

# G8 FEASTS WHILE MILLIONS STARVE

by Daphne Liddle

**THE LEADERS of the G8 nations met in Hokkaido, Japan, last week with global rising food and fuel prices at the top of their agenda.**

Yet they began their deliberations with a lavish six-course lunch, followed a few hours later with an even more lavish eighteen-course dinner.

In their first session they expressed "deep concern" over rising food prices and the need to reduce "unnecessary demand" for food. Prime Minister Gordon Brown had only just lectured the British public about wasting food.

Hours later the leaders of world economic imperialism were being served 24 different lavish dishes during their first day at the conference.

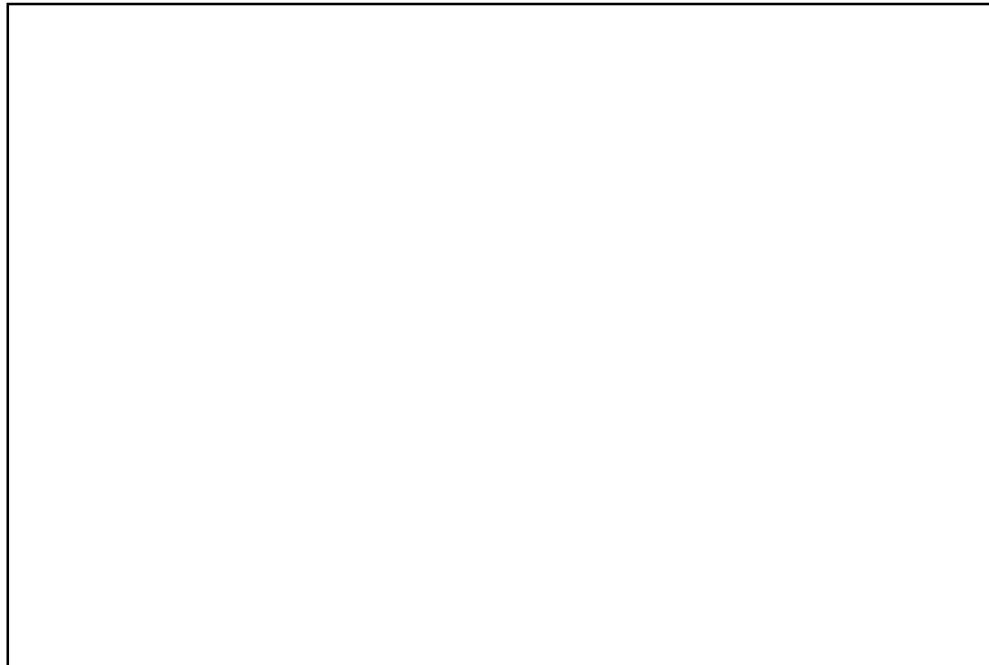
Meanwhile the leaders of several African nations, including the heads of Ethiopia, Tanzania and Senegal – where food shortages are now causing starvation – were excluded from the banquets organised by the Japanese

hosts. And this G8 summit comes three years after the Gleneagles G8 summit where these great leaders pledged to help the world's poor and hungry.

This time the G8 leaders could not come up with anything better than the usual offer of a package of aid – with strings.

The G8 leaders say they will support improvements in agricultural infrastructure including irrigation, transportation, storage, distribution, and quality control while assisting in the development of food security early warning systems.

But these offers come after People's China has been doing trade deals with many African nations, which do not have the imperialist strings that demand the privatisation of everything and the opening up of vulnerable economies to the full force of the global market.



Ironically China, now a major world economic force, was not invited to the G8 as a full member, nor was India. These countries did come along with the leaders of South Africa, Brazil and Mexico for an outreach session of G8, where Chinese President Hu Jintao met Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh for bilateral talks on global

issues. As major developing countries, China and India bear the common tasks of developing economy, improving people's livelihood, safeguarding world peace, and promoting common development, Hu said.

The two nations are also faced with common challenges such as climate change, energy and food

security, and the Doha round of the World Trade Organisation talks.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev was also excluded from the G8 summit, proving that the great imperialist powers no longer consider Russia as the safe puppet it was in the Yeltsin days.

If the trend continues it will not be long before the greatest economic powers on the planet are all excluded from the G8. Its power is already in sharp decline as it made an appeal for United Nations sanctions against Zimbabwe, knowing that Russia and China will certainly veto it.

The G8 leaders also made much of their agreement at last on a common commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50 per cent – only it was not really a commitment; it had a get-out clause; it only applied if countries like China, India and the starving countries of Africa also promised to cut their greenhouse gas emissions by the same percentage.

Of course their leaders are having none of it. They squarely blame the existing industrialised economies for having caused the problem in the first place and will not sign up to any commitment that will prevent them developing the levels of production that will feed, clothe, and house their hungry populations.

So this G8 summit's main achievement is to expose just how much of an irrelevance it is becoming.

It cannot solve any global problems; food and fuel prices will continue to rise

– driven as much by profiteering speculators as by genuine shortages.

It failed to address the large expanses of agricultural land now being given over to bio fuels, even though a confidential World Bank report has estimated that the change to growing biofuels has pushed up global food prices by 75 per cent.

And the G8 summit can do nothing to halt or temper the coming economic crisis.

It certainly will do nothing for the people of Britain where the British Chamber of Commerce's quarterly report found that our economy is facing a real recession and that the credit crunch has dented all sectors of the economy.

House-builders and banks are already laying off workers by the thousand.

But outside Britain the ray of hope is the coming together of China, India, Russia and all those Third World nations excluded from the G8 for their own, less formal but more real economic deliberations.

## Iraq: the root of the violence lies in the occupation

by our Arab Affairs Correspondent

**IRAQI RESISTANCE fighters are stepping up their attacks as the puppet regime wrangles with the Americans over the terms of their occupation. The puppet government says it will insist on a deadline for the withdrawal of all US troops in any new deal to prolong the occupation. But the crack-down on the Mahdi Army continues and many fear this is to clear the decks for a US strike against Iran.**

An American convoy was hit by a roadside bomb on Tuesday, killing four mercenaries and injuring eight others in the northern city of Mosul. Partisans blew up the home of a collaborationist woman MP in Baghdad and five Al Qaeda commanders escaped from jail in Ramadi in what looks like an inside job.

Baghdad is the most dangerous city in the world, rocked by partisan bombs and ambushes, against a backdrop of strife between

the rival Sunni and Shia wings of Islam. US imperialism tries to play off one community against another to perpetuate its occupation and plunder Iraq's vast oil reserves.

But last weekend the Iraqi capital witnessed a new initiative aimed at ending the sectarian conflict. A Sinn Féin leader and the head of the African National Congress' guerrillas who fought South Africa's apartheid regime flew in last weekend to promote peace and reconciliation.

Martin McGuinness, Northern Ireland's deputy prime minister and a former top IRA guerrilla, and MacMaharaj, a former South African Cabinet minister and underground commander of the ANC, were in Baghdad to encourage the Sunni, Shia and Kurdish factions to commit to principles of non-violence similar to those embodied in northern Ireland's peace process, at a conference held in the heavily-fortified US "Green Zone" military compound in the heart of Baghdad.

"It is quite important to drop pebbles into a pool in

the hope that the waves will reach all shores and that's what we're doing," McGuinness said. "That's what we did in Helsinki One, and Helsinki Two" he said.

"I suppose now we're dropping a bigger pebble in the pool by actually going ourselves physically to Baghdad to declare the politicians and others as people of courage – people who are showing leadership in a very difficult time for their country."

Thirty-three leading members of Iraq's sectarian and ethnic groups signed the weekend's agreement to promote national reconciliation in Baghdad accepting, in principle, a commitment to ban political militias, respect the rights of minorities, honour an independent judiciary and resolve all political issues through non-violence and democracy.

The pact, which aims to form a bridge of common principles between Iraq's feuding factions, is known as the Helsinki Agreement because it is based on a framework laid down in two peace conferences held in Finland in September 2007 and April 2008.

The Iraqi participants included an aide to puppet "premier" Nouri al Maliki, the leader of the main Sunni party in the puppet parliament and two MPs loyal to the anti-occupation Shia cleric Muqtada al Sadr. McGuinness, who described his time in Iraq as "absolutely incredible" was upbeat about the success of the conference.

"If you want a glimpse of what World War III would be like, it's there on the streets of Baghdad. So I think it's of vital importance that the process, which is now beginning to move, moves speedily," he said.

"I also want to applaud the courage and leadership shown by these Iraqi politicians. I think something very important, something very powerful is beginning to happen."

But the root of the violence in Iraq is not sectarian strife but the US occupation which inflames it and without the participation of the underground Baathist resistance or the other fighting nationalist movements this initiative will achieve nothing.

### FUND

**The July fighting fund got off to a slow start with just £202 in the bag and £3,000 to raise to hit our target for the month. Another £77 came in for the Special Appeal including £52 from a supporter in Ashford which means we're on the last lap as far as that call is concerned.**

**July is a short month because our full-timers are preparing for their annual summer break. But there can be no let up in building the sales of the New Worker and raising funds to ensure that our communist voice is heard in all the factories, offices and estates throughout the country.**

**We rely entirely on our supporters to keep our presses rolling and next weekend we'll be celebrating the 31 fighting years of the NCP and the New Worker. Every day's been worth it and we'll keep raising the banner of communism for as long as it takes to achieve peace and socialism in Britain. We can do it but only with your help. Please send your contribution to the struggle to: New Worker Fund, PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ**

email: party@ncp.clara.net

News Desk 020 7223 4052

# THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

## Facing the Abyss

**GORDON BROWN says that there'll be no return to 1970s-style industrial relations. He tells union leaders: "...there will be no return to the 1970s, the 1980s or even the 1990s when it comes to union rights, no retreat from continued modernisation and there can be no question of any re-introduction of secondary picketing rights".**

These are the people who mobilised organised workers to put Labour in government three times in a row. These are the people who pay 90 per cent of Labour's bills. But they'll have to make do with Brown's "family-friendly agenda" that consists of little more than the promise of free school dinners and unwelcome advice to supermarkets to stop cut-price food deals that he claims encourage waste. Well they won't if they've got any sense.

Labour's popularity is now at an all-time low and the standing of the Prime Minister is even lower. Brown has two years to turn things round if Labour is to have a hope of staving off the Tories. Moves are afoot to force Brown out if Labour loses their once-safe Glasgow East to the Scottish National Party on 24<sup>th</sup> July. The way Brown's going he might just as well throw in the towel now.

But replacing the Prime Minister with the likes of a Miliband, Straw or even a Harriet Harman will do nothing for Labour's fortunes unless it is accompanied by a whole raft of progressive demands in a manifesto that can win back the millions of working people who expected so much from Labour when it returned to power in 1997.

The Labour Party was established to represent the unions and press for progressive reforms for the benefit of working people throughout the country. Though its first two administrations in the 1920s achieved next-to-nothing, the post-war Attlee government provided free education; established the National Health Service and created a vibrant public sector that underpinned the prosperity in the 1950s and 60s.

Far from being some sort of dark age, the Wilson and Callaghan governments pioneered more reforms for organised labour, and working people enjoyed unparalleled prosperity despite high inflation during the 1970s.

The leaders of the affiliated unions must make it clear to Brown and the rest of the Labour leadership that they'll settle for nothing less than a clear commitment to sweep away the reactionary Tory laws that obstruct free collective bargaining; the scrapping of the pay freeze in the public sector and a pledge to revitalise the ailing health service with funds raised by increasing income tax on those who can well afford it. The pensions link must be restored and all the troops brought back from Iraq and Afghanistan.

At the grass-roots workers must be mobilised to ensure that their leaders do not settle for another third-rate "Warwick" agreement to bail Labour out of its financial woes with little or nothing in exchange.

On the revisionist and social-democratic left the usual suspects are divided between those wringing their hands in despair and those chasing the mirage of yet another social-democratic electoral "alternative" to Labour.

Our task is to fight for a democratic Labour Party that carries out the demands of its affiliates; support the Labour Representation Committee's efforts to rebuild Labour's rank-and-file base and argue for the socialist alternative by building the communist movement up and down the country.

### Bargain holiday

More than 3,000 hard-up Polish students thought they'd found a real bargain package holiday in Paris and signed up for the £5-a-head coach trip – only to discover they'd been recruited into an Iranian group listed as a banned terrorist organisation by the EU and the US.

The trip was organised by the militant Iranian People's Mujahideen to carry supporters to a demonstration in Paris.

"It was a shock," said one student. "I thought we were going to live it up in Paris – not join a terrorist group."

### Greenwash

Prince Charles has been accused of "greenwashing" his accounts, which showed that he increased his annual income by £1 million last year and yet paid less tax.

He did this by offsetting his tax liabilities with a series of green purchases.

## Say no more

These included a converter for his Aston Martin to allow it to run on bio-ethanol and installing woodchip-fired boilers at his home.

### Ponglish

The approximately one million Poles now living in Britain have created a secret language using a mixture of Polish and English, now known as Ponglish, so they can communicate with each other an no-one outsider understand them.

The mixture of Polish and English - dubbed Ponglish - has developed so quickly it has become a cult language with young immigrants.

Poles in Britain no longer pay "podatki" (taxes), but British "taksy"; they travel by "tuba" (tube) and they complain about the "trafik" (traffic).

They spend "kesh" (cash,) take "offy" (days off) and make "fony" or "cally" (phone calls) to their "frendy" (friends.)

### Voice of the people

A YouGov poll published last week for the TUC revealed that the public believes big companies and wealthy individuals dodge taxes too easily – and sparked an angry response from business leaders.

Three out of four people agreed it was too easy for very rich people to get out of paying a fair level of tax, while seven out of 10 said companies got off too lightly.

### Cost of Big Brother

Britain's "surveillance society" is costing taxpayers £20 billion, or £800 per household, according to a report published last week by the Taxpayers' Alliance.

The amount includes £19 billion for the planned ID card system and £500 million for CCTV cameras.

The *Telegraph* quoted former Shadow Home Secretary David Davis, who is

standing for a by-election, as saying that this statistic provided "further damning evidence of Big Brother's (Brown Government's) expensive tastes".

### Original answer

A pupil who wrote "F\*\*\* off" on a GCSE English exam paper was given two marks for spelling it correctly. It meant he got 7.5 per cent – and England's chief examiner said he'd have got 11 per cent if he had added an exclamation mark.

The pupil gave the four-letter answer, which earned him two marks out of 27, when asked to "describe the room you are sitting in".

Peter Buckroyd, chief examiner of English for the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance, said: "It does show some very basic skills we are looking for, like conveying some meaning and some spelling. It shows more skills than someone who doesn't write anything at all."

## Travellers barred from Royal Windsor show

**MEMBERS of the Traveller community last week claimed they had been barred from entering the Royal Windsor Horse Show simply because they were travellers and are planning to lodge a formal complaint to the Equality and Human Rights Commission.**

It is illegal under the Race Relations Act, to discriminate against Travellers or Gypsies on the basis of their race.

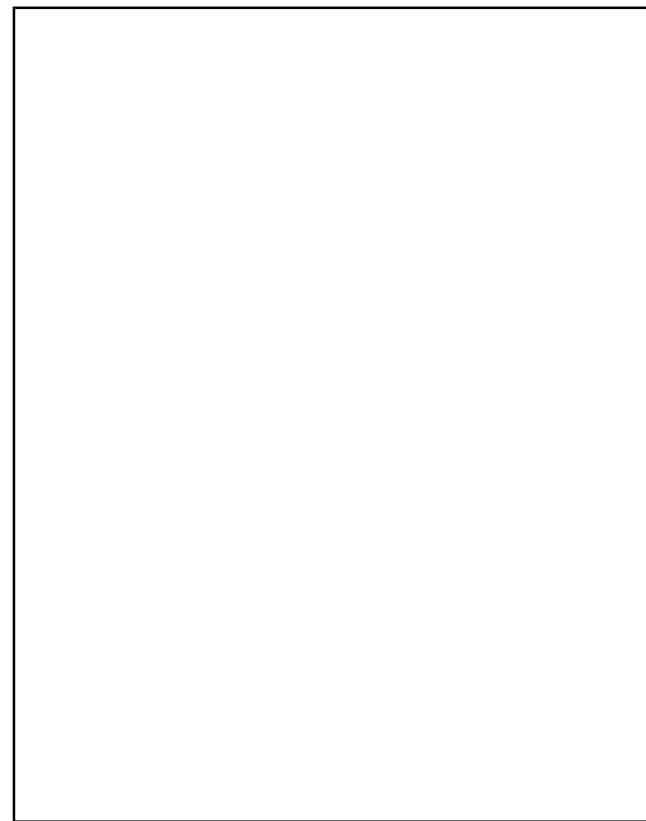
The show is held in parkland around Windsor Castle and is open to the public. The Queen is patron of the event and attended this year as usual.

According to reports, the organisers, the Horse Power Group, turned away people from the Traveller community, saying: "Your kind are not welcome."

Mary Ball, from Sandhurst, Berkshire, describes herself as a "settled Traveller". She said: "The security guard said: 'You can't come in'. At first he didn't give a reason. Then he said: 'Your kind are not welcome'. He mentioned 'the Travelling kind', or the 'Travelling community'."

"I was shocked. It would have been bad enough if we had been a group of youths on the razzle but it was a mother and daughter."

Helen Collins, also a Traveller, said she too had been refused entry. She said: "I wasn't allowed in. They said that due to the year before and thieving they were not going to allow any more in. They



• The Royal Windsor Horse Show – it appears you have to jump over hurdles just to get in!

turned quite a lot of the Gypsy community away."

Sally Evans and her family from Crowthorne in Berkshire were barred at first but eventually allowed in. "We took the whole family," she said, "all three children and my husband."

"They said, 'We don't want their type'. It was disgraceful."

The women later had calls from many friends who had been banned from entering. One was told: "The Queen doesn't want your type in here."

Horse Power press officer Kelly Smith said: "We have had problems before. It was judged on a case by

case basis. The stewards and the police at the time ... they do what they feel they have to do. There was no policy that says Travellers are not allowed in."

She confirmed that the stewards were employed by Horse Power but refused to explain the criteria used to decide who was to be barred.

Thames Valley police said they had been involved only in traffic control. And Buckingham Palace denied any responsibility, saying: "The show is organised independently from the Royal household. Whatever their arrangements for entrance are up to them."

## Migrant suicides

**TWO POLISH migrant workers have hanged themselves at a strawberry plantation in Hertfordshire, last Tuesday.**

A representative of the plantation's owner claims there is no connection between the two deaths. The local police are of the same opinion, but Polish strawberry pickers employed at the plantation think otherwise.

"The two men did not know one another. They may have not ever met as there are around 2,500 people living here. We know they both had problems in their relationships, which may have caused the tragedy," said a representative of the Brook Farm company in an interview with Polish daily *Rzeczpospolita*.

However, according to the Polish workers at the company, the cause may have been different. Their accounts feature stories of harassment by the employers and threats of immediate dismissal in case of unsatisfactory work efficiency.

"Many Poles working there have faced such situations. The nearest village is three kilometres away, and from there it's a three-hour bus ride to London. If a person doesn't speak English, they could hardly manage such a journey", recounts one of the Polish workers, adding that the farm is surrounded with a barbed-wire fence.

## Argos workers to take strike action

**DISTRIBUTION** workers employed by the high street retailer Argos have overwhelmingly voted in favour of strike action in a dispute over pay; 67 per cent of those who took part in the ballot voted for strike action. The turnout was over 75 per cent.

The giant general union Unite is warning the Home Retail Group, owner of Argos and one of the country's biggest high street retailers that it faces severe disruption to its customer distribution service.

Workers rejected the company's pay offer of four per cent. They are also furious that Argos intends to erode the sick pay scheme and implement monthly pay instead of weekly pay without any compensation.

Argos distribution workers across four key regional distribution centres at Basildon, Bridgwater, Heywood and Magna Park in Leicestershire will embark on a series of 24 hour strikes with the action escalating to a four-day stoppage. Details of the strike dates will be announced next week.

Unite is angry that the company has offered a below inflation pay deal with strings at a time when the Home Retail Group's profits are up 16 per cent on last year's profits of £423 million.

In 2007 chief executive officer Terry Duddy was rewarded with a 58 per cent increase in his salary package to take it to over £1.7 million and the finance director has just added a bonus of over 100 per cent to his annual salary giving him earnings this year of £882,000.

Unite national secretary, Jennie Formby, said: "Argos now faces severe disruption to its customer distribution service. Our members have been working harder and more flexibly. Thanks to them Argos distribution has managed to save over £10 million for the group in the last 15 months alone."

"Many distribution workers earn as little as £17,000 a year for doing back-breaking, essential work for this company. A below-inflation wage offer is a pay cut and this is totally unacceptable to our members. They are already struggling to keep up with rising food and energy costs."

"This is a hugely profitable company and all our members are asking for is a fair share of the wealth they've worked so hard to create."

## Ex MI5 boss slams 42-day detention

**THE FORMER** chief of the intelligence service MI5, Eliza Manningham-Buller, last Tuesday in her maiden speech in the House of Lords attacked Government plans to introduce detention of up to 42 days without charge or trial for alleged terrorist suspects.

The measure is contained in the Counter-Terrorism Bill, which narrowly passed through the House of Commons last month and divided Labour MPs. The House of Lords is expected to reject the plan; the Government could overrule such a rejection but this would take a long time.

The Government has argued that the police and security services say longer detention times are necessary to investigate complex terrorist plots but opponents fear the measure could easily be misused as many other anti-terror laws have been – to prosecute peace activists and other who are plainly not terrorists.

Baroness Manningham-Buller, who retired last year as director-general of MI5 after a 35-year career in British intelligence,

forcefully rejected the Government's argument. She said: "In deciding what I believe on these matters, I have weighed up the balance between the right to life, the most important civil liberty, the fact that there is no such thing as complete security and the importance of our hard won civil liberties."

"And therefore on a matter of principle, I can-

not support the 42-days pre-charge detention in this bill." She went on to say that measures in the bill giving MPs oversight of long detention cases would be likely to prejudice any trial of a suspect that followed.

She said: "I don't see on a practical basis, as well as a principled one, that these proposals are in any way workable."

Former Tory shadow

home secretary David Davis, who resigned in protest after the Commons passed the measure in order to re fight for his constituency seat on the issue of civil liberties, welcomed Baroness Manningham-Buller's comments.

He said: "This new law would actually harm the counter-terrorism effort rather than assisting it, and this demonstrates only too clearly that it is an action motivated by politics rather than the nation's security."

Lady Manningham-Buller is the latest in a string of high-profile figures from the security and legal establishment to come out against the 42-day plan, following former Lord Chancellor Lord Falconer, former attorney general Lord Goldsmith and Director of Public Prosecutions Sir Ken Macdonald.

But senior police chiefs including Sir Ian Blair, the Met Commissioner, and Peter Clarke, the former head of counter-terrorism at Scotland Yard, have said the new powers are needed.

• Part of the anti-terror mania: innocent bystander Nzube Udezue is held at gun point.

## Barclay's 300 job cuts

**THE GIANT** general union Unite last week condemned the announcement by Barclays that it is to cut around 304 jobs in Cardiff, Wales. The announcement is the result of the decision to withdraw the "First Plus" product from the market.

Graham Goddard, Unite deputy general secretary said: "Unite is incensed by Barclays' decision to cut around 304 highly trained staff. Whilst the union understands that the market conditions mean that the "First Plus" product is no-longer viable, we wholeheartedly condemn the decision to run down the Cardiff site."

## Building firm cuts 1,100 jobs

**THE CONSTRUCTION** company Persimmon last week announced that it was laying off 1,100 building workers because of the downturn in the housing market.

But a spokesperson from the builders' union Ucat pointed out that the real job losses would be far greater because many building workers are technically self-employed and do not show up on redundancy statistics.

The number of completions of house sales in the first six months of this year was 31 per cent lower than at the same time last year, the company said, leading to the "most challenging period in our recent history".

Persimmon blamed difficulties in getting mortgages and falling confidence.

In a separate report estate agents Savills said that London house prices had fallen 7.5 per cent this year and that the volume of transactions was down by 45 per cent.

Only the most expensive properties – those valued at over £5 million, were "proving relatively immune to the crash. This indicates that while the majority are starting to suffer in the gathering economic storm – the really rich are getting richer."

The news led to a 14 per cent drop in Savills share price in early Tuesday trading.

Meanwhile Persimmon, which has seen its shares sink in line with other house-builders, lost a further six per cent.

Persimmon said that its job cuts would save about £65 million per year, meaning it could cope "efficiently" with its downturn in business.

Persimmon is the latest house-builder to cut jobs; already 2,000 jobs have gone at rivals Taylor Wimpey and Barratt Developments. Last week, Taylor Wimpey shares more than halved in value after the firm announced 900 job cuts and said it had failed to secure an extra £500 million of funding. And Barratt is shedding up to 1,000 jobs. These of course are the official figures and do not include "self-employed" workers who also lose their livelihoods.

## Labour MPs and unions demand more climate change action

**THE PRIME MINISTER** is facing another backbench rebellion as more than 80 Labour MPs have signed an amendment to the Climate Change Bill, which would force ministers to promise greater cuts in carbon emissions.

This Bill commits the Government to make at least a 60 per cent cut in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050. The MPs want that figure to rise to 80 per cent.

The rebels say the 60 per cent goal will not do enough to control global warming and is based on out of date science.

Gordon Brown has admitted the evidence points that way but he has passed the matter to an independent Cli-

mate Change Committee, headed by former CBI chief, Lord Turner, and he is refusing to change the Bill until the committee has agreed a new target.

Lord Turner is not due to report until 1<sup>st</sup> December – after the Climate Change Bill is likely to have passed into law, probably in November.

The rebel MPs want the government to pre-empt Lord Turner's committee and put the 80 per cent goal in the Bill now, or persuade the peer to report earlier so that his target can be put into the measure.

The Climate Change Bill completes its detailed committee stage on Tuesday.

The Tories are waiting for Lord Turner to report before deciding whether to back the rebel amendment, which is backed by 85 Labour MPs – including Tony Lloyd, who chairs parliamentary Labour Party.

Meanwhile representatives of the giant general union Unite working in electrical engineering, electronics and Information Technology are calling for statutory rights for union representatives to gain access to environmental impact information on companies.

Workers in the sector are also calling for company ex-

ecutives to have their pay and bonuses linked to meeting environmental targets.

The union has published a report – *How Green Is My Workplace?* – which gives guidance on how union representatives can raise awareness of environmental issues to make workplaces greener.

In a survey of 10,000 Unite members in the electronics and IT sector, 83 per cent believed that their workplace wasted energy and resources and 87 per cent believed unions should be involved in designing and implementing measures that help to improve the impact of workplaces on the environment.

Workers can contribute to the preservation of the environment through raising awareness of environmental issues and challenging their employers to take action.

Through identifying the links between good environmental practice and getting a better deal for workers, unions can put climate change on the bargaining agenda.

Union representatives are already making an environmental difference in their workplaces but much more could be done with statutory rights. Unite members at Cummins have helped to establish an environmental committee, to

reflect the eco-credentials of the employer. The company manufactures wind turbines and aims to recycle all waste produced in the manufacturing process.

At Fujitsu, Unite members take part in the company's Green Team initiative and have introduced environmental training for employees.

Unite national officer, Peter Skyte, said: "More CO2 is emitted by processes in the workplace than at home, and half of the energy used in the UK comes from workplaces. It makes perfect sense that unions should challenge employers to take action on climate change and the environment."

"Our members in IT and electronics are calling for statutory rights for union representatives to put the preservation of the environment on the bargaining table."

"We believe workers can contribute to the preservation of the environment. Innovative and dynamic changes are already taking place in workplaces because union members are getting involved."

"The outlook is very clear. No employer will make money from a dead planet and no worker will gain from being part of a poisoned population."

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## Features

# Truth Commission reveals history of Korean War US-south Korea massacres

by Eric Struch

**MOST HISTORY textbooks in the United States say that the Korean War started with a 25<sup>th</sup> June 1950 invasion from the communist north and that the freedom-loving US came to the aid of the besieged democratic Republic of Korea in the south. The reality was very different.**

Not only did the south Korean dictatorial, fascist-like regime of US puppet Syngman Rhee make the first move, it had prepared for it for more than a year in advance. These preparations included using paramilitary fascist organisations and the regular army for cross-border raids on northern villages to test the defences of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

Domestically, the preparation meant carrying out large-scale executions of suspected communists, leftists and anyone who opposed the neo-colonial rule of the US in the south. The majority of these massacres took place throughout the summer of 1950, but thousands of civilians were executed by south Korean military and police throughout the war.

The US military — which had operational command of the south Korean army — not only was aware of the massacres but assisted and even directed many of the executions.

That these massacres had occurred was common knowledge among people both north and south. Due to the repressive anti-communist National Security Law, which threatened penalties of decades in prison, no one in the south dared to speak up until recently.

A half-century of official silence finally began to end after the hard struggle of the pro-democracy movement in the 1980s created a political space. Even those who fled to the US to escape the repression couldn't speak up. They were dependent on established Korean-Americans for jobs, housing and loans, and these privileged elements often had ties to the right-wing Grand National Party or the Korean Central Intelligence Agency.

One voice through the decades spoke the truth to the world about the mass murders. The press in the DPRK constantly tried to bring these crimes to the attention of the world. Because Washington's racist anti-DPRK propaganda was all-pervasive, the truth never gained any traction in the corporate mass media around the world.

Today in south Korea, a government-funded Truth and Reconciliation Commission, headed by Ahn Byung Ook, is investigating 1,200 incidents of mass executions in addition to 215 cases in which the US military was directly involved in the executions. Of the more than 150 mass graves unearthed so far, the commission has the physical evi-

dence, documentation and eyewitnesses to officially confirm two mass executions at Ulsan and Cheongwon.

The south Korean government now acknowledges that its military, national police and fascist paramilitaries killed over 100,000 civilians at that time, when Korea's population was 20 million. Kim Dong Choon of the TRC called these government estimates of the human cost of this bloody anti-communist paroxysm "very conservative".

The numbers may be as high as 200,000 people, with some sources putting it as high as 300,000. These numbers do not even include the extra-judicial executions during the war of those south Korean puppet troops deemed to be sympathetic to the liberation forces from the DPRK.

Rightist ideologues, both in Seoul and Washington, point to alleged massacres carried out by the Korean People's Army, while denying that the actual proven murders perpetrated by the southern puppet forces even took place. In reality, according to a CIA study dated 19<sup>th</sup> July 1950, cited by Korea scholar Bruce Cumings, during the occupation of the south by the KPA, "North Korean officials ran a tight ship but without a lot of bloodshed."

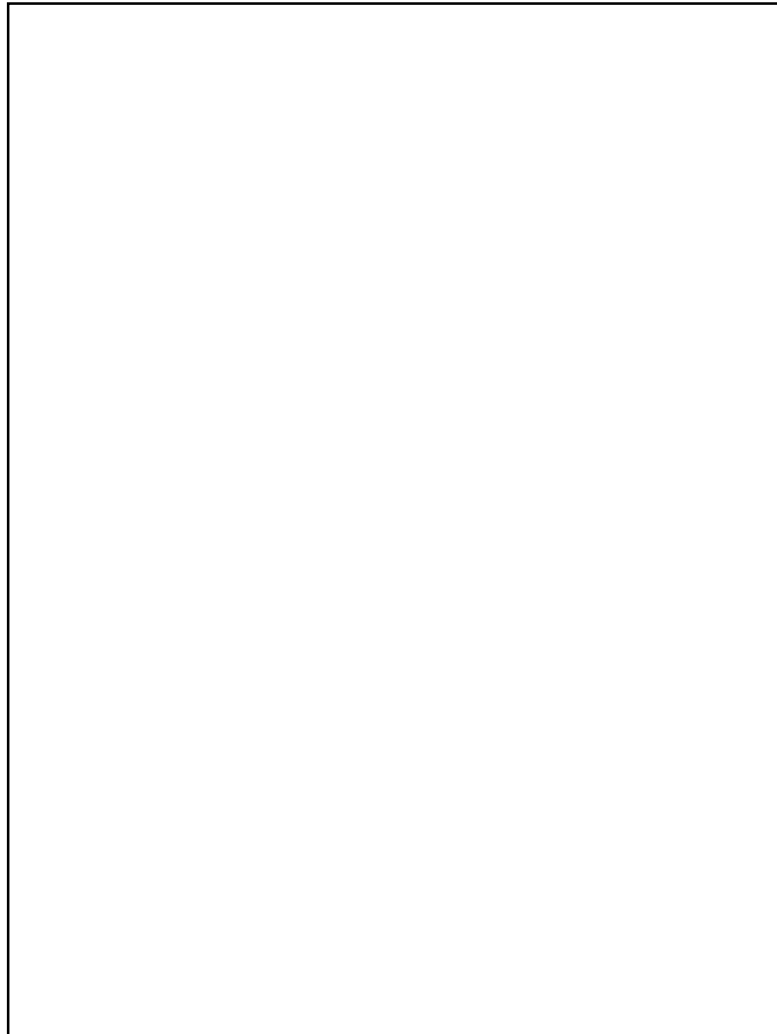
In another CIA report from 1950, a "large percentage" of trade unionists and union leaders joined the KPA only 10 days into the war. DPRK President Kim Il Sung had given a radio address calling on people in south Korea to organise themselves. People's Committees were formed and went about seizing Japanese and south Korean government property as well as that of the rich.

KPA units in the south distributed rice to the people and emptied the jails of political prisoners, who then turned on the cops and the fascist youth groups. KPA troops, in alliance with the poor peasantry, carried out democratic land reform as they swept southwards. Even in the chaos of war, the KPA maintained its discipline. Cumings says that "captured North Korean documents continued to show that high-level officials warned against executing people".

The same cannot be said of the south Korean puppet forces. Before the war even began, the south Korean government created the National Guidance League, a fascist-inspired "re-education" corps for people the Rhee dictatorship claimed were communists. By 1950, more than 300,000 people were forced to join the League.

Kim Dong Choon says the police or the military executed many of the League's forced inductees. National Police under Korean Military Advisory Group supervision executed 7,000 people in Yangwol (near Taejon) from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> July 1950.

Alan Winnington of the British *Daily Worker* in an article entitled "US Belsen in Korea" reported that 20 witnesses observed that truckloads of cops



• Above: the DPRK remembers its heroes, part of a massive monument in Pyongyang. Below: digging up the bodies at Cheongwon.

arrived on 2<sup>nd</sup> July and immediately made people dig six pits of about 200 yards each. Executions went on for three days, by both machine-gun and, when the bullets ran out, decapitation by sword. According to eyewitnesses, US officers oversaw everything while sitting in their Jeeps. The US Embassy in London then had the chutzpah to call Winnington's findings a "fabrication".

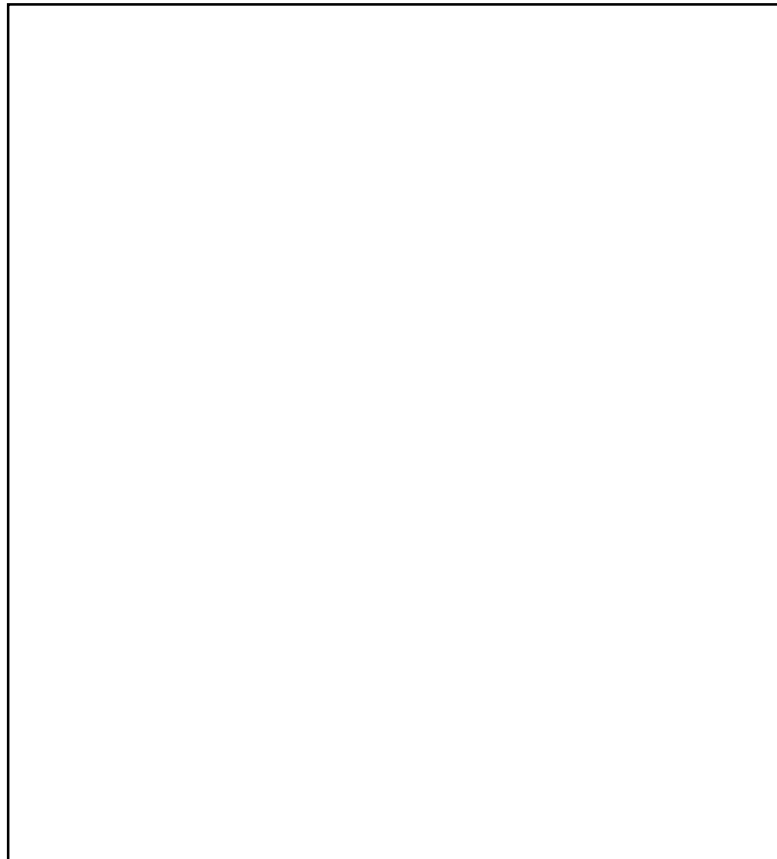
The US military, through its operational command over the south Korean army, was involved at the highest level in the executions. The *New York Times* correspondent Charles Grutzner talked about "the slaughter of

hundreds of South Korean civilians, women as well as men, by some US troops and police of the Republic."

Keyes Beech, in a 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1950 *Newark Star-Ledger* article wrote: "It is not the time to be a Korean, for the Yankees are shooting them all."

Donald Nichols, a former Air Force intelligence officer, wrote in his 1981 memoir of witnessing an "unforgettable massacre" of "approximately 1,800" at Suwon during the war.

In addition, an investigation made by south Korean MP Park Chan Hyun in 1960 during the (relatively) democratic interlude of Chang Myon's Second Repub-



lic revealed that an estimated 10,000 people were executed in Busan.

What these horrible, inhuman atrocities reveal is that the puppet south Korean dictatorship knew its power rested upon a profoundly shaky foundation. As another quite frank CIA report cited by Cumings noted, the rightist south Korean leadership "is provided by that numerically small class which virtually monopolises the native wealth and education of the country.... Since this class could not have acquired and maintained its favoured position under Japanese rule without a certain minimum of 'collaboration', it has experienced difficulty in finding acceptable candidates for political office and has been forced to support imported expatriate politicians such as Rhee Syngman and Kim Koo. These, while they have no pro-Japanese taint, are essentially demagogues bent on autocratic rule."

Rhee's venal clique knew that his planned drive north depended upon drowning the patriotic and communist elements in the south in blood. Pockets of communist guerrillas who had fought the Japanese occupation were still active in the south as late as 1950.

According to General W L Roberts, who headed the American team of military "advisers" from 1948, the south Korean puppet army killed 6,000 communist guerrillas from November 1949 to March 1950. Of the attacks on northern border villages carried out by the army and the fascist Northwest Youth paramilitaries that took place in 1949, General Roberts said that "each was in our opinion brought on by the presence of a small south Korean salient north of the (38<sup>th</sup>) parallel.... The south Koreans wish to invade the north."

Despite the staggering scale of the mass murders carried out by the Rhee puppet regime, patriotic feeling still ran so deep among the Korean people that even in the south Korean National Assembly, 48 members declared their allegiance to the DPRK at the end of July 1950.

The issue of the mass execution of civilians still divides those who are subservient to US neo-colonialism and those who want an independent Korea. Former south Korean president Roh Moo Hyun apologised in an official capacity for the 870 confirmed murders at Ulsan, calling them "illegal acts". In stark contrast, current president Lee Myung Bak, already deeply unpopular, has threatened to cut funding for the TRC.

Seven years ago the US government finally admitted part of its own guilt, that its soldiers had killed hundreds of innocent civilians in the south Korean township of Nogun-ri shortly after the start of the Korean War in 1950. President Bill Clinton himself expressed "deep regret" in a public statement on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2001.

by David Ashton

**MY FIRST** recollections of my mother were on the night of a late bombing raid during the 1939-45 war. We, my sister Pauline and myself, had gone into our Anderson Bomb Shelter, at the back of our Liverpool home. I was hugging my Golliwog, called Golly who got me through the worst of the blitz krieg, with his love for me, lying on my bunk bed.

The adults: Mother, (our Dad was on fire watch duty in Liverpool) and our neighbours called Meakin from next door and Miss Newman, were stood outside looking up at the sky, watching the searchlights pinpointing the German bombers. The Polish Air force Hurricane Squadron based at Speke Airport defended Liverpool and saved us from the worst of the Nazi onslaught.

John and I suffered terribly from the war; we saw dead bodies piled up in the street. My mother put a coat in front of my eyes and for years she denied that it had happened. John told me that he'd had similar experiences. It really was the basis of John's search for peace. John, like me, was very much committed to peace because we had that trauma of war. But when the men came home there was no time to listen to our childhood traumas.

As kids we were afraid that if our houses got bombed we wouldn't be able to get out. Every 20<sup>th</sup> house was given a ladder. When I was five John and I drew pictures of us jumping out of our houses onto the ladder some of these pictures turned up just two years ago, after my Mum died.

Dialectically I wish to argue that the aftermath of war gave our generation a great deal of freedom, which may have helped to feed John Lennon's extraordinary imagination, which was growing up in progressive working class Liverpool. But when the men came back from war they were shaken up. They'd killed. They'd been brutalised. They were violent. You'd be sitting down having your dinner and all of a sudden the food would go flying across the room.

The women had to try and cope with it, and that gave us kids a lot of freedom to wander as far as we wanted without supervision. We'd go to "Speakers' Corner" at the Pier Head where a world of ideas would be pulled apart and discussed in an informed, intelligent way. Liverpool was a major port. There were people from every nationality: Ulster's Orangemen, Jews, Muslims, Arabs, Africans – every race and creed on earth. I don't think we'd be more than five or six. Such was the wonder world of the Woolton, Liverpool of our childhood. It was there we learnt about "Dialectical Materialism as the Ultimate Foundation of Working-Class Analysis", and in identifying solutions to complexities like the "Current Food, & Political/Economic Problems of today"!

In the case of John Lennon that wonder was overshadowed by tragedies that marred his childhood and scarred the rest of his life. John had a very troubled childhood. He had experienced

# My childhood mate John Lennon

the war. He had lost his mother when his Aunt Mimi took him away from her; then he lost her again when she was knocked down and killed by a drunken policeman after John had only just got to know his mother again. When she died John talked to me.

Mimi more or less kidnapped John with the help of Liverpool Corporation Social Department because John's mum, Julia, was, as they called it in those days, "living in sin". She had a child out of wedlock with a lovely man who she had taken up with since her own man, a seaman, had not returned after the war. Aunt Mimi denied that John had got a mother or sisters. But John had a very progressive uncle who told John where his mother was. It wasn't far from where John was living. So we got on our bikes and went to see her. I would have been seven or eight. That was the first time John seen her for years.

It was of course very emotional. Julia, John's mum was very tactile and kissed us both and we talked and talked. She was always very kind to me, as she was to all of John's friends. She was herself a loving, kind, progressive person and a great musician, and we loved her!

As John says in his great *Ballad to the Working Class Hero*:

**"As soon as you're born  
they make you feel small  
By giving you no time  
instead of it all**

**Till the pain is so big you  
feel nothing at all  
A working class hero is**

**something to be  
A working class hero is  
something to be**

**They hurt you at home  
and they hit you at school**

**They hate you if you're  
clever and they despise a fool**

**Till you're so fucking  
crazy you can't follow their  
rules**

**A working class hero is  
something to be**

**A working class hero is  
something to be"**

Many of John's poems and lyrics use his dialectical experiences of childhood in a progressive way. I guess there are very few who would understand the origins of these references in his or the other Beatles songs, but those of us close to John in childhood do in fact understand. The problem in many ways being that the bourgeois scriptwriters took over the script, after the Beatles became famous. I would argue that fame is a curse, which very few working people can cope with in our bourgeois democrat society.

So those of us who were close to John and still talk a lot to one another even today, can hardly recognise the image portrayed of our own childhood. A few years ago, at the urging of John's childhood friends, I wrote, *The Vanished World of a Woolton Childhood with John Lennon*, which we put on "Age Concern UK" and "Beatles Ireland" websites. But it seemed only to encourage the fable making

scriptwriters to rewrite our childhood to their own image. So I then after lots of discussion, I helped John's sister, Julia Baird, to write *Imagine This Growing up with my brother John Lennon* published by Hodder in 2007 and also I helped Steve Turner write *The Gospel According to The Beatles* published by WJK in 2006.

But it has taken me a long time to make sense of my friend John's life and death. I have rarely talked about John Lennon except for a July 2007 BBC Radio 4 interview, when I made a contribution to a documentary about the forthcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day the Beatles' two main songwriters, John and Paul, met at St Peter's Church Garden Fete in Woolton. I have also given an interview to BBC Radio Merseyside.

However I am very very proud of the fact that there is a statue unveiled by Fidel Castro, of my childhood mate John Lennon in Cuba! I will never be able to afford to go to Cuba and see the statue though I would truly love to see it! But it seems that the Cuban people have truly understood that the artist who was John Lennon had a universal message and a way of presenting what had baffled those of us who want to see a more humane democratic world. John it seems knew how to say these things in many of his lyrics and drawings. As kids we drew together I am often amazed how similar my own drawings even today are to John's, but then childhood experiences last long into adulthood. But let me finish with another verse of John's *Hymn to Working Class Emancipation*:

**When they've tortured  
and scared you for twenty odd  
years**

**Then they expect you to  
pick a career**

**When you can't really  
function you're so full of fear**

**A working class hero is  
something to be**

**A working class hero is  
something to be.**

**Keep you doped with religion  
and sex and TV**

**And you think you're so  
clever and class less and free**

**But you're still fucking  
peasants as far as I can see**

**A working class hero is  
something to be**

**A working class hero is  
something to be**

**There's room at the top  
they are telling you still**

**But first you must learn  
how to smile as you kill**

**If you want to be like the  
folks on the hill**

**A working class hero is  
something to be**

**A working class hero is  
something to be.**

David Ashton ©

• Top: Lennon gives a V for peace in front of the Statue of Liberty. no doubt the US authorities never forgave him.  
Left: one of David Ashton's childhood drawings showing the Blitz.

Home News

LETTERS

Dear Comrades

I should like briefly to cover three contemporary issues: the recent building of a statue of John Lennon in Havana, Cuba, the proposal of Cuba to set up a New World Order in information technology and the broadcast media, and the crucial need for communist unity in Britain and worldwide.

On the first issue I agree with Terry Liddle and Dave Danton (New Worker 4th July 2008); Lennon was a progressive icon and his music went way beyond the narrow confines of bourgeois ideology. The Cuban authorities in putting up a statue in Lennon's memory are honouring this emblem of Liverpool and Britain. Yes, he was an eccentric, but his "love-in" with Yoko Ono in 1969 was a powerful stand against war and imperialism.

I own a single 45rpm record of Imagine and guess what is on the "B" side? Answer: Working Class Hero. Enough said.

Edwin Bentley (New Worker 27th June 2008) would have been better advised having a go at the mind-numbing, worthless celebrity crap that is rammed down our throats all the

time, in the imperialist media under the guise of "entertainment".

On the second issue, I was pleased to read in our paper on 4th July that Cuba is due to set up a non-aligned, anti-imperialist news agency and television channel, in order to counter the lies, distortions and propaganda of the worldwide imperialist media, led by the United States of America.

I do not know about the logistics of setting up such an alternative news media but communist and workers' parties should globally welcome such a bold initiative.

I fondly remember Radio Moscow's English Service on short wave radio. During the 1983-84 heroic British miners' struggle, for example, Radio Moscow's English Service, which was broadcast every night between 8pm and 9pm, gave full support to the miners.

At the same time the imperialist BBC and the rest of the capitalist media supported the police and the state in trying to undermine the miners' struggle for jobs and pits.

On the third issue, worldwide communist and working class unity is imperative. Every week the New Worker valiantly reports and supports anti-

imperialists and communist struggles across the globe. However in Britain the communist movement is very weak and split into several competing groups.

Unfortunately the fraudulent "Labour Party", an arm of the state apparatus and the bourgeoisie, still holds sway within the labour and working class movement.

We also have the problem of several revisionist and Trotskyite groups (for example the Communist Party of Britain and the Socialist Workers' Party) poisoning the minds of working class people by attacking socialist and non-aligned countries such as North Korea and Zimbabwe.

These left social democratic groups are effectively in the camp of imperialism because of their refusal to educate the working class in the communist theory and practice of dialectical and historical materialism.

The revisionists and Trotskyites, whilst paying lip service to Marx, Engels and Lenin, abhor the communist teachings contained in their scientific works. These fake socialists and pretend communists detest Stalin and, by implication, the wonderful achievements of the Soviet Union between 1917 and 1953.

These agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement reject the key organising principles of communists such as the dictatorship of the proletariat and democratic centralism.

Communist and working class unity is crucial to our future success in overthrowing the rotten, decadent, parasitical and exploitative imperialist system, and in establishing working class state power in Britain.

My view is that there is an urgent need in 2008-2009 to begin the process of organising a Communist Unity Convention. We could do well by learning from our own communist history: the Communist Party of Great Britain was founded in 1920 by the bringing together of several socialist and working class organisations.

The CPGB with its revolutionary programme, For a Soviet Britain, was doing well and only began to decline after 1951 when it

introduced the revisionist British Road to Socialism. The BRS went into utopian dream mode when it stated that it was possible, within a bourgeois capitalist state, to elect a left labour government committed to socialist ownership and working class power.

I look forward to the beginnings of a serious debate in the letters page of our paper about how we might create a mass, popular, strong and united communist party in Britain.

Yours fraternally, Mervyn Drage, Manchester.

Dear Comrades

I wish to express my support for the position of Edwin Bentley and my disagreement with Terry Liddle and Dave Danton.

John Lennon was not the first and certainly not the last wealthy celebrity to espouse a few leftist ideas and phrases and superficially support progressive ideas.

Of course Lennon and the Beatles flirted with the Left and I believe at different times they were linked with the revisionist Young Communist League (well, interviewed by Challenge) and the Trotskyite Workers' Revolutionary Party.

Lennon and the Beatles actually produced an anti-communist song that included the line: "But if you go carrying pictures of Chairman Mao, you ain't gonna make it with anyone anyhow".

The Beatles were associated with pacifism but pacifism can be very reactionary as it condemns all violence, including that of the exploited against the exploiter and the use of revolutionary violence against counter-revolutionary forces.

The Beatles and other pop music just promoted individualism and hedonism amongst young people. Generally pop music promoted non-class ideas as it supposedly could be enjoyed by both working class youth and the idle bourgeois youth.

The Beatles and most other pop musicians did not promote the ideas of class struggle in their music.

As the great leader comrade Kim Il Sung said, the culture of imperialism is

like a mental narcotic that corrupts the sound consciousness of young people.

Yours fraternally, Dermot Hudson South London

Dear Comrades

In September and October 1965 the military dictator Suharto in Indonesia murdered over one million communists and arrested and tortured a further million after he had overthrown the popular left-wing government of Sukarno. He was supported and encouraged in his actions by the British and American imperialist powers.

I want the British parliament now to enquire into these killings and the role of our government in this. Whether communist or not, the victims were all human beings and this massacre must not be forgotten or ignored.

There must be an apology from all those who are culpable and compensation for the relatives and survivors.

Yours fraternally, Mukhtar Rana, Chairman of the Peace and Human Rights Trust, South London.

Diary

WEDNESDAY 16 July Norwich STW AGM plus Iraq: what is the future?

Queen Charlotte pub, 286 Dereham Road, Norwich

FRIDAY 18 July - 20 July. Tolpuddle Martyrs' Festival, Tolpuddle, Dorset. www.tuc.org.uk/tolpuddle

SATURDAY 19 July Justice for Iraq. Conference, 11am-5pm, United Reform Church, Buck St, Camden, London NW1 8NJ. £5/£7. Iraq Occupation Focus.

SATURDAY 26 July Celebrate the Korean people's victory in the Fatherland Liberation War. Meeting & BBQ. 3pm, Saklatvala Hall, Dominion Rd, Southall, London UB2 5AA. Friends of Korea.

WEDNESDAY 6 August Hiroshima Day. 6.30pm, Peace Picnic, on the lawn behind Charlton Hse, London SE7 8RE. Bring food to share.

FROM THE NEW COMMUNIST PARTY

New technology and the need for socialism

£2 plus 50p P&P.

The case for communism £2 plus 50p P&P.

On Stalin £2 plus 50p P&P. (New Worker reprint).

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)

New Worker Supporters' Groups...

New Worker supporters groups exist to support the weekly newspaper of the New Communist Party. Individual membership is £5.00 ( 8 Euros or \$10) for all or part of the calendar year and every member will receive a New Worker Supporters Group (NWSG) card and a copies of the Internal Bulletin for the year.

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Special Appeal

THE NEW COMMUNIST Party Central Committee has decided to launch a special appeal for extra funds for the New Worker.

The committee set the target figure at a modest £6,000 because that is the shortfall from last year's NCP 30th anniversary appeal and because we hope to raise the money quickly to resolve cash-flow problems that have dogged us since the beginning of this year.

Most of these problems are arising from increases in the costs of producing the paper, increased postage costs, very high rates for the Party Centre building and banking charges.

A quick, substantial injection of cash will resolve several problems that are now a drain on our day-to-day running costs and allow us to look to the future, plan for the replacement of ageing machinery and technology - and ageing staff and volunteers, without whom the paper could not appear.

We call on all readers and supporters to contribute whatever they can. NCP cells and New Worker Supporters' Groups are asked to be sure to take a collection for the paper at every event and meeting they can and to plan fund-raising schemes and events. Please share any good ideas with us.

Please send whatever you can raise to the New Worker Special Appeal at PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ.

New Communist Party Celebration to mark the founding of the Party 7pm, Saturday 12 July, Party Centre, bar & buffet, £5

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

BOOST OUR FUND make your commitment to sustaining the New Worker in the struggle for peace and socialism COMPLETE THE BANKER'S FORM BELOW The Manager..... Banks address..... Please pay to the New Worker account No. 50492464, 08-90-34, Co-operative Bank plc, 17 High St, Kingston-upon-Thames, KT1 1LP, the sum of £.....(in words) each month starting on..... Account No..... Signature..... RETURN THIS FORM TO: NWFund, PO Box 73 London SW11 2PQ.

JOIN US For peace! For justice! For socialism! I would like to join the New Communist Party I would like more information about the NCP Name..... Address..... postcode..... SEND TO: NCP, PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ.

# New US naval threat

**CUBAN leader Fidel Castro, the presidents of Venezuela and Bolivia, Hugo Chavez and Evo Morales, and the Brazilian Defence Ministry all warned some time ago of the threat posed to Latin America and the Caribbean by the rather arbitrary resurrection of the United States Navy's Fourth Fleet.**

In a move that some have called a "return to gunboat diplomacy," US warships sailed on 1st July for the southern hemisphere, despite there being no armed conflicts currently underway in Latin America. Nor does the region

pose a threat to its North American neighbours.

The US Navy Fourth Fleet was originally created in 1943 during the Second World War to confront the threat of German submarines in the region, and was disbanded in 1950.

Washington puts its 2008 re-emergence down to the vague pretexts of strengthening the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism, but others view the move as a blatant reflection of the United States' interventionist plans towards Latin America since its plans for a pan-American Free Trade Area under the

FTAA were thwarted. The resurrection of the Fourth Fleet looks suspiciously like an imperialist show of force directed at the populist governments that have recently sprung up in several Latin American nations.

Top of the list is the Venezuelan government, whose leader Hugo Chavez is a something of a thorn in Washington's side.

The White House is known for taking advantage of sticky situations in other countries, and the 1st March incident between Colombia and Ecuador was no excep-

Brazil's growing influence.

The US is also famous for liking to control energy sources, and Latin America's most important oil and gas deposits lie in Venezuela, although Brazil has also just announced the discovery of oil deposits in its Atlantic waters.

For the current US administration this is an adverse situation, which is only made worse by the insecure global economic outlook and soaring world fuel prices. This may well be the motivation behind the message of intimidation Washington wants to send to the progressive movements south of the Rio Bravo by deploying the Fourth Fleet.

US sailors may do the guise of innocent missionaries and hand out trinkets to the needy, but the warships of the US Navy's Fourth Fleet should get a frosty reception at Latin America's ports.

*Radio Havana Cuba*

## Utah Phillips 1935-2008

### Working class singer and labour activist



by Dustin Langley

**BRUCE "Utah" Duncan Phillips, a labour organiser, Grammy-nominated folk singer and storyteller, died of heart failure in his Nevada City, California home on 23<sup>rd</sup> May.**

Phillips first rose to prominence with the album *Good Though!* which included the single *Moose Turd Pie*, a humorous "tall tale" about serving moose faeces to fellow workers when Utah worked as a cook on a railroad crew.

His career spanned four decades, with recent work including a collaboration with Ani DiFranco on the 1999 album *Fellow Workers*, a Grammy nominee for best contemporary folk album. Leaving behind a rich working-class musical tradition, his songs have also been recorded by Emmylou Harris and Tom Waits.

The son of labour activists, Phillips was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1935. He served in the Army during the Korean War, an event that he later said was a turning point in his life. He said, "Being a soldier in Korea taught me that I will never again do what I'm told. I almost lost my moral compass. I had to fight like hell to get it back."

After witnessing the horrors of war, he returned to the US, where he rode the rails, eventually finding his way to

Salt Lake City, Utah. He wound up at the Joe Hill House, a homeless shelter operated by Ammon Hennacy, an anarchist and member of the Catholic Worker movement. Hennacy helped provide him with a political framework that later shaped his music and storytelling.

Phillips took a job in the 1960's as an archivist, where he learned the methods of historical research, a skill that he would later apply to his songwriting. Brad Wrenn, who co-produced *The Ballad of Joe Hill* said of Phillips' music, "He's such an incredible source of knowledge that doesn't get catalogued in the United States, stuff that doesn't get taught in history classes—the story of the underclass."

In 1968, he ran for the US Senate on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket. Following his loss to the Republican candidate, he also lost his job with the State of Utah, in what he described as "blacklisting".

In 1973, with *Moose Turd Pie* receiving extensive airplay, Phillips began a career in music and storytelling that took him to cities throughout America, Canada, and Europe. He became a legend on the folk music circuit.

His performing partner Rosalie Sorrels said: "He was like an alchemist. He took the stories of working people and

railroad bums and he built them into work that was influenced by writers like Thomas Wolfe, but then he gave it back. He put it in language so the people whom the songs and stories were about still had them, still owned them."

A card-carrying member of the Industrial Workers of the World ("the Wobblies"), Phillips sang songs about the struggles of the working class, the homeless, and the poor.

Phillips, also a member of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, the Travelling Musician's Union-AFM Local 1000 and Veterans for Peace, never voted. His son, Duncan, said: "He said he cast a vote every day he went out in the world and did something. If you want to make change, go out and actually do it yourself. He didn't need to hand over any responsibility to politicians who aren't beholden to the working class."

For the last 21 years of his life, Phillips resided in Nevada City, where he helped start the Hospitality House, a local homeless shelter, and the Peace and Justice Centre. On 20<sup>th</sup> March 2003, he was arrested, along with his partner Joanna Robinson and 40 others, for blocking a road and unlawful assembly as a protest against the US invasion of Iraq.

*Workers World (US)*

• Part of the US Fourth Fleet.

tion, where there were indications that Bogotá's incursion into the sovereign territory of its neighbour was backed by Washington.

George W Bush's expansionist aims are suffering setbacks in the face of a new cli-

mate of change in Latin America, including a deeply revolutionary government in Bolivia, Ecuador's progressive leadership, a president about to step into office in Paraguay with social justice at the top of his agenda and

## China: breakthrough in developing Long March rocket

**CHINA has made a breakthrough in developing its next generation of space-launch vehicle, Long March V, which is scheduled for operation by 2014. Significant progress has been made on the rocket engine and the building of a production plant. The rocket's 120-tonne liquid oxygen-kerosene engine had passed initial tests and will be put into field tests by the year end, said Liang Xiaohong, vice president of the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology.**

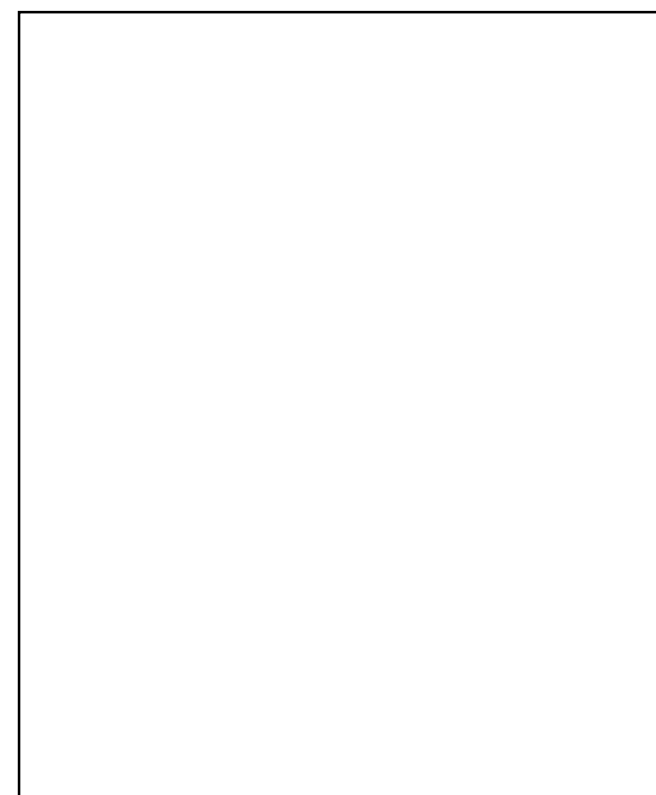
Li Hong, president of the launch vehicle academy, said the Long March V would meet the requirement of large-payload low Earth orbit (LEO) and geosynchronous transfer orbit (GEO) missions for the next two to three decades.

With four boosters, the 59.5 metre-high environmentally friendly rocket's launching weight would reach 643 tonnes. It would be able to deliver a 25-tonne payload to a LEO, compared with the present 10 tonnes, and a 14-tonne payload to a GEO, compared with 5.5 tonnes now.

The 14-tonne payload to a GEO means the rocket can carry a heavier satellite or more satellites at one time, while the 25-tonne payload to an LEO will enable it to carry the Shenzhou-series spacecraft, said Li Dong, a designer of Long March V.

The rocket is five metres wide and cannot be transported via railway or expressway to any of the nation's current launch centres. As a result, a production plant has been built in the coastal Tianjin where the rockets will be shipped by sea to a new launch facility at Wenchang in the southern province of Hainan.

The plant has a total in-



• Children are shown a model of a Long March rocket.

vestment of 4.5 billion yuan (\$657 million). The first phase of its construction will be completed at the end of next year.

The Long March rockets have carried out 107 missions since 1970. The first rocket of the Long March family was launched on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1970, sending China's first satellite Dongfanghong-1 into space.

Most recently, a Long March-3B rocket lifted a new telecommunications satellite, Zhongxing-9, into space from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in the south-western Sichuan province on 9<sup>th</sup> June.

Zhongxing-9, a satellite ordered by China Satcom from the France-based Thales Alenia Space corporation, will be used for live television

broadcasts and put into use before the Beijing Olympic Games next month.

The next-generation rocket is also expected to contribute to China's space probe.

Zhang Bainan, chief designer of Shenzhou VII, said last week that the research team that developed the spacecraft, China's third manned space launch, will start final testing after arriving at a north-western satellite launch centre in a few days.

China successfully put two manned spacecraft into orbit in 2003 and 2005. Shenzhou VII is expected to be launched in October this year.

*Xinhua news agency*



# THE NEW WORKER

International News

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## Protesters arrested at G-8 Summit

JAPAN is being accused of detaining international activists ahead of the G-8 summit, which got underway on Monday. Over the weekend, at least 20 Korean farmers were detained on the northern island of Hokkaido. Several prominent international critics of the G-8 were also blocked from entering Japan, including political scientist Susan George and Lydinyda Nacpil, the Asia-Pacific coordinator for Jubilee South.

At least four people, including a reporter with Reuters, were arrested during a heavily policed demonstration in Sapporo on Saturday. Police were seen shattering the window of a sound truck and dragging out the driver of the truck.

Leaders from Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Canada and the United States gathered today in Hokkaido, Japan for the start of the G-8 Summit. Protests have been occurring for days in the lead up to the gathering of the world's most wealthy nations.

Leaders of indigenous communities have urged rich nations to include indigenous people in discussions as they deal with climate change. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, told reporters: "We have contributed the least to climate change but we are carrying the heavy burden of solving the climate change problem, and so we would like them to ensure that we are included in the negotiations of the climate change convention, so that we can contribute more substantially in shaping solutions."

On Sunday, the South African-based Global Call to Action Against Poverty held a demonstration in Sapporo. Kumi Naidoo urged the G-8 nations to help the world's poorest people. He said that in Africa, "every single day 6,000 people die from HIV/AIDS alone, another 7,000 people die from malaria, another two or three thousand die from tuberculosis". He said that if those numbers of deaths were happening in Europe or North America, the G-8 would have found the money to address these issues "a long time ago".

Radio Havana Cuba

## Iran to hit Tel Aviv and US fleet if attacked

IRAN would strike Tel Aviv and the US fleet in the Gulf as a first response to any attack against the Islamic republic, an aide to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Tuesday.

"The Zionist regime is pressuring White House officials to prepare a military attack against Iran," Ali Shirazi, Khamenei's representative in the Revolutionary Guards navy division, said.

"If they commit such a silly move, Tel Aviv and the US fleet in the Persian Gulf will be Iran's first targets and they will be burned with Iran's crushing response," Shirazi said.

He warned that the US interests around the world would also be hit if Iran is attacked over its disputed nuclear activities.

"The first bullet fired by the United States at Iran will be followed by Iran's response of burning down its vital interests around the globe," Shirazi said.

"The Iranian nation will never accept bullying... (and) no forces in the world can confront it," he added.

Iran's English-language satellite channel, Press TV, reported earlier Tuesday that missile units of Iran's Islamic

• The Iranian Shahab 3 long distance missile.

Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) have begun military manoeuvres in the Gulf to improve combat readiness and capability.

The war games, called *Payambar-e Azam 3*, were conducted by missile units of the IRGC's naval and air forces. The war games came after IRGC Commander Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari said in late June that Tehran

would impose controls on shipping in the strategic Strait of Hormuz if it was attacked.

The United States and its allies have accused Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons under the cover of a civilian nuclear program. Iran has denied the US charges and insists that its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes only.

The Bush administration

said it focused on diplomacy to try to resolve Iran's nuclear issue, but has insisted it will take "no option off the table".

Some observers believe that it is still possible that the United States and Israel would attack Iranian targets for Tehran's suspicious nuclear programmes.

Xinhua news agency

## How many Afghans are members of the Taliban?

by Joaquín Rivery Tur

**IN A RECENT battle in the province of Badghis in Western Afghanistan Nato chiefs reported no casualties among their own forces and those of the Afghani army, in a prolonged battle that reportedly killed 32 Taliban. Meanwhile another seven Taliban were killed in a clash in Paktika, to the east, which left no Nato troops dead.**

Between US and Nato forces, there are some 70,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan, and official reports assert that combat has intensified over the past few months, with an unusually high number of deaths among rebel forces.

Which begs the question: just how long can this war go on? It started nearly seven years ago with a US assault in search of Osama Bin Laden, the notorious terrorist leader held responsible for 9/11, and also known to have been a friend and business partner of the US President George W Bush. There is even evidence that Bin Laden was once a CIA agent, but today he is a phantom propaganda figure wheeled out every time Washington needs to instil more fear in the US public.

Afghanistan has become another death-trap for the United States and its European allies, many of whom are very careful not to have their troops deployed in areas

where there is rebel activity.

The Egyptian journal *Al Ahram Weekly* says British troops losses in Afghanistan now number 100, and the weekly total of deaths among the occupying forces has now overtaken the weekly death toll in Iraq.

The Pentagon reports that during the month of May, 16 coalition soldiers died in Iraq, 14 of whom were from the United States, while in Afghanistan 18 coalition troops were killed, 13 of them from the US.

There is no sign that the war might end, and in the meantime, massacres and civilian deaths continue, and they continue to be reported as "Taliban losses".

The situation has reached such heights that the US has even dropped bombs on Pakistani territory claiming to be attacking rebel hideouts.

One Nato response came in the form of a brutal aerial attack on a Pakistani border checkpoint. Pakistan's Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani asserts that 11 Pakistani soldiers were killed in the assault, while a Muslim League representative, Amir Muqam, claims 70 died.

A UN Human Rights Council special rapporteur, Philip Alston, recently visited Afghanistan to investigate extrajudicial deaths. He revealed that three recent attacks in the south and east of the country

had targeted civilians. In another incident, US Special Forces killed two brothers, with no known connection to the Taliban, under suspicious circumstances.

The UN official signalled that these atrocities form part of a much wider problem, spanning an increase in the illegal massacre of civilians and a general lack of control in Afghanistan.

Groups of Afghani mercenaries are also being hired by

foreign agents to target civilians, but the Taliban appear to be multiplying rather than being wiped out.

Added to the fact that drug trafficking is spiralling out of control, and that the country has become the world's number one opiate manufacturer, the future for Afghanistan seven years after the US occupation began looks fairly bleak.

AIN (Cuba)

## Afghan car bomber blasts Indian embassy

by our Asia correspondent

**THE INDIAN embassy in Afghanistan was shattered when a suicide bomber rammed a car packed with explosives into the embassy gate in the capital, Kabul, on Monday. Scores were killed and over 100 injured in the blast timed to hit the morning rush-hour at 8.30 am.**

Two Indian diplomats, the defence attaché and the press counsellor, were killed along with two Indian policemen. Many of the others killed or injured had been queuing outside for Indian visas and work permits.

Hundred of policemen backed by Afghan and American occupation army troops quickly arrived on the scene to take part in the rescue operations. More than 100 people -- overwhelmingly Afghans -- were injured in the deafening blast. The victims were mostly civilians, including women and children, an Afghan official added. An Indian embassy official said: "A large part of our building has been devastated". The death toll has now risen to 41 with 141 reported wounded in the deadliest bombing in Kabul for many months.

No-one has claimed responsibility for the attack which has all the trade-marks of a Taliban bombing. But the Taliban say they had no hand in it. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahed told the media that his movement would have been proud to claim responsibility for the attack but they had not been involved.

"We wish we had carried out this attack ... since India has been the enemy of the Islamic emirate," he said. "They send secret military experts to Afghanistan and they train (the) Afghan army... had we carried out the attack, we would have claimed responsibility for it with pride since we have good reasons for it."

The Afghan government said the bombing was the "work of the enemies of Afghanistan-India friendship" and claimed it had evidence that "a particular intelligence agency" was behind it -- a veiled reference to Pakistan.

This was strenuously denied by Pakistani premier Yousaf Raza Gillani, who is in Malaysia for an Islamic summit this week.

"Why should Pakistan destabilise Afghanistan? It is in our interest, a stable Afghanistan. We want stability in the region," he said.

The Kabul bombing follows a number of deadly bomb attacks in Pakistan. Nineteen people, including eight policemen were killed in the capital, Islamabad, on Sunday by a suicide bomber and 37 were wounded in six explosions which rocked Karachi on Monday.





