to break through the security cordon at the barricade and clashed with police before being arrested.

Leaders of the Alliance of United Muslim Mass Organisations, which brings together a number of Islamic groups, called for Bush to be put to death and denounced him as a "war criminal" and a "terrorist" at a mid-day rally. One protest leader said that "the blood of George W Bush is halal" — meaning that it was not a sin under Islam to harm him.

Anti-Bush protests were staged in at least eight cities across the Indonesian archipelago on Monday. And almost every day for the past week, leading up to yesterday's visit, protests and demonstrations have taken place in Jakarta and other cities.

Radio Havana Cuba







