

Battles rage as Israel threatens Lebanon

by our Arab Affairs correspondent

Fighting continues across the Gaza Strip despite an Israeli “tactical pause” in parts of southern Gaza allegedly to free up a backlog of humanitarian aid deliveries destined for desperate Palestinians trapped in their beleaguered enclave.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has dissolved the country’s war cabinet following the resignations of former allies, Benny Gantz and Gadi Eisenkot. But he continues to defy UN calls to end the fighting as his hard-line Zionist supporters clamour for an all-out attack on the Hezbollah militia in southern Lebanon.

In Tel Aviv, Netanyahu’s people say Israel is ready for an “all-out war” in Lebanon and has plans approved for an offensive targeting Hezbollah, the south Lebanese resistance movement that has carried out more than 2,000 military operations against the Zionist entity since October in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle.

Hezbollah’s leaders say that the Israelis are in for a “surprise” if they send their troops over the northern border. And



to show they mean business Hezbollah, which largely represents Lebanon’s Shia Muslim community, has released drone footage of key targets in Haifa including arms factories, missile defence batteries and the docks. The Hezbollah drone exposed the weaknesses of the Zionists’ much vaunted air-defences as it roamed undetected over Israel’s major port and the release of the nine-minutes of footage over the key Israeli port was a clear warning to Israel of the risks of escalation.

Hassan Nasrallah, the Hezbollah leader, said: “The enemy knows it must expect us on land, in the air, and at sea, and if war is imposed, the resistance will fight without constraints, rules, or limits,” adding that “there will be no place safe from our missiles and drones.” The current confrontation is the “greatest battle since 1948” when the first Arab–Israeli war began and it “will change the face of the region and shape its future”.

More than 400 people have

been killed by Israeli fire in southern Lebanon over the past eight months. Some 25 Israelis have been killed in reprisal attacks and over 70,000 Israelis from 28 northern towns and villages have been evacuated from the border area since the start of the current conflict in October.

Meanwhile Israel’s military spokesman has publicly questioned Netanyahu’s stated goal of destroying Hamas for the war to end. Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari told Israel’s Channel 13 broadcaster on Wednesday that

the task was impossible and simply wrong. “This business of de-

stroying Hamas, making Hamas disappear – it’s simply throwing sand in the eyes of the public,” he said. “Hamas is an idea, Hamas is a party. It’s rooted in the hearts of the people – whoever thinks we can eliminate Hamas is wrong.”

This week the Israeli ministry of military affairs confirmed that the number of wounded Israeli soldiers has surpassed the 70,000 mark for the first time, adding that 8,663 troops have also been injured since the start of the war on Gaza. The report revealed by the rehabilitation division of the Israeli ministry said that 35 per cent of those wounded since the start of the Gaza massacre are struggling with mental health conditions, while 21 per cent sustained physical injuries.

FUND

This week’s post bag came with fighting fund donations including a generous contribution from a Suffolk comrade who sent in £500 and another from Dagenham who gave us £100. Thanks also to our supporters up and down the country whose donations brought in a total of £1,048, pushing the needle up to £1,691 for June. But we’ve still got a long way to go to hit our £3,500 target and we’ve only got two more campaigning weeks to get it.

At the Party Centre the good news is that we’ve restored the computer that crashed last week and the other one, which went down last month, has now been repaired by a supporter and will soon be back in action. The third, the one which prepares the articles for the *New Worker* is, touch wood, operating smoothly. But in the long run we need to replace our obsolete machines. With your help we will soon do it.

Fund-raising is a crucial part of the struggle to maintain and expand the readership of the *New Worker* – the only communist weekly in Britain. Help us get the message across and build the communist movement in Britain. Make sure that the communist voice is heard every week in every factory, office and neighbourhood across the country by supporting the fighting fund.

Your contribution, big or small, counts. Join us in the fight for peace and socialism by sending in your donations to the *New Worker* fund. All donations help keep our presses rolling. Please send yours 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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Summer shut-down

Our volunteers are taking their well-earned summer rest immediately after the general election.

The last issue of the *New Worker* before our two-week summer break will be published on Friday 5th July. We will be back on Friday 26th July.

THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Round four in the election stakes

We're passed the half-way mark in the election race. The mainstream party leaders stomp the streets to confine the debate to which one of them is better at administering the bourgeois state that the ruling class themselves pay so little to maintain, while on the fringe the left-social democratic outsiders scramble for a protest vote that has failed to take the discussion beyond the parameters set by the ruling class on NATO, Trident, Israel and the European Union.

The one exception is in London, where Jeremy Corbyn is battling to keep his Islington seat in the face of a strong challenge from the official Labour candidate. The former Labour leader has published his own manifesto calling for energy, water, rail and mail to be brought back into public control, as well as for a Green New Deal to put Britain on the path towards a sustainable future.

Corbyn may be the odds-on favourite with the bookies to keep his seat in July but he's still five points behind Labour in his constituency. This week the chair of the Islington North Labour Party resigned after being seen campaigning on the street for Corbyn.

Though the vast majority of voters who will be siding with Labour at the general election say Jeremy Corbyn should be readmitted to the party and he has the support of most of his old constituency party, this will all be rendered meaningless if he loses his seat to a Starmer stooge.

Though well to the left of anything Starmer's got to offer Corbyn's left social democratic programme is, indeed, thin gruel. It doesn't call for the complete restoration of the public sector and the mixed economy that existed when Labour was at the helm in the 1970s nor for the total repeal of the Tory labour laws that have hamstrung free collective bargaining since 1979. But a Corbyn victory will be a defeat for Starmer & Co. It will enable Corbyn to continue to expose and oppose the worst aspects of Starmerism in parliament and provide a focus for the left-social democratic opposition within the Parliamentary Labour Party. And, of course, it will mean that the people of Islington will continue to get the support and assistance of a dedicated representative who has served the locality for over 40 years.

The NCP's electoral policy is to vote Labour. This is not because we support the venal rightwing policies of Starmer & Co nor because we think a future Labour government can solve the problems of working people. It is simply the best possible outcome under the current circumstances. We will, however, support independent left Labour activists who have mass support, even when they come into electoral conflict with the Labour leadership. It is part of our struggle for a democratic Labour Party. We supported Ken Livingstone when he ran, and won, the London Mayoralty, and we support the former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn in Islington.

New spy hysteria over badges

by Mark Blacklock

Spy paranoia has gone to Britain's head – now it is afraid of cap badges. Some time ago I wrote an article highlighting the West's burgeoning paranoia over Chinese spies and made a light-hearted comment speculating whether the next item to be banned on suspicion of having an espionage dual purpose might be chopsticks.

Now, the truth has become stranger than fiction. The media has reported that the Ministry of Defence fears British Army cap badges could be used to spy on military personnel. Cloak-and-dagger is an old-fashioned term for undercover work, but I never expected it to extend to haberdashery. What next, will the laces in army boots be used by China to control the direction in which soldiers march? Perhaps buttons from Beijing sewn onto uniform sleeves will enable the garments to transmit each keystroke of a soldier at a computer keyboard. Is there a risk that Chinese-made berets, caps or helmets will allow "Chinese spies" to read the thoughts of anybody wearing one?

Until now, I thought that the most absurd manifestation of the "Red spy scare" infecting the West was the American politician who proclaimed that Chinese garlic – yes, you read that correctly, Chinese garlic – represented a clear and present security threat. Last December Republican Senator Rick Scott wrote to the country's Department of Commerce demanding that the government launch an investigation. He claimed a severe public health concern over "garlic grown in Communist China".

Another was the "arrest" of a pigeon in India as a suspected Chinese spy: it was freed after spending eight months in avian detention when it turned out to be a Taiwan racing bird that got lost on the way home.

The cap badge story originated in the London-based *Financial Times* (FT), which cited its sources as highly-placed anonymous individuals. Sometimes, the "anonymous source" can be

a device used by unscrupulous journalists to mask the veracity of a dubious story, but the FT is an internationally renowned business and politics newspaper, followed and trusted by politicians and business people around the world, therefore its stories should be taken seriously. However, this story is so laughable it is difficult to take it seriously. The report claimed the Army was delaying the rollout of new cap badges – embroidered cloth for officers, metal for other ranks – because of fears they could be bugged by China.

All badges bear a royal crest of the ruling monarch, the titular head of the armed forces. So, when King Charles III succeeded his late mother Queen Elizabeth II, her insignia was replaced by his on military uniforms. A British firm holds a £2.9 million contract to provide the badges and it uses material sourced from China in its supply chain. This is because the UK cannot produce them as quickly or as cheaply as Chinese manufacturers. The FT quotes a "senior UK defence official" saying "there is a fear that tracking devices or a GPS transmitter could be embedded in the cap badges". The report also reveals that Parliament's defence committee decided to have commemorative coins made in Britain, rather than much more cheaply in China, out of "security concerns".

If the worriers of the West are to be believed, the Chinese must be the world's masters of espionage, given that they have found – according to anti-China antagonists in legislatures and media – multifarious and ingenious ways of eavesdropping on

other countries.

Chinese state actors have been accused of trying to turn an astonishing 20,000 individuals in the UK into spies by contacting them via LinkedIn, the business networking platform. Then, there was the scare over alleged data harvesting by the TikTok app, which President Joe Biden considered banning in the USA until his advisors found it an indispensable tool in his re-election campaign and opened up a presidential account. Technology from Huawei, weather balloons, electric vehicles (both cars and trucks) and shipyard cranes (Biden signed an executive order banning them from US ports) have all been labelled security threats. Is it a coincidence that many of these products are also challenging America's share of whatever market is involved, including even Chinese garlic which suffers huge US tariffs? Is Biden more interested in protecting domestic industries than hunting down spies? It might explain some of the more risible aspects of this phenomenon.

There is also cynical political capital to be earned in America, Britain and elsewhere if China can be portrayed as a foe, and then attacked as a foe. Ultimately, these ridiculous ruses have been exposed for the fiction they are.

Perhaps any diplomat or politician in London shaking hands with their Chinese counterparts would like to sanitise their hand afterward, for fear of being contaminated with something like a Chinese spy virus. And, of course, they'd have to make sure the sanitiser wasn't made in China...

Global Times



Workers' Notes

Unions and the Election

by New Worker correspondent

This election is so interesting that in the online edition of the *Guardian* on Tuesday afternoon, only one out of 10 most-read stories was about the forthcoming vote. On the *Scottish Herald* it was two out of 10. So it is to be hoped readers will not be put off with the contents of this page.

The publication of Labour's manifesto brought a range of response from trade union leaders. Some clearly thought it was akin to Moses handing down the tablets of stone. Christine McAnea of Unison said: "This manifesto sets out a clear plan for the future. It shows how a Labour government could rebuild a Britain broken after years of Tory austerity and chaos." Given that Unison is the major NHS union it should have noticed that a former pledge to the effect that "The NHS is not for sale" has been discreetly dropped. But that could prevent union officials from getting appointed to quangos when Starmer gets to Downing Street.

Her opposite number in GMB, Gary Smith, took a similar line. Taking Labour's vague promises at face value, he said the watered down "The New Deal for Working People is a once in a generation chance to completely transform the lives of working people". The GMB was, however, tougher on the SNP, who are deemed to be unsupportive of the nuclear power industry. As noted last week, Unite refused to endorse the manifesto for its vagueness on workers' rights.

Shopworkers' union USDAW went even further, explicitly admiring "Keir Starmer's pro-business, pro-worker manifesto" which "will deliver the changes that USDAW members desperately need", citing in particular "more uniformed police, town centre banning orders for repeat offenders and an end to the £200 threshold for prosecuting shoplifting", to say nothing of "transforming our high streets

to tackle the retail crisis by reforming business tax, investing in town centres and supporting small independent retailers". It is pitiful watching union leaders support tax cuts for their highly profitable employers.

Community, the former steelworkers' union, was equally deferential to Starmer, in particular welcoming "enhanced partnership working across employers, workers, trade unions and government".

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) has broadly welcomed Labour's manifesto, in particular the commitments to improve the fire and rescue service and strengthen workers' rights, an important matter as firefighters were one of the main targets of recent legislation to curtail strike action.

FBU general secretary, Matt Wrack, said "reversing recent draconian anti-trade union laws will be a vital first step in undoing the damage of the last decade". That he also said it was a hard-fought battle to secure such commitments to basic trade union rights from Labour suggest that Wrack was wary of relying too much on promises from Sir Keir Starmer. Wrack also said: "It will be our duty to ensure that a new Labour government makes good on these promises within the first 100 days of taking power. We will hold Labour's feet to the fire." That is a most unprofessional thing for a fireman to suggest, but a degree of scepticism about Starmer's promises is welcome.

Earlier the FBU demanded that the Labour leader reinstate barred candidates, but Starmer never paid any attention, which is likely to be an omen for the future.

The RMT took a similar view, with General Secretary Mick Lynch saying it is "in the interests of working people to get the Tories out which means getting a Labour-led government in, and our members will need to campaign and vote accordingly".

As befits a union unaffiliated to Labour he added that that there would be "no blank cheques for Labour and we also challenge Labour to provide an alternative, coherent and credible economic strategy that radically challenges the current orthodoxy on spending and borrowing so that we can properly fund our industries and public services". Uniquely for a union, RMT also endorses

"socialist" challengers to Labour at the ballot box.

One of the smaller specialist unions, the Musicians' Union, welcomed the Labour manifesto, for issues concerning musicians such as helping to "break down barriers for artists touring in the EU" (no mention of these problems being caused by rules imposed by EU countries) and support for musical education.

These goodies it credits to being affiliated to the Labour Party and being on the NEC, but that means it must also take the blame for the negative parts of the Manifesto such as increased military spending and reactionary economic policies. No union seems to take issue with the reactionary economic agenda, and those which support higher military spending. GMB and Unite take care not to mention it for fear of annoying those members who do not work in those sectors.

No-one seems to have noticed that of the aims of the New Deal is to "Make Work Pay". That slogan was coined by the Tories in the 1980s and aimed to do so by cutting unemployment benefits to get people "on their bikes" to take low-paid menial jobs.

PCS, a civil service union which is not affiliated to Labour, set out a hopeful shopping list of demands for candidates that focus largely on Civil Service-related issues, seeking a four-day week and an end to outsourcing. They deplore Universal Credit and demand a more supportive replacement, and higher taxation on the rich and big business with investment in HMRC to catch them. It is not difficult to imagine how seriously Starmer is going to take these demands. Someone could start a book to take bets on what excuses will be made by Starmer for non-action.

Crap Jobs

One matter needing urgent reform is the drastic increase in insecure work. The TUC recently estimated that one in eight workers are now in jobs that offer little or no security. It also notes that such jobs have been the main source of growth in the jobs market, which is responsible for the comparatively low level of unemployment.

It estimates that 4.1 million are in this situation which covers

people in zero-hours contracts, low-paid self-employment, and casual or seasonal work (and in any combination thereof).

Between 2011 and 2023 insecure work rose by almost a third at a time when the numbers in secure employment rose by only 11 per cent.

The figure does not vary much across the country, but the West Midlands and the South West are both slightly worse.

It is not a case of hi-tech workers skipping from one short term contract to another with a Mediterranean cruise in between as some would have us believe. It is in low-paid, unorganised sectors where the problem is worse. The care, leisure, service occupations and elementary occupations have seen most of the growth with numbers growing by over 70 per cent or 600,000 since 2011. Apart from the insecurity, the pay in these sectors is over a third less an hour than workers on median pay. Seasonal and casual work are in the same boat.

The TUC also displays a childish belief in Labour's "New Deal for Working People" to herald a golden age. It cited a survey by the Chartered Management Institute of its members who overwhelmingly thought Labour's policies were wonderful. That alone ought to be a warning that they are designed not to change very much.

Paul Nowak, the TUC's General Secretary, said: "The UK's long experiment with a low-rights, low-wage economy has been terrible for growth, productivity and living standards." True enough – but he is no class warrior. He reassures the bourgeois that "as well as preventing workers from being treated like throw-away labour it would stop good employers from being undercut by the bad".

One of the points he mentions is that bosses will be forced to "introduce ethnicity pay gap reporting and disability pay gap reporting". Fantastic, now we will know more about how much certain groups of workers are underpaid, but he failed to suggest what the unions will be doing to ensure that they stop being underpaid.

Last week we reported on the low density of trade union membership in Britain. If the TUC spent more time dealing with that vital issue the problem of

insecure work could be tackled.

It is not just the Chartered Management Institute that seems unconcerned about Labour's supposed New Deal. The Chartered Institute of Profession Development, which represents Human Resources managers, does not seem too worried about Labour's vague promises either. It notes that the creation of a single enforcement body to replace the present various authorities was one the Tories made in 2019 and ignored.

It laments that plans to change the remit of the Low Pay Commission so it takes into account the cost of living when calculating the level at which the national minimum wage could see wages rise. It does not see much problem with plans to end zero-hour contracts as, along with some on the left, it notices there are plenty of loopholes.

First Time on Strike

by New Worker correspondent

Some 400 workers are about to embark on the first ever strike at their 155-year-old employer. They work on *Nature*, Britain's leading scientific weekly, and many other journals such as the *British Dental Journal*. Founded in 1869 by Macmillan, it is now owned by the German multi-national Springer Nature empire.

Springer Nature's latest revenue was reported at £1.6 billion. From this they made an operating profit of £410 million, which is a very generous margin indeed. They are planning to recruit two new vice-presidents at \$250,000 each.

In April, seven months of talks between the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) and Springer via ACAS finally broke down after the UK-based staff rejected a 5.8 per cent pay rise. Springer scientifically claims this is above inflation, but it clearly does not make up for a long-term fall in the value of their salaries.

The union points out that food prices were 13.6 per cent higher when negotiations began in September than in the previous year. Mortgages and rents continue to rise. In contrast to

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Springer, private-sector pay rises in September were an average 7.9 per cent.

The NUJ said of its members: "They work long hours and make a key contribution not just to the company but also to the global scientific endeavour. Senior management have consistently acknowledged that business success wouldn't be possible without their hard work and dedication. But the past few years have seen their wages fall far behind the rising cost of living, making the company's present offer simply unaffordable."

On Thursday staff walked out after voting by 93 per cent on a 90 per cent turnout for industrial action that includes both strike action and working to rule.

One editor said: "My salary is not enough to do the job I do, which takes more than eight hours a day, for which I travel, often staying up until midnight at conference poster sessions, recruiting papers, talking to people. It's not enough to work on a severely, chronically understaffed team, sometimes handling difficult issues around scientific misconduct, corrections and retractions."

This was his reward for "eight years of higher education, which cost me tens of thousands of pounds. My salary is now less than what some postdocs make, not that we should be aiming to

earn as much as a notoriously underpaid and underappreciated profession."

Back Page News

by New Worker correspondent

Readers who turned to the *New Worker* hoping to escape the Euros had better look away now as we turn attention to efforts by the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) seeking to have their hours of work reduced. In particular they oppose plans by the International Federation of Football Associations (FIFA) to hold an expanded 32-team Club World Cup competition in the USA during June and July next year, a decision arrived at without negotiation with player unions.

The PFA says this new tournament is the straw that broke the camel's back with regard to an overcrowded football calendar and will prevent players taking proper breaks between seasons. This contest will come just after the end of the Premier League in late May and occupy the space before it resumes in August.

The action takes the form of a court case in Belgium against FIFA to enforce their rights to take legally protected breaks. This involves the French players' union (UNFP) and the Europe federation of players' unions.

Maheta Molango, PFA's CEO and the highest paid trade union official in the world on £650,000, said: "Players want action. As their union, we have a duty to enforce their legal rights."

He added that: "This is an important moment for players and for their rights as employees. Everyone across football knows that the fixture calendar is broken to the point that it has now become unworkable. The most in-demand players are now part of an endless schedule of games and competitions for club and country, with their limits constantly being pushed through expansion and the creation of new competitions."

"Too many within football act like it is exempt from the normal requirements of employers and employees."

Football players may not be the most deserving cases, but not all are on the £100,000 weekly salaries that are squandered in sleazy nightclubs. A comparatively minor injury can end a career, and at the best of times players have to hang up their boots decades before it is time to collect a pension. Therefore, they need the benefits of a union such as the PFA that runs schemes to retrain as referees or take on managerial or administrative roles in the beautiful game, or rather business as it has become.

On the international front, 66 players' unions are affiliated

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to the International Federation of Football Players Associations (FIFPRO) and its 66 affiliated

national associations support footballers around the world in their workplace.

Last year it secured improved conditions and prize money for participants of the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, although equal pay is controversial matter. FIFPRO points out that globally most players earn modest salaries, similar to the average wage of any worker in the country they play in. In 2015, FIFPRO's Global Employment Report found that 45 per cent of players earned less than \$1,000 monthly.

As in other areas of life, collective bargaining is essential for sportsmen and women to ensure footballers have an appropriate influence over their working conditions. Legal support from the PFA is essential. The transfer market means that footballers often have as much job security as Deliveroo drivers. As well as grasping bosses, footballers also need protection from discrimination, by both fans and club directors and coaches, that happens in the professional game.

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

18th June 2004

TONY BLAIR'S reaction to last week's disasters at the polls [Council and European] has been to tell MPs they must "hold their nerve" and "see it through". The man is unhinged. He has lost all contact with reality and is stubbornly, arrogantly refusing to accept the verdict of the British electorate that his policies in Iraq – and at home – have been a total disaster.

All sections of the Labour Party – in parliament, the constituencies and the unions – must now work together to find a way of getting rid of him or he will destroy

the party.

Labour's overall performance in last Thursday's ballots was the worst for nearly a century. Labour activists reported that the catastrophe of Iraq dominated complaints against the party during canvassing.

MP Glenda Jackson, speaking for many other former ministers and backbenchers, said: "From his response so far, Tony Blair is incapable of hearing what was said to him loudly at these polls. But it's not MPs he needs to reassure – it's the electorate.

"How dare he say to the hundreds of councillors that have lost their seats to 'hold your nerve and see it through', the issue is Iraq – it was his war, it was his misjudgement – and he should resign."

In spite of the efforts of UKIP, Iraq remained the biggest issue hanging over the European elections in Britain. In Italy, Berlusconi, Blair's fellow Bush lackey, was also given a good kicking by his electorate for his support

of the illegal invasion of Iraq.

Labour lost more than 450 council seats; they lost Newcastle and Leeds and Burnley and Cardiff and Ipswich and Swansea and others.

Deputy premier John Prescott admitted the electorate had given Labour "a good kicking".

Robin Cook, who resigned as Foreign Secretary over the issue of Iraq, pointed out that: "Out there, there are a lot of people who withheld their Labour vote because they disagreed with what we did in Iraq."

He warned that the "kicking" is not confined to a mid-term protest or blip of Labour fortunes. "If we are to win these people back, it's not enough to simply say we are holding our nerve, we are seeing it through."

Cook also warned that the voters will not elect Labour again if they believe it would do exactly the same again in a similar situation.

Stalin: *The Foundations of Leninism*

by J Sykes

The *Foundations of Leninism* is a collection of lectures given by JV Stalin to Sverdlov University in 1924, shortly after the death of Lenin in January of that year. The nine lectures that make up the book cover topics of history, methodology, style of work, theory, and strategy and tactics, as well as exposition and analysis of particular issues, such as the party, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the national question, and the peasant question. On each of these topics, Stalin lays out the Leninist position succinctly and concretely.

Stalin's lectures and the book that came out of them have to be understood in the context of the period in which it was written. After the death of Lenin, a sharp ideological struggle over the direction of the Soviet Union gripped the party and the masses. The Bolsheviks needed to chart a course for how to transition from the New Economic Policy, which sought to stabilise the economy following the "war communism" of the Civil War period, to the period of socialist construction.

During Lenin's illness the Trotskyites headed up a group of opportunists who put forward the *Declaration of Forty-Six Oppositionists*. According to the *History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks) – Short Course*, "In their declaration, they prophesied a grave economic crisis and the fall of the Soviet power and demanded freedom of factions and groups as the only way out of the situation." The *History* goes on to explain, "The platform of the forty-six was followed up by the publication of a letter by Trotsky ... [which] harped on the old Menshevik themes which the Party had heard from him many times before".

After a long discussion in all levels of the party, Trotsky's opposition line was defeated at the Thirteenth Party Conference. But, as the *History of the CPSU* explains, "In the autumn of 1924, Trotsky published an article entitled, *The Lessons of October* in which he attempted to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism."

It is in this context that Stalin's *Foundations of Leninism* was published. For this reason, the 1949 book *Joseph Stalin: A Political Biography* by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute calls *Foundations of Leninism* "a most effective weapon in demolishing Trotskyism ideologically, and in defending, explaining, and developing Leninism." The book systematically laid out "everything new and distinctive associated with the name of Lenin, everything he contributed to the development of Marxist theory." The *Foundations of Leninism* thus draws clear lines of demarcation between Leninism and all forms of opportunism.

The Marxism of the current era

As Stalin writes in the introduction, "The foundations of Leninism is a big subject." We can't address all of it here. But we can touch on some of the major points.

First, let's look at Stalin's definition of Leninism: "Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution." He expands further on this, saying,

"To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular. Marx and Engels pursued their activities in the pre-revolutionary period, (we have the proletarian revolution in mind), when developed imperialism did not yet exist, in the period of



• Lenin.

the proletarians' preparation for revolution, in the period when the proletarian revolution was not yet an immediate practical inevitability. But Lenin, the disciple of Marx and Engels, pursued his activities in the period of developed imperialism, in the period of the unfolding proletarian revolution, when the proletarian revolution had already triumphed in one country, had smashed bourgeois democracy and had ushered in the era of proletarian democracy, the era of the Soviets."

In other words, Leninism further develops Marxism in the current period, the era of imperialism, or monopoly capitalism, when the contradictions of capitalism are pushed to their extreme. It develops revolutionary theory, strategy and tactics, in this context. It is under these

new conditions that Leninism seeks to address the problems posed to the revolutionary movement by the contradictions inherent in the imperialist system. Stalin emphasises that "Leninism emerged from the proletarian revolution, the imprint of which it cannot but bear," and that "it grew and became strong in clashes with the opportunism of the Second International, the fight against which was and remains an essential preliminary condition for a successful fight against capitalism," and thus, "the ruthless struggle against this opportunism could not but constitute one of the most important tasks of Leninism."

Stalin emphasises that there are three contradictions which imperialism brings forward that need to be understood as carrying particular importance. First, there is the

contradiction between labour and capital. Second, there is the contradiction among the financial groups and imperialist powers. And third, there is the contradiction between the imperialist nations and the oppressed nations and peoples of the world. "Such, in general," writes Stalin, "are the principal contradictions of imperialism which have converted the old, 'flourishing' capitalism into moribund capitalism".

Stalin lays particular importance on Leninism's method of analysis. He emphasises that this method relied upon testing the theoretical dogmas and policies of the parties of the Second International. These dogmas and policies were found to be insufficient for leading a revolutionary movement forward. Stalin breaks down several of these dogmas piece by piece, showing how Leninist theory must reject dogmatism and combine theory with practice in the course of revolutionary struggle. This is summed up by noting: "It is precisely this critical and revolutionary spirit that pervades Lenin's method from beginning to end."

On the importance of theory in Leninism, Stalin notes "some think that Leninism is the precedence of practice over theory in the sense that its main point is the translation of the Marxist theses into deeds, their 'execution'; as for theory; it is alleged that Leninism is rather unconcerned about it. ... we also know that theory is not held in great favour by many present-day Leninist practical workers, particularly in view of the immense amount of practical work imposed upon them by the situation."

Against this, Stalin puts forward an excellent definition of Marxist theory: "Theory is the experience of the working-class movement in

continued on page 6...

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all countries taken in its general aspect.” For Leninism, theory and practice must be united. Theory without practice is worthless, and practice without theory “grope in the dark”.

Explaining the importance of theory, Stalin emphasises that “theory can become a tremendous force in the working-class movement if it is built up in indissoluble connection with revolutionary practice.” Indeed, writes Stalin, “theory, and theory alone, can give the movement confidence, the power of orientation, and an understanding of the inner relation of surrounding events; for it, and it alone, can help practice realise not only how and in which direction classes are moving at the present time, but also how and in which direction they will move in the near future”.

Stalin brings particular attention to two theoretical points of Lenin’s: first, the criticism of spontaneity and the importance of a vanguard party, and second, Lenin’s theory of proletarian revolution.

The first point here is to emphasise that Leninism understands that the spontaneous economic battles of the working class are not sufficient to bring about a socialist revolution, but rather that a political struggle against the bourgeois state, led by an organised and disciplined vanguard, made up of its most advanced and class conscious workers, armed with the most advanced revolutionary theory (Marxism-Leninism) is necessary to overthrow the dictatorship of capital and build working class state power. Today, when no such vanguard party exists as a material reality, the central task of Marxist-Leninists is to build

one.

The second point is to understand that Lenin understood the era of imperialism to be the eve of socialist revolution due to the internal contradiction of the monopoly capitalist system. Previously, the socialist movement believed that socialist revolution must first come to the most advanced capitalist countries first. Contrary to this, Leninism asserts, “The front of capital will be pierced where the chain of imperialism is weakest, for the proletarian revolution is the result of the breaking of the chain of the world imperialist front at its weakest link.” In 1917, this weak link was Czarist Russia.

Proletarian dictatorship

The *Foundations of Leninism* explains Lenin’s theory of the state clearly and succinctly.

“The state is a machine in the hands of the ruling class for suppressing the resistance of its class enemies. In this respect the dictatorship of the proletariat does not differ essentially from the dictatorship of any other class, for the

proletarian state is a machine for the suppression of the bourgeoisie. But there is one substantial difference. This difference consists in the fact that all hitherto existing class states have been dictatorships of an exploiting minority over the exploited majority, whereas the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of the exploited majority over the exploiting minority”.

Stalin outlines two essential conclusions that Lenin draws from this theory of the state. First, the state isn’t a “complete” democracy, but rather, it is democracy for the working class for the sake of the repression of the capitalist class. Second, the proletarian dictatorship “cannot arise as the result of the peaceful development of bourgeois society and of bourgeois democracy; it can arise only as the result of the smashing of the bourgeois state machine, the bourgeois army, the bourgeois bureaucratic apparatus, the bourgeois police”.

“In other words,” writes Stalin, “the law of violent proletarian revolution, the law of smashing of the bour-

geois state machine as a preliminary condition for such a revolution, is an inevitable law of the revolutionary movement in the imperialist countries of the world”.

The National Question

The National Question, the question of how the socialist revolution should relate to the nations oppressed by imperialism, is of particular importance to Leninism. Self-determination is a key point here. “Leninism broadened the conception of self-determination, interpreting it as the right of the oppressed peoples of the dependent countries and colonies to complete secession, as the right of nations to independent existence as states.” Further, Stalin explains, “the national question can be solved only in connection with and on the basis of the proletarian revolution, and that the road to victory of the revolution in the West lies through the revolutionary alliance with the liberation movement of the colonies and dependent countries against imperialism. The national question is a part of the

general question of the proletarian revolution, a part of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat”.

Leninism also recognises that “the revolutionary character of a national movement under the conditions of imperialist oppression does not necessarily presuppose the existence of proletarian elements in the movement, the existence of a revolutionary or a republican programme of the movement, the existence of a democratic basis of the movement.” This an essential point to drive home, especially today as Zionists and opportunists both demand the denunciation of Hamas and the division of the Palestinian resistance in the face of American-backed genocide in Gaza. Every socialist must understand that the defeat of Israel, as a tool of American imperialism, as a blow against the monopoly capitalist class – and must therefore unequivocally support the unified Palestinian resistance in its just struggle for liberation.

The same is true within the USA where revolutionaries must recognize the right to

self-determination of the Black, Chicano and Hawaiian nations, including their right to secede in their national territories of the Black Belt South, the Southwest and Hawai’i, respectively. Likewise, revolutionaries in the USA must support immediate independence for the colonies, and the sovereignty of native peoples.

This is why the strategic alliance between the multinational working class and the liberation struggles of the oppressed nationalities must form the core of the united front against monopoly capitalism in the USA.

Strategy and tactics

The *Foundations of Leninism* has a lot to say about Leninist revolutionary strategy and tactics. Here we will emphasise the distinction that Stalin makes between revolutionary strategy and tactics and reformism. While Stalin was drawing from a body of practice where a revolutionary situation was at hand in Russia and many other places, there is much to here to inform our thinking today.

“To a reformist,” writes Stalin, “reforms are everything, while revolutionary work is something incidental, something just to talk about, mere eyewash. That is why, with reformist tactics under the conditions of bourgeois rule, reforms are inevitably transformed into an instrument for strengthening that rule, an instrument for disintegrating the revolution”.

“To a revolutionary, on the contrary,” Stalin explains, “the main thing is revolutionary work and not reforms; to him reforms are a by-product



• Stalin.

of the revolution. That is why, with revolutionary tactics under the conditions of bourgeois rule, reforms are naturally transformed into an instrument for strengthening the revolution, into a strong-point for the further development of the revolutionary movement.”

In other words, revolutionaries struggle for reforms in order to build the revolutionary movements and set the conditions for revolutionary struggle. This is why we say again and again that there are three cardinal

principles in revolutionary organizing: we must win all that can be won and strike blows against the enemy; we must raise the level of consciousness and organization of the masses; and we must win the advanced from these struggles to Marxism-Leninism and build revolutionary organisation.

Foundations of Leninism today

Today we still live in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution,

and Marxism-Leninism is theory that the working class needs to understand and put into practice in order to overthrow the old society and build a new one, socialism, where working people are in power and can put the needs of the people first.

As imperialism lashes out everywhere, from Palestine to the Philippines, we need to understand the lessons of Leninism, and stand in solidarity with oppressed people everywhere in our fight against our common

enemy – the monopoly capitalist class at the head of the US imperialist machine of oppression, war, exploitation, misery and death. American imperialism is in a period of prolonged decline, during which it only becomes more vicious.

We have to be organised to fight back. Lenin emphasised that there are objective and subjective conditions for a revolution to take place. The objective conditions are that there is an economic crisis that becomes a political cri-

sis for the ruling class, where they can no longer rule in the old way and we can no longer live in the old way. The subjective conditions are that the working class is conscious of itself as a class, and that it is organised, with a party capable of leading a broad revolutionary movement.

The objective conditions can be analysed and impacted by struggle, but the subjective conditions are even more within our power to change to our benefit. We can and must use Marxism-Leninism

to grasp the tasks of the movement, build the organisation and consciousness among the masses, and prepare ourselves to seize the time. Reading *The Foundations of Leninism* can help a great deal in helping revolutionaries orient themselves for the struggles ahead.

Fightback News (USA)

The Foundations of Leninism by JV Stalin (Chinese edition 1965) is available from NCP Lit, PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ for £5.00 post-free.

Ukraine: Graham gives the game away

Recently, senior US politician and Republican Senator Lindsey Graham unabashedly stated in a media interview that Ukraine holds business value for the USA. He claimed that there are “10 to 12 trillion dollars of critical minerals” in Ukraine, and the primary reason for supporting Ukraine is to seize these critical minerals by defeating Russia on the battlefield. Furthermore, he advocated for seizing and using frozen Russian assets in Europe and the USA.

These remarks reveal the true intentions behind the American political elite’s current policy toward the Ukraine crisis. As foreign netizens bluntly stated on social media, “Now you know why the West won’t allow peace talks”.

As a Senate “hawk,” Graham often garners at-

tention with his extreme rhetoric. For example, he once claimed that parts of Iran must be “blew off the map” and he touted American military aid to Ukraine as “the best money we’ve ever spent” hence he was added to a list of “terrorists and extremists” compiled by Russia’s state financial monitoring agency, Rosfin-monitoring. He has also repeatedly stirred up tensions over the Taiwan question, threatening “sanctions from hell” against China.

Many of Graham’s extremist ideas can only remain at the level of bluster, but his latest remarks on camera have sparked significant outrage for two reasons: First, because he “accidentally” exposed the true nature of American diplomacy, making it clearer to the world what lies behind the facade of the US’ claim that it wants to “maintain peace”; and second, be-

cause of the speeches and actions of the US political elite he represents, which constantly fuels the Ukraine crisis, starkly contrast with the international community’s consensus on de-escalating tensions, and creating conditions for a cease-fire and an end to the war.

Graham views the Ukraine crisis as a business deal, a perspective that is somewhat representative among the US political elites. Many of them talk about peace, but their real concern is not Ukraine, nor European stability. On the contrary, they are keen on Ukraine’s abundant resources and how to exploit Europe’s prolonged and profound crisis to continuously consolidate America’s absolute power and dominance in European security affairs.

Turning the Ukraine crisis into a global conflict is the main policy trend of the USA

in handling the crisis. Washington intends to turn this crisis into a key propeller for its own geopolitical competition around the world. Such policy goals are quite dangerous. Dialogue and negotiation are the only feasible way to resolve the crisis. This is the common voice of any responsible person in the international community.

However, in the past two years or so, the USA and certain NATO countries have continued to undermine the opportunities and efforts of Russia and Ukraine to resume direct dialogue, and even attempted to maximise the use of the crisis for their own gains, creating pressure in Europe and even the world under which people must choose sides and highlight camp confrontation.

The extreme measures advocated by Graham once again show that the US policy elites

are taking a big gamble. The lack of historical reflection is the main reason why the USA frequently makes mistakes in major decisions. At present, the Americans should learn from the idea of building a “peace without victory” put forward during the First World War by Woodrow Wilson, the architect of US diplomacy, and use the idea of ensuring co-operation among major powers and not engaging in camp confrontation to deal with thorny diplomatic issues such as the Ukraine crisis. Regrettably, the current US decision-making elites have both ignored the painful lessons learned from the wars of the 20th century and trampled on the warnings of their predecessors. This is the tragedy of US diplomacy.

The crisis in Ukraine has entered its third year of overall escalation. The war is still ongoing,

the impact continues to spill over, and the conflict is in danger of further escalation. If we want to achieve an early ceasefire and end the war, we cannot allow the Graham-style bellicose thinking to spread. US elites often flaunt themselves with terms such as “democracy” and “rules” and deliberately exaggerate that they are “top students” in international relations. Graham has already told the truth about American diplomacy. The USA is the one that ignores rules, stubbornly interferes in other countries’ internal affairs, and creates chaos within other countries and in the international community.

Graham’s remarks that Ukrainian resources cannot be given to Russia and China have fully demonstrated the narrow-mindedness of the USA in the Ukraine crisis.

Global Times

LETTERS

Dear Comrades

One of the most disgraceful legacies of the 14 years of Tory Government is child poverty.

The number of children living in poverty has reached a record high. Some 4.3 million – 30 per cent of all children in the UK – now live in poverty. That is an increase of 700,000 since the Tories came to power in 2010. Black and minority ethnic groups are particularly badly hit, 47 per cent of children in those communities are poor. There are two big drivers where the increase in child poverty is concerned. One is the two-child limit. The other is the welfare cap that affects welfare benefits.

Abolishing both of these would immediately lift 250,000 children out of poverty. It would also reduce the depth of poverty for another 850,000.

Alan Stewart
Wakefield

Dear Comrades

The best news of the year has taken place with the visit of President Putin to the DPR Korea and the signing of many documents that offer both sides enormous benefits.

North Korea has, to a large extent, stood alone against the murderous US pariah but has maintained its security nevertheless and against the background of overwhelming sanctions and hate managed to keep its economy in fit shape.

Russia has learned the hard way that the US/EU/UK can hardly be classified as run by human beings.

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

The vital aspect of this visit was the agreement that each would come to the assistance of the other if either of them faced aggression – a mutual assistance pact. It's a world-shaking event. I leave it to others with wider and deeper knowledge of the Korean peninsula to bring out what this means for the region and the world. It is very good news.

Elijah Traven
Hull

Dear Comrades

As the bourgeois general election gets underway the two main political parties try to convince the electorate that there is any real difference between either of them.

We may see candidates of both parties kissing babies while at the same time supporting the blowing to pieces and burning alive of children in Gaza. Even the appalling Tory policy, aimed at enthusing its more rabid right-wing supporters, of bringing back national service, is only opposed by Labour because it regards it as unaffordable. The large UNITE trade union is unhappy with the vagueness of Labour's policy on ending zero-hours contracts. Yet while there is still a glimmer of hope that the labour movement may be able to exert some influence on the party it once created, we should give Labour our increasingly critical support. We must however highlight and oppose its policies while taking the opportunity to open discussions on a wide range of important issues.

The election is taking place at a time when capitalism is in its acute crisis stage. The ruling class is divided. The Tory Party is divided and is becoming increasingly dysfunctional as it suffers a massive fall in support. Inter-imperialist rivalry, the risk of an economic collapse and a

very real threat of creating a Third World War are making the current situation serious. Trade wars, as practised against China, are as much an objective and inevitable consequence of the Capitalist crisis as are unemployment and inflation.

The Labour Party has abandoned socialism and under the current leadership moved to a position of full support for Capitalism. A range of smaller left-wing parties are contesting the election but they are in my opinion all, including the Communist Party of Britain (CPB), essentially left Social Democratic. Without unity and the backing of the trade unions they lack the resources to effectively challenge the powerful bourgeois state apparatus. If, however, genuine left-wing and honest independents are elected we would have voices that would be raised in Parliament to oppose wars, call for an end to the horrors of Gaza and to demand the re-nationalisation of important industries and transport services.

I am convinced that the policy of qualified support for Labour is correct but there may be a small number of exceptions in specific cases. Voting for Jeremy Corbyn and in certain other instances those either de-selected by the Labour leadership or those who would speak for Palestine or oppose neo-fascism in Ukraine would mean supporting the genuine left while challenging those who serve the interests of warmongers and big business. Labour should not expect a blank cheque, but we must avoid the hard-right from gaining power and influence and also be aware of tactical voting.

In the final analysis, for the working class there is only one way forward and that is the revolutionary road to building real socialism that will evolve into

Communism. An important role for the New Communist Party is to create the enthusiasm, political conviction and resolve necessary for its achievement. It's no good tinkering with a system that has failed. A bourgeois election can achieve very little for the working class and is designed to favour the ruling class. We must campaign for full dictatorship of the proletariat.

John Maryon
Suffolk

Dear Friends

Barclays is facing huge pressure over its bankrolling of arms companies supplying weapons for Israel's genocide. Until Barclays ends its complicity, we must continue to ramp up our campaign.

Barclays is sponsoring the upcoming Wimbledon tournament, using tennis to try to boost its image and hide from accountability over its role in enabling Israel's war crimes. Will you join our protest outside the tournament on Monday 1st July?

In advance of the protest, we need you to take action. Write to Wimbledon's organisers today to demand they end their partnership with Barclays.

Barclays now invests over £2 billion in and provides financial services worth £6.1 billion to companies arming Israel. This includes General Dynamics, which produces the gun systems that arm Israel's fighter jets being used to bombard Gaza. It also includes Elbit Systems, which supplies the Israeli military with armoured drones, munitions and artillery weapons.

Our campaign against Barclays is gathering momentum. This year, Barclays has seen rolling protests outside hundreds of its branches the length of Britain. More than 3,000 former customers have

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Diary

Check the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Stop the War Coalition websites for emergency Gaza protests across the country.

UNTIL SUN 15 SEPT

London School of Economics: A Say in the End of the World: Solidarity and Nuclear Defence in the Cold War. Exhibition, LSE Library, 10 Portugal Street, London, WC2 2HD.

UNTIL MON 30 SEPT

Working Class Movement Library: Here We Stand: The Art of International Solidarity. WCML, 51 Crescent, Salford M5 4WX.

SAT 22 JUN

Free Julian Assange Campaign: Protest 13:30 HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, London SE128 16:00–18:00, Eros Statue, Piccadilly Circus, London SW1 & Wed 26 June, Australian High Commission, Strand, London WC2 4LA.

SAT 22 JUN

Workers in Palestine: Towards Liberation: Palestinian Politics, History and Activism Today Day School. 09:00–17:00. North London venue. Register on Wi website.

SAT 22 JUN

Cuba Solidarity Campaign: AGM. 10:00, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BB. Open to non-members.

SAT 22 JUN

Keep Our NHS Public: Restore the people's NHS Launch conference. 10:00–17:00. London Irish Centre, 50–52 Camden Square, London NW1 9XB.

SAT 22 JUNE

Jarrow Rebel Town Festival. 11:00 Parade, assemble pedestrian tunnel, Tyne Street, Jarrow NE32. Followed by social at The Crown and Anchor, Chapel Road, Jarrow NE32 3LX.

TUE 25 JUN

Korea Friendship Association. Online anti-US rally. Details TBC.

SAT 29 JUN

TUC Women Chainmakers' Festival. 11:00–16:00, Mary Macarthur Gardens, Lower High Street, Cradley Heath, B64 5AB.

SAT 29 JUN

Stand Up To Racism: National Demonstration Against Deportations to Rwanda. Assemble 12:00 Bath Road, London UB3 5BQ for march to Colnbrook Refugee Detention Centre.

SAT 29 JUN

Korean Friendship Association: Picket of US and south Korean puppet London embassies 15:00. Details TBC.

THURS 4 JUL

General Election Nationwide. Vote Labour most places.

SAT 6 JULY

National March for Palestine: Tell the new government to stop arming Israel! 12:00 Central London. Details TBC.

SAT 6 JUL

International Brigade Memorial Trust: Annual Commemoration of British volunteers in the Spanish Civil War. 13:00–14:00, Jubilee Gardens, Southbank, London, SE1 7PG.

WED 10 JULY

CND Trade Union Advisory: How can trade unions organise against the growing nuclear threat? 19:00–20:00, webinar. Register on CND website.

SAT 13 JULY

Durham Miners Gala: Durham Racecourse, Durham DH1 3BN.

SAT 13 JULY–25 JULY

Lakenheath Alliance for Peace: International peace camp. Details TBC.

THUR 18 JULY

Marx Memorial Library: Stories of Solidarity: Tolpuddle Martyrs & Clerkenwell Green. 18:00 MML, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London, EC1R 0DU.

THUR 18 JULY

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: Eurobomb? No thanks! Preventing nuclear proliferation in Europe. 18:30. Webinar. Book on CND website.

FRI 19–SUN 21 JULY

Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival: Tolpuddle, Dorchester Road, Tolpuddle, Dorset, DT2 7EH.

TUES 23–SAT 27 JULY

Oranges and Stone symbolic play about Palestine by Mojisola Adebayo, Teatro Technis, 26 Crowndale Rd, London NW1 1TT. Book on TT website.

SUN 28 JULY

No Pasaran Memorial Committee North Lanarkshire: 13:00. Duchess of Hamilton Park, 117 Avon Street, Motherwell ML1 3AL.

JOIN US! For peace! justice! socialism!

I would like to join
the New Communist
Party....
I would like more
info about the NCP....

Name.....

Address.....

postcode.....

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Send to NCP, PO Box
73, London SW11
2PQ.



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already closed their Barclays accounts this year to protest against the bank's enabling of Israel's attacks.

Last week, Barclays was dropped from sponsoring music festivals this summer, after hundreds of artists and bands withdrew from Barclays-sponsored events.

We need to keep up the pressure. We need to make sure that Barclays can't hide from accountability over its role in bankrolling Israel's genocidal assault.

Join our protest outside the tournament at 10am on Monday 1st July, and write to Wimbledon to demand it drop Barclays as a sponsor. Tell Wimbledon to drop Barclays!

Thanks for everything you do.

Lewis
Campaigns Officer
Palestine Solidarity Cam-
paign
London

Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political
affairs correspondent

Although Labour still looks set for a landslide at the general election with a 20 point lead over the Tories in the opinion polls the picture in Scotland is more nuanced, with Labour's lead over the nationalists dropping while one poll, conducted by Survation, puts the SNP seven per cent ahead of Labour in votes.

But this pollster suggests it's still neck-and-neck with the SNP on target to win 37 seats and remain Scotland's largest party, but with Labour close behind by less than 2.5 per cent on vote share in three seats and less than five behind in a further four. Survation predicts Labour winning 14 seats – all in the central belt – but if those marginal ones were to go their way it could be as many as 21.

This will boost SNP morale as they face a strong challenge from Labour and constant sniping from dissidents in the nationalist camp who support their old leader, Alex Salmond, and the fringe Alba party that he now leads.

Salmond says "the SNP hoist the White Flag on independence" because in defiance of a conference vote the words "Independence for Scotland" will not appear beside the party's name and logo on the ballot paper, adding that "Alba will be the only party with a manifesto that includes a strategy to deliver independence".

The SNP have good reasons for downplaying the issue, however. It is not the most pressing issue, even amongst their own supporters, as they suffer from cancelled ferries,

pot-holed roads and long NHS waiting lists – which are the responsibility of the SNP-led Scottish government. The new SNP leader, John Swinney, has instead been calling more powers for the Scottish parliament.

Alba, meanwhile, is grumbling about the fact that its sole Party Political Broadcast was switched from its original schedule. They say the switch was made because "too many people were to see it" due to it being scheduled just before the Germany and Scotland football match, thus giving them an unfair advantage. Alex Salmond complained that "STV are riding roughshod over fairness and accepted practice by side-lining our only broadcast. We have now taken them straight to the VAR referee", adding that: "Alba will not be silenced or intimidated by a Broadcaster whose main preoccupation seems to be sucking up to the political establishment."

He ought to be pleased at the outcome. After Scotland was gubbed 5–1 by the Germans (that many said was a foregone conclusion) viewers who drowned their sorrows would not have the slightest interest in Alba's attacks on the Tories or their deadliest enemy, the SNP.

Education Class War

The City of Glasgow College Riverside Campus on the banks of the unbeautiful brownish River Clyde is presently the scene of a battle between the college's management and unions over the former's plans to close its TUC Education Centre, which it runs in partnership with the Trade Union Congress (not the Scottish TUC). Management blames declining numbers for a "financially unsustainable" deficit, citing a 72 per fall in enrolments over the last five years at the Centre which

offers various courses for workplace representatives.

A lecturer at the college said closure would devastate the Scottish trade union movement, adding: "We will not have the capability to train our reps and gain the skills required to challenge employers in the workplace or represent our members to win safe and healthy workplaces."

"This fight is not about six members of staff, it is about 600,000 trade unionists in Scotland."

The College has said that individual trade unions should support the Centre if they value it so much.

A number of academics denounced the move, saying: "The unit has delivered high quality generalist and bespoke education in vital areas, including health and safety, representation, employment law, equalities and discrimination, to many thousands of trade union representatives over decades."

The college has recently been in the news for other reasons. Late last year it threatened to make 100 staff redundant while spending a million pounds on public relations. The Principal, Paul Little, was particularly fond of flying off to five-star hotels in sunny climes to recruit students. Normally further education colleges serve local populations. The lecturers' union did themselves no favours by say that any job cuts should only fall on administrative staff.

Overall funding for colleges was cut in the last Scottish Budget. The Jimmy Reid Foundation, a left-wing think-tank named after one of Scotland's greatest drinkers, said that as SNP Government ministers all send their children to universities they are uninterested in the further education sector, which largely serves working-class communities.

The National Union of Students warn that "education is key to the government's stated aim of tackling inequality and

poverty but it needs to be funded properly to do that. Colleges in particular are on the brink, and students in our poorest communities who have already experienced cuts to teaching staff and provision are going to be hit hardest."

Election Results

There is no need to wait until 5th July for the outcome of the election. The five most recent Scottish local government by-elections are instructive.

First in Inverness West, where a Liberal Democrat councillor stood down due to pressure from the day job. Here, on a 26 per cent turnout and many rounds of counting, an Independent narrowly triumphed over the Liberal Democrat with the SNP in third place.

Secondly, at the Arbrogath West, Letham & Froikham ward of Angus, the Tories secured victory over Labour and pushed the SNP into third place on a 29 per cent turnout in a contest caused by an Independent former leader of the Council standing down. A Tory victory in a long-standing SNP-held Westminster constituency will only add to Nationalist woes. This was the last under the reign of Humza Yousaf and marked the 12th by-election in a row under his command in which the SNP failed to top the poll.

The first by-election under the watch of John Swinney took place in the Kilwinning ward of North Ayrshire, after an incumbent Tory died. This is nat-

ural Labour territory as the deceased was the last of the four ward councillors. Here Labour easily won the seat, securing 54 per cent of the votes at the first and only count on a 29.5 per cent turnout, massively ahead of the SNP and the Tories with the Liberal Democrat narrowly beating the Scottish Family Party. The result made Labour the official opposition against the minority SNP administration.

Just last week two further elections took place.

First, at Tain & Easter Ross in the Highlands, a contest sparked by the death of a long standing Independent councillor, (ironically an undertaker) saw another Independent secure victory over the SNP and a Liberal Democrat who were neck-and-neck for second and third place.

Finally at Clydebank Central in West Dunbartonshire, Labour successfully defended a seat in an election caused by the incumbent Labour councillor resigning due to his being charged and convicted of child pornography charges. In these circumstances this should have been an easy victory for the SNP, especially as West Dunbartonshire was one of four local authorities to vote Yes in 2014, but it was not to be. It was a close race but the winning candidate was Labour's Fiona Hennerby. Amongst the rivals in a 24 per cent turnout was her nephew, Nathan Hennerby, who came second from last with 47 votes under the Communist Party of Britain banner. We hope domestic harmony is restored soon...

CONTACT US...

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London District NCP:
<http://londoncommunists.blogspot.com/>

REVIEW

With One Hand Waving Free

With One Hand Waving Free: a novel by Ken Fuller. Independently published, 2024. Pbk, 351pp, RRP: £12.99.

by Ben Soton

With One Hand Waving Free is the title of Ken Fuller's latest book. Regular readers will remember him as the creator of the *Red Button* trilogy set in the heady days of the early 20th Century. This work, however, is set in the 1970s. Roger Drummond is happily working in a bus garage when offered a managerial position in a medical supply firm Merrit & Thwaite that is thrust upon him through his socially ambitious wife. Drummond, who also spends some of his spare time in left-wing bookshops, resembles a

combination of Reginald Perrin and Citizen Smith.

Drummond's work for Merrit & Thwaite takes him to the Caribbean island of Arawak.

The novel shines a light on British imperialism's role in the Caribbean; it was in fact the slave trade that enabled the industrial revolution to take place. Set in 1978, the 30th anniversary of the founding of the NHS we see the Callaghan Labour Government under left-wing pressure agree to fund a shipment of medical supplies. I wonder if a Starmer Government would be susceptible to such pressure: don't hold your breath.

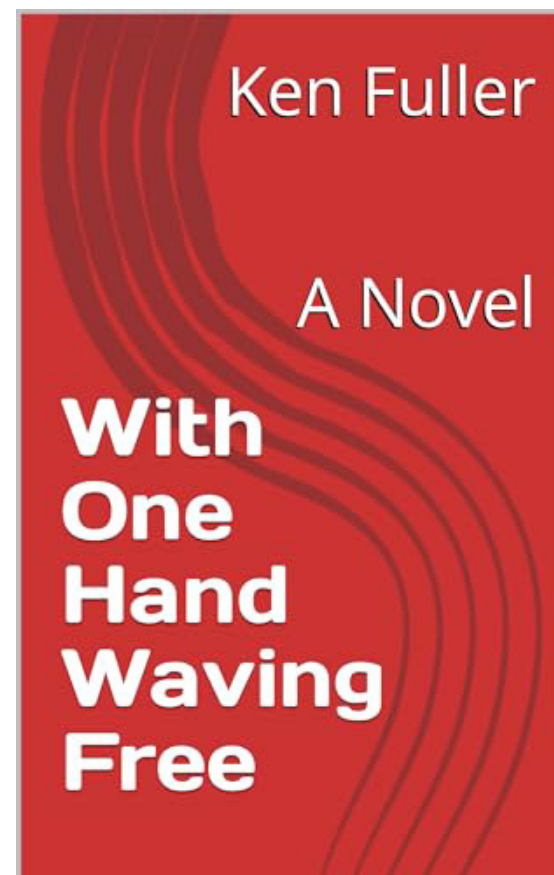
Drummond's reason for visiting the island is to oversee their delivery.

Arawak's left-wing government, which has similarities with both Michael Manley's Jamaica and Maurice Bishop's Grenada, is attempting to introduce healthcare to the island's impoverished population. On the island he witnesses attempts by US imperialism to destabilise the country and becomes involved in a passionate affair with the country's health minister, Davinia Lee.

The dual role of religion is exposed in the story. On one hand the Reverend Bassfield Thom-

as advocates a form of Liberation Theology, and he refers to the imperialists as Pharaohs. His followers come into open conflict with a group of Billy Graham-style Evangelical Christians who object to the presence of Cuban doctors on the island and try to turn backward sections of the population against the government.

The novel ends with a very interesting twist that readers of Fuller's other works will understand. However, *With One Hand Waving* is an excellent read in its own right. Not to say there is a possibility of a sequel. It can be safely said that Fuller is a pioneer in the genre of the left-wing political thriller. I hope his work continues.



REVIEW

Economics for the 21st Century

Socialism and Economic Cybernetics: towards a manifesto by Dr Elena Veduta. Second Wave Publications, 2014. Pbk, 48pp; RRP £10 (but £7.50 including p&p for New Worker readers).

by John Maryon

Professor Elena Veduta is a prolific author and celebrated cybernetic economist working at the Lomonosov Moscow State University as Head of the Department of Strategic Planning and Economic Policy. She is also Head of the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory at the Russian Academy of Sciences. Veduta is also a true Marxist. Her views contrast with the reactionary academics of the school of market socialism that emerged in the mid-1950s as Khrushchev's revision started to undermine socialist development in the USSR.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is concerned with the development and application of computer systems to simulate human intelli-

gence. Cybernetics relates to the study comparison of control and communication in living and machine systems. Economic Cybernetics is defined in *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia* as a scientific field in which Cybernetics is used to assist economic development. Veduta analyses the causes of the current capitalist global crisis and shows that socialist planning is necessary to overcome the failings of market driven economies. In view of the difficult and complex problems the use of AI and algorithms in the application of cybernetics is considered essential.

The book is divided into a number of sections. These include a full analysis of capitalist contradictions and an examination of the alternative experience in co-ordination of production relationships in the USSR. An analysis for today looks at the role of transnational corporations

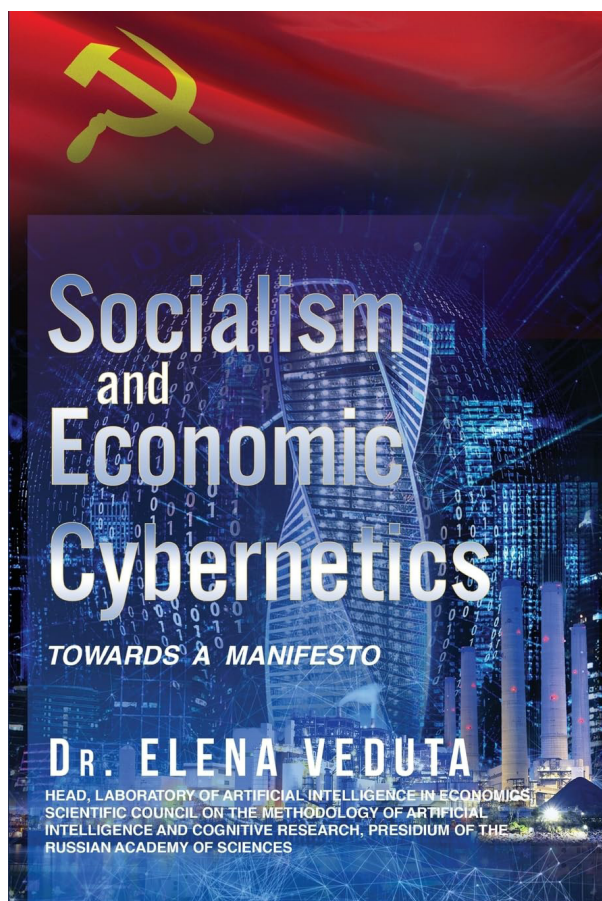
and how the distribution of wealth works in their favour. The impact of protectionism as practised by the USA is also studied.

There is no doubt that computers play an important practical role in socialist planning, particularly as economies develop and become more complex, with the need to respond quickly to vast streams of input data. The rise of AI in which the abilities of computers may surpass human capabilities must be considered as important. Wars in the future, including economic competition, may be controlled by AI which raises important ethical questions. The author examines in detail the experiences of the USSR in the field of Economic Cybernetics in its competition with the USA. The effects of the Belt and Road Initiative are also considered. Professor Veduta states that within the framework of chaotically organised

capitalism there can be no effective management of the economy. It is suggested that in order to preserve capitalism AI may be used as a tool, to control people, rather than its proper use as effective management of the economy.

This important work by Professor Veduta deals with a very complex subject in such a way that non-academics may gain an understanding of the principles involved and the importance of the subject matter. The work also serves as an important reference for specialists in the field. It is a necessary read for those who may wish to analyse why the Soviet Union's awesome rise was followed by a decline and to understand the economic forces at play in the modern world.

The booklet is available at a special price of £7.50 (£5.00 plus £2.50 p&p) from NCP Lit, PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ.



Biden stands alone over Israel

by Ramzy Baroud

On 6th June Spain joined South Africa's case at the United Nations' top court, accusing Israel of genocide.

This move followed a decision by Madrid and two other western European capitals – Dublin and Oslo – to recognise the State of Palestine, thus breaking ranks with a long-established US-led Western policy.

As per American thinking, the recognition and the establishment of a Palestinian state should follow a negotiated settlement between Israel and Palestine, under the auspices of Washington itself.

No such negotiations have taken place in years, and the Americans have, in fact, shifted their policies on the issue almost entirely under the previous administration of Donald Trump. The latter had recognised as “legal” the illegal Jewish colonies in Palestine and Israel's sovereignty over occupied East Jerusalem, among other concessions.

Several years into the Biden administration, little has been done to reverse or fundamentally alter the new status quo. More recently, Washington has done everything in its power to support Israel's ongoing genocide in Gaza.

Aside from supplying Israel with the needed weapons to conduct its crimes in the Strip, the USA has gone as far as threatening international legal and political bodies that tried to hold Is-

rael accountable, thus ending the “extermination” of Palestinians in Gaza – a term used on 20th May by the International Criminal Court Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan.

Washington continues to behave in such a way despite the fact that Israel refuses to concede to a single American demand or expectation regarding peace and negotiations. Indeed, Israel's political discourse is deeply invested in the language of genocide, while the Israeli mili-

Yet, despite the occasional gentle reprimand and ineffectual sanctions on a few settlers, Washington continues to stand firmly by its declared policy regarding the two states and all the rest. Not a single mainstream Israeli politician, certainly not Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government of extremists, is willing to entertain the thought.

This is not surprising, as American foreign policy often

Tel Aviv is clearly far more consequential to American domestic policies than Kabul. Thus, the continued American military and political support of a country that is being accused of genocide and extermination.

This reality, however, has created a political dilemma for Europe, which has often blindly followed US steps – or missteps – in the Middle East.

Historically, there have been a few exceptions to the post-Second World

initial Western unity in support of Israel, immediately after the 7th October events, has splintered, eventually leaving the USA and, to some extent, Germany, as the countries most committed to the Israeli war.

The strong, more recent stances by several Western European countries accusing Israel of genocide and joining forces with countries in the Global South with the aim of holding Israel accountable, is a major shift unseen in many

of retired world statesmen, former president of Ireland Mary Robinson warned against the “collapse of international order”.

“We oppose any attempts to de-legitimise” the work of the ICC and ICJ, through “threats of punitive measures and sanctions,” Robinson said.

The Elders' opposition, however, made no difference. On 5th June, the US House of Representatives passed resolution HR 8282 aimed at authorising sanctions on the ICC.

References to the collapse of the legitimacy of the West-established international order have also been made by many others in recent months, including by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

In his statement requesting arrest warrants for accused Israeli war criminals, Karim Khan himself made that reference. For some, the issue is not just about the Gaza genocide. It is also about the future of “the West” itself.

For a long time, Washington has succeeded, at least in the eyes of its allies, in keeping the balance between the collective interests of the West and a nominal respect for international institutions.

It is now clear that the US is no longer capable of maintaining that balancing act, forcing some countries into adopting independent political positions, the future outcomes of which shall prove consequential.

People's World (USA)



Russia signs new pact with DPRK

by Dharya
Maheshwari

Russian President Vladimir Putin and north Korea's Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un signed a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement during summit-level talks in Pyongyang on Wednesday. The Russian president said that the new comprehensive strategic pact, which includes prospects for military-technical co-operation, would serve as the "backbone" of bilateral ties in the long term. The Russian president arrived in Pyongyang for a two-day state visit late on Tuesday evening. This is his first trip to the DPR Korea since 2000.

Putin said that the new pact implied mutual assistance if any party faced a foreign attack. The Democratic Kore-

an leader described the signing of the pact as an "important event" and one which would accelerate the formation of a "multipolar world order".

"Thanks to the conclusion of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement between north Korea and Russia, relations between our two countries have embarked on the path of further prom-

ising and prosperous development to achieve the progress of the two countries and enhance the well-being of their peoples through active co-operation in various fields, including politics, economy, culture and military affairs," Kim told Putin at the meeting.

He described the new pact as being purely "defensive" in nature. Additionally, Kim committed support to Russia in the

ongoing conflict with Ukraine.

The Russian president didn't rule out the possibility of bolstering military-technical co-operation with Pyongyang under the signed pact. Putin said that security issues and the international situation figured prominently during the talks.

Putin offered his support for efforts to "eliminate the threat of conflict"

on the Korean peninsula, amid continued Western pressure on Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons. The Russian president asserted that he would be ready to assist in forming a "long-term peace plan" to resolve the Korean conflict.

Meantime, during the meeting, Putin condemned the United States and its NATO allies over the supply

of high-precision weapons systems and aircraft to Ukrainian forces for strikes inside the Russian territory.

"This is not just a statement, it is already happening, and all this is a gross violation of the restrictions accepted by Western countries within the framework of various international obligations," the Russian president said.

Both leaders stressed that they would continue to jointly oppose the sanctions imposed by Western countries on both the DPRK and Russia.

"We will continue to oppose the very practice of sanctions strangulation as a tool that the West is accustomed to using in order to maintain its hegemony in politics, economics and other areas," Putin remarked.

Sputnik



• Kim Jong Un welcomes Putin in Pyongyang.

France revolts

by Guillermo
Alvarado

The French Revolution of liberty, equality and fraternity, which had such a profound impact at the time in Latin America and the Caribbean, is on the verge of falling into the hands of the darkest forces of the racist, xenophobic and fascist extreme right.

As is known, in the recent elections for the European Parliament,

the French extreme right won 30 seats, a result above the rest of the political groups, including the alliance promoted by President Emmanuel Macron, which was left with 15 legislators.

This is the best result achieved so far by Marine le Pen and her National Rally party, which is the direct heir to the ideology of the infamous National Party, founded and led until the retirement of her father, Jean Marie le Pen.

To give you an idea of who we are talking about, just remember that this was the guy who once said that the gas chambers, where thousands of victims of the Nazi regime died, were only "an anecdote" in the Second World War. Jean Marie le Pen never hid his admiration for Adolf Hitler and his clique.

After the victory of extremism in the European Parliament, President Macron could not think of anything other

than to dissolve the legislative body, in that country called the National Assembly, and call early elections for 30th June, with a second round, if necessary on 7th July.

After sweeping the European elections, the National Rally is very well positioned for this opportunity to also control the French parliament, which would allow it to appoint the prime minister and force Macron to form a cohabitation government.

The risk is real and many French people are already clear about that and hence the massive demonstrations over the weekend to repudiate right-wing extremism and call for a conscious vote to avoid a disaster.

More than 600,000 people took to the streets across France in support of protests called by unions, students, human rights and anti-racist movements.

One of the proposals is the creation of a new

Popular Front like the great coalition that defeated Jean Marie le Pen when he faced Jacques Chirac in the second round of the 2002 presidential elections.

There are two weeks left until the elections that have already attracted the attention of the world, due to all the risk that represents a greater strengthening of the extreme right in the heart of Europe.

Radio Havana Cuba