

Cutlass



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DEATH PENALTY IN THE CARIBBEAN

Amnesty condemns death penalty in English-speaking Caribbean

Amnesty International is criticising English-speaking Caribbean nations for continuing to impose the death penalty.

The human rights organisation says the former British colonies should rid themselves of what it calls "this cruel legacy of their colonial past".

Amnesty says apart from having no proven deterrent effect, the death penalty carries the risk of killing innocent people.

It says many Caribbean countries' judicial systems fall short of international standards for imposing capital punishment.

The charity notes that prisoners have been executed in Trinidad and Jamaica before they had a chance to appeal the death sentence.

It also cites reports that some countries' police had beaten suspects to coerce confessions, and that many countries failed to offer adequate defence lawyers.

"Even the most ardent supporter of the death penalty should be concerned at the quality of the judicial system employed to inflict the ultimate punishment," Amnesty's Piers Bannister said.

The issue is being hotly debated in the region following last month's Privy Council ruling that mandatory death sentences are unconstitutional.

The London-based council acts as the highest court of appeals in former British colonies in the Caribbean.

The countries affected by the unanimous council ruling in March are Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Lucia, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, and Belize.

Jamaica: attorney general's brave stance against the death penalty

Amnesty International very much welcomes the recent public declaration by the Attorney General of Jamaica, A J Nicholson, that he is personally against the death penalty.

"Many political leaders in the Caribbean are privately against hanging, knowing it to be a violation of human rights and ineffective in preventing crime. The example of the Attorney General's brave personal statement that he is against capital punishment should be followed by others in government and opposition."

"DEATH ROW TWO" REPRIEVED BY PRIVY COUNCIL

The London-based Privy Council has overturned the murder convictions of two Jamaican men on the basis that a video of the scene of a 1996 robbery in which a cop was shot dead does not show either man and was not made available to the defence at their trial.

The Law Lords have remitted the case to the local court of appeal to determine whether to order a new trial of the appellants, Randal Dixon and Mark Sangster.

Dixon was found guilty of capital murder for the shooting death of Detective Acting Corporal Phillip Gordon during the robbery and sentenced to death, while Sangster, who the jury found acted as a secondary party, was convicted of non-capital murder and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Appeals by the men against their respective convictions were dismissed by the Jamaican Court of Appeal in a judgement two years ago. The robbery in which both men were implicated took place in 1996 at a Western Union branch in Spanish Town, St Catherine."

State killing in the English speaking Caribbean: a legacy of colonial times

"The forfeiture of life is too absolute, too irreversible, for one human being to inflict it on another, even when backed by legal process. And I believe that future generations, throughout the world, will come to agree."

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, upon receiving 3.2 million signatures of people from around the world seeking an end to executions

Against the international trend away from the use of the death penalty, (1) executions have increased in the English speaking Caribbean (ESC) in recent years. Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas and St. Kitts and St. Nevis and St. Vincent and the Grenadines have all carried out executions in the last seven years. Jamaica, Antigua, Grenada, St Lucia, Dominica, Belize and Barbados all currently have condemned prisoners and continue to impose sentences of death.

The ESC states inherited, at the time of independence, both the death penalty as the mandatory penalty for murder, and many features of the death penalty system that had existed in the former colonial power, the United Kingdom (UK), during the early part of the twentieth century. The UK abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes in 1965. Ironically, the UK - the former colonial power that introduced hanging to the region - is now viewed as 'neo-colonialist' by many in the region when it attempts to encourage the abolition of capital punishment.

Editorial

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Black History Month

CLS's contribution to BHM will be the showing of the film by Errol Williams 'When voices rise' an excellent film on segregation and the campaigns against in the 1950s.

CLS member, Cde Henry Gunter who resides in Birmingham has been given an award for his work in the city on behalf of the Black Community and his activities on Black History Month, this involves his work from 1949. It was the start of many activities organised by the Birmingham City Archives Central Library. A participation of all ethnic groups making this years BHM a memorable one



CLS members have been supporting; the Mayday, Palestine, United Ireland & ANTI-WAR marches.

TIM'S GONE

Revered journo Hector dies



A celebrated Antiguan journalist has died of heart failure in his homeland.

Tim Hector, the intellectual editor of the hard-hitting weekly Outlet newspaper who was also an Antiguan opposition political activist, died last Tuesday morning at the Holberton Hospital in St John's, family members and media reports confirmed.

He was 59 and would have celebrated his 60th birthday on Sunday. Hector had travelled to Cuba recently for a second time to receive treatment for a heart operation he underwent in February. He returned to Antigua on October 31.

His family was at his bedside at the time of his death.

Hector was a member of the Sixties generation of Caribbean radicals, who came back to the region to confront what they saw as a corrupt, earlier post-colonial order.

Prime Minister Lester Bird described his passing as a sad moment for not only Antigua but the Caribbean, while Baldwin Spencer, the opposition leader, said the country had lost one of its "greatest sons".

"We are going to miss an independent voice which tried to bring some degree of sanity to all the tantrums that go on in this country," Bird said.

Hector studied in Canada as a contemporary and colleague of the late Dominican prime minister, Rosie Douglas, who led a black power student movement at Sir George Williams University and an angry riot that received worldwide attention.

Like the network of young blackpower/left-wing intellectuals across the Caribbean, Hector delved into politics on his return to Antigua.

Initially close to the now Progressive Labour Movement, a 1968 split-off from the late VC Bird's Antigua Trades and Labour Union and the only political party to have successfully challenged - between 1971 and 1976 - Bird's Antigua Labour Party's hold on the government.

But Hector soon drifted from the PLM and formed the Antigua/Caribbean Liberation Movement (ACLM), first as a

radical pressure group, and later as a political party. He recruited bright, young people to the organisation, and developed relationships with similar organisations in the region and with Cuba and Libya.

At the same time Hector used Outlet, and his own column, Fan the Flame, to highlight corruption in Antigua and to critique the political system and played a major role in the mid-Seventies of focusing international attention on a company called Space Research Corporation that was shipping arms from St John's, Newfoundland in Canada to apartheid South Africa via Antigua. Some of the principals in SRC, who had developed big guns with long ranges, were later implicated in a programme to build a massive long-range gun for Iraq.

In later years, Hector moved towards the traditional centre of Antiguan politics and joined current Opposition leader, Baldwin Spencer, in 1992 in forming the United Progressive Party after the failure of a string of political parties - with many of the same personalities - through the Eighties.

Spencer said Hector "made a contribution to politics and the social transformation" of Antigua and the Caribbean. "Although controversial, he did make a contribution to the way this country should go".

But even as he was active in politics, Hector became a cricket administrator in Antigua and the Leeward Islands and served on the West Indies Cricket Board, always pushing for radical reforms.

An eloquent writer and commentator on the game, Hector, for instance, pushed hard to bring the Leeward and Windward Islands in the mainstream of West Indies cricket. He demanded that the authorities pay attention to the talent of a young Viv Richards and Andy Roberts and while on the WICB lobbied hard for Clive Lloyd's captaincy of the regional team.

Trish Lucia
CARIBBEAN TIMES ARTICLE
22 November 2002-11-22

Watson: no big bucks for foreign nurses -

Sunday 24, November-2002
NON-BARBADIAN nurses likely to take up staff posts here next year are not to be paid at a higher salary scale than obtains for locals. Hospital director Andrew Watson made this clear in an interview with the SUNDAY SUN.

Contrary to union concerns about overseas nurses working for big bucks here, he said it would be illegal to bring foreign nurses on a higher salary scale. In addition to this, the nurses would be responsible for their own housing, and Government would not be providing any assistance to them.

JAMAICA

PJ promises to heal political divisions

KINGSTON, Jamaica - P.J. Patterson was sworn in for a third straight term as Jamaica's prime minister, pledging to boost the Caribbean island's struggling economy, fight drug trafficking and heal political divisions.

Before a crowd of about 2,500 invited guests, Patterson became the first prime minister to swear allegiance to the Jamaican people and the constitution, instead of the queen of England.

In August, Patterson helped push through legislation changing the oath of allegiance taken by public officials in the former British colony. Jamaica is still part of the British Commonwealth.

Patterson, whose People's National Party won 34 of 60 parliamentary seats last week, pledged to work with opposition lawmakers in addressing problems.

"With unity, no problem is unsolvable," he said.

Jagan's son knocks 'poor' Panday

GEORGETOWN, Guyana: Cheddi Jagan Jr, son of the late President of Guyana Dr Cheddi Jagan says the results of the October 7 general elections in Trinidad and Tobago meant the end of the line for opposition political leader Basdeo Panday.

Jagan, known as "Joey", writing in a letter published in Stabroek News in Guyana, said the results were as he had predicted in a recent television interview in Guyana, and he foresaw "no resurrection of Panday's political fortunes."

He called for Panday, "the veteran politician, to step down as leader of the United National Congress and let someone more capable have a chance."

He said Panday was once a close collaborator of leftist causes in the Caribbean but after coming to power he "like many other communists chose to pretend that the free enterprise system was the path to follow."

He said that Prime Minister Patrick Manning won the elections because "he presented a vision of stability and reliability to the electorate thus receiving crucial cross-over votes from Panday's party."

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic -

The Dominican government is appointing a commission to decide whether Spanish researchers should be allowed to examine remains reputed to be those of Christopher Columbus in the Caribbean country.

The commission will decide sometime this week if two Spanish researchers should be allowed to inspect the remains at a mausoleum in Santo Domingo, Culture Secretary Tony Rafal said

Anger lingers over Barbados racism meeting

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados: Controversy still surrounds the expulsion of non-Africans from an international anti-racism conference more than a week ago on this east Caribbean island.

Britain's representative to Barbados along with white Barbadian businessmen criticized the delegates' decision to expel all non-Africans from the gathering so they could meet "as a family" to discuss slavery and discrimination against blacks.

"It is an affront to fundamental human dignity," John White, Britain's high commissioner, told Barbados' Advocate newspaper, which had sent a white reporter to cover the meeting.

"It is racially divisive," added the diplomat. "It is as though we have gone backwards instead of forwards." After the vote, delegates, who had met to discuss the effects of the slave trade on their ancestors and descendants and to devise strategies to sue for reparations, urged non-Africans to form "ally groups" to work in their own communities to wipe out racism.

But several delegations, among them Cuba, Colombia, Russia, and parts of the South African and Zimbabwean teams, abandoned the six-day conference, saying they were uncomfortable with the expulsion.

Manning's challenge

PORT OF SPAIN: - As he took the oath of office on recently to become the country's seventh prime minister since independence in 1962, Patrick Manning knows all too well that he faces many hurdles in keeping the population of this oil rich south Caribbean state contented.

Race relations, the need for electoral reform, and budget deficits for the last three fiscal years, are among the immediate problems he faces, even though the new Trinidad and Tobago Government may be heartened by speculation of a coming economic boom thanks to new oil and natural gas reserves.

With unpaid bills totalling an estimated \$166.6 million, Manning will have to present a budget that has enough revenues to cover the debt and will pump even more into the Oil and Gas Revenue Stabilization Fund to buffer any future gas price volatility, says economist and University of the West Indies lecturer, Dhanayshar Mahabir.

To accomplish that, he adds, the new administration risks cutting back significantly on many of the promises it made on the campaign trail, especially those that involve "excessive" spending on public works and social services.

One of the promises of Manning's Peoples National Movement (PNM) was to increase the minimum wage from 1.15 dollars to 1.65 dollars an hour, a pledge that was severely criticised by the private sector.

Officials begin talks on FTAA impact on small Caribbean economies

NASSAU, Bahamas - Officials from several Caribbean countries and Florida met Monday to begin discussions on how the Free Trade Area of the Americas proposal will affect workers and economies in the region. The Free Trade Area of the Americas is scheduled to go online in 2005, and will bring 34 democratic countries of 800 million people into a single US\$9 trillion trade block in the Western Hemisphere. Bahamian trade unions said Sunday they were concerned the new treaty would offer little protection to workers and provide few if any policies for settling international disputes or protecting the environment.

"What is alarming is the complete lack of measures designed to protect the environment and labor rights," said Obie Ferguson, president of the Bahamas' umbrella Trade Union Congress.

Cuba's Tobacco Region Struggling

SAN LUIS, Cuba - The island's western tobacco-growing region is struggling to recover after two recent hurricanes flattened many buildings used to cure tobacco for Cuba's world-famous cigars before the start of the annual growing season.

Hurricanes Isidore and Lili "wiped us out," septuagenarian tobacco worker Agustin Carpio said this week in this rural community in the hard-hit western province of Pinar del Rio, about 100 miles west of Havana.

Women artists breaking new ground in Cuba

HAVANA (IPS) - Women occupy a growing space in the world of visual arts in Cuba in what has begun to be recognized as the feminine discourse within the arts.

The existence of a gender identity in the creative arena was demonstrated recently in Havana with two exhibitions by young women painters, Aimee Garcia and Yami Martinez

Caribbean leaders discuss bleeding air

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent: Governments in the Caribbean are moving swiftly to save the regional airline industry - and the pricing and scheduling of all regional air carriers may soon be regulated.

Governments concerned with the continued precarious financial status of LIAT, and the airline price war now going on convened an urgent meeting to discuss the situation in St. Vincent. According to Prime Minister Owen Arthur, who led a Barbados delegation to the meeting in Kingston, St. Vincent, a committee will be set up to look at the issue of regulation.

LIAT must raise EC\$11 million (BDS\$8 million) by November 15 to stay airborne and Caribbean governments have agreed to guarantee the amount.

Barbados would take up 22 per cent of that guarantee through a letter of comfort.

Labour, Race and Empire

Mary Davis, Professor of Labour History at London Metropolitan University discussed the British TUC's long history of containing and controlling radical and anti-imperialist movements in the ex-British colonies at the CLS October General Meeting.



In the 19th century British Imperialism was the most rampant of its day, especially during the scramble to divide the world between the European powers from the 1880s to the First World War. It is shocking to note that the whole process of annexation of massive amounts of territory, development of colonies and subject people passed the trade union and labour movement and Labour Party by until 1918. The Social Democratic Federation and Independent Labour Party had no policies and made almost no comment on it. There was complicit acceptance of it, the ideology being completely internalised. The Fabian Society was utterly pro-empire. All debate at the time throughout British society was racialised, with the deliberate dissemination of racist and imperial ideas to youth through schools and popular culture. Stereotypes about Black people were accepted as fact with the development of scientific theories of white racial superiority and eugenics based on imperial notions.

Concern about the lack of fitness of enough young working class men to fight in the imperial wars, particularly the Boer war, led to eugenic ideas about improving social conditions of the white poor and encouraging them to breed. The rich had discovered birth control, but in any case could not produce enough offspring. The profits of empire were to be ploughed back into social reform for the workers, so that even the most radical perceived empire as a bene-

fit. The Marxist Social Democratic Federation which later became the Communist Party took an overtly racist line, sarcastically deriding the notion that Black people settling in Britain could be seen as acceptable. The many Black troops that had fought in Europe during the First World War and were still there at its close were seen as a terrible threat. This was the foundation for later developments. The ruling class successfully convinced the working class that empire was in their interest leaving virtually no criticism.

From 1918 to 1935 there was an increasing interest in colonial politics. National Liberation Movements developed in all the colonies and the Labour Party became interested because of the paranoid fear of communism. The Communist International of 1919 had taken a very strong position on imperialism and was actively engaged in the anti-imperialist struggle. The Second Comintern called for a war against the British Empire by all people subject to colonial rule. Leaders of National Liberation Movements such as George Padmore were invited to Moscow. The British Labour Party was deeply concerned about these developments, seeing the League Against Imperialism as a Communist front. The Labour Party Manifesto of 1918 (written by Sidney Webb) argued that Britain had to take responsibility for all "non-adult races". There were a series of policy documents in this vein up to 1933, by which time the Labour Party realised that the anti-colonial struggles were not going to go away and that it would be necessary to influence them in a non-Communist direction. The colonial territories were divided into three areas: 1. The Caribbean, seen as being inhabited by peoples of moderate intelligence who could be influenced; 2. Africa, which, as today was seen as primitive and a hopeless case and 3. The East which was already too affected by Communist influence, especially India. The decision was reached to target the Caribbean, where it was considered there would be the best opportunity for independent government but with regime not hostile to the "mother country".

Between 1935 and 45 there was the beginnings of interest by the leadership of the TUC in the Caribbean, although not from individual trade unions. Stimulated by the labour disturbances of this time the TUC

formed the Colonial Advisory Committee, covering all the colonies except India (which was assigned to the International Department). However, they had no idea what to do and in their naivete, contacted the only Black organisation in Britain that they knew of, the International Africa Service Bureau of Padmore, Kenyatta and others. The Labour Party immediately warned them off this far too radical connection. The TUC began to acquire greater expertise as a result of Caribbean disturbances and the militancy of the labour movement there, especially in Trinidad. The Moine Commission was set up, of which the then General Secretary of the TUC Walter Citrine was a member, to make investigations. The TUC's view was that Labour Advisors should be sent to the Caribbean to advise the TU movement there on organising on the British model.

The TUC library holds a vast archive on the developments during this period, put together by Marjorie Nicholson who serviced the Commission. It reads like a Colonial Office archive, showing clearly the roots of the complicity between the TUC and the Labour Party, which won the General Election of 1945. They were partially successful in their efforts to discourage pro-Communist movements and ensure "safe" trade unionism. The Labour Government funded trade union education and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) which had recently been set up in opposition to the World Federation of Trade Unions (seen as too pro-Communist), played a similar role. This was to ensure that at independence governments would be installed that would be opposed to Communism. All trade unions in the colonies were legalised before independence, in part to try to forestall it.

Colonial Labour Advisors were sent out, some paid for by the Labour government and some by the TUC. The charge against the TU leaders in Africa and the Caribbean was that they were far too political. The Advisors attempted to divert the militancy of the movement, providing education, handbooks and guides promoting TUs as organisations set up to avoid strikes, encourage hard work for the employers and develop understanding between workers and employers.

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In 1950 the Colonial Office, still under a Labour government, issued its own memo assessing the work of the TUC in the colonies as being very beneficial to its aims of guiding colonial territories towards "responsible government". The trades unions in the colonies moving towards independence were seen as central to providing a balance that would stop people joining more radical organisations.



Public Workers strike 1938

With the election of the Tory government in 1951 the TUC's influence in "training the colonial mind" did not decline. Its role was to influence individual trade unions as "examples" to others, which had the effect of dividing the unity of the trade union movements. The Advisors also acted as very effective spies to send back information on radical movements and individuals. It also monitored the International Department of the Communist Party of Great Britain. Jack Woddis, the CPGB International Secretary, produced a book called "The Mask is Off", exposing TUC policy in the colonies and ex-colonies.

Trade Unionists were brought to Britain to be offered education and Ruskin College, Oxford played an important role in attempting to overwhelm them with the glories of such topics as the British Constitution. More radical trade unionists, once identified, were swiftly sent home. It gradually came to be realised that it was better to continue the policy of education in the colonies rather than in Britain as they would experience racism, which would bias them against Britain, they could meet Communists and they might come to be out of sorts with their own people. The TUC produced large amounts of material for education, as an arm of the Colonial Office. At one point the government queried the advisability of including early British trade union history of such movements as the Tolpuddle Martyrs and the Chartists as being

too dangerously radical and revolutionary and not a "wholesome influence". History was sanitised.

The TUC jealously guarded its expertise and role in relation to the colonial trade unions right through the 1950s and 60s. It forbade British trade unions from affiliating to the Movement for Colonial Freedom, which supported radical and anti-colonial movements such as the PPP in Guyana, and whose line deeply clashed with TUC policy. Racialised perceptions permeated the whole of the Labour Party and TUC throughout the period, backing apartheid in South Africa and many other reactionary and oppressive regimes. The TUC's policies adapted and changed over the years, but up to today it still plays a very similar role, only recognising Cuba three years ago. It has always been individual unions that have given support to radical movements with pressure from below, sometimes forcing the TUC into progressive positions.

Mary Davis is the author of several pamphlets and books, including "Women and Class, Comrade or Brother - History of the British Labour Movement" and "Sylvia Pankhurst - a Life in Radical Politics". She is Editor of and contributor to Marxism and Struggle and Editor of Communist Review.

UPDATE ON GRENADA

On a recent visit to Grenada, CLS Executive member Jean Tate had a tour of the almost-completed new hospital building at the General Hospital, St George's. This beautiful and massive yellow-ochre painted building imposes itself on the viewer from almost every direction around the capital as it sweeps down the cliffs from the old hospital, almost to the sea. Built by Grenadian construction companies under the direction of Cuban architects and planners, it is quite simply breath taking. All five floors have wards with veranda views over the lagoon.

There are specialist facilities for gynaecology, urology, paediatrics and surgery, together with extensive maternity provision all of which would be the envy of any hospital in Europe. There is special provision for children, including a safely enclosed outside play garden. The walls and floors of the corridors are marble-tiled and the architectural style and finish of the whole construction is very impressive. The woman security guard who accompanied us around at night

demonstrated her great pride in this development which will surely be a great asset to the Grenadian health service.

Later there were queries that I heard voiced: will there be the capacity and capability to maintain this hi-tech structure or will it turn into a "white elephant"? and - could this be PM Keith Mitchell's intended vote-winner for the elections expected next year?

PRISON VISIT

Two visits to Richmond Hill Prison meant that I spent a total of two and a half hours in mostly very animated conversation with John "Chalky" Ventour. I was very happy to see him again after 12 years. The last time had been in 1990, during the Appeal Trial of the Grenada 17, which I attended as a NALGO delegation observer. Then it had only been possible to have snatched conversations at recess times with Chalky and the other prisoners around the dock in the court room specially built by the US for the trial, and surrounded by armed guards and the then Prison Commissioner rapping knuckles with his swagger stick if anyone got too close. Bizarrely, the hall where we met and which is now used for visiting and recreation, is the very same courtroom building.



All the 16 men still being held have been immensely heartened by Appeal Judge Alleyne's ruling last February that the 3 soldiers' continued detention was illegal and unconstitutional and that they should be released forthwith. The Grenada government used political moves to have the execution of the order stayed, so they are still inside and I was able to meet and chat with two of them - Vincent Joseph and Andy Mitchell. The decision is very important as it opens the way for further legal moves on behalf of the other prisoners. These are targeted at appealing the stay of execution of the release of the soldiers and also the convictions of the other prisoners and securing their release by going through the Eastern Caribbean Appeal Court system. If necessary, and it probably will be necessary, they are preparing to go to the Privy Council in London. The legal costs are anticipated to be high and a fund-raising campaign is being put in place.

IRAQ: AMERICA WANTS WAR AND OIL

The United States has secured a new Security Council resolution to legitimise a war against Iraq. President George W Bush had warned the United Nations that it was determined to attack Iraq, whether or not it received the support of the Security Council. Bush has vowed that the US would invade and occupy Iraq to prevent Saddam Hussein from "threatening the world with weapons of mass destruction."

Bush had threatened to bypass the UN, but he was reluctantly persuaded by British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, his only ally to date, that the American and British public will be more likely to support an invasion that is backed by the United Nations. Both countries say they intend to attack Iraq unless the country 'disarms'.

'Regime change' is the stated aim of the Bush Administration. Iraq is to be invaded and occupied by a US Military Governor. Its oilfields are to be seized and handed to American oil and energy interests, which employed the President and most of his Cabinet. In 1999 General Anthony Zinni, commander in chief of the US central command testified to the US Congress that the US "must have free access to the regions resources."

Gulf War Continues

The Gulf War officially ended in 1991, but the United States, supported by Britain have never ceased hostilities against the Iraqi population. Their air forces have been bombing Iraqi military and civilian installations almost every week to maintain self-declared and illegal 'no-fly zones' over the north and south of the country. All US presidents and British prime ministers have sought to prove their toughness to the rest of the world by periodically bombing a defenceless Iraq. Bush and Blair now want to use the momentum of the so-called 'war on terror' to remove a bogeyman and seize control of the world's second largest reserves of oil, demonstrate Bush's new doctrine of 'preemptive' strikes against America's potential enemies and to maintain Israel's strategic military advantage over the Arab states.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

President Bush's assertion that Iraq

must be bombed to prevent Saddam Hussein from using weapons of mass destruction against its neighbours and the United States are strongly denied by the Iraqis and by neutral observers. The most serious Challenge has come from Scott Ritter, who was a Chief Weapons Inspector throughout the arms inspection regime from 1991 to 1998, and is a Gulf War veteran.

Ritter is a Republican activist, who has become very disillusioned by Washington's manipulation of the weapons inspection regime. His new book, 'War on Iraq', co-authored with William Rivers Pitt refutes Bush's claims that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction. On nuclear weapons, he states, "When I left Iraq in 1998 ...the infrastructure and facilities had been 100% eliminated. The weapons design facility had been destroyed... the gamma rays that accompany attempts to enrich uranium or plutonium would have been detected."

On chemical weapons, he says, "the manufacture of chemical weapons emits vented gases that would have been detected,...via satellite and other means."

Ritter states that, "from a qualitative standpoint, Iraq has been disarmed. Iraq today possesses no meaningful weapons of mass destruction." Ritter is not sympathetic to Saddam Hussein. In fact, he has stated that inspectors should continue to monitor Iraq to ensure the country remains free of weapons of mass destruction.

If Iraq had miraculously obtained the complex tooling and equipment and the raw materials to produce nuclear or chemical weapons they would have been immediately detected by the United States, who would have publish the evidence, notify the United Nations and seized the opportunity to bomb the facilities.

The United States has no moral standing to condemn other countries for the possession of weapons of mass destruction. It has more nuclear, biological and chemical weapons than all other countries combined and it spends vast sums on the development of new weapon systems. It refuses to allow any inspections of its biological weapons facilities and it protects Israel's nuclear arsenal from international scrutiny. The US is the only country ever to have used nuclear weapons; it dropped two atomic bombs on an already crippled Japan in 1945. The US used millions of tons of Agent Orange and other chemical agents

against the Vietnamese people between 1965 and 1975, and it has routinely deployed depleted uranium shells in Iraq, Yugoslavia and Afghanistan.

Bush's ally, Britain, has continued to expand its existing submarine based nuclear arsenal under Blair's leadership.

Weapons Inspections and Espionage

The United States and Britain have used the issue of weapons inspection as a smokescreen to generate crises and confrontations with Iraq. Weapons inspectors have been operating in Iraq since 1991. They carried out 9,000 inspections between 1991 and 1998 including every school, every hospital, every factory. They initially received the full co-operation from the Iraqi authorities and completed the destruction of 95% of Iraq's remaining weapons capability, including tooling, equipment, raw materials and research facilities within a couple of years. The Iraqis had expected the inspectors to declare Iraq free of weapons of mass destruction and recommend the lifting of sanctions. Instead sanctions have been maintained and even tightened. They are designed to be ever more intrusive, showing no sensitivity or due regard for the country's sovereignty. To rub in the humiliation, Iraq has to pay for all the costs associated with the operation of the inspections and sanctions.

In addition some of the inspectors have been spying, they have provided the pentagon with lists of targets, including the locations of senior Iraqi government officials which were subsequently bombed by US planes.

Scott Ritter, who quit in August 1998, accused the CIA of corrupting the inspections regime. He states that in his team of inspectors there were "nine covert operatives from the CIA's covert activities branch." And that Richard Butler, Head of Unscm in 1998, was reporting back directly to the US National Security Adviser, who told him to sharpen the language in his report to the Security Council. Butler duly published his very critical report which accused Iraq of blocking inspections, he pulled out the inspectors and the damning report was used by Clinton and Blair as a pretext for a four day intensive bombing campaign against Iraq resulting in many Iraqi deaths.

Bill Tierney a former UN weapons inspector from the US proudly admitted

on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, in October this year that he was doing his patriotic duty to identify suspected locations of the Iraqi leadership and pass it unto the Pentagon for targeting in subsequent bombing raids.

Britons Condemn Blair for Backing Bush

British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, has attempted to scare the British people into backing Bush's war on Iraq. His long awaited dossier 'Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction' claims that Iraq possesses large stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons and is close to obtaining nuclear weapons was widely dismissed as a repeat of out of date half truths, oft-repeated fabrications from the Pentagon and Britain's MI5 and discredited information from Iraqi defectors and opposition groups.

Blair's case for war has only received support from the opposition Conservative Party. He has so far carried a sceptical Labour Party by promising to act only with UN authority. The British people do not support Blair, up to 400,000 people from all races and backgrounds demonstrated against Bush and Blair's drive to war. The leaders of the Anglican, Catholic and Muslim Churches have condemned any attack on Iraq as immoral and unjust. Senior military figures, former conservative and Labour Ministers and other senior members of the British establishment have condemned Blair's backing for the war and say, it will damage Britain's reputation in the Middle East and around the world. They say it will also endanger the lives of innocent Britons who may become the target of retaliatory bombings.

Many supporters of the Labour Party, who spent much of their lives campaigning against British colonialism and the many interventions by the United States into other countries are deeply troubled that their party is providing such staunch support to the most aggressive and right wing US government in recent history.

Blair, who is a practising Christian and likes to be perceived as a pious man has led Britain into four wars, so far, since he became Prime Minister in 1997, that's more than Thatcher and Major did during 18 years of conservative rule.

Blair has stated that it is in the strategic interest of Britain to support United States action.

Pretext for War Exposed

Bush and Blair had hoped that Iraq would continue to block the return of the inspectors which it had done in response to the 1998 bombing campaign. US officials threatened to invade Iraq without the Security Council's approval while their junior ally, Britain, drew attention to Bush's speech at the UN claiming that they were upholding UN resolutions and that Iraq could avoid an invasion if Saddam complied with UN resolutions and allow inspectors unfettered access to the country. When Iraq surprised them and agreed to co-operate fully with the UN and allow inspectors unhindered access to all parts of the country, they moved the goal post and obtained a new resolution with such stringent and humiliating conditions that has been designed to offend and trip up the Iraqis. Bush has vowed that non-compliance with the smallest detail would trigger a full-scale invasion. At the same time he is issuing daily threats against Iraq and is continuing the military build up in the Gulf.

Sanctions

Since August 1990, when the UN Security Council imposed economic sanctions against Iraq in response to its invasion of Kuwait, Iraq has been prohibited from importing or exporting any goods except medical supplies without the permission of the Security Council. The US State Department referred the sanctions as "the toughest, most comprehensive sanctions in history". The sanctions were expected to be lifted after the end of hostilities, but the US and Britain have maintained and vigorously enforced the sanctions, even the medical supplies that were specifically excluded have been stopped on the grounds that they have dual use capability. In 1996 Madeline Albright, the US Secretary of State said in reply to a question of whether the death of 500,000 Iraqi children was worth the sanctions said, "I think this is a hard choice, but price - we think the price is worth it."

During the Gulf War, US bombers deliberately targeted and destroyed Iraq's sewerage systems, water supplies, transport, electricity plants and other non military infrastructure to wantonly bleed the country long into the future. Most of these systems have not been repaired or restored and Iraqis continue to suffer and die due to a

contaminated drinking water, lack of sufficient food and other basic services. All of the revenue from the sales of Iraq's oil is controlled through the United Nations "Oil-for-Food Program". Less than half of the money collected is used to purchase food and medicine for the Iraqi people, the rest of the money is used to compensate US oil companies whose equipment and facilities were damaged during the Gulf war, mainly by US bombers.

Iraq has not been allowed to import sufficient food, medical supplies and other basic materials to rebuild its shattered infrastructure on the grounds that they could be used to produce weapons. The denial of these basic necessities has resulted in the deaths of over 500,000 Iraqi children under five years old according to reports produced by UNICEF and other United Nations agencies, that does not include the many other Iraqi civilians. Dennis Halliday, the Assistant Secretary UN and Hans Von Sponeck, two previous officials responsible for the UN humanitarian programme in Iraq resigned in disgust at the US and Britain's delaying of billions of dollars worth of medicines and equipment required to decontaminate its water supplies and to prevent malnutrition. Dennis Halliday, who spent 30 years with the UN, said of the sanctions, "we are in the process of destroying an entire society." Von Sponeck explained that "I can no longer be associated with a programme that prolongs suffering of the people and which has no chance to meet even basic needs of the civilian population," he later asked "how long must the civilian population be exposed to such punishment for something they have never done."

The "Iraqi Threat"

Saddam Hussein represented a much greater menace to his neighbours and his own people when he was supported by the United States and Europe than he does now. He was encouraged to attack the Iranian revolution that ousted the US supported Shah and has since been depicted as a threat to the remaining US supported conservative Gulf States. He received massive military aid from the US and Europe and obtained financial support from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the other Gulf States during the long and self destructive eight year war with Iran. The US became an active ally of Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war, it provided Saddam

with satellite reports of Iranian troop concentrations and it directly attacked Iranian targets including the shooting down of an Iranian passenger airliner by the USS Vincennes killing all 290 civilians aboard. The US supplied anthrax and other chemical and biological agents to Iraq until 1989 and they never condemned Saddam when he used chemical weapons against Iran and the Kurds until 1990, after the invasion of Kuwait. In fact the US voted against a UN statement in 1986 that recognised Iraq's use of chemical weapons against Iran.

The Iran-Iraq war left the two most developed Muslim nations, and opponents of Israel devastated and weak. After 20 years of war and crippling sanctions Iraq is now a broken country. It has no capacity to threaten its neighbours and is certainly in no position to constitute a threat to the US. Iraq has not been able to shoot down a single US or British aircraft in all of the bombings since 1991. That is why the US now relishes what it believes will be a cost free war against a stricken country.

Under the unprecedented UN sanctions Iraq is forbidden to import any military equipment even for its legitimate self defence. Iraq is also not permitted to develop any missile capability beyond the range of 150 miles, while the US and its allies have missiles that can obliterate any country in the world from thousands of miles away.

History of Colonial Domination

Iraq and the other Gulf States were seized by Britain in a carve up with France after the break up of the Ottoman Empire following Turkey's defeat in the First World War. After a period of direct British colonial rule, Britain transferred sovereignty to a monarchy in 1932. Saddam Hussein regime is the latest in a series of military coups that first occurred in 1958.

The British Empire's continued decline since the end of the Second World War forced it to transfer control of the area to the United States who stepped in to protect the kingdoms of the Saudis, the Shah, and the Emirs against the democratic aspirations of peoples across the Middle East. The US with British help have used their military power to crush every democratic tendency in the region while hypocriti-

cally condemning these states as undemocratic, and now speak of crusades to bring democracy to the region as a pretext to occupy Iraq.

Recolonisation will be Resisted

Iraq's armed forces are not equipped to offer any serious challenge to a global superpower with more firepower than the rest of the worlds armies combined, plus nuclear equipped allies. Its anti-aircraft batteries and other defences have been destroyed by US and British aircraft in the continuing bombing raids of the last eleven years. The Iraqi people will again be subject to massive bombardment and huge loss of life, but it will be more difficult and costly for the US and Britain to win a ground war which the US has not shown much stomach for. An eventual occupation of Iraq may also prove costly in American lives in the battlefield and elsewhere. The Arabs and Muslims in the Middle East and beyond have little to lose; they are resisting Israeli occupation of Palestine and will resist the humiliating occupation of another Arab country by European colonists.

Before Iraq was 'bombed back to the stone age' by US-led forces during the Gulf War in 1991, it was the most developed Arab nation in the Middle East. Crippling UN sanctions deliberately designed to cause severe hardship and encourage the population to overthrow Saddam Hussein has kept Iraqi society in a dire state since the end of the war but the country has the potential to develop quickly once the sanctions are lifted, the country has a highly educated and self-reliant population that could exploit its raw materials and rebuild its shattered country. Iraq is despised by the US and British leaders because unlike most of the Gulf States it does not need western technicians to operate any part of infrastructure.

The Consequence of American Aggression is 'Terrorism'

The US government was humiliated by the destruction of the World Trade Centre and the massive damage to the Pentagon, the symbols of US capitalism and its military power by a dozen determined and unarmed Arab militants. No conclusive proof has been presented to indicate that Osama Bin Laden or Al Qaeda was behind the hijacking of the planes that were

steered into the World Trade Centre and even US sources cannot find the slightest connection between Osama Bin Laden or Al Qaeda and Iraq.

Bush has used the tragedy of the 3,000 innocent workers slaughtered in the World Trade Centre on 11 September 2001 to justify the bombing of Afghanistan where thousands more innocent lives have been destroyed. Bush wants to use the momentum to launch a full scale invasion of Iraq in order to gain control of the countries easily accessible oil supplies.

Some American political leaders and commentators claim that America is hated because it is successful and free. More thoughtful Americans concede that millions of people in every continent have just cause to be very bitter and resentful at the slaughter of millions of their peoples from direct and prolonged US aggression in Vietnam and Korea, Lebanon and Afghanistan, Panama and Grenada and more recently Serbia. All of the countries in Latin America have had brutal military governments imposed and sustained by Washington. Angola and Mozambique was bled for decades by US support of Unita and Renamo terrorists who carried out wanton killings and destruction of the countries infrastructure to retard development.

The suffering and humiliation that Israel is inflicting on the Palestinians and the expanding presence of US armed forces on Arab lands have enraged Muslims and Arabs in the Middle East and beyond.

Despite the overwhelming military might of the US, it is not immune from the consequences of its military adventures. Americans and their perceived allies have learned through the painful experience of the Twin Towers atrocity and other bombings in Bali that single and disparate groups and

individuals will be driven to acts of desperation, committing their own lives to avenge themselves against US military personnel where possible or innocent European civilians.

Islamic militancy

The US initially encouraged the growth of Arab and Islamic militancy in the Middle East and Asia to defeat progressive governments, undermine social reforms and to encourage dependence on the United States military. Having succeeded in removing the Soviet supported government in Afghanistan and contributing to the

ultimate demise of the Soviet Union itself, Muslims now understand who threatens the independence and freedom of the whole region. That militancy is now being channelled into resistance to Israel's occupation and brutalisation of the Palestinians. Muslims are inflamed by the uncritical and unwavering support Israel receives from the US and the stationing of US military forces on Arab lands. Their anger will become uncontrollable if the United States and Britain attempt to occupy another Arab country.

The Islamic world has become the most politicised and militant of all anti-imperialist forces. Arab regimes have become fearful for their own survival. They risk 'regime change' if they oppose US policy or they will be swept away by their own peoples if they continue to acquiesce in the American and Israeli expansion in the region.

United Nations Resolutions

The otherthirteen members of the Security Council supported Resolution 1441 to prevent the United States and Britain from invading Iraq without the authority of the UN. France and Russia initially resisted White House pressure to back a more punitive draft, they were offered oil contracts in a post Saddam era Iraq. China, who many hoped would defend the interests of the developing world have reportedly been offered bilateral trade deals with the US and has remained passive. The ten elected, non-permanent members on the Security Council (Bulgaria, Cameroon, Guinea, Mexico, Syria, Columbia, Ireland, Mauritius, Norway and Singapore) have been subjected to diplomatic bullying and economic threats. Some of the countries have very fragile economies that are dependant on US controlled global financial institutions like the IMF and World Bank.

The US claims that it is acting against Iraq to preserve the sanctity of UN resolutions is betrayed by its own violations of the UN Charter and the continued vetoing of statements condemning Israel's non-compliance with other UN resolutions.

The adoption of this corrupt resolution, which will be used by the US to launch an unjustified aggressive invasion against the people of Iraq, will bring the United Nations into disrepute.

The general Assembly of the UN where all the countries of the World are represented exercise little influence on

the Security Council who act in their name. The world body needs to be reformed to represent all the world's peoples instead of the present situation that gives the new global empire and former colonial powers absolute control of world affairs, where might is right and the rule of the jungle prevails, and where injustice against the weak is legitimised through bribery and threats. The United States and Britain has cynically abused the instruments of the United Nations to maintain the most oppressive control ever imposed on a country. This injustice will breed resentment and bitterness and create a thirst for revenge.

No country can expect to enjoy the benefits of peace and security while imposing death and destruction on others.

Iraq has accepted the terms of the new US resolution. In spite of all the provocations. This has had no effect on the United States and Britain who continue to act with impunity, they are still carrying out bombing raids, they openly fund and organise Iraqi opposition groups to violently seize power in Iraq, and they are continuing to build up an invasion force for an attack against the country. All of which is against the charter of the United Nations, this happens without comment by the Security Council. The comprehensive sanctions imposed on Iraq puts it at the mercy of powerful member states of the United Nations. The UN has a duty of care to protect Iraq against this continuing aggression.

Attempted coups in: VENEZUELA

Six months after the failed coup against Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, the giant oil rich Caribbean country is again big news for worrying reasons.

In early October, Chavez announced at a meeting of mayors and regional governors:

"We have stopped a coup. I have little doubt about that; (but) though we have aborted this one, the threat from fascist coup plotters and reactionaries has not disappeared and we must remain alert 24 hours every day".

Just as well he called for vigilance, because since then the country has

been experiencing a constant battering from the IMF, opposition trade union and business leaders, disgruntled army and navy personalities and the Caracas police, manipulated by Chavez's long time foe, Mayor Alfredo Pena.

Meanwhile the mainstream of the army and working people across the country remain firm in their support of the government, as do African and indigenous Venezuelans who are enjoying meaningful citizenship for the first time under Chavez.

What is to be made of recent events in Venezuela?

Ever since the shortlived April coup it has become commonplace for sympathetic observers to compare today's Chavez project ("Bolivarian revolution") with the Socialist party-led government of Chile's President Allende which went down in the bloody CIA - backed coup of 1973.

But for those in the solidarity movement, the greatest difference between the two is that in 2002 people have the Chilean lesson to guide them. If even half the international solidarity extended to the people of Chile after the coup had been there before the anti- Allende plot gained the upper hand, the Chilean experiment might have prevailed.

As far back as December 2001 Chavez said: "I (will) not be toppled like Chilean President Salvador Allende."

Constitutionally, his current presidency does not end until 2007 and all conspiracies to deflect the progressive development in Venezuela can be frustrated if external solidarity is stepped up. Chavez' record on human rights alone should be a clarion call to action.

Anyone interested in coming together to support the struggle in Venezuela is asked to contact CLS at the Treasurer's address, 6, Belgrave Close, London W3 8QA

Tel: 020 8992 5462.

Nader in Havana: U.S. should let Cubans breathe.

HAVANA — Former U.S. presidential candidate Ralph Nader stated that he is opposed to the concentration of power within corporations that is impeding the development of democracy in his country, and criticized his government's foreign policy on the island which, he said, doesn't give Cubans a chance to breathe.

During an almost two-hour master lecture in the University of Havana's Aula Magna, attended by President Fidel Castro, Nader talked of the current relations between both countries, suggesting that the United States give Cuba the chance to breathe so that it can develop in its own way, without restrictions.

He also advocated that the island should transmit its experiences in various experiences to the rest of the world, and cooperation between the two nations, particularly in the health sector.

Nader began by saying he would talk about symbols and governments, the myths and realities of the United States, some of whose past leaders had warned that a concentration of wealth and power cannot co-exist with democracy.

He explained how commercial values have overtaken the interests of the U.S. people, thus weakening their civil rights to the point that freedom could be lost without even amending the Constitution.

If the United States is the greatest military power, why does it have the highest rate of child poverty in western democracies, Nader asked, pointing out that the national level stands at 20%, rising to 30% in the district of Columbia. Why has the U.S. economy doubled but six million families are unable to pay their rent?

Nader enumerated a series of questions on the U.S. system, highlighting that in the wake of September 11, his country is now spending more on security than on healthcare for its citizens.

The former presidential candidate, who did not discount running again in 2004, also criticized the way in which his country's two political parties establish barriers to prevent other political groups participating in government debates.

Wealth is currently concentrated in the hands of the few, controlling elections, the Government and the information media, he stated. Nader referred to civil rights restrictions after September 11, affirming that this has become the U.S. response every time it feels threatened, no matter how distant that threat is.

He asked what would happen if his nation were exposed to attacks, blockades and restrictions for 40 years. What would happen? he repeated, leaving the answer open to imagination.

In his opinion, the blockade has not managed to destabilize the Cuban government, but has strengthened it, and he questioned the U.S. authorities' double standard on that point, comparing it with the attitude of his country's citizens who are increasingly calling for relations to be normalized.

He likewise believes that the U.S. press should make more mention of Cuban society's achievements and positive aspects.

Ralph Nader, Green Party candidate in the 2000 presidential elections, visited the island at the invitation of the National Assembly of People's Power, and was received by President Fidel Castro.

He has also met with Rosa Elena Simeon, Minister of Science, Technology and the

Environment; Alfredo Morales, Minister of Labor and Social Security; Felipe Pérez Roque, Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Osvaldo Martínez, president of the Parliamentary Economic Commission. The rector of the University of Havana presented Nader with a commemorative plaque celebrating the 270th anniversary of the founding of that center of higher education.

Thousands of counterfeit EC dollars seized by police in Grenada

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada - Police have seized thousands of counterfeit Eastern Caribbean \$100 bills (US\$40) in Grenada recently and estimate thousands more remain in circulation, authorities said Thursday.

Police said more than 10,000 bogus notes could still be in use in the Caribbean country.

Acting on a tip, police said they raided a house two weeks ago and seized nearly 11,000 notes all bearing the same serial number — B489567G

NUGFW SUPPORTS BRITISH FIRE FIGHTERS

In a message of support to striking firefighters in Britain, the President of the National Union of Government and Federated Workers, Robert Giuseppi, said:

"On behalf of the National Union of Government and Federated Workers of Trinidad and Tobago we send the firefighters in the UK our solidarity and best wishes for the successful conclusion of your struggle for improved wages. Every day of the week, firefighters throughout the world risk their lives and we have a responsibility to ensure maximum support in your struggle."

The Fire Brigades Union in the UK has started a series of strike to push for a 40% increase in wages.

More information can be found on the FBU web page: <http://www.fbu.org.uk>



Grenada born Judge heads International Tribunal

Judge Dolliver Nelson, visiting Professor of International Law at the London School Of Economics and former UK delegate to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, was elected President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea for the period 2002 to 2005. He was the Vice President for the previous three years.

The Law of the Sea is an international agreement regulating the use and exploitation of the world's oceans. The UN-sponsored Law of the Sea Treaty (1982) calls for limited and strictly controlled, mining of the seabed; established in general the (19.3km) 12 miles limit for territorial waters; gives all nations' ships the right of 'innocent passage' through crucial straits and sets up international antipollution regulations. Most of the industrial nations opposed the restrictions on seabed mining, but the Third World nations used their majority and passed it.

The Tribunal conducts hearings into disputes, which are submitted to it.

Dr Nelson was educated at the Grenada Boys Secondary School, the University of the West Indies and London School Of Economics. He is a member of Gray's Inn and of the Grenada Bar.

Grenada Has First Home grown Bishop

On Wednesday 2nd October 2002 Grenada born Father Vincent Darius was ordained Roman Catholic Bishop of Grenada

Virgin Holidays to Expand in the Caribbean

Virgin Holidays, which already markets a range of holidays to Barbados, St. Lucia, Antigua, Cuba and Nevis is expanding to Grenada and Tobago with a full product range from May 2003, using Virgin Atlantic flights. The brochures are already out.

Former BBC Broadcaster pleads for better prison Conditions.

Mr Stanley Charles, journalist and one time frequent presenter on BBC Radio London Black Londoners' Programme, complained that the poor conditions at the Richmond Hill Prisons, Grenada contravened his human rights and made an impassioned plea to have the matter investigated. Charles surrendered to police after an absence of about two years and was remanded in custody on a charge of making seditious statements.

Caribbean Women Seek Gender Equity

Despite the achievements of women in the last decade or more eclipsing that of men in the field of education, this has not been translated to the labour market and especially the upper echelons of economic and political power.

The main focus in health is the rapid increase in the number of women affected by HIV/AIDS as women do not feel empowered to insist on the use of condoms. This was particularly so in relationships of young women with older men.

Violence against women is also a major concern according to a meeting of directors and coordinators of regional women's bureaux sponsored by The CARICOM Secretariat. CARICOM has approved a study into various model solutions implemented elsewhere to identify elements that could be adapted to the region.

Your presence is needed in Palestine?.

The International Solidarity Movement is urgently trying to get international volunteers to come to the Occupied Palestinian Territories to stand with Palestinians against attacks on their very existence.

As the fourth largest army in the world continues to use its military might on a population, largely unarmed and struggling for its freedom and independence; as the international community and formal governments continually fail to live up to their obligations to protect, and treat as protected persons, the Palestinian people; as Israeli colonial policies continue to strip Palestinians of their human rights and deny them human dignity; as grave violations of human rights and international law are being committed by the Israeli Occupation Forces every day; as hundreds of tanks, and armored personnel carriers roam the destroyed streets of Palestine continually shooting at civilians and civilian infrastructure; as missiles continue to fall on the Gaza Strip; as Palestinian children are systematically denied their education and the Palestinian people are denied the right to live and make a living; as dozens of civilian homes continue to be destroyed by the Israeli government and military; as the International Solidarity Movement has been witness to war crimes and is expecting an escalation in the months to come, WE NEED YOU to come stand with us against this injustice.

Our call out to the world is ongoing, but since we know December is a time of vacation, we hope you will arrange to be with us here in Palestine. Join us December 15, 2002 ? January 15, 2003.

For more information or to register, please see: www.palsolidarity.org .

Contact us by phone at +972-2-277-4602.

THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

Haiti: ICFTU condemns wave of anti-union repression

26/11/2002

Brussels 26 November 2002 (ICFTU OnLine): In a letter sent to President Aristide, the ICFTU expressed its concern at the serious deterioration of human rights in Haiti, denouncing in particular the harassment and prolonged detentions suffered by trade unionists in the education sector, such as Josué Mérilien, General Coordinator of the Union Nationale des Normaliens d'Haïti (UNNOH), and Pepe Jean Ghetto, General Secretary of the Groupe d'Initiative des enseignants de Lycée (GIEL).

PM's sister dies

Tuesday, November 26, 2002

CHAIRMAN of the ruling People's National Party, Robert Pickersgill, yesterday expressed condolences to Prime Minister P J Patterson on the recent passing of his youngest sister, Marcia Sinclair.

Ganja in concrete tabletops seized at wharf

Ganja seized at Berth Five in Newport West is weighed at the Narcotics headquarters in Kingston. GANJA neatly wrapped in brown masking tape, covered with mesh wire and moulded in concrete tabletops and pedestals was yesterday

Cop injured, man shot dead on Gold Street

Tuesday, November 26, 2002

A policeman was yesterday afternoon shot and injured, and a gunman shot dead in an alleged shoot-out on Gold Street in Kingston.

The dead man, according to the Constabulary Communication Network (CCN), was identified as Jermaine Johnson, otherwise called "Insane", 26, of East Queen Street in Kingston. The Kingston Central Police, who are investigating, say that Johnson was wanted in connection with a number of murders and shootings committed in the Kingston Central area.

- **What is CLS?**
- **How does it function?**
- **What are the aims and objectives?**

CARIBBEAN LABOUR SOLIDARITY

CLS was founded in 1974 by a group of activists from the Caribbean community and the wider labour movement in response to an appeal from independent trades unionists in Jamaica, for support in their struggle against anti-union legislation.

After this campaign, it was decided that there was a need for a permanent anti-imperialist organisation which would promote the support of the mounting democratic national movement which was by then sweeping the Caribbean.

Our roots are in the Caribbean and the wider working class community.

We work to unite all those who struggle against imperialism and for the building of strong international links between working people here and in the Caribbean in their fight for human rights and justice. We have links with progressive organisations throughout the Caribbean region with whom we exchange information and offer mutual support and solidarity.

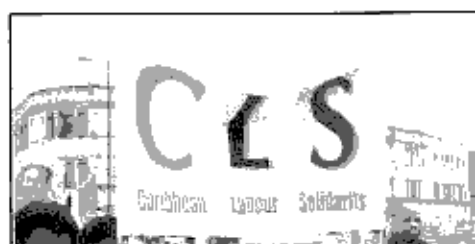
We have, we believe, a very important educational role in disseminating information in this area that is not usually available through the normal sources. We do this through our monthly public meetings, our bulletin Cutlass, our website and through press releases, leaflets, periodical articles and at conferences and demonstrations.

We associate ourselves fully with all the progressive and working peoples' movements

in the Caribbean, and rejoice in the victories won by the Cuban revolution.

CLS also sets itself the aim of mobilising opinion in defence of the pan-African bonds that exist between all black peoples in Africa, Europe and the Americas in their struggles against racism and imperialism.

Recognising the Britain's bitter racist legacy, Caribbean Labour Solidarity seeks united action with all Caribbean and working class solidarity organisations which share our commitment to anti-imperialist and anti-racist struggle.



NOTE NEW VENUE

We meet on the first Sunday of each month at the ...

DALSTON X CENTRE
(Asian Centre)
17 - 19 Dalston Lane
London E

Meetings start at 12 am to finish at approximately 2 pm.

CLS is financed through, subscriptions, contributions, donations, fundraising and speakers giving their time free of charge. This enables us to retain our independence and influence.

speakers to discuss issues relevant to current situations that face the Caribbean Community both here in Britain and in the Caribbean basin.

Many of the topics discussed will not be debated in the mainstream press or wider media, or generate involvement in campaigning activities.

The following are some of the topics and issues discussed at our meetings.

- The Grenada 17
- The Recolonisation of the Caribbean
- Recommencement of hangings by Caribbean governments
- Preparations for General Elections in Guyana and Jamaica
- The problems faced by the Caribbean Banana Industry
- The political situation in Guyana
- 50th anniversary of The Windrush
- The US invasion of Grenada - fifteen years on
- The Stephen Lawrence case an - historical perspective
- Asylum and Immigration Bill
- The World Trade Organisation
- Claudia Jones
- Role of Black Lawyers in USA
- Cuba, Haiti and Dominica
- Free Trade of the America Area (FTAA)
- Affordable Drugs - South Africa v Multinational Pharmaceutical companies

These listed have been just a few of the important topics and issues that have been highlighted during our monthly discussions. We hope you will be able to participate in our forthcoming series of topical debates.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name/organisation

Address

Post code

Tel:/ Fax:

Email

Fees. Individual £12.00 conc. £5.00 • Organisations £15

National/International Organisations £25.00

Donation | |

Remittance to be sent to: Treasurer, 6 Belgrave Close, Acton London W3 8QA

For Information telephone 020 8677 9910