

Workers' Weekly

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20p

Come and Hear RCPB(ML) on the Present Situation! FOR A SOCIALIST FUTURE!

IT is under the above banner that the Public Rally celebrating the 15th anniversary of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) is being held on March 19.

The rally will be an event of great significance for the communists, the working class and all people concerned
Continued on page 4

***International Seminar* COMMUNISM AND THE REQUIREMENTS OF MODERN DEMOCRACY**

A paper by the Communist Ghadar
Party of India

October 8-9, 1994 Chicago, Illinois

Second in the series of international seminars on
The Retreat of Revolution and the Tasks of the
Communist and Workers Movement

For text of the Communique, see page 2

March 8 - International Women's Day

AS women on March 8 celebrate International Women's Day, they celebrate their common struggle against every kind of exploitation and oppression, a common struggle which also contributes in a major way to paving the road to a society where exploitation of and discrimination against women is ended, where women claim their equal rights alongside all other human beings in society. On this day, they greet women everywhere in the world who are fighting for the same cause.

But women are acutely aware that in the context of the all-sided crisis of capi-

talism, today throughout the world obstacles are still placed in their way at work, they are faced with increasing exploitation, low pay, job insecurity, together with high unemployment, poverty, lack of child care and other social amenities, not to mention the violence and abuse directed at them. Many women fear for the future of their families.

However, one characteristic of women these days is that they are extremely active in all areas of life. They are affirming their right to participate fully in society and are determined to play their full role. At the same

time, they are constantly presented with the ideology of those who want society to remain as it is and take away hard-won rights. It is presented that there is no alternative to the present situation of crisis, that the cutbacks in education, health and social services are a necessary evil and have to be endured.

In conjunction with this, there is great pressure on women both to organise simply around "women's issues" as well as to give in to hopelessness and despair that "nothing can be done". But the increasing crisis is also raising the con-

Continued on page 4

Themes of the Coventry Seminar:

The nature of political power

ONE of the spheres where it is most important to provide modern definitions is that of democracy.

Old definitions cannot encompass that in reality in today's society political power does not reside in the people, and furthermore cannot explain how it can become possible for sovereignty to be placed in the

Continued on page 3

International Seminar Communique

Communism and the Requirements of Modern Democracy

The US Marxist-Leninist Organization and the Workers Party are hosting Part 2 of the International Seminar on *The Retreat of Revolution and the Tasks of the Communist and Workers Movement* in Chicago, Illinois, from October 8 to 9, 1994. Part 1 of the International Seminar was successfully held in Coventry from January 2-3, 1994, hosted by the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist).

The aim of the International Seminar is to develop discussion on some important questions which face modern-day social and political developments. Part 2 will deal with the topic, *Communism and the Requirements of Modern Democracy*. Clear emphasis will be put on the need to carry the struggle which began against medievalism through to its logical conclusion by abolishing classes and class society.

The immediate task is to open the path for this progress of society. Modern democracy plays a crucial role in this direction as it brings to the fore those social and class forces in whose interest it is to abolish classes and class society.

Which are these social and class forces? What kind of democracy would they establish which would constitute the political power capable of abolishing classes and class society? What is the origin of this political power? What are the modern definitions required to bring in modern democracy? What is the relationship of this democracy with the universal demand for inclusion, for the recognition of the rights people have by dint of being human and what is the relationship of these human rights with the rights people have by dint of being workers or being women, etc.? What are the general inter-

ests of society and their relationship with collective and individual rights?

The programme for the International Seminar is worked out and organised by the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), the Communist Ghadar Party of India, the Communist Party of Trinidad and Tobago, the US Marxist-Leninist Organization and the Workers Party, USA. For Part I of the seminar in Coventry, Hardial Bains, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), presented the main paper and RCPB(ML), CGPI, CPI(ML) and USMLO and WPUSA spoke on the paper. A vigorous discussion continued throughout the seminar.

For Part 2, *Communism and the Requirements of Modern Democracy*, the

main paper will be presented by CGPI and all the other parties will also present their points of view. While the main paper will concentrate on the main thesis, discussions on related subjects will also take place.

Participation by all those who are interested is welcomed. Please contact the hosts, or one of the parties in their respective countries to request an invitation, because attendance will be by invitation only. Anyone interested in acquainting themselves with the programme of Part 2 of the seminar, or the proceedings from Part 1, can contact the hosts or parties listed below. The press will also be invited.

The programme will begin at 1:00 pm on October 8 and continue all day on October 9. Full details of the programme will be released in due course. An attendance fee will also be charged.

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Communist Ghadar
Party of India

Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist)

Communist Party of
Trinidad and Tobago

Renewal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act

IT has been reported in the press that John Major and John Smith met in secret last Wednesday to discuss the renewal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act which is due to be debated in the House of Commons this week.

The PTA was passed immediately after the Birmingham pub bombings of 1974. The Act gave police the power to hold suspects for up to seven days before they had to be brought before a court. It also introduced the unprecedented measure of allowing the Home Secretary to exclude a person living in northern Ireland, part of the territory of the UK, from entering Britain, and a number of other measures which amount to a systematic erosion of human rights. The Act has been used as a weapon to intimidate the whole Irish community living in Britain, and to divide

workers of British and Irish origin.

The miscarriages of justice which have occurred the cases of the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six and others have all been inextricably bound up with the use of the PTA to hold suspects long enough to extract confessions. The PTA has been shown to be an Act which has no grounds for being on the statute book of any civilised society.

In recent years, the Labour Party, which originally introduced the PTA in 1974, has voted against its renewal. Its vote has not been on the basis that the Act should be

repealed for denying the rights of a section of society, but rather on the basis of objections to particular clauses. Although it would have been welcome had John Smith met John Major to demand the repeal of the Act, the meeting was apparently requested by John Smith in order to ask John Major to revise it so that Labour could vote in favour of its renewal, so that the two parties could put on a "common front against terrorism".

It cannot be acceptable that such an Act should remain on the statute books. Its very existence is due to the British presence in part of Ireland, the ending of which is long overdue. And its use shows that British

occupation of part of Ireland has led to the increased denial of rights in Britain itself.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act is one of the pieces of legislation which must be thrown out lock, stock and barrel, alongside the withdrawal of British forces from Ireland. There is nothing else about the Act to discuss. Along with this, a timetable for withdrawal should be set and other accompanying measures carried out, such as the termination of all forms of Westminster jurisdiction over the north of Ireland and the release of all those political prisoners arrested as a consequence of the past 25 years of British rule in the six counties.

The nature of political power

Continued from page 1
hands of the people, the electorate. At the same time, a modern definition takes into account that political power is also a class power. Of the classes in society, it is the proletariat, the modern working class, which has the interest of ensuring that the people as a whole are empowered, that have decision-making power in society. And it is the working class that must hold political power in its hands to ensure that the whole electorate participate in governance and lawmaking, and exercise control over their lives.

It is almost a truism to say that the political system in Britain has become archaic. But unless the origins of political power are examined,

for example, it is not possible to appreciate the reasons for this. In a historical sense, the dominant power in society arose as the expression of a class interest, but assumed the appearance of a power imposed on society from outside itself. At the beginning of the 17th century, this political power was established as a one and indivisible force, as absolutism, personified in the person of the king, who justified being the sole wielder of power in that this power derived from God. Although the form of political power has changed, with the clash and struggle for supremacy of the different class forces, today it can still be said that constitutionally this indivisible power derives not

from the electorate but from God. And behind the form of Cabinet government which has the executive power handed to it by the monarch stand the dominant economic and financial interests in society. The function of this form of power is to marginalise the electorate and keep sovereign power away from them. In constitutional terms, the Royal Prerogative ensures that the supreme political power can always be used against the people.

For sovereign power to be placed in the hands of the people the basis for the archaic political system must be changed. When this is done, political power must be put on a rational basis, and derive from the people, with

elections as the instrument of establishing that power. As long as political parties come to power with the sole prerogative of selecting candidates, their role will be to deprive the people of power. The role of the working class must be to assert its claim to power, and lead the society in the renewal of the democratic process. The Marxist-Leninist party, as the party of the proletariat, has therefore a fundamentally different programme in terms of the reform of the political process to other political parties which do not want to challenge the basis of political power and empower the people, and recognise the human rights of all simply because of the fact of being human.

International Women's Day

Continued from page 1

sciousness of women that solutions must be found, that they should organise alongside all sections of people who are oppressed in order to bring about not only the complete emancipation of women but a socialist society where all the exploitation of persons by persons is ended.

If women are to change their situation, if they are to build a better society, women must take up the

tasks which are appropriate to the times. In this respect, women too are in the front ranks of developing the necessary discussions on the burning question of the day, the questions of *What kind of society? What kind of Party? and How to reach the goal of both men and women of a just and humane society?*

Workers' Weekly hails International Women's Day and wishes women in Britain and throughout the world success in their struggles.

Come and Hear RCPB(ML)!

Continued from page 1

about modern-day social and political developments. What is crucial at this time is pushing forward discussion on the vital questions necessary for the advance of the communist and workers' movement. And the Party is pledged to make a decisive contribution to this discussion in its all-round analysis of the national and international situation and in pointing the way forward.

The work in preparation

for the rally is in its final stages. Hundreds of vibrant posters for the rally have been put up in towns and cities, around factories, workplaces, educational institutions and in the communities. Leaflets have been distributed at these places too. Discussions have been held on the ideas of the Coventry Seminar among many sections of society.

Everyone interested is warmly encouraged to attend the rally.

PUBLIC RALLY

Celebrating the 15th Anniversary of

The Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

Come and Hear RCPB(ML) on the Present Situation!

FOR A SOCIALIST FUTURE!

Saturday March 19, 1994 2.00 pm

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1

(nearest tube: Holborn)

Programme

- 2.00 pm Registration and Welcome
- 2.30 pm Party's Analysis of Present Situation, for a Socialist Future
- 3.30 pm Interventions by Invited Organisations and Individuals
- 4.15 pm Messages of Greetings from the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist), the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) and Others
- 5.30 pm Break
- 7.00 pm Reception and Cultural Programme

For further details contact: Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)
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