

Arabs fight as Israel plans new ethnic cleansing

by our Arab Affairs correspondent

Israeli warplanes pound Beirut as Hezbollah resistance forces battle to drive the Israelis out of southern Lebanon. Palestinian guerrillas are ambushing Israeli patrols in northern Gaza and launching attacks deep inside Israel itself. American B-2 Stealth bombers have raided military bases in Houthi-controlled north Yemen. And back in Cairo leaders from Fatah, the Palestinian movement that runs the autonomous West Bank administration and Hamas, which heads the Gaza Strip government, have agreed to form a Palestinian unity government for Gaza and the occupied West Bank.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has again rejected international calls for a ceasefire. He's also insisting that there now must be a buffer zone along the border with Lebanon while demanding the withdrawal of the long-standing UN peace-keeping force that the Zionists want out of the way of their invasion force.

But Israel's latest attack on the UNIFIL force has provoked an angry backlash from the European Union whose mem-



bers contribute troops to the peacekeeping forces in southern Lebanon. After hours of negotiations, all of the EU bloc's 27 countries signed a joint statement on Sunday condemning Israel's attacks against UN missions after 15 UN personnel were injured when Israeli troops forced entry into their Lebanese base.

The Zionists still dream of victory, but Hezbollah's Deputy Secretary-General Sheikh Naim Qassem says the best possible outcome to the conflict is for Israel to stop attacking Lebanon and Gaza. The Lebanese resistance movement, which is also a major player in the Lebanese parliament, has hit back with a vengeance in recent days with rocket and drone attacks throughout northern Israel including a strike on a barracks near Binyamina that killed four members of the crack Golani Brigade and wounded more than 60 others.

"The solution is a ceasefire. We are not speaking from a position of weakness," Qassem said. "If the Israelis do not want that,

we will continue," he added. He said the Zionist settlers in northern Israel would then be able to return home after a ceasefire deal is reached through an indirect agreement.

But he highlighted that "the number of uninhabited settlements will increase, and hundreds of thousands, even more than two million, will be in danger at any time, at any hour, on any day" if the Zionist regime keeps the war going in Lebanon and Gaza. "The resistance will never be defeated because they're the ones that own the land. They will fight and die in dignity. Victory will come with patience," the Hezbollah deputy chief stressed.

Fears that the Zionists are now moving to drive all the Palestinian Arabs out of the Gaza Strip are growing after the Israelis told Palestinians in northern Gaza to evacuate to the Israeli-designated "humanitarian zone" in the Strip's south.

Aida Touma-Sliman, a member of the communist-led Democratic Front for Peace and

Equality (Hadash) in the Israeli parliament, said: "While most attention is on Lebanon and Iran, it appears that Israel is enacting what was named 'The Generals Plan' in northern Gaza, which includes the displacement or starvation of all people still in the northern Gaza Strip. This plan is a plan of ethnic cleansing and sets the scene for the permanent Israeli occupation of all the northern Gaza Strip. It could also open the way for the vision held by many in the government ... of resettling Gaza with Jewish settlers. The world must act to stop this new and dangerous escalation in Gaza."

FUND

This week's postbag brought £800 for the fighting fund, pushing the running total for October up to £1,200. Special mention for a veteran communist who lives in a former Soviet republic who sent in £500 as well as the Southall comrade who donated £200, the Stroud supporter who gave us £20 and a Dagenham comrade who made a £40 contribution. We now need £2,300 to hit our target by the end of the month.

Every day we read about the crimes of the imperialists and their lackeys all around the world. But the peoples of the world are fighting back in Palestine, in the Donbas and wherever there is oppression. Communists are to the fore in the struggle against imperialism, Zionism and neo-colonialism, so help us get the message across and build the communist movement in Britain. Make sure that our voice is heard in every factory, office and neighbourhood across the country by guaranteeing the survival of the *New Worker*. Your contribution, big or small, counts.

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THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Free Palestine!

While the great and the good shed crocodile tears over the carnage in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, the Israelis continue their genocidal war safe in the knowledge that they can always count on the Americans to back them up, regardless of the consequences. And those consequences include an Israeli attack on Iran that could set the entire region ablaze or even trigger a new world war.

Starmer can say what he likes about an end to the fighting and a “two-state” solution but nothing’s going to happen while Britain continues to pump arms to the Zionist entity. Starmer bleats on about Israel’s “right to defend itself” while imposing new sanctions on Iran to appease his masters in Washington.

That’s why the boycott campaign and the mass movement on the street is vital to mobilise public opinion in solidarity with the Palestinians. The Labour and Tory leaders blindly follow the American line but a substantial minority of MPs on the opposition benches have taken the principled stand in support of the Palestinians. While the jobsworths and bureaucrats in the labour movement turn a blind eye to what’s going on in the Middle East the rank-and-file are joining the mass movement to end the war that is sweeping the country. The conflict will only end when the legitimate rights of the Palestinians are restored including the right to return and the right to self-determination and independence. Let them hear it in Washington – let them hear it in Tel Aviv!

The Secret Policeman’s Ball

During the Cold War not a day went past without some “red scare” story in the news. The Berlin Wall; Gulags; Eastern Europeans groaning under the Soviet jackboot; Reds fomenting strikes to bring down “Western civilisation”; communists taking “Moscow gold” and legion of Russian spies creeping around looking for atom secrets. All of this under the shadow of a nuclear holocaust that only the Anglo-American nuclear deterrent could prevent.

These days we’re told it’s the hidden hands of the Russians and Iranians who are generating “mayhem” on our streets, fomenting civil unrest and poisoning the minds of young children to do their bidding. Or so Ken McCallum, the Director-General of MI5, says.

Last week the chief of the secret police delivered a speech at the Counter Terrorism Operations Centre in London in which he said Russia was on a “mission to generate mayhem” on British soil while Iran was plotting attacks on “an unprecedented pace and scale” to destabilise the country.

Some think McCallum is preparing the ground for new laws to curb the Palestine solidarity movement that has swept the country over the last year. Others fear that this is just the start of a hate campaign that will lead up to a direct Anglo-American attack on the Islamic Republic in support of the genocidal Israeli war against the Palestinians. Or he might simply be trying to get the new Labour government to beef up his budget by conjuring up new threats to British security...

Assange: Guilty to journalism

by Mary Manley

After serving five years in a British prison, Assange was released. The Australian publisher and activist pleaded guilty to obtaining and publishing US military secrets in a deal with Justice Department prosecutors following years of legal battles to avoid being extradited to the USA.

Last week WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange said he was freed after years of incarceration because he “pleaded guilty to journalism”. The Australian editor who founded WikiLeaks in 2006 made his first public remarks since he was released from prison in June, and presented evidence on his detention and conviction and its effects on human rights to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). The assembly in the French city of Strasbourg included parliamentarians from 46 European countries.

“I want to be totally clear: I am not free today because the system worked,” Assange told lawmakers. “I am free today after years of incarceration because I pled guilty to journalism.”

Prior to his arrest, he spent seven years in political asylum at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London on the grounds of political persecution.

“Let’s not forget that one of the points [Assange] made was that before they engaged in their publications, they spoke to lawyers about the state of the law, both in the US and Europe, and, to understand the boundaries and the risks,” says Mohamed Elmaazi, a UK-based journalist. “And they did expect some legal, having to engage in certain degrees of legal challenges, just not to the extent that he faced, right”.

“I mean, this is the first application of the Espionage Act against a publisher for publishing activities outside of the US. I mean, there was only one case I’m aware of inside of the US where it went as far as a grand jury, and that was during the Second World War and the grand jury failed to indict,” the journal-

ist added.

While speaking, Assange said he had “struggled to stay alive, both physically and mentally” while incarcerated. The Americans began pursuing Assange with an Espionage Act charge after he was accused of receiving and publishing hundreds of thousands of war logs and diplomatic cables including the US military’s wrongdoings in Iraq and Afghanistan. He pleaded guilty to an Espionage Act charge of conspiring to unlawfully obtain and disseminate classified nation defence information.

Because he already spent five years behind bars in the UK, a judge used those years as his sentence. He returned to Australia as a free man in late July.

PACE published a report on Assange’s detention in the UK, and said Assange qualified as a political prisoner. They also issued a draft resolution expressing deep concern regarding his harsh treatment. PACE also said that Washington’s failure to investigate war crimes and human rights violations disclosed by WikiLeaks in combination with the poor treatment of Assange suggests the USA was more interested in hiding the wrongdoings of its state agents, rather than to protect national security.

“...the fact that all of this global effort developed right in the end, the US government conceded that they didn’t have any

evidence during the plea agreement [of anyone] coming to harm or being killed or being injured as a result of publications, which the judge noted was important actually when accepting the plea agreement,” Elmaazi noted.

“And, this resolution to come from the Council of Europe that, I think, assists in, at the very least, politically to make it more difficult because these are the end of the day political decisions,” he added. “...at the end of the day, laws are just words on a piece of paper, right. What matters is power, right. And the various interests, how far they believe they can push things.

“...you’ll always be able to find people who can interpret the law, just as it’s been interpreted, the Espionage Act has been interpreted in particular ways to go against Julian. I would also find the US is applying and has applied its domestic criminal law extra-territorially, right, outside of what would be recognized as legal jurisdiction against people who are non-US citizens for activity and behaviour they engaged in outside of the US.

“And that is imperialistic and all the rest of it. But it does still require a degree of complicity from, you know, not just a degree, meaningful complicity from British judges, right. UK judges and the UK prosecution.”

Sputnik



Workers' Notes

The Employment Wrongs Bill

by New Worker correspondent

After months of speculation we can finally see that a mouse, rather than a rabbit, has been pulled out of the hat that contained the promised Employment Rights Bill.

One sign that the Bill was of no great threat to business came from Alex Hall-Chen, Principal Policy Advisor for Employment at the Institute of Directors, who said that: "Our research shows that there is appetite for some employment law reform within the business community. We welcome signs that government has taken on board concerns from business regarding the importance of probationary periods, as well as its commitment to consult meaningfully with business on the detail of the policies."

The senior bosses' union advisor went on to complain that "however, we remain concerned that these proposals are using a sledgehammer to crack a nut and will ultimately make it both riskier and more costly for businesses to employ staff at a time when business confidence is at its lowest point in two years".

This is a comparatively mild criticism coming from a body which was a cheerleader for Margaret Thatcher. Another complaint was that the Bill offered no "measures to assist businesses, particularly Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), in coping with the additional costs which will arise from these reforms", but the IoD hoped that the forthcoming Budget will assist "SMEs with higher costs resulting from changes to the Statutory Sick Pay entitlement".

If that is all the IoD have to complain about it is clear that Labour Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner's pious declaration that "The government is delivering the biggest upgrade to rights at work for a generation",

merely confirms that nothing was done during the Blair and Brown years.

The Confederation of British Industry was also pleased with Labour's offering, claiming that "politicians and businesses have a shared goal in wanting to raise living standards through higher levels of growth underpinned by investment and increased productivity". They welcomed the fact that the bosses were allowed to veto any possibly troubling bits by adding that "The government deserves credit for its willingness to engage with businesses and unions on how to make a success of the Plan to Make Work Pay. It's that willingness to work together that can ensure we find the right landing zone and improve living standards by avoiding the unintended consequences that businesses have warned against".

The unions speak

The TUC General Secretary was even more optimistic, if not downright delusional by claiming that "whether it's tackling the scourge of zero-hours contracts and fire and rehire, improving access to sick pay and parental leave, or clamping down on exploitation – this Bill highlights the government's commitment to upgrade rights and protections for millions".

Even the branding has been downgraded from "A New Deal for Working People" to "Plan to Make Work Pay". That would make an appropriate slogan for a Victorian workhouse.

To make matters worse, there is going to be further consultation with bosses for another two years. So much for promising to legislate in the first hundred days of taking office.

The unions took a mixed view. Unite said the Bill was a step forward. But it condemned the failure to ban zero hours contracts and 'fire and rehire' and complained about watering down the right for workers to have access to trade unions.

Unite demands the return of collective bargaining arguing that higher wages boost the economy as workers spend rather than stashing it away in tax havens. It argues that restoring collective bargaining coverage to the same

levels as 1996 would lead to a 2.8 per cent rise in GDP.

Shopworkers union USDAW was much more grateful. General Secretary Paddy Lillis said "USDAW is delighted to see this Labour Government deliver on their manifesto promise of bringing forward legislation to improve worker's rights to help make work pay and employment more secure".

He praised the legislation for its modest measures and even welcomed "action to tackle insecure work and one-sided flexibility with a ban on exploitative zero-hour contracts, an end to unscrupulous 'fire and rehire' tactics" despite it clearly doing nothing of the kind. Arise Sir Paddy.

Unison took a similarly uncritical view. GMB General Secretary Gary Smith declared that "This is a significant and groundbreaking first step to giving workers the rights they've been denied for so long". He welcomed the "Fair Pay Agreements for carers, reinstating the School Support Staff Negotiating Body, repealing anti-union legislation and a raft of other rights for workers will make a huge difference to the lives of GMB members and are popular across the country".

He made clear that "there is a long way to go and naively demands that "unions and workers are front and centre of the detailed discussions needed to deliver it". He is going to be severely disappointed when his hopes that "the legislation must be watertight and without loopholes that could be used by those wanting to delay the rights workers so desperately need" are dashed.

Only on Monday the Prime Minister slapped down the Transport Secretary for calling for a boycott of P&O Ferries after they sacked hundreds of workers. This action was so blatant that even the then Tory made false promises about abolishing fire and rehire.

Even those unions known to have a backbone joined in the chorus of praise. Mike Lynch, RMT's General Secretary said "this is the most significant set of reforms in workers' rights that we've seen in decades and is a far cry away from the previous Tory government's attempts to suppress the aspirations of working people".

Matt Wrack, the Fire Brigades Union general secretary, even claimed credit for the promised measures, saying "this very significant extension of workers' rights is a huge victory for the FBU and other unions that have been at the forefront of campaigning to ensure that Labour's New Deal for Working People is fully delivered".

The lawyers' respond

Keith Ewing and Lord John Hendy KC cast their lawyerly eyes over the measure and were more critical. They point out most of Starmer's original pledges have been dropped and that Britain will still not meet many International Labour Organisation standards. They welcome the fact that ballot thresholds introduced in 2016 are abolished and the simple majority vote in favour restored. Not surprisingly some people have described the Bill as having more holes than a Swiss cheese. More holes than a string vest, and Rab C Nesbitt's at that would be a better metaphor.

The Details and Absences

The Bill promises workers' rights from "Day one", which will allow new employees to claim unfair dismissal if sacked. However, there is a loophole as there will be a statutory probationary period for new hires, during which time bosses will be able to terminate employment without going through a full process. It has been suggested that period will be nine months, which is much longer than most probations at present.

Rights to paternity leave and unpaid parental leave are on offer, but these seem only modest improvements. Rights to Statutory Sick Pay are amended under the Bill, removing the current three-day waiting period making SSP payable from the first day of absence, and the present Lower Earnings Limit (LEL) for qualifying for SSP, currently £123 per week, will be removed.

The Government claims it is strengthening the right to "flexible" working hours, but it still remains a right to politely request flexitime and bosses will still have a right to decline, so it looks like a change without a difference. It looks as if the only

difference will be that bosses have to explain a refusal in more detail.

Plans to end zero-hour contracts outright seem to have been effectively ditched. The Bill introduces a new right to a guaranteed-hours contract for those who work regular hours over a 12-week reference period, with provision for subsequent reference review periods if hours become regular over a longer period of time. But it also allows workers who want to remain on zero-hours contracts the ability to do so – leaving vulnerable workers open to coercion.

The Bill also provides for workers on zero- and low-hours contracts to be given 'reasonable notice' about changes in shifts or working time, with compensation for shifts cancelled or curtailed at short notice. But zero-hours contracts are most common in unorganised sectors, which makes it difficult to enforce any positive legal rights.

In theory the Bill offers to end the fire-and-rehire question by adding it to the list of reasons of offences constituting an 'automatic' unfair dismissal. This is effectively negated by saying that fire and hire is acceptable when bosses claim there is no alternative due to dire financial circumstances which would affect the viability of the business as a going concern. This point has always been used as an excuse in such cases, so it's essentially no change. Any clever accountant can prove that a profitable business is on the verge of collapse.

On the question of redundancy, the obligation to consult with workers has been slightly improved by lowering the threshold, which currently stands at 20, meaning even smaller businesses planning redundancies will need to follow a more structured consultation process.

A great advance but consultation is meaningless without union representation.

While pregnant women and new parents will have more protections against dismissal long after returning to work there are plenty of "specific circumstances" for employers to exploit.

There's increased protection from third party harassment and strengthening the obligations on employers to prevent sexual

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harassment at work though the precise wording is that employers are required to take "all reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment, rather than "reasonable steps" as currently provided means that successful actions will still depend on negotiations rather than the strict letter of the law.

Large employers with over 250 staff will be forced rather than advised to produce action plans to address their gender pay gaps and to support employees through the menopause.

On pay questions the Bill will include powers to create a Fair Pay Agreement for the adult social care sector and bring back the School Support Staff Negotiating Body, which will assist some low-paid workers. More seriously this is a sign that all other workers will not be brought back into collective bargaining.

The existing National Minimum Wage age bands are to be abolished but the hourly rate will still not be tied to the level of inflation. While the Low Pay Commission is now required to take into account the cost of living when setting the rate that is largely meaningless as it has, in practice, always done so in the past.

Another modest change is reinstating the two-tier code for public sector contracts, which is

supposed to ensure that employees on outsourced contracts are offered terms and conditions no less favourable to those transferred from the public sector. Again, this has been a legal obligation in theory.

The ineffective and unused Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 will be formally repealed, and vague promises made about making it easier to secure union recognition and for union officials to get access to workplaces. It will oblige bosses to give workers a written statement of their trade union rights along with their statement of employment particulars. This is similar to the long-standing obligation to display health and safety rules.

A new Fair Work Agency is being planned to unite the existing enforcement agencies: the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, HMRC's NMW enforcement unit and the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate. But there is no sign that the new agency will receive any extra funding to become effective.

All in all, the Bill continues the Tony Blair tradition of keeping all the six anti-trade union laws passed by the Tories in the 1980s intact. One example is the necessity to go through the hoops of balloting before trade unions can take strike action still remains

in place.

As dessert we are promised further modest goodies including plans to clearly define the status of "worker" to clarify the difference between workers and the genuinely self-employed.

There is also going to be "a right to switch off" to stop Management contacting workers after hours except in exceptional circumstances.

Changing of the Guard?

by New Worker correspondent

Last week white puffs of smoke appeared from the London HQ of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) when it was announced that its new general secretary was to be one Laura Davison, who takes over from the departing Michelle Stanistreet. The NUJ has 21,410 members. Only 2,632, or 12.3 per cent of the membership, could be bothered to return the postal ballot. Even that was only achieved by giving an extra week of voting. Of these, 12 others either could not fill in the ballot paper properly or deliberately spoil their vote in protest. Of the remaining votes 1,976 went to Davison – well

ahead of her rival Natasha Hirst who bagged just 644 votes.

For over 20 years NUJ general secretaries were elected unopposed. This was the first contest in the union since 2001 so perhaps something is stirring. Hirst, a freelance photographer based in Cardiff with her own company, was something of the challenger candidate. She will just have to be content with carrying on as the NUJ's President. Being deaf she is a champion of disabled journalists.

This correspondent is unsure of whether or not a goodie or baddie won. The *Morning Star* published the two candidates' election addresses. There was little to distinguish between them, and had a mischievous sub-editor switched around a few paragraphs, few would have noticed.

As is almost inevitable these days, Ms Davison has been a NUJ full time official since 2007. Previously she worked in the BBC. For a decade she was NUJ national organiser for newspapers and news agencies. She led negotiations at The *Financial Times*, The *Guardian*, and publishers such as Reach, Newsquest and Thomson Reuters among others. In all these outfits workers have lost jobs or at best received below-inflation pay rises, which is not very encouraging.

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**20 years ago
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15th October 2004

TENS OF THOUSANDS of working people marched through Athens last Saturday demonstrating their support for the Greek Communist Party (KKE) and workers' rights. And communists from every continent joined hands with them under the slogan "The Olympic Games are over – but class struggles continue".

Workers and the Greek youth dominated the march through the heart of the capital following a rally addressed by Greek communist leader Aleka Paparigha, and comrades from Cuba and the Palestine People's Party.

Greek workers' living standards and union rights are

under attack from the recently elected conservative New Democracy government and this has been intensified in the name of the 2004 Athens Olympics, which the Greek government used to promote its reactionary class agenda.

Thirteen workers were killed and hundreds more injured building the Olympic complex. No government official or employer has been jailed or even charged with negligence. Everyone knows that top government officials and multinational contractors made fortunes out of it.

The building workers paid for the Olympics with their blood. The entire Greek working class will pay for it for years in increased taxation to pay for the losses made in the running of the Games. Militant Greek trade unionists will not forget the workers who died building the Athens Olympics.

Their deaths underline the inhuman face of capitalist exploitation and the hypocrisy of the government and employers, who have transformed the Olympic spirit into a business deal to amass more profits.

Today Greece is preparing to take an active part

in imperialist plans for the occupation in Iraq. The opposition PASOK social-democratic party plays into their hands by focusing their opposition on secondary matters of lesser importance.

Delegates from 64 communist parties suspended an international meeting of communist and workers parties taking place that weekend in Athens to join the rally and march.

In her opening address Aleka Paparigha said: "Imperialism has not yet managed to finish off national liberation struggles and revolutionary movements by either political or military means. The Palestinian intifada goes on, the people's victory in the recent referendum in Venezuela – all constitute facts of broader significance and point out that the peoples' struggles against imperialist domination and aggression continue unceasingly."

The reactionary nature of the European Union and the divisions amongst the imperialists themselves, especially over the invasion of Iraq, were discussed over the weekend.

The future is socialist

by John Maryon

Those people from all over the world who make the spirited choice to build socialism may take different roads. With differing cultures and social conditions, standards of education, natural resources, levels of economic development and national wealth they will have their own strengths and weaknesses. Their route will be affected by their ability to resist imperialist threats and also any support they may have from other progressive states. China's Belt & Road along with BRICS and the growing prowess of a new emerging world order can assist all those who have taken the road towards that Bright New Horizon that leads to socialism.

People's China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) have each chosen to take different steps forward. I wish them both great success and follow with pride their amazing progress. China has opted for a mixed economy of both public and private enterprises that operate within a socialist market. The result has been to eliminate mass poverty and place the country into a leading position in the fields of science, technology and sustainable development, and with a powerful economy that is able to challenge US dominance. People's Korea has made no less remarkable progress since it started from ground zero, with everything destroyed by American bombing. Rising like a phoenix from the ashes it has successfully combined Marxism with the Juche philosophy of self-reliance developed by the great leader Kim Il Sung to also become a successful modern socialist state.

As a dynamic socialist society develops its priorities and strategies will change as achievements are made and new challenges arise. Building socialism involves far more than economic progress. It is

concerned with an upgrading of social relations to reflect a classless society in which selfish individualism is replaced by co-operation and respect. Unlike the USA, where more privileged and well-educated white-collar workers may look down on blue-collar workers, a socialist country takes steps to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential and in doing so contribute to the common good.

Since the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established 75 years ago on 1st October 1949 the country has

has been amazing. In spite of continued attempts to cripple it's progress China is now a world leader in advanced engineering science and has demonstrated its ability in space exploration, artificial intelligence and manufacturing.

China's economic development speeded up after 1978 when the leader Deng Xiaoping took steps to open up the economy to foreign investment which led to the creation of a private sector. He believed that common prosperity was a goal of socialism and although the new policy

neurs would be encouraged to repay society by sharing wealth. In China the government has an important role to play in mobilising all parts of society for these ideals.

So far so good. A creditable policy with noble aims but what happens if the socialist market becomes saturated?

The presence of a strong unfettered public sector is absolutely necessary together with strict regulation of finance and a constant vigil for corruption to ensure economic stability and accountability. Central planning to provide a

plying the universal principles of scientific socialism, such as central planning, collective ownership and maintaining the leading role of a vanguard party, a modern socialist state has been successfully developed from almost nothing. Democratic Korea's independent nuclear deterrent has without doubt saved it from the fate that befell Iraq, Syria, Yugoslavia and others. Cruel and unfair sanctions have made life very hard, but things are about to change. The people can now look forward to their free housing and living standards are rising. The DPRK may soon be able to join BRICS, and I can see no reason why they cannot be invited to join the Belt & Road Initiative.

The DPRK economy was hard hit when revisionists destroyed the Soviet Union and Russia withdrew its support to the developing nation. Continuing crippling sanctions and a weather-related famine in the 1990s along with COVID-19 restrictions created serious problems. However, with the strong and wise leadership of the Workers' Party of Korea the state has moved forward. It has built a modern socialist state on the ruins left after US carpet bombing. Its success is secured by the strong bond that exists between the ruling party and its people. The essential features of Korean Socialism were created not only by the application of Marxism but also by experience on the battlefield of the anti-imperialist struggle.



• China on the road to socialism.

made tremendous progress. Life expectancy has doubled. Its railway network now has a total length equivalent to circling the Earth four times. Its metalled roads would extend to the Moon and back six times. China has grown to become the world's leading industrial nation with a GDP value fast approaching that of the USA. Its GDP per capita has increased from 119 Yuan in 1952 to 89,356 Yuan in 2023 reflecting an impressive rise in people's well-being. The rapid development of its infrastructure, with awe-inspiring bridges, huge dams and extensive power grids,

had its potential dangers it should be seen in the context that as the economy improved so would the wealth of all its citizens. President Xi Jinping is committed to common prosperity and has stressed the need to transform society into one in which everyone would share its benefits equally by 2050. The President has identified measures with this aim in mind. These include strategic investment in rural areas and an upskilling of the whole labour force to move away from lower wage levels. Improved public services and enhanced social protection will play their part. Entrepre-

framework for development is essential to guide harmonious development in the medium and long term. A strategy to which the private sector must contribute and be guided by.

Let us now examine another road to socialism; that taken by the DPRK. A very different route but one which traditional Marxist-Leninists will be more familiar with. The outlook and culture of the DPRK is heavily influenced by its struggles against the brutality of Japanese and American imperialism. The Juche philosophy of self-reliance and independence has served the nation well. By ap-

The NCP badge



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Workers' Party of Korea: the party of the people

by Otis Grotewohl

For 79 years, the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) has been a revolutionary socialist party dedicated to representing the interests and aspirations of the Korean working class. The WPK developed through an intense struggle for liberation and independence, and it is the leading party within the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

WPK as it exists today was founded in 1949 from a merger between the Workers' Party of North Korea (WPNK) and Workers' Party of South Korea (WPSK). In 1945, the Workers' Party of North Korea was established through a unification of the Communist Party and the New Democratic Party (NDP). The South Korean Workers' Party, on the other hand, was created as a combination of both the South Korean Communist Party and NDP, as well as another smaller tendency known as the People's Party.

At the time of their formation, the great leader Kim Il Sung praised the consolidation of different revolutionary parties into the two Workers' Parties as a significant social gain for the Korean working class.

Kim Il Sung wrote: "The foundation of the Workers' Party representing and defending the interests of the labouring masses of Korea through the merger of the Communist Party and the New Democratic Party is the greatest event in the political



• Koreans celebrating Party founding day.

life of our people at the present time. This great event has aroused profound social interest and focused the attention of the entire people. We have triumphantly completed the foundation of a unified party of the labouring masses in north Korea."

Japanese imperialism ruled Korea from 1910 until 1945. Under the leadership of Kim Il Sung, Korean revolutionaries defeated Japanese occupiers in 1945. But the American war hawks decided they wanted to replace the Japanese rulers as the colonial power.

The American imperialists meddled in the Korean elections in 1947 to prevent Korean reunification. Through their influence on the UN Security Council, the Americans forced the passage of a "resolution" to hold separate elections in south Korea under US supervision.

In what was known as the "U.N. Little Assembly", the USA illegally divided Korea in half, installing its own puppet regime in the southern peninsula. The USA made sure right-wing dictator Syngman Rhee was elected as president in July 1948.

In response to Washington's arbitrary annexation, Korean communists and revolutionaries regrouped. The WPNK held its 2nd Congress in March 1948, and a special session of the Supreme People's Assembly was conducted the next month in April. Both meetings resulted in a prevalent demand for a peaceful reunification of Korea.

Recognised as the most popular revolutionary both during and after the successful war against Japan, Kim Il Sung was declared the Supreme Leader by the Korean working class.

During the WPNK's

Second Congress, Kim Il Sung confirmed the Party's demand for independence and sovereignty against the US aggressors and their puppet allies. During that meeting, he proclaimed: "Our Party holds that a supreme legislative body for all Korea should be elected by secret ballot on the principle of universal, equal and direct suffrage."

The WPK was created in June 1949. The USA and its puppet government in South Korea have been hostile towards the WPK since its inception. Upon taking state power in 1948, the Syngman Rhee regime banned the WPSK through a "National Security Act," and that prohibition also applies to the courageous WPK to this day.

The US imperialists, along with their capitalist lackeys in south Korea and Japan, have been attacking the Ko-

rean people ever since the Americans launched their open invasion of the DPRK on 1st July 1950. The USA tried to wipe out the whole population of the capital city of Pyongyang through various bombing campaigns between 1951 and 1953, during what was called the "Korean War" in the USA.

The WPK stood defiant against the imperialists every time they carried out an assault, and the Korean people have not forgotten the Party's dedication and perseverance in carrying out self-defence.

The WPK has refused to be intimidated by imperialist sabre-rattling. The WPK and the DPRK have always rejected the illusion of "peaceful coexistence" with capitalism and imperialism. When Western powers attempted to divide the world socialist camp, pitting socialist countries against one an-

other, the WPK and the DPRK unconditionally stood on the side of socialism against capitalist appeasement.

The WPK has carefully applied revolutionary socialism to the material conditions and unique culture of the Korean working class. In December 1955, Kim Il Sung presented an important speech to the Party Propaganda and Agitation Department entitled 'On Eliminating Dogmatism and Formalism and Establishing Juche in Ideological Work'. In that speech, Kim Il Sung emphasised the significance of Juche theory as an implementation of self-reliance to achieve political, economic and military independence.

Juche theory has helped both the WPK and DPRK resist the type of counter-revolutions that other socialist countries and political parties have experienced. While many socialist governments were overthrown following the fall of the former Soviet Union, the WPK and the DPRK remained intact.

Furthermore, the WPK never conceded to class collaborative ideologies of "social democracy" or "Eurocommunism" and has instead endured vibrantly as a communist party of the working class.

The WPK applies its revolutionary essence dialectically. Kim Jong Un has been the DPRK's Supreme Leader since 2011, and he maintains the same revolutionary legacy as his grandfather, Kim Il Sung, and his father, Kim Jong Il. Kim Jong Un strength-

ened and advanced Juche theory in 2021 by devising the concept of a “People-First Principle”.

Imperialist provocations have forced the

WPK and the DPRK to respond with strength in recent years. The WPK and the DPRK have both stood the test of time in maintaining independ-

ence, sovereignty and a socialist economy, in spite of imperialist attacks. Unlike capitalist parties that govern most countries, the WPK is a

party that is made up of both working-class leadership and rank-and-file membership.

Throughout its tenure of challenges and

tribulations, one optimistic slogan of solidarity that has traditionally been raised at worksites throughout the DPRK is: “Forward! Workers’ Par-

ty members! The WPK is a party that represents the class interests of all workers and oppressed.

Workers World (USA)

Attacks on UN peacekeeping forces must stop!

Following an incident in which two Israel Defence Forces (IDF) tanks broke through the gate and forcibly entered a UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeeping base on Sunday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres issued a statement on the same day, warning: “Attacks against peacekeepers are in breach of international law, including international humanitarian law. They may constitute a war crime.” The Israeli side defended themselves, claiming that to evacuate wounded IDF soldiers, “two tanks reversed in a spot where they couldn’t have gone elsewhere because of the threat of fire”.

Since the escalation of clashes between Israel and Lebanon, UNIFIL has come under frequent attacks. Many peacekeepers were injured, serving as further evidence that this escalating conflict is impacting on regional order and the bottom line of international law. Concerns are growing that the situation in the Middle East will spiral further out of control.

Attacks on UN peacekeeping forces must be halted immediately. Peacekeepers are not conventional “forces”, but operations authorised by the UN General Assembly or

UN Security Council to carry out peace-keeping missions such as monitoring ceasefires, mediating conflicts, protecting civilians, and providing humanitarian aid. These actions are safeguarded by international law and their moral standing is widely respected by the international community. No country has the right to restrict peacekeepers’ freedom of movement within their operational zones, let alone threaten their safety and security.

UNIFIL was established under UN Security Council Resolution 425 in 1978 and remains one of the longest-serving peacekeeping missions in the world. Following the conflict between Lebanon and Israel in August 2006, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1701, expanding UNIFIL’s mandate and increasing its personnel to maintain security in southern Lebanon. As of 2nd September, UNIFIL consists of over 10,000 troops from 50 countries, including 418 from China. UNIFIL’s presence is vital to ensuring the implementation of the diplomatic solution outlined in Resolution 1701, which remains the only viable path to resolve the Israel-Lebanon conflict.

The attacks on UNIFIL send a dual warning signal. First, they show that certain countries or

forces are challenging international law and the norms of international relations, further exacerbating the already tense situation in the Middle East. Second, these attacks represent a serious disruption to the UN peacekeeping operations in the region, potentially foreshadowing even more dangerous military escalations and raising further concerns within the international community about the future of conflict in the Middle East.

We have observed a rapidly forming consensus within the international community regarding the attacks on UNIFIL. France, Italy and Spain issued a joint statement to express their “outrage”.

Following this, 40 UN member states that contribute peacekeepers to UNIFIL signed a joint declaration strongly con-

demning the recent assaults. The international community is united on this issue: The presence of UNIFIL must be respected, and all parties involved in the conflict have an obligation to ensure the safety of its personnel at all times while supporting peace and stability in Lebanon and the broader region. UNIFIL embodies the principles of international law and UN Security Council resolutions, and the actions of all parties must have clear boundaries; they cannot challenge the humanitarian and legal thresholds.

The humanitarian tragedy in Gaza is already severe, and allowing Lebanon to fall into a similar plight would pose a moral and ethical challenge for the international community. It is high time to collectively press the stop button on actions that openly

provoke the authority of the UN, as well as international humanitarian law. While the consensus emerging within the international community is a positive step forward, it is not sufficient.

Some parties, emboldened by support from the UN and others, continue to act with a misguided sense of impunity on this issue. We urge the need for broader international public pressure and diplomatic action, advocating for dialogue and consultation in multilateral and bilateral contexts, as well as within the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly, to develop impactful resolutions concerning the relevant parties.

Since the outbreak of the current Israel-Palestine conflict, the UN’s authority has faced numerous challenges, with its peacekeeping and hu-

manitarian efforts being obstructed and the lives and property of personnel threatened. However, it is under these circumstances that the international community has come to recognise the importance and urgency of respecting the UN’s leadership and mission, as well as maintaining a multilateral co-operation framework centred around the UN. The joint open letter from over 100 countries of support and confidence in the UN Secretary-General and his work serves as clear evidence of this. The challenges posed by the crisis remind the international community that the role of the UN must be strengthened, not weakened; its status must be upheld, not undermined.

Currently, achieving a ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel must be the top priority. The Middle East cannot afford a full-scale war, and the conflict must not continue to escalate. All parties must approach the current situation with a calm, rational and responsible attitude, making genuine efforts to break the vicious cycle of violence and refrain from actions that could drag the region into new catastrophes. The authority of the UN should be respected by all member states, and influential powers, in particular, should set an example.

Global Times



• Chinese UNIFIL peacekeepers in Lebanon.

LETTERS

Dear Comrades

In 1966 the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) qualified for the World Cup Finals, which were held in England.

The DPRK team was based in Middlesbrough and the people of Teesside took them to their hearts. The players trained at the sports ground of the nearby ICI chemicals plant. Lots of workers came to watch their training regimes and many were impressed by their all-out attacking intent. Locals even waved DPRK flags.

In the opening group game, in front of 32,000 fans at Ayresome Park, the DPRK lost 3-0 to the Soviet Union. In the second game the DPRK drew 1-1 against Chile.

This set them up for the third group match, this time at Roker Park, against Italy. The DPRK were very much the underdogs. Yet they won 1-0. The *Morning Star* declared that it was "one of the biggest surprises in football history".

The DPRK were now in the quarter-finals. They were up against Portugal, including the famous Eusebio, in front of 52,000 supporters at Goodison. There the DPRK led 3-0 before finally succumbing 5-3. However, the national team from a socialist country, the DPRK, had captured the world's imagination. They had played for national pride not big bonuses!

And football in the

DPRK remains of a high standard. In September of this year the DPRK won FIFA's U-20 Women's World Cup in Bogotá. The DPRK are a genuine force in world football.

**Alan Stewart
Wakefield**

Dear Comrades

In many countries there are fascist groups, but in Ukraine fascism is the ruling group. Abwehr officer Bandera has been declared a national hero. Kiev justifies the 1943 Volyn massacre and legalised the Azov regiment, which was previously recognised by everyone as Nazi.

Why does the whole world not want to notice fascism in Ukraine? Is it really because the whole world has gone crazy with hatred for Russia? Is the whole world trying to curry favour with the United States? No. All this is happening because the whole "civilised world" has become fascist.

The whole "civilised world" helps the Ukrainian fascists. This is a special, democratic form of fascism, with millions of civilians killed all over the world. Isn't the killing of thousands of Palestinian children by Israeli soldiers fascism? And the world can't do anything about the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF). It can't stop the killing of children. Why? Because it was necessary to move your ass earlier, when the Ukrainian fascists started killing Russian children. And even now the world does not want to notice how Ukrainian fascists are killing children in Russian cities in Belgorod, Bryansk and the Kursk region.

Boris Ikhlov

Dear Comrades

Male-dominated societies are impoverished when senior positions

in management and the professions are denied to women. An immense source of brainpower and skill are lost, apart from the fact that if they are forced to play a secondary role which could be considered a denial of human rights. My grandmother wanted to be a book-keeper but was told, in no uncertain manner, that her place was to be in "service". Progressive social progress is only enshrined in socialism.

Sexual discrimination is not the only restriction that will hold back a society's development. Class discrimination manifests itself in many different ways under capitalism. Wealthy parents are able to send their children to elite fee-paying schools from which they emerge with great advantage to gain senior positions in business and the professions and to play key roles for the establishment. However, a two-tier approach can have its drawbacks. One of the reasons why the USA cannot compete in manufacturing is that the less well-educated blue-collar workers lack the necessary skills in science, technology and mathematics. Hi-tech production involves far more than assembly. Cutting-edge industrial processes require workers with an understanding of physics, advanced mathematics, artificial intelligence and algorithms.

Middle class (actually better-off members of the working class) parents struggle to support their teenagers at university in the hope of giving them a better start in life. The top wealthy elite do not have this worry. Those privileged students who then emerge from some posh institutions may feel that they are superior with the right to dominate lesser mortals. Their track record, if they go into pol-

itics, has been one of allowing Britain's economy to fail and its manufacturing industry to collapse. A few very talented young ladies will have made successful careers but for others the emphasis appears to have been on developing social skills including how to make a dramatic entrance so they can attract a partner with more money.

While watching China's *Chang'e 5* lunar mission I noticed that a young woman was playing a major role in conducting the flight manoeuvres. Zhou Chengyu at 24 years of age is the youngest female space commander and played a key role in the successful project. As China's socialism continues to mature, we can expect to see more women reach the top of their chosen profession.

**John Maryon
Suffolk**

Dear Friends

This week marked the horrific milestone of one year since the start of Israel's genocidal assault against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. Now, the Israeli military is intensifying its massacres in northern Gaza in an attempt to forcibly displace the remaining Palestinian population of around 400,000 people. Our Palestinian partners have asked us to act urgently and increase our pressure on the government. Will you write to Foreign Secretary David Lammy today demanding that he takes action to prevent catastrophe?

The repeated failure of Britain and other western governments to apply meaningful pressure to secure a ceasefire has encouraged Israel to escalate its criminal actions. Israel has imposed a complete siege on northern Gaza, along with heavy

continued on page 9...

Diary

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

UNTIL APRIL 2025

Townsend Theatre Productions: *Behold Ye Ramblers*. Touring play by Neil Gore. See TTP website for details of venues.

SAT 19 OCT

One Year! Photographic exhibition of the 1984-85 Miners Strike. Wed-Sats. Four Corners Gallery, 121 Roman Road, London E2 0QN.

SAT 19 OCT

Palestinian Solidarity Campaign: Trade Unions Building Solidarity with Palestine. 10:00-16:30, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BB. Book on PSC website.

SAT 19 OCT

United Voices of Workers: Strike Solidarity party. 17:00, Casa UVW, 144 Cambridge Heath Road, London W1 5QJ.

THUR 24 OCT

Scottish CND: The Nuclear Cover-up: Ongoing Harms of British Nuclear Testing. 19:00-20:00. Webinar. Register on SCND website.

THUR 24 OCT

Working Class Movement Library: *Walter Rodney: What They Don't Want You to Know*. Film Showing in Library. 19:00-20:30, 51 Crescent, Salford M5 4WX. Book on WCML website.

SAT 26 OCT

Marx Memorial Library: Second-Hand Book Sale. 11:00, MML 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU.

SAT 26 OCT

Working Class Movement Library: Open Archive Day - Black Radical History. 10:00-14:00 at WCML.

SAT 26 OCT

Stand Up to Racism: Stop Tommy Robinson, Stop the Far Right. National Demonstration. 12:00, Trafalgar Square, London.

SAT 26 OCT

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: National Student Conference for Palestine. 9:30-17:00, Venue TBA. Register on PSC website.

SAT 26 OCT

Scottish Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Vigil in opposition to the US blockade of Cuba. 1:00-1:45, Argyle Street, Glasgow.

SAT 26 OCT

Lakenheath Alliance for Peace: Vigil against US nuclear weapons returning to Britain. 12:00-14:00, RAF Lakenheath, Brandon Road, Lakenheath, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 9PS.

SUN 27 OCT

International Brigade Memorial Trust: Teesside Volunteers for Liberty commemoration. 10:00-16:00, Heugh Battery Museum, 20 Moor Terrace Headland, Cleveland, Hartlepool TS24 0PS.

TUE 29 OCT

Socialist History Society: Nikolay Sarkisyan on Revolutionary

museums in the Russian Empire and Soviet Union before and after 1917. 19:00, Online lecture, book on SHS website.

WED 30 OCT

Marx Memorial Library: 1974 Health & Safety Act 50 Years On. 19:00, Online and in person panel discussion. Book on MML website.

THUR 31 OCT

Marx Memorial Library: William Cobbett - Britain's Radical Campaigner and Pamphleteer. 18:30, In person at MML.

SAT 2 NOV

Lakenheath Alliance for Peace: National Demonstration against US nuclear weapons returning to Britain. Time TBA, RAF Lakenheath, Brandon Road, Lakenheath, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 9PS.

SAT 2 NOV

Keep Our NHS Public: SOS NHS National conference. 10:00, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BB. Register on KONHSP website.

SAT 2 NOV

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Stop the Genocide in Gaza. National Demonstration, Central London. 12:00 details TBA

SAT 2 NOV

Society for Co-operation in Russian and Soviet Studies: Jane Rosen on An Unpopular Cause: Centenary History of the SCRSS 1924-2024. 14:00-16:00, SCRSS, 320 Brixton Road, London, SW9 6AB.

THUR 7 NOV

Marx Memorial Library: The Spa Field Riots. 17:30, in person.

SAT 9 NOV

International Brigade Memorial Trust: Discussion on 'Public support and governmental obstruction: differing British responses to the struggle of the Spanish Republic'. 14:00-15:30. MML in person and online. Book on IBMT website.

SAT 9 NOV

Society for the Study of Labour History: Natalie Thomlinson, Remembering the 1984-85 Miners Strike in popular memory. 14:00, Huddersfield. Register on SSLH website.

THUR 14-TUE 26 NOV

Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Speaking Tour: Keith Bolender on What will the next US president mean for Cuba? London, Norwich, Liverpool and Coventry.

FRI 15-SAT 16 NOV 2024

Havana Glasgow Film Festival. CCA, 350 Sauchihall Street, Glasgow G2 2JD.

SAT 16 NOV

Liberation (formerly Movement for Colonial Freedom) 70th Anniversary commemoration. Cypriot Community Centre, Earls Grove, London N22 5HJ. Register on Liberation website.

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

...continued from page 8

airstrikes and shelling, particularly targeting the Jabalia refugee camp. The death toll is rising rapidly, and Israel’s genocidal forces are firing on Palestinians as they attempt to rescue the injured.

The very same week that a damning UN investigation found Israel guilty of committing war crimes and the crime against humanity of extermination through its relentless and deliberate attacks on medical personnel and facilities, Israel has ordered hospitals in the north of Gaza to evacuate all staff and patients, threatening bombardment if they fail to comply.

The British government must apply every possible pressure on Israel to stop its attacks, lift its cruel siege, and allow immediate unfettered access for desperately needed humanitarian aid.

We must keep the pressure going. The genocide in Gaza is continuing, alongside escalating attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank. Meanwhile Israel is attacking and invading Lebanon – killing thousands in just the past few weeks. We are now confronted with the imminent threat of an even wider war.

Next Saturday, 19th October, we are calling for local and regional actions right across the country, including a central London rally (details to be confirmed). Then, on Saturday 2nd November, we must all take to the streets of London once again. Will you help to spread the word about these actions?

Act now to prevent catastrophe in northern Gaza and get ready for the Day of Action and our next national march for Palestine.

Peter Leary
Deputy Director
Palestine Solidarity Campaign
London

Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

Former First Minister Alex Salmond died last Saturday after collapsing at a conference in North Macedonia. The former Scottish nationalist leader, who suffered a fatal heart attack, was 69. An official from his Alba party paid tribute to Salmond’s contribution to the nationalist cause saying Salmond, who had been one of the most important figures in SNP history, is considered one of the most transformative political figures in Scottish political history.

Salmond has been credited with making the SNP electable, that is only partly true, it was already a formidable force before his two periods of leadership in 1990–2000 and 2004–2014. During the Labour minority government in the 1970s the SNP held the balance of forces in the House of Commons, and though the SNP greatly increased the support for independence under his leadership the final result in 2014 was a clear defeat.

In the dim and distant past Salmond had a reputation as a radical within the

SNP. This reputation was belied by his occupation as an economist for Royal Bank of Scotland.

Joining the SNP while at St Andrews University, Scotland’s Oxbridge, he belonged to the party’s republican 79 Group, which was narrowly banned by the leadership. Allowed back into the party he won a Tory seat in the 1987 general election winning the leadership and securing four seats in the 1992 general election. This was upped to six in the Blair landslide of 1997, which lead to the formation of the Scottish parliament, which the SNP had been ambiguous about fearing it as block, rather than a path of independence.

Under his leadership the SNP was able to form a minority administration in 2007, thanks to acknowledged Green support and unacknowledged Tory support. In the 2011 Holyrood elections the SNP secured an overall majority and were enabled to dictate the terms of the Independence Referendum, which they went on to lose. The years that followed were mired with scandal. Salmond resigned as leader after the referendum. He returned to the House of Commons after winning Gordon for the SNP in 2015 but lost it to the Tories in the 2017 general election. He resigned from the SNP not long

after, to fight allegations of sexual assault in the courts. Though he was eventually acquitted on all charges and awarded £500,000 compensation he never recovered his standing with the Scottish public.

After his departure from the SNP, his 2021 Alba Party has not exactly been a roaring success. All its incumbent councillors and parliamentarians lost their seats in subsequent elections.

While the King, Tony Blair, Jeremy Corbyn and Boris Johnson all noted Salmond’s dedication to public service in their condolence messages, it was interesting to read the more nuanced comments of his one-time ally who turned into his bitterest foe in the Scottish National Party.

Nicola Sturgeon paid tribute to ‘her mentor’ following Salmond’s death but said: “Obviously, I cannot pretend that the events of the past few years which led to the breakdown of our relationship did not happen, and it would not be right for me to try.

“However, it remains the fact that for many years Alex was an incredibly significant figure in my life. He was my mentor, and for more than a decade we formed one of the most successful partnerships in UK politics.

“Alex modernised the SNP and led us into government for the first time, becoming Scotland’s fourth First Minister and paving the way for the 2014 referendum which took Scotland to the brink of independence. He will be remembered for all of that. My thoughts are with Moira, his wider family and his friends.”

No loss

The SNP should be congratulated for taking advantage of the media coverage of Salmond’s passing to expel John Mason, the anti-abortion Glasgow Shettleston MSP. The bible-punching Baptist has long been a

thorn in the side of the SNP for such pearls of wisdom such as declaring that it did not matter if surgeons cannot spell and suggesting that Creationism should be taught in schools. However, his expulsion was due to his August announcement that there was “no genocide” in Gaza because the Israelis had not killed enough people for that threshold to be met. This saw him being suspended, with the SNP chief whip describing Mason’s remarks as “utterly abhorrent”.

Sunday saw his expulsion to which he responded by saying “to be expelled over a disagreement over the definition of a word – an important word, genocide – but to be expelled for that reason is extremely disappointing”. The now Independent MSP will remain until he retires at the next election, and he is unrepentant about his choice

of words. He compared the events of Gaza with the bombing of Dresden and Hiroshima that he said were not genocide, but arguably excessive acts of war.

The SNP Member Conduct Committee which expelled him accused Mason of claiming to be the “arbiter” of what is considered to be genocide, describing that as “unacceptable and offensive”. In response Mason said he supported SNP’s call for a two-state solution to the conflict, but said he did not understand the party policy he is accused of disagreeing with.

Mason does, however, stand by his original remarks, telling an online conference organised by the National Jewish Assembly: “I stand by my statement because it’s based on facts. Israel has a right to defend itself, and that’s what they’re doing, not committing genocide.”

FROM THE NEW COMMUNIST PARTY

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- Arab nationalism and the communist movement** by Andy Brooks. £1 plus 50p p&p (New Worker reprint).
- Killing ourselves to live** by Daphne Liddle. £1 plus 50p p&p (New Worker reprint).
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Which way forward following the election...

by New Worker correspondent

That was the question posed at a seminar in London on Sunday. The 30th anniversary of the start of the dialogue between the NCP and the RCPB (ML) was appropriately marked by the opening of a discussion that both parties believe needs to be taken throughout the labour movement. NCP leader Andy Brooks, who chaired the meeting at the NCP Centre, welcomed everyone to the seminar at the Sid French library or by video link, and the discussion was opened by Michael Chant, the



RCPB (ML) leader.

Michael reviewed the work of both parties over the years and presented views on the tasks and vantage point

of the communists at this significant time in history. Other comrades, including supporters of the Consistent Democrats platform and the

British Posadists, also spoke on the *Tasks of the Communists in the Light of the July 2024 General Election* – to look at the meaning of Labour's

immense but essentially hollow victory in July, Jeremy Corbyn's new Independent bloc in Parliament and the predictable failure of the

revisionists and the conventional social-democratic left at the polls. We discussed the mass support for the Palestinians on the street as well as the upsurge of racist violence and the mass anti-fascist response that followed, and the need for a renewed fight-back against Starmer-style austerity that must be led by the rank-and-file in the trade unions and the mass movements of the labour movement. Finally, it was agreed to broaden the discussion by publishing the contributions in both parties' journals and to hold other meetings and seminars in the very near future.

REVIEW

by Ben Soton

The word Uhuru (as well the character from *Star Trek*) is Swahili for freedom or independence. *African Uhuru* is a history of African self-liberation covering a period from the end of the First World War to the present day written by Roger McKenzie, the International Editor of the *Morning Star* and a highly respected figure within the progressive and labour movement.

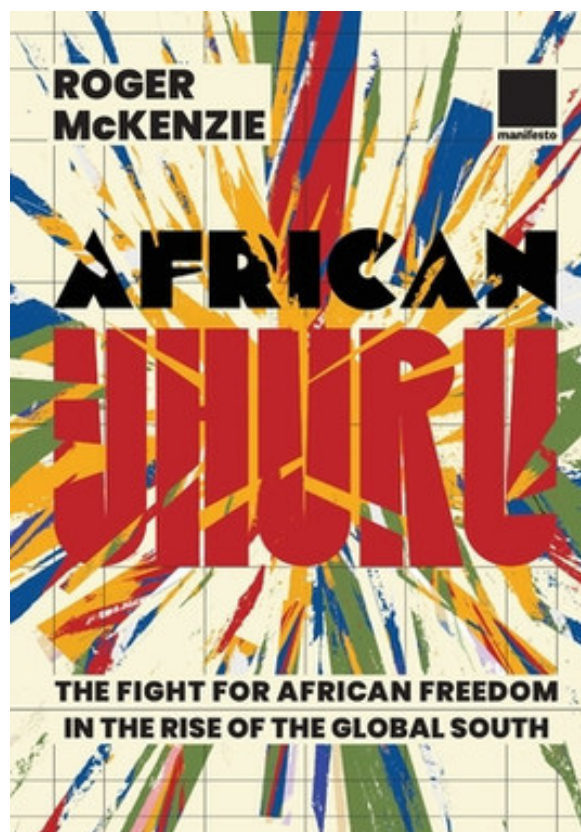
The book covers liberation movements both inside and outside of Africa; both movements for national independence as well as the struggle against racism in Europe and the USA. McKenzie places considerable

emphasis on the African diaspora, which he is a product of. From the 16th to the 19th Centuries Africans were abducted from their homes, mostly in West Africa, and sold as slaves to work in the Americas. It was the Transatlantic slave trade which enabled capital to be accumulated in a relatively small part of the globe that led to the development of capitalism and the Industrial Revolution.

The author goes into considerable detail about the growth of anti-colonial and anti-racist movements in Britain and the USA. Whilst covering the role of key figures such as Marcus Garvey and CLR

Uhuru!

African Uhuru by Roger McKenzie.
Manifesto Press, London, 2024; 178pp; RRP £15.00.



James, McKenzie also points out that African Self-Liberation and Marxism did not always sit well together. He covers the hostility of leading black figures such as George Padmore and Marcus Garvey to Marxism, which the latter described as a “white man's thing”, as well as a possible lack of commitment of communist parties in assisting black workers. It was however Lenin and his seminal work *Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism* that took Marxism away from its European origins and into the colonial and semi-colonial world.

The book also covers the various attempts by

nations within what is now referred to as the Global South to co-operate against imperialism. This ranges from the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1950s, with its famous meeting in the Indonesian city of Bandung, to the more recent rise of BRICS, the bloc formed initially by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, whose initials make up the group's name.

McKenzie ends the book with a call to de-colonise the labour movement, a demand for the labour movement to play a greater role in fighting racism, which has its origins in the slave trade and imperialism.

A Unique Kind of Fascism

by John Miles

The USA is continuing its persecution campaign against journalists and dissidents who work with the Russian media.

The Biden administration has signalled that it would continue to clamp down on alternative media with the announcement of several measures against figures connected to Russian news outlets.

"Today, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated ten individuals and two entities as part of a coordinated US government response to Moscow's malign influence efforts targeting the 2024 US presidential election," read a statement released last month.

US Attorney General Merrick Garland claimed individuals connected to Russian media outlets were involved in a campaign to spread "disinformation" in the months leading up to November's election, a favoured talking point the Biden administration has repeatedly used to justify its heavy-handed tactics in regulating the social media.

The account for RT on the video sharing giant YouTube was removed in 2022 and Biden signed legislation earlier this year likely to result in the social media app TikTok becoming unavailable in the United States after this autumn's election.

Writer and historian Dr Gerald Horne joined Sputnik's *Critical Hour* programme to discuss the surprising development, which he attributed to the USA's concern over the rise of Russia, China and Iran and the

emergence of an increasingly multipolar world.

"It's difficult to judge what you just described without judging simultaneously what's unfolding in the Tampa, St Petersburg area of Florida, where Chairman Omali and his comrades and the African People's Socialist Party and the Uhuru movement are now facing trial in the halls of injustice for reasons eerily similar to these charges," said Horne, referring to the Biden administration's ongoing persecution of radical Black groups.

"Certainly, we should not forget what has befallen Scott Ritter, the former arms inspector,

now viewed widely as a dissident who has been a frequent guest on numerous platforms including your own, as I understand it, rebuking and reprimanding US foreign policy, particularly as it relates to the escapade in Ukraine," he continued.

"Not to mention the funding and financing an army of the radical regime in Israel. We are also aware of what has befallen Richard Medhurst who is a frequent speaker on issues related to Iran in particular. He was detained in London summarily just a few days ago in a blatant violation of civil rights and civil liberties, caus-

ing some commentators to suggest that England, Great Britain is moving towards a unique kind of fascism."

Horne claimed a "hysteria" is gripping the US political class over an emerging counter-hegemonic bloc of countries increasingly able to challenge the political and economic might of the USA. A former senior American military man, General Wesley Clark, reflected the anxieties of Washington officialdom in an editorial in *USA Today* recently, casting Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping as enemies of "democracy".

But a recent survey found that almost half of the American people believe there is "not enough democracy" in the USA while 57 per cent of the people polled said the US government only serves a minority of its population. Russia and China ranked higher than the USA on most questions regarding their citizens' self-perception of their country's democracy, with Chinese people being among the most likely in the world to consider their country democratic.

Clark drew attention to improving relations between Beijing and Moscow, something the USA had worked to un-

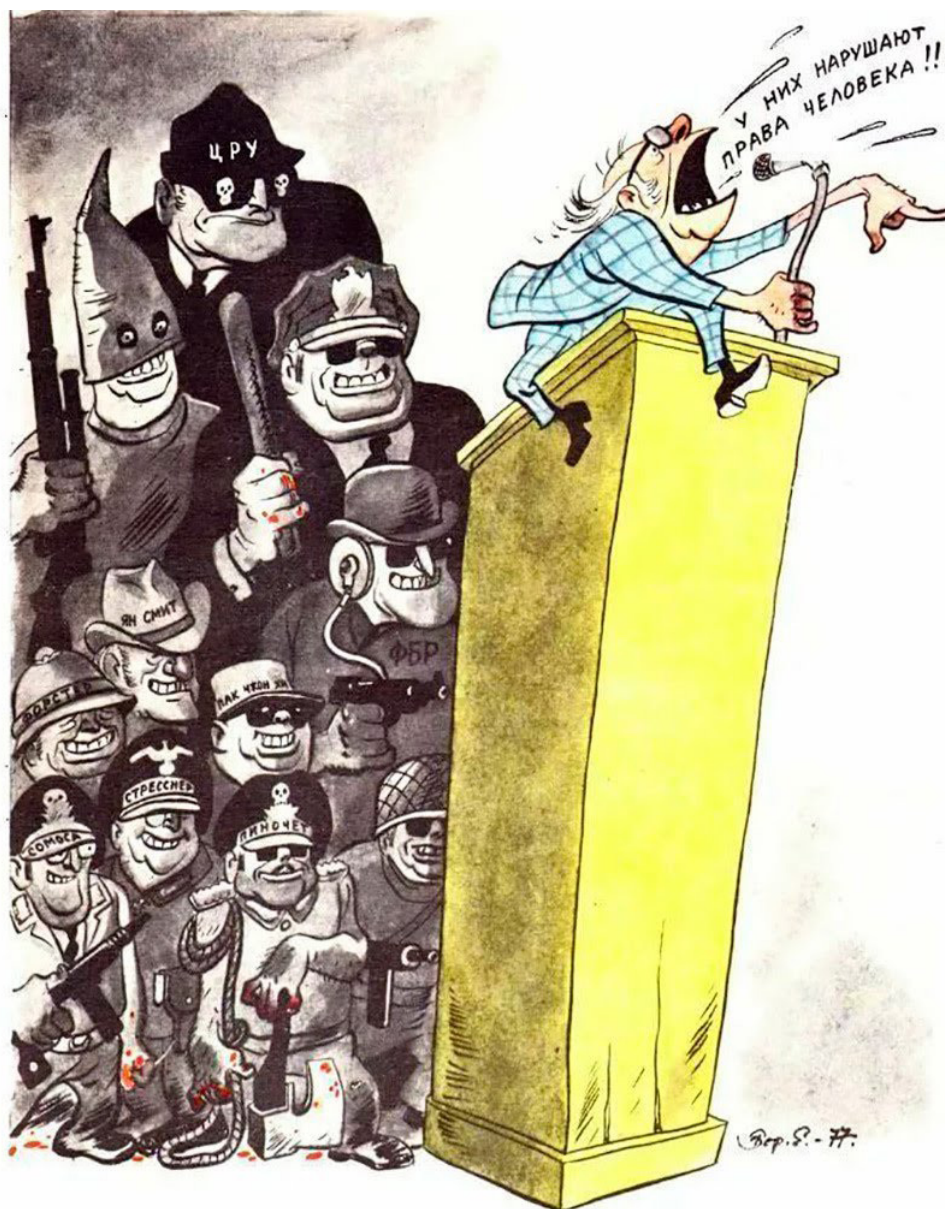
dermine throughout the Cold War.

"Recall that the late national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, the national security adviser under Jimmy Carter in the 1970s, in one of his final books *The Grand Chessboard* suggested that US imperialism would justifiably be fearful if there was a de facto alliance developing between Russia, China, and Iran, and that is precisely what's happening as we speak," said Horne.

The leadership of Iran has long been critical of the USA owing to the long history of American interference in the country. Recent polling reveals that people in countries throughout the Muslim world now overwhelmingly view the USA negatively as the country backs Israel's violent military campaign in the Gaza Strip, which has killed over 41,000 Palestinians.

Horne said the USA is likely to be particularly disturbed by Beijing's growing influence in Africa as dozens of heads of state from across the continent meet in China to discuss economic development.

"The way in which the North Atlantic countries were able to soar to global pre-eminence was precisely by the battering and bludgeoning of the African continent," said the historian. "When Africa begins to rise, particularly when it begins to rise and lead with China – now the number two economy on planet Earth – to use the expression 'with a bullet', it's understandable why there is hysteria gripping Washington."



• A 1970s Soviet view of the Western lie-machine.

A song of solidarity from Cuba!

by Ed Newman

Tens of thousands of Cubans marched through Havana on Monday in solidarity with the peoples of Palestine and Lebanon who are suffering genocide by Zionist forces. Miguel Díaz-Canel, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba and President of the Republic, led the demonstrators along the route between the Fragua Martiana and the Anti-Imperialist Tribune along the Malecón esplanade, that was marked by signs, songs, slogans and a large human flag of Palestine, a symbol of the lives destroyed by the Israelis, to call for an immediate end to the escalation of

violence unleashed in the Middle East.

Meyvis Estévez Echeverría, the First

taken the lives of more than 40,000 people and entire families buried under irrational hatred

as an accomplice to barbarism of such proportions and considers itself morally

we defend the right of the Palestinians and of all the peoples of the world to live

tion and respect for the sovereignty of nations," the youth leader said. During the event, which was attended by Cuba's top leadership, Palestinian students also spoke, expressing through their art and oratory their desire not to renounce their homeland and their infinite gratitude to Cuba.

Omayma Alkhwaga, a Palestinian doctor who graduated on the island, agreed with these positions and emphasised that the solidarity of Cuba is unparalleled in the world. "Once again, Cubans have risen to support a just cause, as they have done in the past with so many others, and to raise the message that Palestine is not alone," she said.

Radio Havana Cuba



Secretary of the Union of Young Communists (UJC), said that the criminal actions of the Israelis that have so far

cannot be erased from memory.

She condemned the hypocrisy of US imperialism that acts

superior to keep Cuba on its list of supposed state sponsors of terrorism.

"From this island

with dignity and we reaffirm the political will and commitment of the Cuban State to peace, coopera-

The only way to achieve peace

For several decades, the USA and Israel have set out to establish a matrix against Iran, using the Islamic Republic's nuclear development as a pretext.

The power of the Western media, plus the dominance by the US government of almost all international organisations, have been the banners to make Tehran surrender.

At the same time, economic and other sanctions have led the

country to develop national initiative, in both the military and economic fields.

But the war against Iran has not ceased, rather it has been taken to a level that only leads to conflict. Israel even insists on its destruction.

In all this context, the Islamic Republic of Iran, whether the Zionist government likes it or not, has made peace its most sacred and longed-for objective, and to achieve it it has extended and

strengthened its ties with Arab countries, as well as with Russia, China and others.

The Zionist government is encouraged by its guardian, the USA, which applauds the assassinations of Palestinian, Lebanese and Iranian leaders, while the Zionists massacre, in the most cruel manner, an entire population in Gaza, where more than 20,000 children have been exterminated, half of all those killed by Israeli bombs and

rockets in the besieged Palestinian enclave.

Last week the Iranian President, Masoud Pezeshkian, said "we are not looking for war, it is Israel that is forcing us to react". The Iranian leader was referring to the launching of hundreds of Iranian missiles against Tel Aviv's military and intelligence targets.

The escalation of confrontation is today greater and more dangerous than ever. The price of oil – a major international concern

– has skyrocketed, and the Israeli Prime Minister has even declared UN Secretary General António Guterres "persona non grata".

Russia, meanwhile, has warned that "the Middle East is sliding into the abyss of a new great war". The maxim that peace can only be achieved by avoiding war holds true.

The international community and the organisations created for this purpose

have a great responsibility to act urgently. Only then will there be peace.

Granma

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