

## Editorial

## Condemning the Terrorist Attack on the People of London

On July 7, as the G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland began its second day of meetings, bombs were detonated in three London subway cars and a bus killing at least 54 people and wounding hundreds more. *Modern Communism* condemns this criminal attack on innocent people and extends its condolences to the families of the victims.

Within hours of the bomb blasts and before any evidence had been gathered, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and U.S. President George W. Bush blamed the attack on those who are opposed to democracy and the values espoused by the U.S., Britain and the other G8 countries. The media went further, blaming al-Qaeda and/or some unnamed Islamic extremists for the attack.

Bush, Blair and their supporters are using the London bombings to justify the continuing occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, claiming that individual and organized acts of terrorism can only be stopped by attacking it at its source in Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries which are the target of the “war on terror”. Meanwhile, others are pointing to the London bombings as proof that Blair and Bush are wrong and that individual and organized acts of terrorism can only be stopped by withdrawing from Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. According to this position, it is completely understandable that people of Middle Eastern origin will launch terrorist attacks against the people of Britain and the U.S. in retaliation

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## Commentary

## Live 8 – Promotion of “White Man’s Burden”

The British imperialists justified their brutal rape of the African continent under the racist banner of the “White Man’s Burden”. According to this logic, the African people were incapable of governing themselves and required the rule of the “benevolent” European imperialists to “civilize” them. Despite the constant protests to the contrary by its organizers Bob Geldof and Bono, the Live 8 extravaganza held simultaneously in numerous countries promoted precisely the same message. Live 8 was billed as an exercise in raising public awareness about the dire poverty that exists in Africa and an attempt to force the issue of debt relief to the top of the agenda at last week’s G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland. However, it was apparent from the beginning that the

real purpose of the event, apart from making huge amounts of money for its corporate sponsors, was to spread the illusion that the G8 countries are the key to solving the problems of Africa. This fact became even clearer following the G8 summit with statements from Geldof and Bono about the “sincerity” of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin and U.S. president George W. Bush.

The fact of the matter is that the G8 countries are pursuing the same old colonial policy towards Africa. The “debt relief” program adopted by the G8 has absolutely nothing to do with ending poverty in Africa and everything to do with opening the country up even further to the penetration of finance capital. To begin

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for the death and destruction that those countries have wreaked on the people of the Middle East.

It is the view of *Modern Communism* that both of these positions are wrong. The aggression against and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq was not for the purpose of preventing the spread of terrorism or putting an end to it. The issue of “terrorism” was merely a way to put a humanitarian face on the aggression, occupation and domination of these countries. The working class and people of the U.S. and Britain should demand that their governments cease their aggression against other countries primarily due to the harm it is doing to the people of these countries, and not because of apprehensions that they will become victims of retaliatory attacks.

The U.S. is the leader of all imperialist states in organizing terrorism against peoples of other countries in the form of military aggressions, political assassinations, torture and economic sabotage. The imperialist states and other reactionary governments openly carry out this state organized terrorism, and they use various individuals, organizations and their intelligence agencies to carry out open and clandestine terrorist activities. It benefits the imperialists to create fear, confusion and anarchy in the society. In this way, these oppressors and exploiters can present themselves as the “protectors” of the working class and people. The working class is opposed to state organized terrorism in all forms – open or clandestine. It views political assassinations, wanton destruction of property, and indiscriminate killing of people as criminal activity and puts the blame for these activities on the reactionary governments and their agents.

The working class also opposes the notion that terrorism is a legitimate form of struggle for oppressed peoples fighting against an overwhelmingly more powerful oppressor. The ideology of terrorism is the ideology of imperialism, and those who espouse it as a method of fighting imperialism are generally declassed elements who have no faith in the ability of the masses of people to organize themselves to overthrow their oppressors. It is a dead-end path which can only bring disaster to the very people that the terrorists claim to represent. The most recent terrorist attacks in London illustrate

this point. Regardless of the motivation of the bombers, the only real beneficiaries of their actions are British Prime Minister Tony Blair and U.S. President George W. Bush who have been under intense pressure since the leaking of British Cabinet documents which prove that they deliberately lied in order to justify their illegal invasion of Iraq. The London bombings are also being used, not just by Britain and the U.S., but Canada and various European countries, as well, to justify the further fascization of their states in the name of “combating terrorism” and preventing similar attacks in their countries.

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with, the proposed “debt relief” is actually relief for various G8 financial institutions which stand to lose billions of dollars if the poorest African countries are forced to default on their debts. The debts held by these financial institutions will be bought by the governments of the G8 countries. However, the G8 leaders made it clear that the money to retire these debts would not be new money, but would come from corresponding decreases in foreign aid to those African nations “fortunate” enough to qualify. In other words, “debt relief” amounts to forcing these countries to use foreign aid to repay their debts to the finance capitalists. It also exposes the self-serving nature of the imperialist propaganda barrage demanding good governance and transparency in the recipient countries to ensure that the “savings” go to the people and not some corrupt officials, since there will be no savings to distribute.

In fact, when Bush, Blair, Martin and other G8 leaders use words like “democracy”, “good governance” and “transparency” in relation to Africa, they are really talking about the reduction of barriers to foreign finance capital and nothing else. While the G8 leaders are talking about the necessity for poverty reduction, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are forcing African countries to privatize their water utilities and charge user fees for education and health services as conditions for qualifying for “debt relief”. Of course, the phony “debt relief” is actually a bail-out of the finance capitalists, not the poorest African countries, and will

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# **U.S. Attempting to Weaken Canadian Sovereignty Over Water**

American efforts are currently underway to weaken the International Joint Commission (IJC), the bi-national body which currently adjudicates all water disputes between Canada and the U.S. Weakening or abrogating the IJC will enable the Americans greater access to water in shared water systems and seems to be a priority for the Americans at this time, as there are several attempts to do so taking place, most notably in the Great Lakes basin.

The IJC was established following the signature of the *Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909* and has served as a quasi-judicial body for most of the past century. The treaty provides equal protection to the U.S. and Canada. Comprised of six appointed commissioners (three from Canada and three from the U.S.), the IJC has established the conditions for the construction of dams or hydroelectric systems on shared water systems and has set the rules for sharing water from rivers which span the border. All IJC rulings are made to ensure compliance with the *Boundary Waters Treaty*.

The IJC has proved frustrating to the Americans on many occasions over the last century, but as water shortages in key economic production centres of the U.S. have reached crisis levels, increasing access to water supplies has become extremely critical to the Americans. The treaty and IJC are currently the only two barriers preventing this access.

On the Great Lakes basin, the American Great Lakes states have proposed a plan that would enable them to increase their diversion projects by avoiding the IJC initially and giving it a bystander role subsequently. On June 30, the Great Lakes states and provinces released the second draft of the Great Lakes Annex Implementing Agreements. There are two separate agreements within the proposal; the first is a binding and legally enforceable agreement amongst the U.S. Great Lakes States, which would enable states to divert unlimited quantities of water from the basin to cities that are only partially within or wholly outside the basin, with the agreement of other states. The requirements for diverted water to be returned to the basin after use are vague and, given the structure of this section of the agreement, could

be substantially revised without any input from Canada. The second agreement is non-binding and is between the U.S. states and Canadian provinces, essentially promising that Canadian provinces that border the Great Lakes states will have a consultative role in all future diversion projects.

These agreements completely undermine the IJC, which is supposed to be the sole arbiter of boundary water issues. The agreements also specifically exclude the largest diversion project from the Great Lakes – the Chicago diversion – which, in violation of the *Boundary Waters Treaty*, has been arbitrated by the U.S. Supreme Court. The court set an allotment of 2.1 billion litres of water per day for the Chicago diversion, which the state of Illinois has consistently exceeded.

Attempts to weaken or abrogate the IJC are not linked solely to increasing access to fresh water. In the case of the Devil's Lake diversion project that the state of North Dakota is undertaking, the aim is to divert water from Devil's Lake into the Sheyenne River, a tributary of the Red River, which flows into Lake Winnipeg. Despite repeated appeals from the government of Manitoba and the federal government, the state of North Dakota has refused to refer the project to the IJC, and has instead been proceeding unilaterally. While the Bush administration has publicly cautioned North Dakota about Devil's Lake, it has done little to stop the diversion project, instead providing what many commentators on both sides of the border have described as tacit approval to proceed.

These attempts to weaken or undermine a treaty and judicial commission that have served Canada well over the last century directly attack Canada's sovereignty over its water resources. Individual U.S. states are being used to violate the treaty while the U.S. federal state pretends to uphold it – but it is surely only a matter of time before the U.S. federal government puts the treaty on the table for negotiation.

# Collective Punishment in the Gaza Strip

Israel has responded to two recent suicide bombings in Israel (on July 7 and 13) by unleashing a series of air and ground strikes on Palestinian villages and towns. The two suicide bombings were the first such attacks in five months. The Palestinian Authority has put extensive pressure on Palestinian militant groups to end their campaign of suicide attacks against Israeli civilians. On the Israeli side, the Israeli Defence Forces had halted their policy of targeted assassinations of different Palestinian leaders during the same period, although there were dozens of Palestinians killed by IDF forces for protesting the continued construction of Israel's apartheid wall during the ceasefire period.

The Israeli policy of collective punishment has led to the death of thousands of Palestinians and the response to the two latest terror attacks is no different. It is worth noting that when British police announced that the men suspected of carrying out the attack in London on July 7 all came from Leeds, there was no suggestion that the British armed forces should respond by targeted bombings in Leeds – the

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proceed regardless of their compliance or non-compliance. So, the real club being wielded to force the poorest of Africa's countries into line is the threat by the IMF and World Bank to reduce future foreign aid payments if their economies are not opened wide to foreign capital and goods.

Whether consciously or through ignorance, Geldof, Bono and a host of other celebrities have reduced themselves to the level of skills for imperialism. During the nineteenth century Christian missionaries were used to put a human face on the rape and plunder of Africa. Today, millionaire rock stars have replaced the missionaries, but everything else remains basically the same. Live 8 contributed nothing to the raising of awareness about the problems of Africa. On the contrary, it further mystified and obscured those problems and their causes. As such, it must be seen as a component part of the massive ideological assault being carried out by the imperialists to promote medievalism and block any possibility for the advance of human society.

notion is quite preposterous. Yet that has been the Israeli response to the suicide bombings – Israel has launched a series of indiscriminate attacks intended to destroy Palestinian infrastructure and kill civilians in towns the suicide bombers are believed to have lived in.

On July 16, the Israeli Air Force launched a series of missile attacks over Gaza City and the southern Gaza town of Khan Yunis, hitting a metal workshop and a garage. Missiles also struck near a United Nations food warehouse next to the Shati refugee camp. Israeli Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz has also ordered the IDF to prepare for a large scale ground offensive in the Gaza Strip, and current media reports indicate Gaza is surrounded by IDF armoured vehicles. The IDF have essentially cut the Gaza Strip into three, effectively banning all of the 1.3 million Palestinians who live in Gaza from traveling for work, school or family visits to other areas within the strip.

The IDF also launched a series of raids in West Bank towns this week, killing three Palestinian youth and seizing another 26 Palestinians, suspected militants, who are currently being held without charge.

## **Modern Communism**

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