Rupture Magazine Issue 16 ‘Culture War’

Despite – or maybe because of – the overall weakness of the far left, there is no shortage of left-wing journals. Many are written by (and for?) academics and whilst these can often be informative and useful, their relevance to the actual struggles of the oppressed and exploited is not always clear. Others focus on more immediate issues but are often restricted to advancing a rather stale and narrow ‘party line’. The existence of a journal which combines topical analysis with political relevance – in an attractive and readable format – is therefore something to be celebrated. *Rupture* is one such journal, and the comrades of RISE in Ireland deserve to be warmly congratulated for bringing it out.

The latest number of the journal – Issue 16, Summer 2025 – contains a variety of articles, several of which focus on the so-called ‘culture war’ and on the need for the left to engage with and champion – not avoid or downplay – the struggles of the oppressed. These include a piece by Paul Murphy, TD, responding to a recent book with the somewhat ominous title ‘Class War – Not Culture War’. In this article Murphy warns of the danger of ‘economism’ and reminds us of Lenin’s dictum that, above all, socialists should aspire to be ‘tribunes of the people’. It concludes:

“[t]he working class will not be unified on the basis of a rational appeal to put aside other issues and unite solely on the economic issues – but only on the basis of a consistent struggle against all oppression … [w]e cannot win the class war by abandoning the cultural front”.

Other articles exploring the same theme include ‘Stay Woke’ by Comrade RS; ‘Struggle Outside the Workplace – Women in the Vanguard’ by Jess Spear; and a piece on the need for trans-

inclusive feminism by a group of comrades from *Anti-Capitalist Resistance.*

In addition to the above, the current issue also includes a helpful introduction to the relevance of Gramsci to the development of socialist strategy by a comrade from the USA; an article on the shortcomings of some 'orthodox' interpretations of historical materialism; a short piece of creative writing; a review of the popular TV show 'Severance'; and, finally, an interview with an author of a new book on the political history of rap icon Tupac Shakur.

All in all, the latest issue of Rupture contains some great articles and these alone would justify a subscription but – and this is important too – the physical magazine is also beautifully designed – with lots of charming visuals – and it's clear that a lot of thought has been put into both its content and its appearance. At a time when many of us get almost all our political content online, the pleasure of a well-produced and attractive journal with good politics shouldn't been underestimated. Do yourself a favour and get hold of a copy!

Subscriptions to Rupture Magazine including free postage to Scotland, England and Cymru are available here

RISE is an Irish Revolutionary Marxist organisation and a Permanent Observer of the Fourth International.

Uprising or Dictatorship in

Ecuador? International Solidarity Needed Now!

In the afternoon of Thursday, 18 September, the new, apparently right-wing leadership of CONAIE, Ecuador's powerful Indigenous movement, bowed to pressure and called an indefinite national strike – in protest at the removal of subsidies for diesel fuel, a move set to almost double the price of most basic necessities overnight.

On Friday morning, President Daniel Noboa announced plans to call a Constitutional Assembly to rewrite the Constitution – he'd been pushing for a series of reforms that would remove or weaken environmental and labour rights enshrined in the progressive Constitution of 2008, and allow him to invite U.S. troops to operate on Ecuadorean soil, supposedly in his 'war on drugs'.

Late on Friday night, President Noboa sent police to surround and evacuate the Constitutional Court as it deliberated on the constitutionality of his moves – it had recently ruled out of order several of his attempts in this direction.

Ecuador's social movements immediately called for a mobilisation on Saturday morning in defence of the Constitutional Court.

This latest standoff comes at the end of a week of mounting confrontation between the increasingly far-right government and Ecuador's social movements, with Indigenous communities in the lead.

Days of protest against a big mining project in southern Ecuador, which threatens the region's entire ecological balance, especially its water sources, culminated in a huge demonstration on Tuesday. Some 100,000 people marched through Cuenca, the country's third city. The government was forced to

back off, suspending the project at least temporarily, while promising to press ahead with other big mining projects in communities like Palo Quemado and Las Naves, where both resistance and repression have been intense.

In parallel, the government announced the sharp increase in the price of diesel, as part of its deal with the International Monetary Fund. The reaction was similar to that of October 2019, when a fuel price hike triggered an Indigenous-led uprising. Strike action by transport unions was soon joined by Indigenous communities blocking highways and confronting the police. Students marched through the capital, Quito.

Repression has also increased. As the government continues to use its supposed war on drugs to justify its attacks on social movements, there have been gruesome reports of troops torturing detained activists. But the Indigenous movement has also been exercising its significant social power. When secret service agents apparently tried last month to run over Leonidas Iza – the former president of CONAIE and figurehead of radical resistance – they were promptly detained by the local community and submitted to Indigenous Justice, another right protected by the current Constitution. They were not harmed in any way, but they were subjected to several days of close questioning, in the course of which they revealed remarkable details of the security services' surveillance of social movements, including the use of infiltrators and fake journalists. As a result of the agents' detention, Leonidas himself is now being charged with kidnapping.

The same Indigenous social power was on display on Thursday when the new President of CONAIE, Marlon Vargas, announced the indefinite nationwide stoppage. With regional stoppages and road blocks spreading in the days before, President Noboa had declared a state of emergency in several provinces. Now, alongside the strike, Marlon Vargas declared a 'community emergency', meaning the army and police would not be allowed

to enter any Indigenous community or territory.

This represents a significant shift in the balance of forces within the Indigenous movement. Only two months ago, Vargas was elected at the head of a coalition of centrist and overtly right-wing forces, promising to do business with the Noboa government and promote national unity. It seemed like a serious defeat for the radical forces in the Indigenous movement, led by Leonidas Iza. But in recent weeks, reality has undermined that ‘unity’. The Amazonian section of CONAIE, Confeniae, which Vargas once led, and several provincial federations, announced they were breaking off relations with the government. Local communities were already taking direct action.

Events have been unfolding quickly and it is still too early to tell whether the national stoppage will develop into a full-blown rebellion, the third in six years. Much will depend on what happens within the leadership of the Indigenous movement. Nor is it yet clear how far President Noboa – who retains significant support among parts of the population, even though his popularity has fallen – will go in riding roughshod over Ecuador’s already weak democratic institutions. This is not yet a dictatorship, as some on the left have been suggesting. But it may be heading in that direction.

In any case, the people of Ecuador need international solidarity – Now!

Iain Bruce, 20 September 2025