

Vol, 2 No. 19 October 2021 ISSN 2055-7035

<http://cls-uk.org.uk/>

## Environmental Impact in the Caribbean

Looking back to the devastating 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti on August 14th 2021 (with this being the second major earthquake to hit the country in just over a decade), it is ever more apparent that changes in climate and extreme weather occurrences are not going away any time soon.

Linking this in with recent freak weather that battered the USA (Hurricane Ida), causing serious damage across various states, from Louisiana right through to the Eastern seaboard; New York, Pennsylvania etc, these ongoing problems are prevalent across various countries in the Americas, and they do not respect geographic borders. Hurricane Ida also caused major damage in the Cayman Islands, Colombia, Cuba, Venezuela, thus highlighting the need to address the ongoing issue of climate change.

It seems unjust that countries that are severely affected by climate disasters, should have to foot the bill for the cost that other more climatologically 'secure' countries are having on the natural world, as they all vie for control of global markets, natural resources and the like.

### Instability of the Planet's Ecosystem

Fifteen of the world's top polluting countries, are accelerating the elite of their populations towards all the glory and material success that can be afforded them, but at the cost of increasing instability of the planet's ecosystem.

Thinking on this; and referring back to countries such as Haiti; that has been ravaged by imperialism and slavery, as well as other difficulties since fighting for independence in 1791 (independence being attained in 1804), we must look at the impact of economically larger countries on nations such as Haiti, caused indirectly by climate change and directly through underdevelopment.

The earthquake in Haiti resulted in; 2,248 dead, 12,763 injured, 329 missing persons, 53,815 destroyed homes, 83,770 damaged homes, and 690,000 persons impacted.

For us on the other side of the world, it must be remembered that these numbers are not just data figures, but represent hundreds of thousands of reasons why more must be done by countries that 'sit at the table'.

### Hurricane Grace

Within days of the earthquake striking Haiti on August 14th, Hurricane Grace piled on yet more disaster in the following days, further delaying recovery efforts, as the country was hit by torrential rain, and those impacted by the fallout from the earthquake were left to fend for themselves against the elements.

As we near the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), due to take place in Glasgow, Scotland, from 31st October-12th November, it is way beyond time to ask; 'is enough being done to protect countries that are ravaged by climate disasters so frequently?'

In the pursuit of being at the top of the global agenda, the bigger economies taking part in the COP26 conference, have a moral obligation to make inroads on addressing climate change, not just setting open-ended climate targets, actually taking affirmative action; as the old saying goes; "less talk, more action".

### Criminal Underdevelopment

After criminal underdevelopment, the scourge of modern day/historic imperialism, enslavement and displacement of millions of peoples; by larger countries, it is only right that more is done to provide concrete solutions for the countries that have carried the trauma of said atrocities. Here and now is the time, not 2030, not 2050.

*Omar Leon*

## Climate change: COP26 is 'make or break' moment for dozens of island nations

Grenada's minister for climate and environment, Simon Stiell, says that the support of the international community is "absolutely essential" for the survival of Grenada and other developing nations.

*"And our right to thrive - survival is such a base term. I want more for my children than just to survive. I want more for my people. I want more for myself than just to survive. We need to be able to thrive."*

*"Lives are at risk... entire nations will be underwater, if we don't protect our people, if we don't protect our livelihoods."*

*"What price? What price do you put on lives? What price do you put on culture? Our right to exist?"*

### Climate funding

Poorer countries, backed by the UN, are asking that at least 50% of the promised annual \$100bn in climate funding from wealthy nations and institutions go directly to adaptation measures.

This includes building sea walls, moving communities away from rising sea levels, and better protecting critical infrastructure like roads, water and electricity supplies from storms, droughts, and saltwater intrusion.

Many low-lying nations view the Glasgow summit as a last chance to secure the help they need

Mr Stiell said: *"The extraordinary challenge we face in small island developing states such as Grenada, is that we do not have the resources to protect ourselves, we don't have the technology, we don't have anywhere to run."*

*"We don't have the financial economic capacity to absorb this, and let's remember the challenges that we are facing were not created here."*

### Responsibility

He issued a plea to the Group of 20 nations *"But those developed nations within the G20 who generate 80% of global emissions and constitute 85% of global GDP?"*

*"The responsibility lies there, the technology and the means to do what is necessary lies there, the financial resources to take that necessary action resides there."*

Although huge efforts are under way to both adapt to existing changes and to dramatically reduce carbon emissions, Grenada, on the most southerly tip of the crescent of Caribbean islands, is a nation under pressure.

The two pillars of its economy are tourism and agriculture and both are vulnerable to climate

change. Increasing heat and drought and unpredictable and intense rainfall alongside saltwater intrusion into the water supply and soil make agriculture increasingly precarious.

Sea level rises will eventually threaten lavish tourist resorts, and rising ocean temperatures threaten fish and the reefs that support them.

### Beach disappeared

Telescope Bay resident Patricia Richards had to leave after the beach in front of her home disappeared.

*"I feel angry because I know it is humans that caused climate change but they keep doing the wrong thing... right now the sea is up on us and it keeps on coming and there is no stopping it."*

Melon and pumpkin farmer Witfield Lyons said: *"We are now noticing there is so much rain during the dry season, unexpectedly so much sun during the rainy season so it's difficult as farmers to cope, we cannot really plan ... simply because the climate has changed."*

*"It's hard to be a farmer because of global warming."*

Grenada's government estimates that it will cost around \$350m USD to deliver all the protective adaptation measures, including protecting the capital's vulnerable harbour, that are needed. This represents around half of Grenada's entire annual GDP.

### \$70bn annually

But the UN Environment Programme estimates that the actual cost for global adaptation is closer to \$70bn annually, and will rise to \$140-300bn by 2030 and \$280-500bn by 2050.

The IPCC said in a recent assessment that no matter what humans do to reduce carbon emissions, lasting sea level rise will be irreversible for hundreds to thousands of years, and that the world is likely to experience 15-30cm of sea level rise through the middle of the century.

Under scenarios where emissions continue on their current path, with warming approaching 3-4C, it is projected to be closer to two feet.



# Return Drax Hall Estate in Barbados

In July, Dorset Stand up to Racism (SUTR) organised a demonstration to demand that Richard Drax, Member of Parliament for South Dorset, return the Drax Hall Estate in Barbados to the people of the island. Drax still owns the plantation land in Barbados on which his family wealth was built. He also owns 15,000 acres in Dorset, purchased with the profits of the business of slavery and with the compensation money that the slave-owners were paid on emancipation.

Responding to demands for the return of the Drax Estate made by Barbados MP and Special Envoy on Reparations and Economic Enfranchisement, Trevor Prescod, and from Chair of the Caribbean Reparations Committee, Sir Hillary Beckles, Dorset SUTR have been campaigning actively in Drax's own constituency. The demonstration in July, which attracted a good number of trade unionists, community activists and anti-racists, was addressed by Frances O'Grady, General Secretary of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) who argued for reparations as a moral and material debt that needs to be paid. Phil Marfleet, joint secretary of Dorset SUTR spoke of "A message to Richard Drax that we stand in solidarity with those people in the Caribbean who are saying it's time for slavery justice, that the Drax Hall plantation in Barbados be put to good purpose".

Lynn Hubbard, speaking at the International SUTR conference in October, told of the links being built between the campaign in Dorset and the campaign in Barbados, with twinning between schools, trade union branches and community groups. She said "People in Barbados are still paying the price and 80% of the food is imported" The campaign is calling for the buildings on the estate to be made into a museum and the land turned over to cultivation for the benefit of the whole community.

Phil added: "We're not going away. We're going to continue to confront Drax, develop international networks and work closely with the trade unions."



---

## Extracts from *The Book of Trespass, Crossing the Lines that Divide Us*

The Great Wall of Dorset is the longest brick wall in England. The wall is owned by the former army captain, current MP for South Dorset, Richard Grosvenor-Plunkett-Ernlé-Drax.

Fifteen years before the wall was built, Richard's ancestor John Sawbridge married into the Drax dynasty and, in so doing, he had acquired, the magnificent Charborough estate and the business that had propelled the Draxes into the premier league of English landowners: their sugar plantations in Barbados. Just before the wall was built in 1841, John Sawbridge had received a handsome dividend from his estates, not from his sugar, but from compensation for the emancipation of his slaves.

Henry Drax did to sugar what Henry Ford did to the car industry: he turned a small industry into a standardised mechanism of mass production. He itemised every component of sugar production and was the first to bring every element of sugar refinery, the growers, the boilers, the distillers, the refiners, onto one site.

The set of instructions he wrote in 1679 for his overseer Richard Harwood came to be seen as the standard textbook for the management of slave plantations. It was a meticulous description of the mechanics of production, where slaves are listed simply as cogs in the system, parts to be repurchased when broken.

*continued on next page*

In 1661 the *Act of Better Ordering and Governing of Negroes* was passed, the first of several attempts to drive a partition between the white and black workers. By banning miscegenation (sex between races) and giving the white workers privileges, it created an imbalance between the white servants and black slaves and linked the white underclass with their white superiors; it gave race a salience it never had before.

It was the start of a new era of slavery, one that veered from the economic principle of exploited labour to the quasi-scientific concocted hierarchy of race. The British had just legalised white supremacy.

Many of the slavers were returning home to translate their bloody money into neoclassical architecture. As many as 300 new manor houses were erected in this time, each designed to ingratiate itself within the established order of greatness, the 'old order' designed and presided over by the English aristocracy. Across England the wealth of the sugar plantations was being injected into English society, into buildings and infrastructure.

It is estimated that in 1765 there were forty MPs in Parliament with West Indian connections and, by 1784, twenty-nine MPs with direct East Indian connections. Down in Dorset at least six of Richard Drax's ancestors were MPs and the Beckfords held posts as sheriffs, aldermen, lord mayors and MPs.

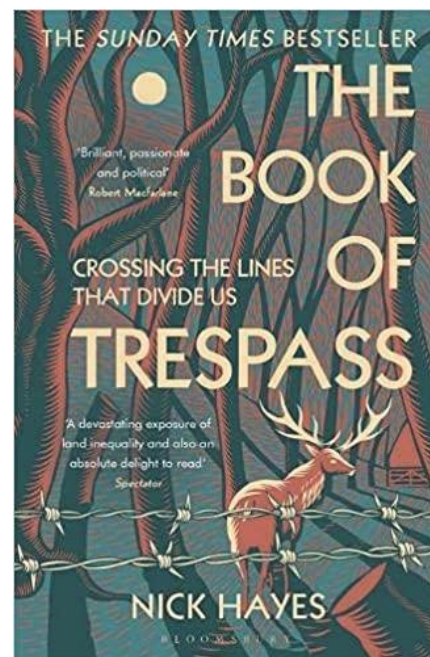
As slavery financed more walls around the commons of England, more and more country folk were corralled into the cities, into a new work regime that would spur the industrial revolution. The new money that had flooded England, brought in on the back of African and Indian labour, was the same money that partitioned English commoners from their livelihood and land.

These manor houses of England were always more than just homes: they were PR stunts. They communicated not just power, but rightful power, clean and pure. Today, they have become icons of 'Englishness', a tourist-board narrative of a great empire, a proud history, steam engines, top hats and globally acclaimed costume dramas.

With a little bit of digging, the truth of Drax's inheritance becomes ever starker. Not only does he still operate within a power and property bequeathed to him by slavery, but he still owns the original sugar plantation in Barbados, and visits his Jacobean manor house there every year. His link to slavery is not tangential, but direct, and current. Drax's ignorance is a wilful act. He knows the history, he lives within it, but he has hardened his eyes. For most of us, however, the colonial legacy is buried under the false narrative of emancipation; the white saviour complex is built into the architecture of Englishness, the stilts upon which national pride balances.

The superiority of the white race is a story that was shaped on the sugar plantations of the Caribbean. It has neither the moral nor scientific backing that it later claimed for itself, but was invented chiefly for economic ends: to justify the exploitation of free labour. The notion of race is as contrived as the walls it financed in England and, just like the walls, it stands to this day, dividing the land. While we continue to acknowledge the legitimacy of these brick walls, we continue to support the lie of white supremacy, of class superiority, that one type of person deserves a bigger and better share of the world than another. Black people have been the slaves of this lie, but for as long as white people continue to sustain its false narrative, they are its servants.

An apology is an acknowledgement of responsibility, a speech-act that changes the story. And it works as much for the speaker as the listener. Instead of dragging a nation out to the stocks for a public shaming, an apology is the moment the addict first looks into the mirror and truly sees themselves. It is the first step to recovery.



*London CLS supporters will be joining our comrades from Sustainable Hackney for these demonstrations*

**THE ERA OF INJUSTICE IS OVER**

# **GLOBAL DAY FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE**

A stylized illustration on a dark purple background. At the top right, a large, bright yellow sunburst with radiating lines. Below it, several stylized human figures in various colors (red, white, blue) are shown from behind, holding up large, multi-petaled flowers in shades of yellow, orange, and pink. The flowers have long, thin stems and many small petals. The overall scene is one of collective action and hope.

**FRI 5TH & SAT 6TH NOV  
HACKNEY SHOWS  
SOLIDARITY WITH THE  
WORLD!**

**Fri 5th: Divest from fossil fuels rally  
outside Hackney Town Hall from  
12.30 to 1.30pm**

**Sat 6th: Join the big march for the  
global day of action for climate  
justice.**

**Assemble at 10.30am in Shoreditch  
Park  
to walk/ cycle/ travel together to  
Bank Of England for midday to start  
the march.**

**Any questions please contact:  
[hcc@sustainablehackney.com](mailto:hcc@sustainablehackney.com)**

**COP<sup>21</sup>  
COALITION 26**

# Edmonton incinerator

## Climate protesters block North Circular

*Enfield Black Lives Matter and Extinction Rebellion* from 7 North London Boroughs are collaborating with local trade unionists in a campaign against the rebuilding of a giant incinerator in Edmonton, North London.

This new incinerator will pump an estimated 700 thousand tonnes of CO2 into the atmosphere every year, into one of the most deprived and diverse areas of the country. (In contrast, the government recently rejected an incinerator in Cambridge as it wasn't in keeping with the character of local buildings.) The toxic air pollution will damage the health of local people and destroy the planet at the same time. You can find out much more information here: <https://stop-edmonton-incinerator.org/>

Traffic came to a standstill on London's North Circular Road as campaigners took to the streets to protest against a new incinerator.

Climate activists, anti-racists, trade unionists and local residents marched to the planned site of the new Edmonton incinerator holding up traffic on part of the busy North Circular Road.

The event on Saturday 25th September was part of a national day of action against waste incineration that saw protests in several cities across the UK.

Opponents of the incinerator warn it will release carbon dioxide and other pollutants that can cause health problems.

### Inequality

Delia Mattis, from *Black Lives Matter Enfield*, described the protest as "hugely successful" and said the number of people taking part was "in the hundreds".

She said: "It was kind of historic, because it was clear that the people of Edmonton had never seen anything like that before, and it will encourage them to know there are people prepared to march on their behalf in solidarity."

"My concern is around disproportionality. These [incinerators] are three times more likely to be



*built in areas of great deprivation. This area will have a population of black and brown people and other racial and ethnic groups.*

*"Attached to that, we have got health inequality and Covid. Black people, we know, are 50% more likely to die from Covid than white people. It is a respiratory disease, [so] it is obvious that air pollution will be a problem."*

Delia added campaigners were tired of lobbying and being ignored, and warned they were prepared to continue taking disruptive action.

Andy Thomson, from *Extinction Rebellion Waltham Forest*, said the march had disrupted traffic on the North Circular for up to an hour.

He said: "We are angry. We feel the community has not been consulted properly."

### Burn, Pollute, Emit

*"On the one hand, councils are declaring climate emergencies. On the other hand, they are investing in operations to burn waste, pollute the atmosphere and emit carbon dioxide for what would be five decades."*

*"The [current] incinerator is at the end of its life. We are in a climate crisis. We should not be investing in the same polluting policies."*

This protest was the latest event in a growing wave of local opposition to the scheme. Earlier this month, campaigners staged a "die in" demonstration outside Enfield Civic Centre to protest against the council's involvement in the scheme. Scores of residents and campaigners have also written a joint letter to the council's chief executive calling for a review of the incinerator.

The pressure is working, there is only one remaining bidder (Spanish company Acciona), and they are now thinking of pulling out.

An inspiring day and an object lesson on how to fight for climate justice and against environmental racism.

*Thanks to ENFIELD DISPATCH and REEL NEWS*



# Digital identity, rights and citizenship in Latin America and the Caribbean: who are we including and who is being left behind?

by Eve Hayes de Kalaf (Centre for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of London)

Over the past three decades, a silent global revolution has been taking place which will have an impact on every living person on this planet. Far-reaching and transformative, digital identification systems have grown to become an integral component of everyday life.

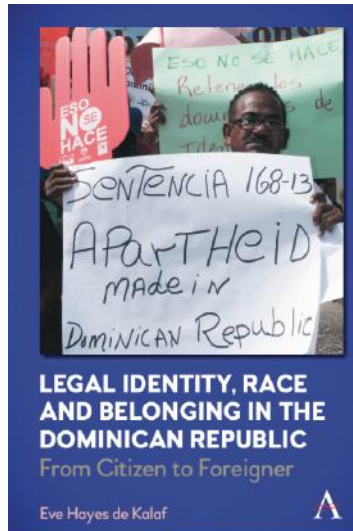
Big tech companies, NGOs, legal specialists and governments are embracing the benefits of digital ID with considerable zeal. Their fundamental argument is that citizens, particularly the income poor, need to be correctly documented. Effective ID will help those included in these systems unlock their fundamental rights, thus facilitating access to essential state services such as healthcare, welfare and the financial sector.

Debates on identification measures, and the technologies that support them, are typically couched within a discourse of belonging, social inclusion and the universal right to a legal and, increasingly, digital identity. Now a central component in all development planning, access to social protection is wholly dependent on channelling assistance to those who hold the correct ID. Ambitiously, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are aiming to provide over one billion people with evidentiary proof of their legal existence by 2030.

Yet emerging research is providing some uncomfortable insights into the use and abuse of these modern-day identity-based development 'solutions'. Earlier this year, Privacy International expressed concerns that digital identification is being used to discriminate against ethnic and religious minorities, noting:

"By virtue of their design, these systems inevitably exclude certain population groups from obtaining an ID and hence from accessing essential resources to which they are entitled."

Although today large-scale efforts to document populations in Latin America are hailed a resounding success, historically identity/identities, race and constructs of belonging in the region were consistently (re)imagined, hierarchically structured and/or (mis)used for political and economic gain. Colonial regimes, for example, relied heavily on complex caste systems, racial categorisations and blanqueamiento (the process of whitening the race). They implemented these practices as a means to control, dominate and enslave populations. For centuries, Indigenous peoples, the Afro-descended and the income



poor, especially women, were systematically excluded from the privileges of formal citizenship and treated as non-belongers in their country of birth.

My new book 'Legal Identity, Race and Belonging in the Dominican Republic: From Citizen to Foreigner' highlights some of the limitations and problems with the en masse roll-out of identification practices. I illustrate how efforts to provide populations with proof

of their legal existence resulted in the retroactive exclusion of hundreds of thousands of (largely) Haitian-descended citizens from the Dominican civil registry. These practices not only affected undocumented populations but also had a significant impact on persons who already held some form of state-issued national ID. While persons born to Haitian migrants had a legitimate claim to recognition as Dominicans, including the paperwork to prove this status, the authorities refused to provide them with a new biometric identification card. One woman told me about the problems she started encountering when registry officials refused to recognise the validity of her Dominican citizenship and instead retroactively (re)categorised her as a Haitian national:

*"I told someone [waiting for registrations] that I didn't want documents from immigration. What am I going to do with a document that's meant for foreigners? What am I going to do if I'm not allowed to get my ID card? About two months ago, I went to buy a phone and they didn't want to sell me one. They told me I couldn't get a SIM card because I wasn't registered [as a Dominican]. There are a lot of things I've wanted to do but can't. I can't get a good job with this card because they tell me I don't appear in the system. I'm not allowed to vote."*

Read the full article here: <https://bit.ly/3CdCeY9>

**Book Launch - Legal Identity, Race and Belonging in the Dominican Republic: From Citizen to Foreigner**

1 December 2021, 6.00pm - 7.30pm

*Institute of Modern Languages Research*

More details:

<https://bit.ly/3Bddoqa>

## A Journey with Bernard Coard

What has the last 50 years taught us since the publication of *How the West Indian Child is made educationally sub-normal in the British School System*



### A CONVERSATION BETWEEN BERNARD COARD AND DAVE NEITA

Zoom meeting on

**Thursday, 4 November 2021 from 19:00 to 22:00 United Kingdom time**

Please register at

<https://bit.ly/3phZktj>



*Bernard Coard during his interview in Subnormal: A British Scandal.*

The ground-breaking study by Bernard Coard, *How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Sub-normal in the British School System*, was first published in 1971. It provided an understanding to Caribbean and working-class parents of the obstacles they faced in the limited educational opportunities open to their children and led to their resistance against this system. The 50th anniversary edition was formally launched by our Zoom meeting in March 2021 to enthusiastic reviews.

Bernard Coard has agreed to deliver a follow-up session to the launch. It will be

by Zoom, scheduled for Thursday 4th November at 7 pm UK time. The theme will be: “What has the last 50 years taught us since the publication of ‘How the West Indian Child ...?’” with questions such as how have we responded since then, what must we do now, what forms of struggle can be used by black and white parents to develop an effective model of education for their children and how do we mobilise social capital, amongst other things.

This event will be a historic milestone, starting with the original publication, the production of its many editions and the launch event in March 2021. Participants will be part of this journey.

Bernard Coard states in the anniversary edition of *How The West Indian Child...*,

*“Back in 1971 when this booklet was first published, the principal Weapons of Mass Suppression, or WMS, of Black Caribbean children’s educational and life prospects were the ESN school, ESN streams and ‘Remedial’ classes in regular schools. New versions of WMS appeared over the ensuing decades, as the original model, and each replacement, met with Black Caribbean resistance and even open protest. In each case, the objective of these ‘new’ iterations was not to concentrate more resources and more experienced and skilled teachers to meet the needs of the children designated as ‘in Special Educational Need (SEN)’, but rather to assign less of these resources, and less experienced teachers to their care. It was a dustbin solution, not a lifting-the-child-up operation. It was a life sentence, not a life-line to greater opportunities.*

*The last 50 years has taught us not to rely on pleas to or the goodwill of those running the system to effect the changes our children need. Just as we did a half-century ago and since, we have to accept that future progress for our children on all fronts depends on our actions, our initiatives...”*

### Dave Neita converses with Bernard Coard

*Grenada – Forward Ever* is now pleased to announce that it has been able to secure the participation of Dave Neita in this event. Dave, as he wishes to be called, spoke at the launch earlier this year. He has agreed to engage with Bernard Coard on the question of what Coard believes could be the route to better education for black and white parents whose children are suffering race and class discrimination in school.

Organised by ***Grenada Forward Ever***





# THE POLICE CRIME SENTENCING AND COURTS BILL 2021

a view from our friends at *Extinction Rebellion*



The Police Crime Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Bill is wide ranging in content and its intentions are controversial. It gives the police increased powers to stop and search which will impact disproportionately on black youth. It increases the sentencing guidelines for assaults on emergency workers and in doing so, takes no account of mental health issues or the experiences of women subjected to domestic violence. The provisions in the Bill restricting the rights of travellers have been labelled racist and draconian. This article, however, concentrates specifically on the impact of the provisions of the Bill on the right to protest.

## **Police Power**

The detail of the specific provisions relating to protest are contained in clauses 55 to 60 of the PCSC Bill. They propose increasing the powers of the police to place conditions on the right to public processions and assemblies but without detailing what those conditions might be. They introduce a new consideration for the police to take into account – the level of noise. This requires the police to determine whether the level of noise is such that it could cause “serious disruption to the activities of an organisation which are carried on in the vicinity of the procession” or such that there may be a relevant or significant “impact” on persons in the vicinity.

## **Peaceful Protest is Noisy**

The very nature of peaceful protest is that it is noisy – whether through chanting, shouting, or Samba / drumming / musical support. Having put into place their own conditions on the protest assembly or procession, the police may immediately arrest protestor(s). While legal challenges to the lawfulness of the arrests and prosecutions may result in acquittals, this is no consolation to the protestor whose rights are abruptly curtailed by arrest.

The current provisions of the Public Order Act allow for defendants to argue lack of knowledge when prosecuted for violating any conditions imposed by the police on the protest. The PCSC Bill disallows this defence by making it an offence where the person “ought to have known” of the conditions –effectively criminalising protestors who inadvertently commit a breach by being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

## **Unrealistic**

The police themselves find it difficult to understand how to exercise their current powers. It is unrealistic to assume that officers – often following police guidance and handbooks – will fare any better when their powers are increased as proposed by the PCSC Bill. The police’s use of force during the vigil for Sarah Everard (the woman murdered by a serving police officer in March 2021), the Bristol protests to Kill the Bill, also in March, and the recent Impossible Rebellion protests by Extinction Rebellion in London in August, reinforces the very real concern that to give the police more powers will deter peaceful protestors from exercising their rights. The duty of the police is to support and promote the right to peaceful protest, but recent events give the public no confidence that such rights will be upheld, rather the reverse. This represents a serious erosion of one of the only ways in which citizens can express their dissatisfaction in a democratic society.

## **Serious Disruption**

The Bill gives the Home Secretary the power to make regulations defining what would amount to “serious disruption to the activities of an organisation” or “serious disruption to the life of the community. This political power can be used without scrutiny by Parliament which should never be permitted in a properly functioning democracy.

Union activity such as pickets and protests outside places of work may be impacted by these proposed changes. By relying on the “serious disruption to the activities of organi-

## THE POLICE CRIME SENTENCING AND COURTS BILL

*continued*

sations”, these powers could be used to clamp down on commonplace union activity. The right to picket and protest is a fundamental human right which is safeguarded by the ILO Convention (Article 3), the European Social Charter (Article 6(4)) and the ECHR (Articles 10, 11 and 14).

The right to peaceful protest must be defended in a functioning democracy. Protests are noisy and inconvenient, but are an integral part of the exercise of our rights under articles 10 and 11 ECHR. The PCSC Bill is neither necessary nor proportionate. Given the 80-seat majority in the House of Commons, there is every likelihood that this Bill will be passed into law by the end of this year. Our voices need to be heard loud and clear now before this draconian Bill seeks to silence us.

*Nicola Harries* Extinction Rebellion

---

## Reparations - Meeting Bristol's Responsibilities

*(Introduction by CLS President at the Zoom meeting on 14 October 2021)*

There is a short introduction about the history of CLS in the notes of the meeting that you will already have seen. I would like to add that we are an anti-imperialist organisation with no paid officers, and we depend entirely on membership fees and donations for our activities. We have for more than 40 years been agitating on issues concerning the peoples of the entire Caribbean region and its diaspora. We are an outward-looking organisation and pay close attention to world events and actively support the Pan-Africanist Movement and other liberation organisations.

We applaud and celebrate the revolutions in the Caribbean region, including the Grenada, Cuban, Nicaraguan, Venezuelan and the Bolivian revolutions. We work in solidarity with all Latin American support groups in the UK.

Several of our founding members had first-hand experience of anti-colonial struggles and were deeply involved in the politics of the region and the wider world. Some, including Lionel Jeffery and Richard Hart, were imprisoned for their efforts to bring about change in the region.

We see ourselves as an activist organisation and over the years we have engaged with many issues - too numerous to mention in the brief time we have now. But a few that I would consider victories are worth mentioning.

A campaign against the State of New York dumping its waste in Guyana was successful, and may well have contributed to the end of the

Burnham regime.

Our support for the campaign to overturn the death sentences of the Grenada 17 was a long and hard-fought victory. Our honorary president, the late Richard Hart, served as Grenada's Minister of Justice. He managed to escape the clutches of the invading Americans to continue the fight to save the lives of those who were sentenced to be hanged.

Over the years, we have taken up and protested many issues in all territories in the Caribbean. Among our ongoing priorities are:

- \* Reparations for slavery and Native genocide
- \* Justice for Haiti
- \* Action on environmental issues
- \* Decolonising the curriculum.
- \* The Windrush Scandal

We are encouraged that Bristol University has put reparations for slavery on their agenda. We pay tribute to the intellectuals who join our fight for justice in the region.

We recognise there are risks for academics, as the establishment becomes nervous when intellectuals take a stand on issues affecting the masses. There are many academics who have done stellar work in the region and whose works has informed our struggles. Time permits only brief mention of a few who have made lasting contributions.

C. L. R. James for his book *The Black Ja-*

*cobins* and for his work on West Indies Federation, Eric Williams for Capitalism and Slavery and Walter Rodney for his ground-breaking work *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* and his *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881-1905*. Rodney was disliked by the Jamaican establishment for venturing out of the University of the West Indies to "ground" with the Rastas in the "dungle". He was refused re-entry into Jamaica on his return from a conference in Canada, whereupon the Rastas rioted for two weeks, setting on fire several buses and property. Rodney eventually returned home to take up the job promised to him at the University of Guyana. The Government blocked his appointment and Rodney joined with the Working People's Alliance ... and (it's a long story) finally they assassinated him on 13 June 1980.

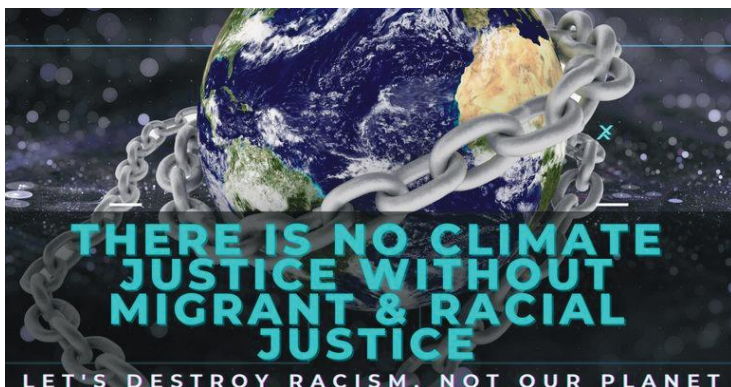
We applaud Professor Catherine Hall for her work on creating a website that provides among other things a list of the slave owners who benefited from the £20 million paid as compensation for the loss of their slaves at the time of emancipation. I need not remind listeners that the formerly enslaved people received not a penny.

Finally, we celebrate Sir Hilary Beckles the Vice Chancellor of the West Indies for his ongoing work on reparations and especially for his book *Britain's Black Debt*, which crystalises the moral and legal claim for reparations for slavery. We pay tribute to his "conversational" skills at getting Glasgow University to make reparations to the University of the West Indies. We believe these victories are but stepping-stones toward the final victory of a settlement with the British Government.

We hope that this historical event with Bristol University will open the door to lead to a similar outcome with Glasgow University.

I thank you

*Luke Daniels*



### About this event

On 2 March 2021 Bristol City Council passed a resolution on the need for 'Atone-ment and Reparations for Bristol's Role in the Transatlantic Traffic of Enslaved Afrikans'. This issue has been taken up by the University of Bristol and many of those in communities that make up the city: it is still to be resolved. The issue of reparations is also a live one in the Caribbean islands to which many slaves were transported and one strongly supported by Caribbean Labour Solidarity and its members in the UK and internationally.

The impact of slavery and racism and the need for reparations is a feature of many contemporary cultural forms that have the potential to reach people for whom international law and political resolutions have little resonance.

Hosted by the University of Bristol's Migration Mobilities Bristol and Centre for Black Humanities during Black History Month..

Chair: **Jessica Moody**, Centre for Black Humanities, University of Bristol, and author of '*Off the Pedestal: The Fall of Edward Colston*'.

Introduction: **Bridget Anderson**, Director of Migration Mobilities Bristol, University of Bristol.

Keynote speaker:

His Excellency **David Comissiong**, Barbados Ambassador to CARICOM and author of *It's the Healing of the Nation: The Case for Reparations in an Era of Recession and Re-colonisation*.

Panel:

**Cleo Alberta Lake**, Former Lord Mayor of Bristol (2018/2019), Bristol Legacy Steering Group.

**Madu Ellis**, Co-Convener, Afrikan ConneXions Consortium.

**Luke Daniels**, President of Caribbean Labour Solidarity.

**Roger MacKenzie**, General Secretary of Liberation and former Assistant General Secretary of Unison.

Performers:

**Alexander D Great**, the UK's leading contemporary Calypsonian.

**Levi Tafari**, performance poet, consciousness raiser and urban griot.

# Decolonising Education

*Caribbean Labour Solidarity* has joined the ongoing campaign to Decolonise the Curriculum of the United Kingdom's constituent nations.

We recognise that the British Empire has bestowed a bitter legacy on sections of the working classes in the UK and the former colonies. We seek to maintain and expand solidarity with Black workers and their allies in the Caribbean as well as being part of the anti-racist struggle in Britain.

We believe that the current curriculum in the UK's education system, and the knowledge vested in other bodies, is extremely inadequate, with glaring gaps in the knowledge imparted to others. This is harmful to all in the United Kingdom and harms the social fabric of the society. Correcting these will benefit all and will improve community relations and contribute positively to other areas. CLS will join with other organisations campaigning to change the curriculum by providing support to individuals and organisations including; the supply of information and other resources. The dedicated website can be found at <http://decolonising.cls-uk.org.uk/>.

One of our primary tasks will be to expand our website to provide information, and other knowledge resources, which shall be open to all.

If you wish to help, contact us at [info@decolonising.cls-uk.org.uk](mailto:info@decolonising.cls-uk.org.uk)

## Some dates to Remember

by *Raphael Andrews*.

As time passes and we recall special occasions and their times or dates, we like to celebrate: birthdays, wedding anniversaries, historical events.

The biggest celebration of the year is Christmas, 25th December, commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ. However, the first point to make is that this date of birth is unconfirmed by historical records and likely to be an approximation. Secondly, it was already a day of big celebration in northern Europe, called the festival of light, since that was darkest day of the year, the winter solstice in the Roman calendar. So, the church decided to take it over and make it their day too - cunning fellows, Christians.

Among other days that are celebrated is 4th July, a national holiday for people in the USA, the date on which they had a revolution in 1776 and decided they no longer wanted to pay Britain taxes or be ruled by a monarch (yet they did want to carry on using enslaved labour and seizing the land of the native population). So, they had a war called the American War of Independence and proclaimed that all men were free (unless they were of African heritage or from the indigenous First Nations).

The French also had a revolution, but they celebrate 14th July. The slogan used for that revolution was "Freedom, Equality and Fraternity", so they freed all the slaves and ended slavery in the year 1794. Nevertheless, Napoleon decided that ending all that free labour and wealth was a bad idea and re-introduced slavery in all the French colonies that had sugar, as they needed slaves to grow and cut the sugar cane.

However, the people of the French colony of Saint Domingue, later Haiti, decided they wanted the same freedom as the French and revolted against French rule. They declared independence on 18th May 1791, when the first black republic was created - another date everyone should also know, but few do. Did you know that Haiti was forced to pay compensation to the French slaveowners for the loss of "property" (enslaved workers), amounting to the huge sum of \$150 million dollars?

The British, after years of bitter argument, abolished the slave trade on 25th March 1807, another date to remember. However, full emancipation for all in the British Caribbean was not granted until 1st August 1838.

The last nation to officially abolish legal slavery was Mauritania in 1981. Although the law was passed, it was not enforced or even followed, so slavery still carried on illegally. In 2015, the UK passed the Modern Slavery Act outlawing ALL forms of slavery anywhere in UK.

So, while these are a few dates you can choose from to note and celebrate, do not forget: an estimated 40 million people are still forced labourers in the world today, despite all the freedom that so many people celebrate each year.