

Wagner boss dies in plane crash over Russia

by our Eastern European
Affairs correspondent

The disgraced head of the Wagner mercenary company dies in a plane crash north of Moscow. Russian troops hold the line in the south and push back in the north of the Donbas. The war in the air continues with wave after wave of Russian missile attacks on military targets throughout Ukraine whilst the Ukrainians respond with drone raids in Crimea and Moscow. And Vladimir Zelensky calls on Balkan leaders to help Ukraine open up a Danubian river “grain corridor” to by-pass Russia’s Black Sea blockade.

Zelensky was in Athens this week for an EU-Balkans summit called to discuss the region’s “European” future. Ukraine is not a Balkans country nor is it a member of the European Union. He was, nevertheless, a welcome guest at the gathering in Greece whose only thing is common is that they are all satellites in one form or another of the USA.

They all dutifully pledged their support for the “integrity of Ukraine”, and Greece even offered to



• Holding the line on the southern front

train Ukrainian pilots to fly the F-16 jets that the Dutch and the Danes are giving to the puppet regime in Kiev.

These US warplanes are the latest “game-changers” in the NATO play-book, but whether they will turn the tables on the Russians remains to be seen.

The new NATO missiles failed to change the balance of forces on the front and the Challenger tanks that were supposed to smash through the Russian lines this summer are now just burnt-out hulks in no-man’s land.

Back in Moscow, the government has launched a criminal investigation into the death of Wagner boss Yevgeny Prigozhin in a plane crash on Wednesday.

Prigozhin was flying from Moscow to St Petersburg with his business partner and their bodyguards when the plane went down some 300 km north of Moscow. Although some bodies have yet to be recovered, all 10 passengers and crew are believed to be dead. The

disgraced leader of Russia’s ‘foreign legion’ had only recently returned to Russia after going into voluntary exile in Belarus follow his abortive coup in June.

Eyewitnesses say the plane was hit by a missile. Others say they heard an explosion before the plane went down. Perhaps a bomb was planted in the landing gear area. The fact that the pilot said nothing suggests a sudden loss of consciousness due to de-pressurisation that would occur following a blast in the fuselage.

Some say it was Putin’s pay-back for his former protégé’s treachery. Others believe Prigozhin’s jet was sabotaged by the Ukrainians – blown up on the eve of Ukraine’s independence day as a ‘gift to Zelensky’ from Ukraine’s intelligence service. But Zelensky says “We had nothing to do with it. Everybody realises who has something to do with it”, whilst his master in Washington pointed the finger at Putin. “I don’t know

a body-double, to enable him to disappear into obscurity with his money.

The Wagner chief usually used two private jets, switching between them for security reasons so that no-one beyond a tiny circle would know which plane he would be on at any given time.

So now there’s speculation about the whereabouts of Artem Stepanov, one of Prigozhin’s personal pilots, who had access to the planes but wasn’t part of the crew for this final, fatal flight as he was on a hiking holiday in Siberia. The police are now looking out for him.

Whether it was sabotage or simply a tragic accident will, however, only be answered by the official investigation into the crash.

FUND

New Worker supporters raised £570 for the fighting fund pushing the August appeal up to £2,460. We now need £1,040 to hit our £3,500 target and we’ve got another seven campaigning days to do it.

We are the only communist weekly in Britain and we survive only through the struggle and sacrifice of our supporters like a long-standing reader in Deal who donated £100, the Dagenham reader who gave us £45 and the Notts supporter who sent in £25.

Running a communist journal is an expensive business. The fighting fund subsidises the cover price to make the *New Worker* affordable on the street. But the cost of paper, ink and general supplies is rising in line with inflation. That’s why we need more and more financial support to keep our paper going and to reach out to a wider audience across the country.

All donations, big or small, help keep our presses rolling. Please send your donation to: New Worker Fund, PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the ‘New Worker’.

To save a stamp you can also use your credit or debit card to send contributions here:
<http://newworker.org/ncpcentral/fightingfund.html>

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THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Another world is possible...

World leaders gathered in Johannesburg this week for the annual summit of the BRICS bloc. Named after Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – the key players that set it up some 14 years ago – the bloc has become a pivot for the Global South in the struggle to end the economic and political stranglehold of Anglo-American and Franco-German imperialism in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

At the conference in South Africa the Chinese President, Xi Jinping, said China was willing to deepen solidarity and co-operation with other emerging markets and developing countries to make the international order more just and equitable. “Emerging countries are becoming more and more relevant in the international arena. This summit will very much contribute to the shaping of a new global economic and political order. It will help change the current situation when it comes to international relations,” the Chinese communist leader said.

The presidents of People’s China, India, Brazil and South Africa were all there together with leaders from all over the Global South because BRICS is not just a forum for used to be called the ‘Third World’ – it is a platform for concrete economic and diplomatic co-operation. Co-operation that led to the establishment of the New Development Bank in 2015 and the development of a common diplomatic front to demand the South’s rightful share of the fruits of the global market.

Some 85 per cent of the world’s population live in the Global South – the ‘developing’ world that is still largely excluded from the international institutions set up by US imperialism after the Second World War with the support of the weaker imperialist forces who rely on American might to defend their global interests now that their colonial empires have long gone.

The people of the Global South are sick and tired of the fact that the Americans and their minions in the West have economically dominated the world for decades, forcing and imposing transactions in dollars with the fear that failure to comply with US directives would result in economic and financial sanctions or even ‘regime change’ à la Iraq and Libya.

In contrast, BRICS is open to helping countries develop, as well as promoting investment and trade without strings or preconditions. BRICS is fighting against the concept of a new Cold War and is opening the possibility of building a fairer and more equitable international economic order from which the world can benefit. The BRICS bloc is helping to build the multi-polar world that will put an end to the US dream of the ‘new world order’ and world domination.

No wonder Argentina, Egypt, Iran, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia have applied to join the group. Many more will follow in the future.

A new world is indeed possible, but it’s not the EU or the hell-hole of the USA. It’s the world being built now in the new institutions of the Global South and Russia that offer an even playing field to all countries to trade and peacefully resolve disputes, to build a better future for everyone on the planet.

Doing Britain’s dirty work

by Ilya Tsukanov

A military-diplomatic source claims British intelligence has prepared a 100-strong “sabotage hit squad” to send to Africa on missions against Russia-friendly governments.

According to the source’s information, MI6 and the SAS helped to hand-pick the 100-strong squad from amongst fighters with “significant combat experience” against Russia. Ukraine’s secret service was directed to assist them and the would-be mercenaries’ training was conducted in Greece and Poland.

The squad is reportedly led by Lieut-Colonel Vitaly Prashchuk, a veteran Ukrainian intelligence officer with experience in “successful liquidations” including combat experience in Donbas going back to 2014, and assisting covert MI6 missions in Zimbabwe.

Along with operations to sabotage African countries’ infrastructure (a favourite tactic of the West during the Cold War), the Ukrainian unit’s job will reportedly include attempts to assassinate African leaders seeking closer ties with Moscow.

A chartered civilian ship sailing from the southern Ukrainian port of Izmail is thought to have taken the squad on route to Sudan, and they are expected to arrive in the Sudanese city of Omdurman sometime “during the second half of August”.

Successive post-1991 governments of Ukraine have unfortunately been no strangers to supporting anti-Russian and pro-Western military operations abroad, with radicalised nationalists travelling to the Russian Caucasus in the mid and late 1990s to fight against Russian forces engaged in counter-terrorism and counter-separatism missions. Kiev also sent a 1,700-strong contingent of troops to Iraq during the Western invasion in 2003. In 2008, Ukrainian ultra-nationalists reportedly took part in Georgia’s invasion of the breakaway region of South Ossetia, which triggered a Russian military intervention after peacekeepers were killed.

British-Ukrainian military and intelligence co-operation has been extensive since the 2014 coup in Kiev, with the UK training tens of thousands of Ukrainian

troops, sending over £9.2 billion in military and economic support to Kiev, and providing additional material and training assistance for Ukrainian small boat terror attacks against Russian civilian infrastructure and shipping.

Politically too, the UK has served an instrumental role in sabotaging Russian-Ukrainian peace negotiations, with the then Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, jetting off to Kiev in April 2022 to convince President Vladimir Zelensky not agree to a peace plan that had been hammered out in Belarus and Turkey. Now, it seems, MI6 may be looking to further “internationalise” Ukrainian military operations abroad, this time in Africa.

“I think that lately MI6 and its leadership have been feeling inadequate in the current situation,” says Sergey Goncharov, a military expert and veteran of Russia’s elite Alpha counterterror special forces unit. “If you remember, just a month ago the head of MI6 issued an address to Russian citizens expressing readiness to recruit people,” he recalled, pointing to the absurdity of such statements. “I think that for a serious person who serves as the head of an intelligence agency, such statements even sound alarming, to some extent.”

As far as the reported plans to deploy Ukrainian saboteurs to Africa are concerned, Goncharov believes that apart from a propaganda effect, it is unlikely to have any impact on the region. “For starters, if Ukraine is so strong and has such a serious special forces unit, why can’t these special forces solve the serious problem on the front between Ukraine and Russia?” he asked.

Secondly, he noted, it’s questionable where Ukraine may have found these would-be mercenary operators, given the horrendous losses their troops have faced in recent months, including forces trained in Britain.

“If [MI6] hopes that the special forces allegedly sent from Ukraine will solve the ‘problem’ of Niger, this, I think, is simply laughable. I don’t think they’re needed there at all.”

Dismissing any potential political or military impact of possible Ukrainian mercenary operations in Africa, Goncharov

believes the only effect they could possibly hope to achieve would be limited to the realm of propaganda, which, he noted, “unfortunately” often “causes more of an uproar than military operations”.

“Africa was a colony of all these Western countries. Russia has never been a colonial state,” Goncharov pointed out, when asked about the West’s attempts to undermine co-operation between African countries and Moscow.

“Naturally, neither Britain, nor the Americans, nor the other Western countries of NATO like this. They do not want to lose their profits and political influence.”

As far as potential Western efforts to meddle in African affairs are concerned, regional countries don’t need a regional war, and are instead actively seeking more cooperation with Russia. Accordingly, “even if this [Ukrainian] unit has already been created, it won’t solve any real ‘problems’ for the West, he summed up.

Former CIA station chief, columnist and security consultant Philip Giraldi echoed Goncharov’s sentiments on the UK’s likely motives.

“I think these reports are completely plausible. Britain wishes to retain its special relationships with a number of African nations which give it access to raw materials that it lacks as well as political support in forums like the United Nations. It would use Ukrainian mercenaries to carry out the disruption because that gives it plausible denial whereby it can always pretend that it is in no way involved,” Giraldi said.

“The rapidly growing influence of both Russia and China in much of the Third World terrifies the political leadership in Britain and also in the USA, note for example the recent Africa trip of the State Department number two Victoria Nuland, who is about as hardline as it is possible to be and has frequently expressed her hatred for Russia. Note also the recent Africa-centred conference hosted by the Russian government in St Petersburg, which attracted representatives from 49 countries including 17 heads of state, which I am sure caused a panic in Washington, London and Paris,” Giraldi said.

Sputnik

Workers' Notes

On The Streets

by New Worker correspondent

Industrial action over pay by traffic wardens in the London borough of Camden began at the end of July. Nearly a month on, the dispute continues with little sign of movement from bosses.

The wardens are employed by outsourcing company NSL, part of Marston Holdings, which made a £23.1 million profit in the year to May 2022 from its activities that include “ethical” debt collecting, whatever that is.

The council makes about £40,000 per day from collecting parking fines so the industrial action is blowing a large hole in council finances. These parking fines have sometimes come from ambulances.

At present the wages are £12.70 per hour, with Unison seeking an increase to £15.90, a claim submitted last December. For this they have to work a 42.5 hour week in all weathers.

Although they were classified as key workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, on the grounds they kept spaces clear for NHS workers to come into work, their services are not always met with happy smiles from grateful motorists.

NSL say that the Unison claim is unrealistic, but the 25 per cent increase they are seeking is from a very low base.

Branch secretary Liz Wheatley said that, despite NSL's claims, the present offer is effectively on a below-inflation 7.5 per cent. NSL's profits increased from £5.8 million in 2021 to £9.2 million last year. The boss's salary went up from £258,000 to £412,000 which is a 60 per cent increase or to £221 per hour.

Camden Council have not responded to Unison demands to put pressure on NSL to make a settlement they can clearly afford. Unison also



• Camden traffic wardens' protest picket

demands that they are brought back in-house, a promise the Labour council made five years ago. The Council pays £30 hourly to NSL for the workers but the wardens get less than half that, so the savings are obvious.

In contrast to in-house employees who work 36 hours with 25 days holidays and sick pay, NSL workers only get 20 days holiday and are only paid for the first three days off sick. Pension provision is naturally much worse. Working on rest days, which for many is a necessity, brings in only an extra £15.

Cleanliness is next to Godliness

by New Worker correspondent

Just down the road, at the London School of Economics (LSE), the university founded by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, another group of low-paid workers are engaged in their own battle.

Twenty cleaners have launched a legal claim for underpayment of holiday pay. Their claim is based on the fact that the cleaners have been paid holiday pay based on their “basic salary”, which does not take into consideration the extra hours that account for the lion's share of their weekly income.

This has been admitted by LSE Management, who promised that: “Staff will receive the additional overtime related holiday pay on all non-contracted overtime payments.” But they have

not committed to paying the money owed from the start of the cleaners' contracts. A three-day strike took place in June with no positive results, but now the case is being taken to an Employment Tribunal by the small street union, the United Voices of Workers (UVW) whose organiser, Molly de Dios Fisher, said: “LSE is a world renowned institution that boasts associations with Nobel Prize winners and counts 37 past or present world leaders among its alumni. It is unjustifiable that they are refusing to pay their cleaners the holiday pay that they are legally entitled to.”

Another case of cleaners taking industrial action is at the Tesco's depot in Didcot, Oxfordshire where workers employed by Atalian Servest plan strike action over pay after Atalian refused even to discuss the matter. This will take place in the first week of September followed by a three-day strike starting on Friday 15th and a final three-day strike beginning on Thursday 21st.

At present the cleaners are on pay rates as low as £11 per hour, including weekend and bank holiday work for which they receive no premium payments. They work in a chilly warehouse that is kept at a temperature similar to a domestic fridge. The catering staff are worse off financially being on the minimum wage of £10.42 per hour.

Unite general secretary Sharon Graham said: “Atalian Servest can fully afford to give our members a decent pay rise, its failure to do so is a cynical attempt to further

boost its profits.”

The union's regional co-ordinating officer Scott Kemp warned: “Strike action will inevitably result in a dirty depot and the closure of the canteen, but this dispute is entirely due to the pig-headed manner in which Atalian Servest has refused to even engage with Unite over a pay increase for our members.”

Off the rails

by New Worker correspondent

Yet another group of contracted-out workers taking strike action are the those working for Rail Gourmet on the TransPennine Express (TPE) franchise, where once again the issue is the low pay and poorer terms and conditions received compared with workers directly employed by the train operating company.

RMT General Secretary Mick Lynch deplored the fact that: “Greedy rail contractors have for too long exploited our members and Rail Gourmet is no exception. Despite making more than a million pounds in profit, Rail Gourmet are refusing to offer staff a decent pay rise, sick pay or a good pension.”

Rumours abound to the effect that Rail Gourmet are training workers to break the strike, at £25 per hour, greatly in excess of what Rail Gourmet staff on TPE get.

Mick Lynch added that: “Rail Gourmet staff wear the same uniform and work just as hard as directly employed TransPennine Express workers yet they earn considerably less and will be left in poverty in retirement all because TPE contract out their catering services.”

The TransPennine dispute is not of course the only one on the railways. Drivers' union ASLEF has announced a one-day strike next Friday (1st September) followed by an overtime ban the next day.

This will force companies to cancel all services in this country and the ban on overtime will seriously disrupt the network because no privatised train operating companies employs enough drivers to

provide a proper service without drivers working on their days off.

ASLEF general secretary Mick Whelan said: “We don't want to take this action but the train companies, and the government which stands behind them, have forced us into this place because they refuse to sit down and talk to us and have not made a fair and sensible pay offer to train drivers who have not had one for four years – since 2019 – while prices have soared in that time by more than 12 per cent.”

He further complained that: “We haven't heard a word from the employers – we haven't had a meeting, a phone call, a text message, or an email – since Wednesday 26 April, and we haven't had any contact with the government since Friday 6 January. This shows the contempt in which the companies, and the government, hold passengers and staff and public transport in Britain.”

Anger at Government intransigence was expressed by the trade association UKHospitality, which estimated the cumulative effect of the series of rail strikes between last autumn and earlier this spring cost the hospitality sector £3.25 billion. Kate Nicholls, CEO, told *The Caterer* that she urged the unions and train companies involved to conduct “constructive discussions to reach an agreement”.

At CrossCountry (owned by Arriva and serving many long-distance routes) RMT members are also taking strike action on all four Saturdays in September in a dispute over working conditions for staff based in Edinburgh that will see workers becoming poorer, after management withdrew an earlier financial offer. CrossCountry have said that all despatch duties will cease, which RMT fears will result in further cuts.

Mick Lynch complains that: “CrossCountry have not been serious in trying to resolve this dispute and have put their energies into attempting to discredit their own staff. In our union, if you attack one member of staff, you are attacking the whole workforce

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and that is unacceptable.”

The struggle to save ticket offices is reaching a climax. Whilst the plans will largely affect England, the booking clerks' union, TSSA, warns that the ticket offices at both Edinburgh's Waverley Station and Glasgow Central, which are run by LNER and Avanti respectively, will also close. TSSA's new General Secretary, Peter Pendle, said: "Ticket offices are vital for safe, cheap rail travel for everyone. They help everyone to buy the best value rail ticket, especially the most vulnerable people in our society, the elderly and disabled who can't use ticket machines and websites."

He added that: "It's beyond belief that ticket offices in Scotland are being affected by Tory policy. Really, the Scottish Transport Secretary, Màiri McAllan, should intervene with the Conservatives now to put a stop to this senseless and cruel policy."

Next Thursday (31st) is

the closing date for the online Transport Focus consultation to which all readers should submit their opposition to the "modernisation" plans, to add to the 400,000 who have already done so. It can be found at: <https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/train-station-ticket-office-consultation/>.

On the same day, Thursday 31st August, RMT is organising a protest in Whitehall outside 10 Downing Street at 6 o'clock in the evening after a short march from the Department of Transport at Horseferry Road.

History at Risk

by New Worker correspondent

The University of Chichester does not have as many dreaming spires, but it is presently the scene of an important battle. The university's unique course in the history of Africa diaspora in Britain and elsewhere has been closed down. In partic-

ular, Professor Hakim Adi is facing redundancy.

Professor Adi is the author of highly regarded works on Pan-Africanism, Black migrants in Britain, and the role of black workers in British and international communism.

The cause has been taken up by the University College Union. Jo Grady, UCU's General Secretary, said: "The University of Chichester's decision to axe this crucial course and put Professor Adi at risk of redundancy is nothing less than an attack on Black academia." She added that it is no surprise that only one per cent of UK professors are Black when a university like Chichester is willing to sack the UK's first African-British professor of history and shut down a course created to train Black academics.

History Matters, an organisation of Black academics, has organised a petition on Change.org to oppose the measure. Although African history is taught and

researched at the University of Oxford and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London, the subject is not one where the closure of a small university department will be anything but a severe blow.

The university suspended enrolment of new students without consulting Adi. History Matters says: "The marketisation of universities and shoe-horning subjects into the sole outcome of generating income for universities is unequivocally immoral and unethical."

The course has attracted students from Africa, the Caribbean, North America and Hong Kong as well as Britain. It has trained students to research the hitherto neglected history of African and Caribbean people in Britain and supported the online *History Matters Journal*.

The University claims the course has not attracted enough interest from students to financially justify the continued existence of Adi's post, but History Matters claims that not enough has been done to market the course.

Chemical Warfare

by New Worker correspondent

Production, distribution, and research and development workers at the International Paints factory in Gateshead are taking further strike action.

Two-hundred workers belonging to Unite have rejected a pathetic 4.8 per cent pay offer. The union complains that International Paints has failed to come to the negotiating table in good faith and even threatened to call the police on lawful picket line protests outside its building.

Strike action started in late July taking the form of strikes every Monday and Thursday for a four-week period. This will resume next Thursday 31st August and then every Monday and Thursday until 21st September. An overtime ban is in place until 22nd September.

Regional officer Steve Casson said: "This further strike action will inevitably cause

severe disruption to the UK's paint supply but this dispute is entirely of the company's own making. It has had every opportunity to make a fair pay offer but it has refused to do so. The company's threats to call the police on our members for exercising their lawful right to protest shows just how unreasonably they are behaving."

The strike also involves GMB members. Joyce Guthrie, their regional organiser, told the media that "we are taking industrial action against pay and the reason behind that is we've never seen a pay award here in the last 10 years". In early 2021 a strike was suspended at the last minute when a 1.5 per cent rise was accepted.

Government Leaks

by New Worker correspondent

Two civil service unions, the mandarins' FDA and the lower castes' PCS, have united to condemn filthy working conditions in Government buildings. There have been 138 sewage leaks in the past year in Whitehall and Ministry of Defence sites across England alone.

In Whitehall itself leaks were found at the Cabinet Office, Education, Transport, and Work & Pensions departments.

The *Times* also informs us that *Legionella* was discovered in a Liverpool HMRC office.

PCS General Secretary Mark Serwotka said: "The state of government buildings is a disgrace, outdone only by the way the government treats the people who work inside them. "Legionella is a dangerous disease, especially for those who are disabled or vulnerable, and any decent employer would do all they can to keep their workforce safe."

Amy Leversidge, FDA's assistant general secretary, demanded that: "The Government Property Agency must take responsibility and control of this, clear the maintenance backlog, and guarantee the very basic right of a safe working environment for all civil servants."

**20 years ago
this week
in the New Worker**

29th August 2003

HUMAN air traffic controllers may be redundant by the year 2020 according to British Aerospace scientists who say they have developed a revolutionary airborne computer system that can land aircraft safely without human intervention.

BAe Systems, the British defence aerospace company, says the computer will eliminate human error, save on fuel and increase flight safety.

It could also end the jobs of 40,000 air traffic controllers around the world.

BAe plans to introduce the new system in three phases, ending in 2020. So far it has cost £76 million, half-funded by the European Commission.

BAe spokesperson Alistair Hyndman said the current system is over-dependent on human judgement and the new system is necessary because of a growing volume of air travel means they will be unable to cope.

There are around 2,400 air traffic controllers in Britain. Approximately 5,500 aircraft fly in and out of the country every day.

The controllers' union Prospect is concerned about jobs cuts and safety. National Secretary David Luxton said: "While computers can accurately plot a path, the concern would be that pilots and passengers need the reassurance you can only get with human judgement."

Scientists who oppose the introduction of genetically modified (GM) crops are coming under pressure to soften their stance.

Dr Andrew Stirling of Sussex University, and a member of the Government GM science review panel, was warned by a leading member of the establishment

that his career would be ruined unless he stopped questioning the safety of GM technology.

The pro-GM scientist then tried to get Dr Stirling removed from a research project by approaching its funders.

A few days before, Professor Carlo Leifert of Newcastle University – another leading academic – told the press he had resigned from the science review panel after fearing that the funding would be withdrawn.

The Government has now agreed to investigate this bullying and has appointed Nigel Griffiths, Minister for Small Businesses, to investigate.

Dr Douglas Parr of Greenpeace said: "We are pleased the Government seems to be trying to get to the bottom of this. The intimidation of Stirling was a braze attempt to silence legitimate concerns about GM crops."

"How many others are holding their tongues on GM issues for fear of losing their funding or academic posts?"

Corbyn returns to Belfast for Féile35

by Joe Dwyer

Jeremy Corbyn received a warm West Belfast welcome on 3rd August when he addressed the main hall of St Mary's College – plus three additional overspill lecture theatres – as part of the annual Féile an Phobail community arts festival.

Having previously attended the Féile in August 2015, shortly after his whirlwind election as the unlikely leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn was pleased to be back for the festival, especially as it celebrates its 35th Anniversary. Much has transpired within the intervening eight years and there was plenty of ground to cover in his keynote address.

The former Labour leader began by paying tribute to the Féile, noting: "This festival includes many things. I am a very big believer in the use of culture and music to unlock the potential in so many people. So many young people feel that school isn't for them, college isn't for them, and they feel often very alienated. So, a political message for them is not just the dry facts of economic justice or world peace. It's also about respecting the knowledge that so many people have and respecting the hope and spirit that's there in people. If you can only unlock it. As I've often said, there's a poet in all of us, but most are too afraid to admit it, to write that poem, and to let it out."

Having visited the Áras Uí Chonghaile James Connolly Visitors Centre earlier in the day, Corbyn paid tribute to the former Belfast-resident saying: "The more I understand and the



more I read about James Connolly, the more in admiration I am of him." He then quoted an extract from Connolly's 1909 essay *Erin's Hope*, observing that: "No Irish revolutionist worth his salt would refuse to lend a hand to the Social Democracy of England in the effort to uproot the social system of which the British Empire is the crown and apex, and in like manner no English Social Democrat fails to recognise clearly that the crash which would betoken the fall of the ruling classes in Ireland would sound the tocsin for the revolt of the disinherited in England."

Corbyn concluded: "Just think for a moment if Connolly had not have been executed, had the others not been executed, they would have been free within a couple of years because politics moved on so fast. How different Ireland would be; how different the world would be but for the lives that were stolen from us by the executions of those who led the Easter Rising in 1916."

Turning to more recent history, he paid trib-

ute to those who brought about the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, noting in particular the groundwork that was laid by the Hume-Adams talks. As he recalled: "I voted for the Good Friday Agreement when it came to the House of Commons in 1998, and I was thinking, I think, it was the first time I'd ever voted with a government on anything to do with Ireland in all the time I'd been in parliament! So, for me it was an aberration!"

"But a week before that vote, I was given a copy of the 1799 Secret Government Report on the situation in Ireland. The report reproduced the entire statement of the founding conference of the Society of United Irishmen. The United Irishmen, and their sister organisation the Society of United Irishwomen, set out a vision of uniting Catholic, Protestant and Dissenters in equal measure in a new Ireland. A vision, that while still not fully realised, looking around Belfast today, I can see there is hope. There is still a determination to bring about a true unity of

people across this island."

The Islington North MP noted that recent elections in the North of Ireland have repeatedly returned a non-Unionist majority, remarking: "As someone who sits on the backbenches of the House of Commons, behind where the DUP sit – I hear stuff! I've got very good ears! And I can be very quiet when I want to be. It's very interesting and I recommend it."

He challenged the DUP on their boycott of political institutions and power-sharing. "They think they're pressurising the British Government, I'm not sure the British Government particularly cares what they think or what they say. I care what they think and what they say because I want to see that devolved Assembly up and running. Because people in Belfast, in Derry, all over Northern Ireland, face exactly the same problems as the working class in England, Wales and Scotland."

His address concluded with a poem entitled *Your logic frightens me, Mandela*, written by the Nigerian

poet Wole Soyinka at a time when Nelson Mandela was still imprisoned in Pollsmoor Prison.

Corbyn said: "It's the bravery of those that suffered. Who were abused, tortured and imprisoned, that helped to bring about the peace, the freedom, the cultural diversity, and that hope that our generation enjoys. Let's not close our minds to the future. Let's open our minds to the future of the kind of world that we can all live in. That is what the real human spirit is really about."

The speech was followed by lively and thought-provoking contributions from the floor. Most notably from Pat Cullen, the general secretary of the RCN nursing union, who paid tribute to Jeremy Corbyn's solidarity during the most recent nurses' strike in England and made the notable observation: "I believe the only hope for the NHS in the North is reunification, across the north and south, on an all-island health basis."

During his visit Jeremy Corbyn also met with local political representatives and community leaders in West Belfast. He received a warm welcome at each and every engagement, with many saying that they hoped to see him back again soon.

Corbyn himself said he would be happy to return: "I just think it's a great thing, the variety of things that are on in the programme, the arts events, the discussion events, the films, the plays, the music, the folk music, as well as the contribution of the speeches. I just think what an amazing thing the festival is."

An Phoblacht

The New McCarthyism

A statement from the Communist Party USA

The following statement was issued by the Communist Party USA on 11th August 2023, in response to allegations in the *New York Times* that a wealthy American citizen in Beijing is secretly funding left-wing and peace groups in the USA with the aim of furthering the foreign policy aims of the Chinese state.

It's official: The new Cold War is on – and the *New York Times* 'proves' it by warning of a nefarious Chinese plot to influence US public opinion.

In an article that would have made Joe McCarthy, Roy Cohn, and J Edgar Hoover green with envy, the *New York Times* puts a bulls-eye on the activity of groups such as Code Pink, the People's Forum, and the Tricontinental Institute and the financial support they supposedly rely on from Neville Roy Singham, a wealthy American with a history of donating to left organisations.

The most damning piece of evidence in the prosecution's arsenal is saved for the hit job's ending sentence: "Just last month, Mr Singham attended a Chinese Communist Party propaganda forum. In a photo, taken during a breakout session on how to promote the party abroad, Mr Singham is seen jotting in a notebook adorned with a red

hammer and sickle." A notebook emblazoned with a red hammer and sickle? Oh no!

The article is replete with such 'proof'. According to the *New York Times*, Singham also has offices in Shanghai and has been seen in the company of Chinese officials at events where China's role in the world is presented in a way that does not align with US foreign policy discourse.

And that brings us to the heart of the matter: Once again, we see the revival of the notion that challenging US foreign policy is tantamount to acting as an "agent of a foreign power", a charge drawn straight from the play-book of the old House Un-American Activities Committee.

At the height of the McCarthy period, a figure no less esteemed than Dr WEB DuBois, 83 years of age at the time, was handcuffed by the government on such patently false premises. As part of a similar crusade today, the *New York Times*

authors leave no McCarthyite stone unthrown and no Red Scare dog whistle unblown.

This is not investigative journalism. It is reheated McCarthyism, the putrid leftovers of a conspiracy theory that was already rotten the first time around, served up to de-legitimise China's emergence as a global power and discredit critics of US foreign policy.

If the individuals and organisations targeted in the article were part of the welter of privately-funded NGOs, thinktanks, conferences and media networks used by the US ruling class to promote its foreign policy priorities, there would be no story here.

But they're not. And because they do not take talking points from Washington and Wall Street, they are accused of taking them from Beijing. Because they engage with China rather than treating it as an enemy, the details of their political activity are stretched, twisted and lit from behind to project the menacing

shape of a foreign, Communist plot.

We have seen this shadow-play before, with the same choreography – against organised labour, against movements for civil rights, against the peace movement. We have seen it before, with other leftists, other progressive organisations, in the cross-hairs that Mr Singham, Tricontinental, Code Pink and People's Forum now occupy. We have seen it before, when the profits and power of the US ruling class come under threat.

We remember those days well because, as is widely known, we were at the very centre of the McCarthyite storm. And just as we did then, we condemn it today. We condemn it not only as Communists, not only as believers in peace and international solidarity, but as partisans of democracy in the struggle against fascism.

Here, in the aftermath of 6th January, the right side of history has no room and no time for conspiracy theories. The

stakes are too high and the enemy too close at hand to traffic in crude red-baiting and anti-communist paranoia.

After all, that role is already taken. Donald Trump pledges to keep "foreign, Christian-hating Communists" out of the country. The government of Florida bars Chinese citizens from buying property in the state, and now the Biden administration does likewise with certain types of technology investments. Heavily-armed extremists slap the "Marxist" label on anything they designate for repression, from the environmental movement to public schools.

For an institution with the reach and resources of the *New York Times* to echo those positions, to spread those same conspiracy theories, is not merely irresponsible. It is a betrayal of the struggle for democracy and a material service to the extreme right.

Democracy would be better served if the *New York Times* turned its prodigious

investigative resources on the donors, corporate and otherwise, who bankroll lawmakers who participated in Trump's attempt to overturn the 2020 election; or on the funders behind the attempted fascist coup of 6th January; or on infiltration of police forces by white supremacist terror groups.

The struggle to preserve and expand democracy against the MAGA [Make America Great Again] right needs all of us: communists, socialists, liberals, moderates, grass-roots activists, artists, intellectuals, elected officials, labour leaders, Black, Latino, Asian, Native American, and white, organisers, and, yes, some business forces, too. It needs unity, focus and determination.

What it does not need and cannot bear is another round of right-wing conspiracy theories and anti-communist paranoia, endorsed by the 'centrist' *New York Times*.

Be forewarned: This is a dangerous turn of events, and the GOP [Republican] right in the person of Marco Rubio has already seized upon it, demanding a Justice Department investigation, a probe that has the potential to affect everyone regardless of political point of view.

That's how witch-hunts start. As James Baldwin said to Angela Davis on the eve of her trial: "If they come for you in the morning, they'll come for us that night."



The immortal memory of Fidel Castro

by Mario Saravia

“A Peronist agitator of Cuban origin.” This is how the CIA described Fidel Castro, according to journalist Rogelio García Lupo (from *Prensa Latina*) in his book *Últimas noticias de Fidel Castro y el Che*, which was published in 2007.

A young Fidel, 21 years old, went to Bogota in 1948 as a representative of the University Student Federation of Cuba at a counter-summit taking place in the Colombian capital. They were protesting against the Pan American Conference, a tool of US imperialism, that would be replaced by the Organisation of American States, another tool of the Empire, a year later.

On that 9th April, Fidel expected to meet with the left

leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, but he was assassinated at noon. The Bogotazo uprising followed, and although Fidel was not Colombian, he was there, at the side of the people.

According to García Lupo, Fidel “saved his life in a Cadillac protected by an Argentine flag stretched over the roof and with the diplomatic plates clearly visible”. Hence the hasty and fallacious conclusion of the Yankee spies. He was not an Argentinean, but that CIA document shows the Latin American patriotic character of the man who, 10 years later, would lead the necessary struggle in Cuba.

In 1947, Fidel had been involved in the failed Expedition of Cayo Confites, integrated by Cubans and Dominicans, and whose objective was to free the Dominican Republic from the

dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo. He was not Dominican, but at the age of 20 he had already made his internationalism clear.

Then came the Moncada barracks attack, the imprisonment and a stay in Mexico, to gain momentum and return to the struggle. There, in June 1955, he would meet Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara, an Argentine doctor introduced to him by Raul at Maria Antonia’s home, a Cuban exiled in Mexico City.

With the help of young Mexican friends they would get the *Granma* yacht and the necessary weapons, and another Mexican named Arsacio Vanegas would train them. Fidel was not Mexican, but whilst eating tortillas he said that sentence: “If I go out, I arrive. If I arrive, I enter. If I enter, I triumph.” The conviction of reason... and of the

human spirit.

He was not Puerto Rican either, but he was very clear that Cuba and Puerto Rico are the two wings of a bird. On one occasion he clarified: “Cuba’s solidarity with Puerto Rico comes from history, from Martí and from our internationalist principles.”

Fidel was not Nicaraguan, but without his help, who knows if the Sandinista revolution would have happened. In 1961 Carlos Fonseca, Germán Pomares and Tomás Borge travelled to Havana, and in Cuba the seed was sown that two years later germinated as the FSLN Sandinista movement. But on one occasion, Fidel warned them: “You have to make your own revolution, you cannot imitate ours.” And so it was.

He was neither Soviet, nor Vietnam-

ese, nor Yugoslav, nor Chinese, but he always understood which side to be on in times of Cold War, against the American Empire. And that strategic clarity is one of his most lucid legacies for us in these times of geopolitical reconfiguration.

Fidel was not African, but he became a symbol of post-colonialism because the wave of de-colonisation in Africa matched exactly with the definitive independence of Cuba. Hundreds of thousands of Cubans went to Africa to help in that post-co-

lonial period and the most decisive action, undoubtedly, was in Angola. The battle of Cuito Cuanavale liberated three countries, because it put an end to the reaction in Angola and initiated the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa, which in turn determined the independence of Namibia.

He was from nowhere else but Biran... and Santiago, and Havana, and Pinar del Rio, and every corner of Cuba. But Fidel was and is also from humanity.

Granma



• Flanked by the niches of those who fell by his side on 26th July 1953, Fidel’s ashes rest inside an enormous boulder of grey granite.

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LETTERS

Dear Comrades

China's unique socialist democracy is influenced by the experience and culture of over 5,000 years of civilisation. Whole Process People's Democracy (WPPD) is a creation of the Chinese people including the Communist Party of China (CPC). The CPC plays a major role in its promotion and function. General Secretary Xi Jinping has said that under the socialist system in China all important matters are discussed and decided through public consultation to ensure that the country is run by and for the people.

The influence of the ancient philosophy of Confucius remains strong in modern China. Today it is regarded as important in the pursuit of compassionate social relations and to oppose the growth of excessive individualism as seen in western societies. The philosophy encourages peaceful development and reinforces responsibility in social relations. Its promotion of a harmonious society is compatible with the goals and aspirations of Marxism.

The Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee (CPPCC) is a specialised consultative body in which the CPC plays a key role. In addition to the CPC, seven other smaller democratic parties, people's professional organisations, all 56 ethnic groups and representatives of five religious groups all participate. Work is conducted through 3200 committees by over 600,000 CPPCC members at national, provincial, city and country levels. Ample scope exists for all sections of society freely to air their views. This is the basis of real democracy and contrasts with the hyped sham democracy of many Western governments. Dodgy deals done behind closed doors by corrupt officials under the influence of wealthy

lobby groups all support the interests of the rich and powerful whilst the masses, whether they realise it or not, are excluded from discussion and decision in capitalist society.

Speaking at the 20th Communist Party Congress, Xi Jinping said: "People's democracy is the lifeblood of socialism and it is integral to our efforts to build a modern socialist country in all respects." He stressed that the WPPD represents democracy in its broadest, most genuine and most effective form, and emphasised the importance of unity between Party leadership, the running of the country by the people and law-based governance. He also said that the Party is committed to ensuring that the people give a full expression to their will, protect their rights and interests and, are able to spark their creativity.

The CPPCC is involved in advising on all aspects of policy making from both national issues to those at a local level – for instance, to accept and endorse a decision made by Tibet villagers who voted with wooden balls in an earthenware pot to decide local poverty alleviation priorities. It exists side-by-side with the National People's Congress (NPC), which exercises state power. The two bodies meet on an annual basis in what has become known as the 'Two Sessions'. CPPCC members can put forward proposals to the elected delegates of the NPC. The CPPCC is not a state body but a top political advisory body that facilitates the countries multi-party co-operation and consultation mechanism.

John Maryon
Suffolk

Dear Comrades

The book about Jesus recently reviewed in the *New Worker* [NW:2216, 11 Aug 2023] looks interesting. But the point about the

'Jesus Movement' is not what he did or did not say but why millions of people in the Roman Empire embraced what would soon be called 'Christianity'. The fact that many of them were slaves is significant.

Over 100 years before the days of Herod and Pilate, Spartacus led a slave revolt that shook Rome to the core. The Romans consciously preserved the memory of the fate of Spartacus and his followers, who died in mass crucifixions after the rebellion was finally crushed, as a way of reminding slaves of what happens if you dare to defy the might of Rome. The slaughter of prisoners in the arena for the amusement of the crowd was another.

Although the early Christians never challenged slavery, Christianity did offer slaves what in their despair seemed to be the only way out – not on this Earth but in a heavenly paradise for the poor and eternal punishment for their oppressors.

It was much, much later – when Rome was on the ropes, held to ransom by tribes they called "barbarians" who had already embraced one form or other of the 'Jesus Movement' – that significant sections of the ruling elite of land-owners and generals turned to Christianity to maintain their order in the Empire.

Dave Danton
Dagenham

Dear Friends

Amazing news from Ecuador this morning: the Ecuadorian people voted by around 60 per cent against oil drilling in the Amazon's Yasuni National Park yesterday!

This is an incredible victory. Activists have proved it's possible to stand up to big oil's interests and win. And thanks to Global Justice Now supporters' donations, we were able to send over £4,000 to support

them.

Their campaign has been vital to the well-being of indigenous people living in the Yasuni, as well as the record numbers of species that also call this national park home.

And it's not only local interests that have been defended. The planet's future depends on keeping oil in the soil. Campaigners in Ecuador have been standing up for all of our lives and futures.

Hearing about this historic victory might inspire people to act for climate justice. We want as many people as possible to know about it. Can you help us share the good news?

Indigenous communities have been organising to protect Yasuni for over a decade, building a broad coalition with youth activists, environmental organisations and others to deliver this momentous result.

While this is an incredible day, their fight isn't over yet. As global allies, we must be ready to stand in solidarity to ensure this democratic vote is implemented. There will soon be a new Ecuadorian government, and it is vital that they do not overturn the people's vote to protect Yasuni.

We also have to keep putting pressure on governments in rich countries like the UK and, tell them climate reparations are key to achieving climate justice.

In 2007, the Ecuadorian government put a call out to the international community, asking rich countries to compensate Ecuador for the climate-positive action of leaving oil in the ground in Yasuni.

If governments in the global north had contributed to this fund, Yasuni would have already been protected. The world could have taken a major step towards a just transition away from fossil fuels 15 years ago. Investments in

Diary

EVERY SATURDAY

Committee to Defend Julian Assange: Protests: 12:00–14:00, HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, London SE28 and 16:00–18:00 at Eros statue, Piccadilly Circus, London SW1.

FRI 8 SEPT–MON 30 OCT

The Mistake Anti-nuclear touring play by Michael Mears. See michaelmears.org for 28 venues.

UNTIL 9 SEPT

John Rylands Library: *Workers' Playtime: culture and community in industrial Lancashire*. Exhibition, 10:00–17:00 Weds–Sat. Free. Deansgate, Manchester.

UNTIL 30 DEC

Working Class Movement Library: *That Impudent Little Party: The Independent Labour Party 1893–1975*. Exhibition, Wed–Fri afternoons, WCML, 51 Crescent, Salford M5 4WX.

SAT 2 SEPT

Korean Friendship Association: 75th Anniversary of the foundation DPRK.

Hybrid meeting, 14:00–16:30. Venue details from uk@korea-pr.com or juche007@gmail.com.

SUN 3 SEPT

Burston Strike School rally: Church Green, Burston, near Diss, Norfolk.

MON 4 SEPT–FRI 15 SEPT

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: Protests at DSEI Arms Fair. London's Royal Docks, London E16.

SAT 9 SEPT

Wigan Diggers Festival: 11:30–9:30, Open-air free festival, The Wiend, Wigan WN1.

SAT 9 SEPT

Korean Friendship Association: 75th anniversary of the foundation of the DPRK. Online Seminar 15:00–17:00. Link on from uk@korea-dpr.com or juche007@gmail.com.

SUN 10 SEPT–WED 13 SEPT

Trades Union Congress: 115th Congress 2023, ACC Liverpool King's Dock, King's Dock Street, Liverpool, L3 4FP.

the fund would have been investments in all of our futures.

All countries need to urgently move away from fossil fuels. But some, like the UK and European countries, have spent over a century profiting from them. The global transition away from fossil fuels must not impoverish countries in the global south who have done the least to cause the climate crisis.

Rich governments can access the funds needed to make sure this doesn't happen. If countries like the UK make polluters pay, they could use some of that money to stop countries relying on climate-wrecking

oil production to grow their economies.

On Sunday, Ecuadorians voted to make their country a global trailblazer for climate justice. They told their government loud and clear: keep oil in the soil.

The Ecuadorian government had tried to block this referendum from even happening, but campaigners refused to give up. From the North Sea to East Africa, those fighting fossil fuels around the world can take hope from this inspiring example of people power.

Izzie McIntosh
Campaigner at Global Justice Now

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Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

Silly season continues

The name of Campbell Martin will not mean much to many readers, but recently he has been causing mayhem in the SNP, for whom he was briefly an MSP between 2003 and 2004. Then he was expelled for the crime for repeatedly criticising then SNP leader John Swinney. After this he served out the rest of his undistinguished term as an independent, before getting rejected under that label in 2007.

He has recently resurfaced by suggesting that the SNP has been “captured” by the secret police and is now under the thumb of the Westminster government. Only this can explain its failure to lead Scotland to independence he says. “British state assets in the SNP have...risen through the ranks and now hold senior positions that have allowed them to influence party politics and directions.” He does not name any names but as he is a fan of Alex Salmond (although not an Alba member) it does not take long to work out whom he has in mind.

Shortly afterwards, former Health Secretary Alex Neil joined in the fun by saying that SNP politicians should hide information from civil servants to prevent vital information being leaked to their “masters in London”. This brought down the wrath of the FDA. Its national officer, Allan Sampson, said Neil’s comments were unjustified and an insult to the mandarins the FDA represents.

But Former Deputy leader Jim Sillars, points out that: “MI5 would not be doing the duty they are supposed to do if they did not penetrate the SNP. We all had our suspicions over the years.”

As all readers of spy fiction should know, however, one of the functions of a secret agent is to cause dissent in the target organisation by suggesting other members are informers or agents. Spy-hunters should therefore have a look at Campbell Martin for starters...

People Counting

A comparatively small example of SNP inefficiency has recently come to light with the revelation of the cost of the last census that took place a year after the English one in 2021. The Scottish census, carried out by the National Records of Scotland (NRS), cost £25 per head compared with the £8 per head for that organised by the Office of National Statistics, which covered England and Wales. Despite the extra costs the Scottish results are next to worthless in the statistical sense.

It took an extra month to complete after only 79 per cent of the population had replied. It took another month to get the figures up to 89 per cent. South of the Border, the figure with no extension was 97 per cent. Although seven people were reported for not filling in the form, none have been prosecuted. The cost in Scotland was £140 million, £21.6 of which was due to the unnecessary postponement and £7 million for the extra month, double that of the 2011 census.

Of course the 89 per cent average means that

many areas were much lower. Dundee, Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire just crept over the 80 per cent mark. These and other areas are the poorer areas and will suffer by having their needs underestimated when Holyrood doles out funds...

and finally...

...Kate Forbes, the former SNP Finance Secretary, was put on the spot at an Edinburgh Fringe event when she was asked what would arrive soonest: the second coming of Jesus Christ or a second independence referendum. Her reply was that the first could happen at any moment but another referendum would take time and effort.

Ms Forbes, being both a senior SNP figure and a staunch member of the Free Church of Scotland, is uniquely informed on both questions and so her predictions must be taken seriously...

New Worker Supporters' Groups...

New Worker supporters groups exist to support the weekly newspaper of the New Communist Party.

Individual membership is £10.00 (8 Euros or \$10) for all or part of the calendar year and every member will receive a New Worker Supporters Group (NWSG) card and a copies of the Internal Bulletin for the year.

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The editor welcomes letters from our readers. If you have a contribution to make please make sure it reaches us before Wednesday. You can send your letters to: PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ, or email party@NCP.clara.net

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China: Expanding horizons for peace across the globe

by New Worker
correspondent

NEW COMMUNIST Party leader Andy Brooks took part in a seminar with other communists, academics and solidarity activists, at the Chinese embassy in London this week, on the role of the Communist Party of China and the world today.

The NCP delegation, which included national organiser Theo Russell, joined Robert Griffiths, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Britain and Ella Rule, the Chair of the CPGB (ML), in the discussion that looked at China's new Global Security Initiative and its long-standing efforts to promote sustainable development in the Global South and throughout the rest of the world.

The symposium was opened by Ambassador Zheng Zeguang, who said that the Chinese people are

acting upon the goals set forth at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of China and working hard to achieve the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation through a Chinese path of modernisation. "We are also taking concrete steps to promote high-quality development. Many British friends who have recently visited China are amazed by the prominent progress China has made over the

last few years in green and low-carbon development and the digital economy. And they are full of confidence for China's economic progress."

People's China has always upheld the principle that all countries, big or small, are equal. "We never engage in economic coercion, and we oppose bullying and coercion by others. It's only when China's core interests are undermined by

certain countries that we take legitimate and reasonable counter-measures."

In his opening, Andy Brooks said: "Imperialism fans the flames of war in Ukraine and the Middle East, blocks the return of Taiwan to its Chinese homeland and prolongs the unhappy partition of many countries including Cyprus, Ireland, Kashmir and Korea. China's perspective, on the other hand,

is based on the concept of 'one country, two systems', and the principle that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought'. But the most aggressive sections of the American ruling class now at the helm in Washington clearly believe in 'one world, one system' and that nuclear war is, under certain circumstances, entirely winnable."

China is striving to achieve lasting world peace through the traditional United Nations framework and through other platforms for economic and diplomatic co-operation including BRICS, the Belt and Road Initiative and the Shanghai Co-operation Council.

This, the NCP leader said, "was a quantum jump from the post-war Soviet policies of 'peaceful co-existence' and 'détente' that failed to end the Cold War and probably accelerated the collapse of the USSR. Peaceful co-exis-

tence mistakenly believed that the capitalists could be economically beaten at their own game while detente was, in essence, a futile Soviet attempt at achieving nuclear parity with the Americans to divide the world into Soviet and American spheres of influence."

China, backed by many other countries, has repeatedly challenged the West to implement the entire non-proliferation treaty, signed in 1968, that not only called a halt to nuclear proliferation but also committed the signatories to work towards universal nuclear disarmament.

The struggle to abolish nuclear weapons is crucial for the survival of humanity. But central to averting a Third World War is the need to eliminate the causes of war. And that is why communists have always understood that the struggles for peace and socialism are indivisible.



• Andy Brooks with CPB leader Robert Griffiths and Keith Bennett from the Friends of Socialist China society.

Gerald George Shaw 1936–2023

London comrades and friends were saddened to hear of the passing of George Shaw, a veteran campaigner who was a stalwart supporter of the people of the Donbas and often seen on protest pickets outside the American and south Korean embassies.

Gerald George Shaw was born in November 1936. He grew into a young man interested in engineering. During his years in the car industry he became a Labour Party member, a

militant trade unionist and a supporter of the British Posadist movement in the Trotskyist Fourth International.

He moved to London in the mid-1970s, settling in Wembley. He joined the Brent Trades Council, supported the striking Grunwick workers, and helped the Kilburn Unemployed Working Group in their many campaigns against inhuman treatment by the DWP.

George moved to Barnet in more recent years,

where he died on 27th July 2023. He represented Unite on the Barnet Trades Council and as a Labour Party member, he defended the comrades of the Labour Against the Witch-hunt. He repudiated the fraudulent conflation between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism.

As a Republican, George helped present the thesis by Bruno Leipold: *Citizen Marx and Republic*. In later years he joined the International Ukraine Anti-Fascist Solidarity front (IUAFS), where he de-

nounced NATO as the war-monger that uses Ukraine as a platform for its war on Russia, China and their allies. Despite his age and health issues he joined numerous protest auctions in solidarity with the victims of the fascist-backed coup in February 2014 and the tragic events that followed.

George's communist confidence in humanity lives on through the continuation of our struggle for justice and equality, without which there will never be peace.



• George Shaw protesting outside the Polish embassy in London.

Legendary Tales of the Korean War

A Friends of Korea committee seminar was held at the NCP Centre in London last month to commemorate the victory of the Korean people over US imperialism and its lackeys. Chaired by Andy Brooks, the symposium heard papers from Michael Chant and Dermot Hudson, and a video link contribution from Kim Song Gi from the DPR Korea embassy in London. This is the contribution from Jong Gi Kim.

In 1950 the Korean War, the fiercest war since the Second World War, broke out. At that time no-one ever thought that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), founded two years before, could defeat the USA, which had been boasting of being the "strongest" in the world having won 110 wars since its founding. Across the world the media called the war a confrontation between the rifle and the atom bomb.

The result of the war turned out to be the opposite, however. The DPRK, a small country in the East, created a miracle by defeating the multinational forces, which had pounced on the country in the name of the USA, for the first time in the world.

After switching over to an immediate counter-offensive, the Korean People's

Army drove the enemy to the end of south Korea within a little over a month.

On the other hand, the USA hurled into the Korean front forces armed with the latest weapons – one-third of its ground force, one-fifth of its air force, most of its Pacific Fleet – as well as the troops of 15 of its vassal states, as well as the south Korean puppet army and some remnants of the former Japanese army. The military budget during the war totalled \$164 billion. This notwithstanding, the Americans sustained a loss nearly 2.3 times greater than that they had suffered in the four-year war in the Pacific and signed an armistice agreement.

By defeating the enemy, who were superior in terms of number of troops and technical equipment, by dint of their ideological and spiritual, strategic and tactical superiority, the Korean people defended the freedom and independence of their country. Defending global peace and security, they frustrated the US attempt to dominate the world with the Korean peninsula as a springboard.

General Mark Clark, commander of the US Far East Command who had signed the armistice agreement, said that the north Korean army was victorious thanks to the outstanding command of General



Kim Il Sung, who had achieved great exploits in the resistance of many years against the Japanese army until the defeat of Japan in the Second World War.

Seventy years have elapsed since the ceasefire was achieved on the Korean peninsula. But the peninsula remains as one of the 'hottest' spots in the world.

After the armistice agreement was reached, the USA implemented none of the items of the agreement and tenaciously pursued a hostile policy against the DPRK, driving the situation on the peninsula to the brink of war. It deployed nukes in south Korea, imposing an undisguised and direct nuclear threat on the DPRK.

Entering the 21st Century, the USA has put the DPRK on the

list of targets of its pre-emptive nuclear strike and stages nuclear-war-games every year in the areas near the country by mobilising large forces, including its strategic nuclear assets.

A country without an effective self-defence capability will inevitably be at the mercy of external military threats and, worse still, be unable to safeguard the existence of its own country and of its people. This is an immutable law shown by human history.

Over the last 70 years after the war, the DPRK has had to overcome manifold difficulties in developing its economy and improving the living standards of its people because of the long-drawn-out military threat, sanctions and blockade.

The best option

for the DPRK, for both durable peace and further acceleration of building itself into a powerful socialist country, was the line of simultaneously promoting economic construction and building up its nuclear forces.

The line of simultaneously promoting the two fronts was put forward at the March 2013 Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea.

True to the new strategic line, the defence scientists displayed their indomitable will in developing strategic weapons systems of their own style.

Within a few years the DPRK manufactured innovative versions of inter-continental ballistic missiles, thus making its military strength irreversible.

In April last year a DPRK ballistic missile of the Hwasongpho-18 type made its appearance, demonstrating the level of development of the country's strategic forces.

The display of military equipment at military parades held every year in the country is proof of its military strength that the others could not belittle.

With this, the DPRK could frustrate the machinations of the hostile forces who were trying to drag it into their arms race by aggravating the situation on the Korean peninsula.

This can be testified by the demonstration of the potential of the DPRK's self-supporting economy, such as setting up structures that reflect its people's dreams and ideals and opening a new era of rural rejuvenation amidst severe difficulties such as harsh sanctions, a global healthcare crisis and successive natural disasters.

In the present world, where confrontation of strength is the order of the day, the country's sovereignty and dignity and genuine peace can be assured only by an overwhelming defence capability – this is the creed of Kim Jong Un, the President of the State Affairs of the DPRK.

In April last year in the speech at the military parade held in celebration of the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Korean People's Army, Kim Jong Un said: "We should continuously grow stronger; there is no satisfaction or accomplishment in cultivating strength for defending ourselves, and, whom-ever we confront, our military supremacy should be more secure."

The 70-year-long post-war history of the DPRK, in which it defended its sovereignty and dignity and the safety and happiness of its people, further highlights the meaning of the 70th anniversary of victory in the war in the 1950s.

BRICS aims to end dollar domination

by Ed Newman

The leaders of the BRICS nations, namely, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, have gathered once more to discuss ways to eliminate the US dollar's domination in the business world.

Speaking ahead of the opening of a two-day summit in Johannesburg, South Africa's deputy president Paul Mashatile said BRICS aims to claim its place on the global scene. "Today the world takes notice of this bloc because it's at the forefront of the global discourse," to reduce dependence on the dollar, Mashatile said. "We are not here to compete with the West. We want our space in global business."

Hosted by South African president Cyril Ramaphosa, the sum-

mit brought together some 50 world leaders including UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and global heavyweights such as Chinese President Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Brazilian President Lula da Silva. Russian President Vladimir Putin joined the summit virtually and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was there in person.

Putin, who has in the past slammed the West for weaponising the dollar to put pressure on other nations, has been issued an arrest warrant for alleged war crimes in Ukraine by the International Criminal Court (ICC) of which South Africa is a member. And he told the BRICS summit in a recorded message that the days of the dollar's domination of trade amongst BRICS coun-



tries are numbered.

Ramaphosa insists that South Africa will "not be drawn into a contest between global powers" rivalry in the framework of the West against the East and the Global South against the Global North. He said South Africa was opposed to seeing the world as "increasingly polarised into competing

camps". But "our decision not to align with any one of the global powers does not mean that we are neutral on matters of principle or national interest".

Ramaphosa said they wanted to build a partnership between BRICS and Africa so that the continent can unlock opportunities for increased trade, investment and infra-

structure development. South Africa supported the expansion of the membership of BRICS, whose value extends beyond the interests of its current members.

The BRICS bloc, which roughly consists of one-third of the global economy and two-fifths of its population, is expect-

ed to add several new members to the group.

In addition to adding more countries to the group, members of the bloc have deliberated extensively over creating a common currency for their intra-member trade. "The traditional global governing system has become dysfunctional, deficient and missing in action," the Chinese ambassador to South Africa, Chen Xiaodong, said last week, adding that BRICS was "increasingly becoming a staunch force in defending international justice".

More than 40 countries have expressed interest in joining BRICS. Some 20 countries are thought to have formally asked to be admitted, including Iran, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Venezuela.

Radio Havana Cuba

NATO an obstacle to peace in Europe

The continued existence of NATO means there will be no peace in Europe, says Pere Ortega, honorary president of the Delas Centre.

"The EU was founded to avoid intra-European conflicts, and the countries that are members of the EU have achieved this, which is the right path, but we have not been able to get rid of the

US military intervention."

The submissive foreign policy of European countries is due to the armed military intervention of the USA and its NATO allies, noted the expert from the Barcelona-based independent research centre on issues related to disarmament and peace.

"After the end of the Cold War, NATO

should have logically disappeared, but it didn't and is still looking for new enemies," he said.

It has become the armed wing of the USA and the Western capitalist bloc, "and from the end of the Cold War it has been where it likes to intervene and bomb as it pleases", which has caused multiple wars and regional conflicts.

One of the main causes of the current Ukraine crisis is NATO's eastward expansion since the 1990s and the pressure it has been exerting on Russia.

"NATO promised Gorbachev that it would not expand towards Russia's borders, but this was an empty promise," he noted.

Expansionist policies as such run counter

to the trends most countries are taking, Ortega said. Instead of making the world a more dangerous place and moving towards confrontation, "we should be moving towards a partnership that guarantees common security, which is what the UN wants and which is the path we should take".

Xinhua

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