

Gaza: Americans veto call for peace!

by our Arab Affairs correspondent

The United States has vetoed a UN Security Council resolution calling for an end to the fighting in Gaza this week – the fourth time it has used its veto to shield the Zionist entity from UN action. And in the Netherlands the International Criminal Court at The Hague (ICC) has issued an arrest warrant for Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, accusing him of crimes against humanity and war crimes over the war in Gaza. The court also issued arrest warrants for Israel's former defence minister Yoav Gallant and Hamas leader Mohammed Deif, who is said to have died in an Israeli air-raid in Gaza earlier in the year.

Fourteen of the 15 Council members, including People's China and the Russian Federation, voted in favour of a motion demanding that the war in Gaza "must end immediately, unconditionally and permanently and all remaining hostages must be immediately and unconditionally released". But it was blocked by the Americans. Their mouthpiece at the UN pathetically claimed that the resolution had "abandoned" the necessity for there to



be "a linkage between a ceasefire and the release of hostages" and accused the other 14 council members, including Britain and France, of cynically rejecting attempts at reaching a compromise.

Russia's UN envoy, Vassily Nebenzia, told the Security Council that: "It is shocking that the US has vetoed an effort to save the lives of Palestinians and Israelis. Though perhaps we should not be surprised about it." The draft text rejected "any effort to starve Palestinians" and demanded immediate access to humanitarian assistance for civilians in Gaza.

The USA is fully responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians in the Gaza Strip, Nebenzia said, adding that Russia will continue to call for an end to violence against Palestinians and continue "calling out the abuses and hypocrisy by the United States when it comes to settling the situation".

After the vote China's UN ambassador said people could not but ask "do Palestinian lives

mean nothing?". The French said international humanitarian law was being trampled on and the only response should have been an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

The White House, as usual, says it's tirelessly working to stop the carnage, but most Arabs stopped believing anything Biden says a long time ago.

Hamas's acting leader in Gaza, Khalil al-Hayya, says that there will be no hostages-for-prisoners deal with Israel without a cease-fire and the withdrawal of all Israeli troops from the Palestinian enclave. Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem says there must be a complete ceasefire and "protection of Lebanon's sovereignty" in any new truce with Israel.

Meanwhile the war goes on, with the Arab resistance fighting against all odds against the Israeli aggressors who are stepping up their terror bombing of Gaza and Lebanon while inciting Zionist violence in the West Bank to drive the Palestinians off their land to make way for

suspension of all flights at Ben Gurion international airport.

The Palestinian Popular Resistance Committees, a major force in the Gaza resistance, is calling for a global response to the American veto and the Zionist war-crimes.

"The American veto necessitates a massive popular revolution by the nations and the free people of the world in response to the American crimes against our people. It calls for mass demonstrations in the streets and the besieging of Zionist-American embassies in all the capitals of the world, especially in the Arab and Islamic countries," they said. "The [Zionist] occupation state stands against the truth, contradicts the concept of justice, and clashes with human values, and the brutal terrorism that is internationally supported sustains the occupation's existence."

• The resistance fights on.

more Zionist settlers. A shopping centre in the heart of Tel Aviv was set ablaze when it was hit by a Hezbollah rocket last week while further waves of resistance missiles temporarily forced the

FUND

This week's tally came to £660 thanks to an Uxbridge comrade who sent in £200 and a number of other donations, including £30 from a veteran Essex communist and £40 from another in Newcastle. The running total now stands at £1,162. We need £3,500 by the end of the month to survive so please help by sending what you can to the *New Worker* fighting fund.

Biden's last throw before he finally and thankfully shuffles off the political stage has been to veto yet another effort at the United Nations to stop the slaughter in Gaza while sending more weapons of mass destruction to his puppets in Ukraine to prolong NATO's proxy war against Russia. But these days more and more people in Britain and the other heartlands of imperialism are seeing through the lies of imperialism and demanding peace and social justice. Their voice rings out as the millions take to the street to demand justice for the Palestinians and an end to Zionist aggression. Their voice is heard within the labour movement leading the fight-back against austerity throughout the Western world.

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THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Escalation leads both ways

In a final act of madness Joe Biden has sanctioned the use of NATO-supplied weapons of mass destruction against the Russians in Ukraine. Shamefully, the Starmer government has followed suit on a blatantly obvious attempt to stymie any efforts by the incoming Trump team to end the conflict. It didn't take long for Biden's Ukrainian puppets to do their master's bidding, launching American long-range rockets and British-made Storm Shadow missiles on targets deep inside Russian territory.

These decisions by the US and British governments were made without any debate or decision by the US Congress or the Westminster Parliament. The Stop the War Coalition is calling on Starmer and Biden to stop these provocations immediately and to focus on securing a negotiated end to the war, while Jeremy Corbyn wants Starmer to explain to the public whether we are now "at war" with Russia.

Corbyn, who now leads the Independent Alliance in parliament, says Starmer "must tell the British public if this means we are now at war with a nuclear power, what risk this poses to people in Britain, and why this action was taken without any approval from parliament. As we edge closer and closer to catastrophe, we should be doing everything in our power to bring about de-escalation and peace. Instead, our political leaders have added fuel to the fire and gambled with people's lives for political gain."

What happens next nobody knows. Biden's provocation clearly crosses a Russian red line. The Kremlin has, so far, not responded in kind. But Vladimir Putin, the Russian leader, warns that use of such Western-made systems in the conflict has drastically changed its nature. "A regional Ukraine conflict instigated by the West has acquired elements of a global one," he said. Russia's air defence systems have successfully repelled all the attacks made with these Western long-range missile systems. "The goals that have apparently been set by the enemy have not been achieved," he said.

Russia reserves the right to strike the military facilities of countries that allow their weapons to be used against Russian territory, Putin said. "We will determine the targets during further tests of our newest missile systems based on the threats to the security of the Russian Federation. We believe that we have the right to use our weapons against the military facilities of those countries that allow their weapons to be used against our facilities."

Russia has always favoured a peaceful resolution and the Russian Federation is ready to resolve all contentious issues. "But we are also ready for any development. Do not doubt it, there will always be a response."

Donald Trump has long said that he's going to swiftly end the Ukraine war, which he rightly sees as a drain on US resources while serving no purpose for the American people. But he put out mixed messages on Ukraine during his campaign for the presidency, rhetorically posing as the peace candidate yet having a friendly meeting with Ukraine's President Vladimir Zelensky at Trump Tower in September. We'll soon see one way or another which way Trump turns – or indeed what other tricks Biden has up his sleeve to wrong-foot the incoming Trump administration.

Escalation works both ways. These long-range British and US missile systems cannot be used without the direct involvement of Western military specialists, and there clearly will be long-term repercussions unless there is a speedy return to the negotiating table.

Good intentions alone not always enough

by Mark Blacklock

When Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister Keir Starmer on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro on Monday, they spoke through interpreters, but were their words tentatively speaking the language of rapprochement?

Less than a year ago, it would have been inconceivable for the UK's prime minister to engage positively with China. But it is remarkable how quickly Downing Street's once icy disparagement of almost anything to do with China seems to be showing early signs of a thaw. There may be clues to this in the language used in Britain's official announcements.

Last month, British Foreign Secretary David Lammy's office used the word "pragmatic" repeatedly to refer to his visit to Beijing and his meetings with Chinese Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

Then, both in the run up to this week's meeting between Xi and Starmer, and in the brief official UK readout afterwards, the prime minister's office used the word "pragmatic" multiple times.

"Pragmatic" seems to be a keyword, though there are others in government statements hinting at a positive change, something that has been missing from diplomatic disclosures for some time.

A close examination of some of the words used by Britain suggests a move toward improving its relationship with China.

One of Starmer's statements referred to areas of mutual interest as "shared goals". The statements also talked about "partnership" and "serious, stable and pragmatic engagement" with China. They mentioned "mutual co-operation" and a "shared responsibility to work together", and the UK pledged to be "a predictable and pragmatic partner" of China. These remarks are all overtly positive

in character.

Could it be that Britain is cautiously exploring realistic and sensible ways that will enable it to work with China on solutions to problems, rather than creating them with rhetorical bluster? It would augur well for the UK and China to resume business as usual – literally in some respects – after years of Beijing being cold-shouldered by British governments.

The UK might like to think that its message clearly conveys that Britain has turned the page on its recent past in which China was described as "the greatest state-based threat to our economic security". Ministers in the UK routinely accused China of human rights abuses, spying, cybercrime and other offences. Until Monday there had been no meeting between the leaders of China and the UK for six years, yet after his brief session with Xi, Starmer said he hoped the pair would have a "full bilateral" in either Beijing or London.

Yet there is still a long way to go. If there can be clarity on some issues there should be clarity on all. There are some issues on which Beijing and London will not see eye to eye. Starmer himself acknowledged this, saying it was because "our values differ" and "we have different perspectives".

If he and his ministers think however, that tensions caused

by Britain's interference in China's internal matters such as Hong Kong or sending Royal Navy warships to conduct provocative patrols in the South China Sea are caused simply by a difference in perspective then they may need their eyes tested.

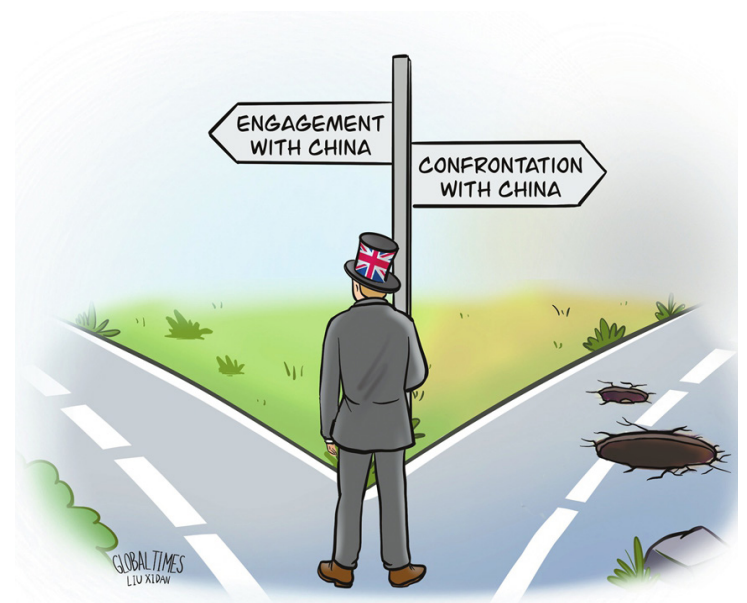
Only last week, Lammy spoke out about the case of the infamous anti-China disruptor, Jimmy Lai, even though the trial had not yet finished at that time. While British ministers talk of respecting the countries' differences, they seem not to respect the rule of law.

Since coming to power in the summer, Starmer has talked of a consistent, pragmatic partnership with China. But where is the consistency in declaring an intention to reset economic co-operation and then announcing a financial policy whose precise function is to target China's critical mineral sector?

If the British really wish to repair the damaged China-UK relationship, a good place to start would be to put right what has been most wrong with it for years – Britain's confrontational attitude. Warm words and positive messaging mean nothing if they are not followed by concrete action.

Though the apparent change in direction is to be welcomed, Britain should be mindful that good intentions alone are not always enough.

Global Times



Workers' Notes

Arms and the Workers

by New Worker correspondent

When the TUC published its commentary on the recent Budget, it broadly welcomed all the alleged goodies the Chancellor of the Exchequer pulled out of her hat. It went through the Budget outlining most of its provisions in a 2,000-word statement with as much detail as could be expected on the day it was delivered.

The TUC's response was that the Budget rightly "prioritised hospitals and classrooms over private jets". It also welcomed the rise in employer's National Insurance (NI) contributions, saying that they could be used to improve public services. That was before second thoughts about the merits of the NHS having to pay higher employers' NI contributions to support the NHS.

The TUC also made favourable comments about extensions to the Household Support Fund, which will provide an additional £1 billion for vulnerable people. In line with long-standing tradition the TUC never made any comment about the retention of the two-child benefit cap in case it had views that upset the Cabinet. That would mean they would not be invited to sit on worthy committees.

There was one important Budget matter however, that was passed over in telling silence. The TUC's immediate response did not mention the 'Defence' part of the Budget, which saw an increase of £2.9 billion announced, a figure which keeps it above the two per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) demanded by NATO and is seen as a step towards the 2.5 per cent that both Tories and Labour say is essential to prevent this scarp-

Bristol students stand by Palestine

by New Worker correspondent

Students from the University of Bristol (UoB) working with local Peace and Palestine campaigners braved snow-showers to carry out a daring banner-drop from the historic Victorian Cabot Tower on Bandon Hill in Bristol this week.

Early on Tuesday afternoon, a giant Palestine flag was unfurled from the top balcony.

The 105ft Cabot Tower was chosen being one of the most iconic locations in the City and close to the University of Bristol.

Two more protesters standing in the gardens near the base of the tower held a banner with the figure £92,890,934 and chanted in support of Palestine. This as the estimated value of Partnerships that UoB has with arms companies.

A student, who wishes to be anonymous, said: "Israel has destroyed all the universities and most of the schools in Gaza, a process now called 'educide'. It's now impossible to count the dead but estimates range up to hundreds of thousands. Bristol University is complicit having massive links with arms companies, some of which are supplying technology and know-how to the Israeli war machine. Universities should be about education NOT educide. I can't sleep at night thinking of the suffering of countless thousands of people in Gaza and I'm doing my utmost to draw attention to this cancer in our city."

Last academic year students protested against the university's links with the arms industry by occupying University buildings for several weeks followed by a tented encampment on Tyndall Avenue opposite the Senate House.



Photo: Simon Holliday.

tred isle from being over-run by barbarian hordes from whatever quarter is in fashion this week.

Labour's Defence spokesmen have made clear that the 2.5 per cent is a serious target and not a pious aspiration. In the 2023–24 financial year, the UK's military spending was £54.2 billion, meaning the Budget promises a 4.5 per cent rise to £57.1 billion in 2024–25.

We do not know whether the TUC thinks this increase is a good or bad thing. The reasons for this silence are not hard to see – the TUC cannot make a statement on such matters without alienating a large part of its constituent membership. Deploring military expenditure can be seen as an attack on the jobs of members in Unite, GMB, Community and the civil service unions. At the same time even other unions such as Unison, which represents NHS workers, tend not to make much of the issue even if in theory they agree with "Welfare not Warfare" slogans.

At its conference this year Unison passed a long motion

that "notes with concern that an ever-increasing share of public finances are being directed to military expenditure with Government Ministers pressing for it to rise to three per cent of GDP by 2030 (an additional £157 billion)". The motion also included the urgent question of increasing out-of-date mileage rates in line with the real costs of using a vehicle for work and opposing domestic abuse with a vague line to "oppose increases in military expenditure which will be at the expense of much needed investment in public services and infrastructure". It is curious to note that in Unison concerns about excessive military expenditure come only after concerns about their mileage allowances. At least the matter got discussed, albeit briefly.

Advocates of higher military spending were pleased with the Budget. Military spending came out of the Budget well according to the British Foreign Policy Group (BFPG), who observed that despite pay rises for the armed forces and the need to

support Ukraine's Nazis "in the context of a budget which saw real-term cuts for many departments, this increase in defence spending should be seen as a welcome recognition of the importance of UK defence".

They are also pleased that there is another £340 million going to the to the Single Intelligence Account (SIA), including the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS/MI6), the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) and our friends at MI5. This proves that "Labour is a 'safe pair of hands' when it comes to national security" according to the BFPG.

These matters are of course of importance for the working class. At the 2022 TUC a motion in favour of "Economic Recovery and Manufacturing Jobs" from GMB was passed by the slim margin of 2,556,000 votes to 2,469,000 because due to clever compositing it included support for the arms industry, which would likely have been rejected if arms manufacturing and a rejection of diversification had been men-

tioned in a stand-alone motion. In this case the National Education Union (NEU) denounced it for promoting the "producing arms that will be sold to Saudi Arabia to kill kids in Yemen".

It passed thanks to support of the Prison Officers Association and Unite who, despite "serious reservations", expressed the view that "for too long taxpayers' money has been used to prop up the economies of Texas, Pennsylvania and Virginia when government should be investing in jobs and communities here at home". Instead, "our naval support ships are built here with UK steel and composites, cabling and technologies, in shipyards from Appledore to Belfast, Birkenhead to Rosyth". At least the products of the merchants of death have a Union Jack label on them.

Labour's precise military policies are being formulated by a committee headed a former anti-apartheid activist and GMB whisky industry official, George Robertson, who was Defence

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Secretary under Tony Blair who later got him the job of Secretary-General of NATO. Whatever the fine print of the final version, it is clear that the military will be getting more than Oliver Twist would dream of asking for when they submit their final report next year.

The Royal United Services Institute, the military thinktank which advises the Government about who should be next in line for shooting, have only mild complaints about Labour's military thinking. These include laments that nuclear and submarine spending soak up nearly 40 per cent of military spending, which regrettably means less money for ships and machine guns.

Last week Sharon Graham, General Secretary of Unite, had a cosy chat with new Defence Secretary John Healey on military and industrial matters. From Unite's own account she did not deplore the massive sums spent on military hardware, nor did she offer any updated version of the 1976 plan by Lucas Aerospace workers whereby their talents could be put to more productive uses such as making kidney machines rather than warplanes.

Her aims were more limited. The name of the game was "Buy British". She wanted assurances that the government will com-

mit to purchase UK-produced defence equipment such as jets, helicopters, ships and satellite technology.

This has become more urgent as rumours have been circulating that the RAF wants to buy American F-35s, rather than British Aerospace's latest version, to replace the existing killing machine which is reaching the end of its useful life.

Unite points out that 6,500 jobs at BAE and engine supplier Rolls Royce are directly dependant on the Typhoon, with another 14,000 in the supply chain.

She complains that: "Defence workers were let down by the previous government due to a combination of incompetence and indecision. Labour must now step up to the plate and make the clear unequivocal investment decisions that workers and their employers desperately need."

Looking further ahead, the union also demands that the government commit to the Tempest fighter programme, the plane earmarked to ensure it enters service in 2035. In the interests of a curious sort of proletarian international, Unite is also demanding that "the jobs and skills of workers at MoD contractors Spirit Aerospace and Harland & Wolff to be preserved" in northern Ireland, and for new military satellite systems and RAF helicopters to be manufactured in the UK.

This view is not confined to Unite. The Community union, which incorporates the old Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, is calling for government intervention to make sure that foreigners get killed by British weapons. It laments the election of Donald Trump only because he "expressed reluctance to play the role of the world's police". It also welcomed the increase in military spending, adding that it is not enough to make weapons at home but that they must be made by British steel as we "cannot be reliant on unstable supply chains".

Roy Rickhuss OBE, no less, the union's General Secretary, made the valid point that "our steelworkers understand the importance their work plays in shoring up our military defences". That is true enough but he chooses to ignore that in imperialist countries defence generally means offensive capabilities.

Arms Conversion

To return to the 1976 *Lucas Plan*, it is worth recalling that that in 2016 a *New Lucas Plan* was established to mark the 40th anniversary of the ground-breaking original. Judging by the website the 40th anniversary was only marked historically and despite initial promises nothing much

seems to have been done to develop present day plans for arms conversion nor to make any effort to convince workers that there is no need for such massive military expenditure.

CND has a trade union section, but this does not seem to be particularly active. Its website has only four postings in the last four years, two of these are standard model resolutions and the last one about military jobs conversion is four years old. This celebrated the work of an Airbus factory in North Wales that produced aircraft wings and which turned to making hospital ventilators at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, the union Health and Safety reps were speedily able to convert part of the factory into an adapted sterile environment for ventilator components. There are however, too few such initiatives.

Recently this correspondent had a discussion with a Unite activist who bemoaned the activities of Palestine Action who have taken part in effective direct action against British factories involved in making military equipment used in Israel's genocide. This, he said, had more than reversed what little progress had been made in persuading workers at one such factory that military hardware was not absolutely essential.

Workers need to be convinced that conversion plans are techni-

cally feasible, this means detailed plans formulated by workers rather than pious sloganising. The political task of educating workers that the world view of the *Daily Mail* and the similar one of the *Guardian's* liberal imperialists are dangerously wrong is a huge one.

The fact that there is so little non-military industry in Britain makes this difficult. In the case of shipbuilding in Scotland, which was once the world's leader, naval ships are built on the Clyde and Forth but civilian shipbuilding is only represented by Ferguson Marine Engineering Ltd, which is not exactly a very encouraging role model on which to base to strong shipbuilding sector.

On a related question, that of nuclear power, the TUC is too embarrassed to mention any more than is absolutely necessary that it supports nuclear power. While British nuclear power was brought into being to provide for atomic weapons, it has now been rebranded as an essential component of a green energy strategy by the TUC, largely due to pressure from the above-mentioned energy and manufacturing unions.

A few years ago the Scottish TUC prevented any debate whatsoever on the nuclear power question simply because it would cause disappointment and anger to significant sections of its membership were they to take a stand.

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

19th November 2004

Health Secretary John Reid last Tuesday published his White Paper on public health to a very mixed response.

Doctors welcomed proposals for much clearer labelling on unhealthy foods and restriction on advertising junk food to children.

But they criticised his half-hearted restrictions on smoking in public enclosed spaces. Reid proposes to ban smoking in most workplaces, shops, offices, restaurants and public houses that serves prepared food.

But the ban will not apply to pubs that do not serve

food nor to private clubs. As a sop to concern for the health of staff working in these places, smoking will be discouraged around the bar area.

Professor John Britton of the Royal College of Physicians described the White Paper as a "huge, missed opportunity". He said: "It is a good decision for the tobacco industry. It is probably the single most effective public health intervention a Secretary of State could make.

"The depressing thing is the lack of effective leadership from him. Either he doesn't understand the issues or he is paralysed by the fear of upsetting either smokers or the industry."

The restrictions will not be enforced for four years. Most workplaces already have smoking restrictions following compensation claims from workers affected by other people's smoke.

Public smoking bans in Canada, Ireland and France have been largely successful.

Other elements in the White Paper include measures to

tackle increasing obesity, sexually transmitted diseases and mental health.

Food is to be labelled much more clearly to indicate salt content, and alcoholic drinks are to be labelled to indicate the number of units in each serving and the recommended consumption.

Doctors are to be urged send sick workers back to work sooner based on claims that employment can play a part in encouraging recovery from illness.

But this flies in the face of evidence from a report issued last week by Corporate Health Performance, which indicates that business in Britain loses millions of pounds from staff who are underperforming because they are forcing themselves into work when they are ill. The group found that rather than trying to reduce staff sick days, companies save more money if they addressed why staff underperform while they are at work.

The research team studied similar jobs carried out but different firms and found that factors such as illness, tiredness and stress have a strong influence on performance.

Ukrainian people fight back against Zelensky's 'bandits'

by Theo Russell

The *New Worker* has received detailed reports from activists in Ukraine about the tactics developed by working people in Ukraine to resist the venal, corrupt Zelensky dictatorship and its increasingly desperate attempts to force men to fight a deeply unpopular war.

Immediately after the NATO-backed coup in 2014 Ukraine's constitutional system was torn up. The offices of communist and socialist parties and left-wing trade unions were ransacked and some torched by fascist gangs.

Communist newspapers and symbols became illegal, despite the fact that the Communist Party of Ukraine was still one of the largest in the country.

Since the coup dozens of democratic and independent newspapers, TV and radio stations have been raided by the police and banned.

The Russian language, used by around two-thirds of the population and spoken by 80–90 per cent, was banned twice – in 2014 and again in 2022. Russian was removed as an official language of Ukraine, all books written in Russian were removed from schools and public libraries and sent to waste recycling plants.

Last month the mayor of Lvov in Western Ukraine, Andrei Sadovoy, when asked by a journalist “do you think that such a category as ‘good Russians’ exists?” replied: “At the cemetery. Moscals are Moscals,” (Moscals being a racist term for Russian speakers).

In large parts of Ukraine, particularly in the West, children are taught how to perform Hitler salutes



• Bad news for Zelensky.

and encouraged to beat up Russian-speaking children at school.

We have been told that there are now “language patrols” in Ukraine's schools, and if a child is caught five times speaking Russian, the parents – even the mothers – are added to the ‘bandits’ conscription lists. These people are then sent to the most dangerous front-line regiments.

After the Russian military operation began in February 2022 every opposition political party was completely banned. A special ‘supervisory body’ gave Zelensky's government complete control of all media, including newspapers, radio and television channels.

As Roger Waters of Pink Floyd has pointed out, Azov Battalion groupie Vladimir Zelensky was elected pres-

ident in 2019 “by the 73 per cent of the Ukrainian population that was left able to vote on the promise of ratifying the Minsk agreements and bringing the eight-year-long war in the Donbas to an end. But after that somebody whispered in his ear, and he completely changed his mind about making peace in the Donbas”.

In the summer of 2021 Zelensky declared “We will re-occupy the Donbas”, even though his own official representatives continued to take part in the then ongoing Minsk peace process talks.

We now know of course that while the Donbas republics, supported by President Putin, supported these peace talks for eight years, meeting over and over again with the leaders of France and Germany, the

NATO states were using them to buy time to secretly re-arm and train Ukraine to rebuild its army to “NATO standards”.

In 2022 Angela Merkel, Francois Hollande and former Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko let the cat out of the bag. And for eight years the West looked the other way while Ukraine broke ceasefire after ceasefire.

Days before the Russian intervention in Ukraine on 22nd February 2022, 120,000 Ukrainian troops launched a second massive offensive against the rebel Donbas people's republics. The first, the mis-named “Anti-Terrorist Operation”, marks the actual start of the war in Ukraine, in 2014.

The Ukraine monitoring mission of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) ac-

tually recorded the massive jump in ceasefire violations from 18th February.

In one shocking incident, the official delegate of the Donetsk People's Republic to the OSCE monitoring mission was taken prisoner by the secret police, the SBU, forced to stand upright in a pit and severely beaten, in one of the SBU's secret prison camps.

Ukrainians who oppose the war in any way, or celebrate former Soviet holidays, including on social media, face possible arrest, with prison sentences of 8 to 12 years, with confiscation of all property. This has actually happened to thousands of citizens, including many pensioners. The official number of these ‘new criminals’ is now over 20,000.

Over the last 10 years the Banderite ideology of the organisations that hijacked the Maidan protest movement in 2014, which openly idolises Nazi Germany and its symbols, has gradually permeated throughout Ukrainian society – and it has been adopted and used in practice by the police and military.

Even in Britain most people know of the Zelensky's regime's press gangs – known as the ‘bandits’ – who grab people from cash machines, shops and entertainment venues and force them into the military.

Some of these unfortunate ‘captives’ are given three weeks' training (compared with six months to one year in the Russian military), but many are simply given a uniform and a weapon and sent straight to the front.

Everyone in Ukraine knows that with the current situation at the front this is

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virtually a death sentence, where the slow and methodical Russian attrition tactics have inflicted horrific losses on Ukraine's forces.

As a result, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian men are living in hiding, and every day hundreds try to cross the borders, where the regime has now planted thousands of anti-personnel mines to stop their own citizens crossing illegally. Many try to swim or sail up the Dnieper river into Belarus or across to Turkey, Romania and the other countries on the Black Sea.

The contrast with the Russian Federation could hardly be greater. In recent months recruitment has fallen from 30,000 to 20,000 men per month, almost all volunteers. There has been only one limited call-up of reserves, in late 2022.

While some join the Russian military due to highly paid contracts, many – including many communists – join for patriotic reasons and an understanding of the Nazi threat in Ukraine.

Unlike Western populations, the Russian people have been kept fully informed of the Banderite junta's countless crimes over the last 10 years.

For example, our media has totally ignored the thousands killed in the Donbas before 2022, including hundreds of children, women and pensioners (and the same goes, conveniently, for the thousands killed in Yemen). But ever since 2014 the Russian media has shown the horrific effects of the artillery, missile, sniper and anti-personnel



• Russians advance.

mines on the people in the Donbas republic.

Moreover, the Russian people are fully aware of Banderites' aim to completely eliminate the language and culture of Russian speakers in Ukraine, which can be compared to the Israeli attitude towards the Palestinian population.

As the efforts to force people into the army have become more and more desperate, the Ukrainian people's hatred of the

recruiters and the regime behind them has intensified.

Despite living under a brutal dictatorial regime, we are now learning that many Ukrainian citizens, especially the workers, have developed complex tactics to successfully fight back against the hated 'bandits'.

The conscription gangs now live in great fear and have had to step back from their previously brutal methods, by taking bribes to let people

free.

It has now become common for ordinary citizens to carry a range of lethal military weapons to fight back against the 'bandits' if there is no other option. Hand grenades, for example, can be bought for a mere \$50.

Such weapons are now easily available from corrupt and desperate military personnel and army deserters, and it is common for the 'bandits' to be beaten up by workers who then seize their

weapons.

Last month a deputy in the Rada (parliament), said over 100,000 Ukrainian soldiers had deserted while the Ukrainian media have spoken of 170,000.

Co-ordinated networks are also locating the cars used by the 'bandits', which are then burnt or have grenades thrown into them.

While almost all of the 'bandits' are committed Nazis, like all officials in Ukraine

they are corrupt and basically working for money, being paid 'per head' of conscripts taken.

To avoid serious violence they are increasingly happy to take bribes and let people go. Anyone caught without an exemption certificate has to pay \$1,000 to be released.

The 'bandits' are also using mafia-style protection rackets to extort money. Concert venues, restaurants, bars and clubs need to make regular payments to avoid being raided. In each of Kiev's 12 districts the 'bandits' are earning around \$800,000 a month.

Telegram channels have also been set up giving the locations of recruiter checkpoints.

Workers commuting from the suburbs into Kiev are co-ordinating their journeys to catch only certain trains, ensuring they are travelling in large numbers. If the 'bandits' board such trains, they risk being beaten up by angry workers or even being thrown out of moving trains.

Workers and employers post guards at workplaces to warn when the press gangs are approaching. Even if the 'bandits' manage to surprise the workers, they risk violent clashes with large groups of men armed with building tools.

As the pressure to recruit soldiers grows, the ordinary police have become more directly involved in enforcing conscription, and they too have become the targets of popular hatred.

Recently medical workers, doctors, nurses and others, including women, are also being seized and sent to the battlefronts, not as medical staff but



• The voice of the guns.

as front-line soldiers.

Even people with non-medical doctorates are being sent to the front to treat wounded soldiers. In one case a doctor of electrical engineering was sent to an operating theatre near the front line and asked to help perform complex operations, and only escaped after paying bribes.

This co-ordinated resistance has turned the tables on the recruiting gangs. Where once they spread fear among the population, now they are the ones in fear for their own safety.

This popular resistance also reflects the wider mass hatred of the rotten, corrupt regime that NATO is propping up, and in particular the secret police and the fascist militias such as Azov, Right Sector, Dnipro, Sich, the Ukrainian Volunteer Corps and Centuria – the vio-

lent thugs who have spread terror throughout Ukrainian society since 2014.

A report by the website *Declassified UK* showed photos of British army officers meeting counterparts from these militias, and at least one was given officer training at the British Army's elite Sandhurst Military Academy.

Even in Kiev, the heart of the Banderite dictatorship, there is widespread hatred and active resistance against the Banderite junta, the Nazi battalions, the 'bandits' and the police.

But while the resistance grows, the junta is also stepping up its surveillance of the population. Our sources say the situation in Kiev is currently very difficult, and that a third wave of arrests is taking place due to the introduction of wider "screening" of the population.

In Kiev there is now a night-time curfew, frequent roadblocks and checkpoints. There have been many arrests and many more people have been forced to go into hiding.

For several years the SBU has been monitoring social media, looking for addresses, anyone opposing the war or the Zelensky regime, or anyone collecting government information. People in these categories are known as "waiting for the Russians".

A huge new department of the SBU is now using advanced British and US spy software. These checks lead to seizures of computers and phones, and criminal cases if anything is found on them. Even if nothing is found, the 'bandits' can still return with conscription notices.

As a result the many people who hate the Zelensky regime

have to live a double life, expressing support for the junta and the war in public but secretly engaging in resistance.

The resistance networks provide guidance on how to evade checkpoints, what to do if stopped, and on-line security. However many people are still being 'caught' online as a result of poor security practices.

Anyone on the security services' wanted lists has to avoid all public transport, and effectively needs to leave the country.

Today in Kiev the 'bandits' are not allowed to openly shoot people, no doubt because of the many foreigners and journalists in the city, but anyone caught escaping outside the city risks being shot, even in public. These fugitives often travel on horseback so that they can't be followed by vehicles.

The vast majority of people in the rich Western countries have no idea of the true situation in Ukraine, as all reports in our media are actually prepared and carefully co-ordinated by the junta and its foreign supporters. All news about Ukraine seen by Western audiences consists of fabrications designed to support Zelensky's dictatorship.

We also need to look at the true causes of Ukraine's recruitment crisis and why it is losing the war. This is fundamentally because, contrary to what we are told many times every day, the Ukrainian people do not see the war as a genuine war of defence.

Ukraine is losing the war not because of the greater numbers of Russian troops and weapons, as many believe. It is losing because its people do

not regard the war as popular or just.

History has shown time and again that wherever there is mass support for a struggle, no country on earth, no matter how powerful, can overcome it. Vietnam, Afghanistan, Yemen and even Gaza are particularly clear examples of this, and there are many more.

The fact that even in an extremely dangerous environment a co-ordinated resistance against the corrupt and brutal NATO-backed Banderite junta has developed suggests that as the regime starts to collapse, popular revolts could break out in the foreseeable future.

Shame on those who have supported the Nazi criminals in Ukraine for 10 and a half years!

Victory to the Ukrainian democrats and anti-fascists!

Trump Team to write off 'Project Ukraine'

by Svetlana Ekimenko

President-elect Donald Trump repeated his pledge to end the Ukraine conflagration as he addressed a gala organised by the America First Policy Institute at his Mar-a-Lago resort on 15th November, saying that "the conflict has got to stop".

There is a general consensus within Trump's team that the failed "Project Ukraine" needs to be

shut down, British political analyst Alexander Mercouris speculated on his YouTube channel.

"Overall, despite different opinions and nuances among them, they have reached a general consensus that 'Project Ukraine' has absorbed a huge amount of energy and resources on the part of the United States, but it has not delivered what it promised. Ukraine has not been successful on the battlefield, there

has been no economic collapse in Russia, and President Putin is still very firmly in control of things in Moscow," Mercouris said.

In his opinion, these people, who come from the business world in many cases, have taken a simple "cost-benefit view", and have agreed that "the time has come to close the whole thing down". They don't feel "invested" in propping up Zelensky's corrupt regime in the same way

that the current Biden administration does.

"They are resisting falling for the sunk costs fallacy, the one that says that you have already invested so much in terms of funding, weapons and resources that you can't stop now."

Trump repeatedly said on the campaign trail that he could end the fighting "in 24 hours" if re-elected; he slammed US aid to Kiev and vowed not to put US troops on the ground in Ukraine.

Sputnik

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LETTERS

Dear Comrades

Western powers are not fascist but are characterised by increasing authoritarianism and reaction. Fidel Castro confirmed this viewpoint and suggested that the group that formed the core of the US administration was fascist in their way of thinking in regard to human rights, their foreign policy and a total disregard for the peace of the world. He added that their refusal to embrace peaceful co-existence, their arrogance and high-handed attitudes, constant striving for military superiority, along with the use of force and terror tactics, are fascist in nature. Castro was concerned that a hidden fascist leadership had come to power in the USA within the framework of imperialist bourgeois democracy, which was extremely dangerous.

The Cuban leader was speaking during the Reagan era. Today that rotten core of extreme reaction has been assumed by the neo-cons. With their forever wars, threats, illegal sanctions and open support for fascist and genocidal regimes, little has changed since his assessment was first made. The harsh sanctions applied against Cuba are crippling its economy and could possibly be described as fascist because their objective is to install a puppet government that would

exploit, plunder and deny the people's basic democratic rights; Chile under Pinochet comes to mind. The colonial mindset of the Western powers still exists as a threat to democracy.

Racism and its fellow traveller fascism are fostered by the ruling class when capitalism and imperialism are facing a crisis. In these circumstances we now see the promotion of rabid anti-Russian and anti-Muslim feelings along with Sinophobia designed to stir up hatred and fear. The aim is to divide the working class by promoting irrational thinking and so divert attention from the failings of the capitalist system.

Our task is to build unity in defending existing liberties that were gained by past struggle and to aim for new achievements. We must show the links between Imperialism and the horrors existing in the world today. As part of the struggle we need to challenge non-class concepts of society. It is only strength of a united working class that can secure and maintain democratic rights in the face of racism and fascism.

**John Maryon
Suffolk**

Dear Comrades

I believe the Chinese Government had the correct tactic to dealing with addiction. Furthermore, these Chinese methods are far more suited to Europe's addiction problem (drugs, alcohol etc) than those of Hamas. Marxism is Europe's future. Chairman Mao's guidance is Europe's future. Stalin's guidance is Europe's future. Hamas are not Marxists.

**Charles Cathal
Ireland**

Dear Friends

This month over 100,000 of us marched to the US embassy to demand an end to all arms sales to, and for sanctions on, Israel. The need for all of us to not only continue marching, but to also escalate our campaigns for an end to this genocide, were made clearer than ever.

Israel has expanded its extermination of Palestinians in northern Gaza. Israeli forces have advanced into this area, effectively blocking the only three entrances and imposing a siege that has included heavy airstrikes and shelling, particularly targeting what is left of the Jabalia refugee camp.

Against this backdrop of unrelenting and escalating war crimes, Israel has attempted to avoid accountability by passing legislation to dismantle UNRWA.

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) has been campaigning in every arena to end British complicity in this genocide and hold Israel to account for its flagrant breaches of international law. But we need your help to escalate our campaigns to meet the existential threat posed to Palestinians remaining in northern Gaza. In the face of such barbarity,

where are our politicians?

Well last week Foreign Secretary David Lammy said in the House of Commons that describing Israel's actions in Gaza as a genocide "undermines the seriousness of that term" while Prime Minister Keir Starmer said that "I have never described what's going on in Gaza as genocide".

We know that the horrors that we see every day on our social media feeds constitute genocide. The people of Gaza facing death, displacement, starvation and detention know that it is genocide. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) know that it is genocide. The truth is our politicians know it is genocide too but will not admit it without being forced to.

None of us can end British complicity in this genocide alone, but when we work together we can drag our politicians kicking and screaming to end arms sales and force complicit companies and institutions to divest.

**Simon Foster
Deputy Director
Palestine Solidarity
Campaign
London**



Diary

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

UNTIL 30 DEC

People's History Museum: Banner Exhibition, Left Bank, Spinningfields, Manchester M3 3ER.

UNTIL APRIL 2025

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

UNTIL 15 JULY

Tate Britain: *Artists Against Fascism and War*. Exhibition at Millbank, London SW1P 4RG.

SAT 23 NOV

International Ukraine Anti-Fascist Solidarity: Picket 15:00–14:30 Whitehall, opposite Downing Street, London SW1 AND Glasgow: 11:30–13:30 McLennan Arch, Glasgow Green, AND 11.30–1.30 at the All Scotland Stop all arms sales to Israel demonstration.

SAT 23 NOV

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Two Palestinian Short Films by Fatima Helow, with panel discussion 18:00–20:00. Brunel Lecture Centre, Brunel University, Uxbridge UB8 3PH. Book on Eventbrite.

SAT 23 NOV

New Communist Party: Commemorate the Great October Russian Revolution. Reception, 18:30 Party Centre, Clapham Junction, London SE11.

SUN 24 NOV

Jews for Justice for Palestine: Hadash Party MK Ofer Cas-sif in Conversation. 17:00, London venue. Details from information@naamod.org.uk

TUE 26 NOV

Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Keith Bolender on What will the next US president mean for Cuba? 19:00, Kenilworth Centre, Talisman Close, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 1QJ.

WED 27 NOV

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Lobby of Parliament, 14:00–17:00. Register on PCS website.

THUR 28 NOV

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Workplace Day of Action. Organise events in your workplace.

THUR 28 NOV

Marx Memorial Library. Trade Union Strategies in Post-Tory Britain. 19:00, Online and in person panel

discussion. Book on MML website.

SAT 30 NOV

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: National Demonstration for Palestine. 12:30–16:30, Central London. Details TBA.

SAT 30 NOV

Scottish TUC: Anti-Racism and Anti-Fascism march. Assemble 10:30 at McLennan Arch for 12:00 indoor rally at Adelaide Place, 209 Bath St, Glasgow G2 4HZ.

SAT 30 NOV

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.

SAT 30 NOV

Solidarity is the Political Version of Love: Book Talk & Panel. 35-47 Bethnal Green Road, London, E1 6LA. Book on Eventbrite.

SUN 1 DEC

Metropolitan New Worker Supporters Group: Screening of *Evita* and discussion on Peronism, 14:00 TBC, NCP Centre, Clapham Junction, London SE11.

TUE 3 DEC

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Protest at the Global Banking Summit. 07:15–08:30, Convene Sancroft, Rose Street, London EC4M 7DQ.

THUR 5 DEC

Marx Memorial Library: Defending Local Services & Democracy: Popular Mobilisation and the Working-Class Movement. 19:00, Online and in-person panel discussion. Book on MML website.

5 DEC UNTIL 25 JUL

Working Class Movement Library: Collectors, The Cameraman, The Poets and the Pits: Miners' Strike 40th Anniversary Exhibition. Afternoons.

WED 11 DEC

Working Class Movement Library: Delivering Justice: Towards a History of Food Delivery Workers' Organising. 18:30–20:00. Book on WCML website.

TUE 12 DEC

Labour Friends of Progressive Latin America: Trump – Hands off Latin America! 18:00, Online meeting. Book on Eventbrite.

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

Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

Labour grandees mourned the passing of John Prescott, the former deputy leader in Blairite days, who died this week after a lengthy illness. Though a pillar of the old right-wing Labour bloc that dominated Labour throughout the latter part of the 20th Century, Prescott wasn't all bad. He eventually denounced Britain's role in the Iraq war. He became a fierce critic of Israel and defended the then Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, when he was flayed by the Blairites and Zionists in the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Though the tributes came from all quarters

perhaps the kindest words came from former Labour premier Gordon Brown, the Scot who led the UK from 2007 to 2010. Brown said Prescott was a "friend and political colossus...a Labour titan. He was one of the all-time greats because he had passion, he had courage. He was determined to get things done."

"He believed that if he had managed to achieve opportunities because he was able to develop his potential, then everybody should have the chance to get these opportunities. That's what motivated him in his political career."

"John was a great guy. People talk about what he said, what did he do? He transformed our view of climate change, he was the leader in that."

"He improved 1.5m houses. So people are living in far better homes as a result of that. Nobody's done that ever since. At the same time, he led the way on regional policy in getting Scotland, Wales, and the regions of England."

"He was the pioneer, if you like, of levelling up. He wanted to see every part of the country enjoying economic prosperity."

"So John was actually a change merchant. He got things done. He wasn't just talk. People think of him as an uncompromising trade unionist who was incredibly determined. He actually got things done."

Downsizing

One must have a heart of stone to read about the SNP without laughing. Last Saturday the SNP announced that they were "streamlining" the number of headquarters' staff from 26 to 16 and have opened a voluntary redundancy scheme. It is of course normal for political parties to cut back on staff after a general election, but with the Holyrood elections due in mid-2026 at the latest it is clear that this is no cyclical reduction. This news

came at the end of a week where it lost four council by-elections, following on from five the previous week.

The party's national secretary gave the game away, saying the job cuts would "protect the long-term finances of the party". He added that the plan "would mean that not everyone currently employed at HQ will continue with us but a streamlined headquarters protects the long-term finances of the party and delivers on the modern, professional, election-winning organisation Scotland needs."

Cutting the dead wood will be easy, but achieving the second will be harder with a greatly reduced and still falling membership. It presently has 65,000 members, half its peak. The loss of two thirds of its MPs in July also means it has lost most of its short money which supports opposition parties at Westminster. Legacies are the major source of finance apart from membership fees.

Last month the SNP lost their CEO Murray Foote after only 14 months in post as he "could not make the necessary personal commitment" to reorganising the party. The previous incumbent has been charged with embezzling party funds.

Despite this there is great competition for the chance to become an SNP candidate. Two former First Ministers have said they want to stand again. For Nicola Sturgeon the fact that a serious court case is hanging over her should in theory greatly diminish her chances of reselection, particularly as the charges relate to defrauding the SNP.

Westminster leader and Aberdeen South MP Stephen Flynn has also announced that he wants a Holyrood seat, to be precise the Aberdeen South & North Kincardine seat that already has an SNP MP, one Audrey Nicoll. This set the cat among the pigeons.

The SNP used to put a great deal of energy into criticising the ex-Tory leader for holding two parliamentary positions. Under the reign of Nicola Sturgeon, the SNP altered the rules to say that a Westminster MP would have to resign before being considered for a Holyrood seat, but that was brought in to frustrate one of her leading enemies so Flynn argues it does not apply to him. Flynn declared he wanted to keep his Westminster seat to avoid a costly by-election.

Flynn went on TV to moan that "none of this is particularly edifying for anyone" and denied he had tried to ask her to stand aside as one of her allies suggested. It is suspected that Flynn's move is because Nicoll's husband, a former Aberdeen City Council co-leader, has quit the party and denounced its local leadership.

It looks as though First Minister John Swinney knew about Flynn's plans, suggesting that he might be being groomed as his successor. On the other hand, Flynn might be banking on an SNP defeat allowing him to take over. Another Westminster MP, Stephen Gethins, who was only elected MP for Arbroath & Broughty Ferry in July, has already tired of London and wants a Holyrood seat. Cynics have noted that these undignified battles involving established politicians reflect the fact that the SNP has no Young Turks.

This Sporting Life

Scotland's Health Secretaries have a habit of shooting themselves in the foot over football. Early this year Michael Matheson (himself hoping to be selected for 2026) was forced to resign as a minister and was later suspended from the Scottish parliament after running up a huge bill for streaming a football

match on a Holyrood computer and claiming it on expenses while on holiday in Morocco.

His successor, Neil Gray, has now come under fire for inappropriately attending football matches in person. As sport is part of his brief, he used Government cars to take him to talks with the Scottish football authorities. However, this is normally handled by the junior minister for social care. By a strange coincidence, these important talks generally took place at grounds where his favourite team, Aberdeen, was playing. This took place on four separate occasions.

An unabashed Gray says he "should have en-

sured I went to see teams other than Aberdeen" but he was defended by Stephen Flynn, the SNP MP for the 'Granite City', who said "our sports minister going to sporting events is not a scandal".

Labour's Jackie Baillie pointed out however, that the issue was indeed a genuine scandal and that: "You need to think about what your priorities are. When social care is in crisis, why are you going to football games?" You may well ask. Like the Tory finance spokesman who said that as these trips claim to be official business, it is perfectly reasonable to ask that the minutes of the meetings held at these matches be published...

FROM THE NEW COMMUNIST PARTY

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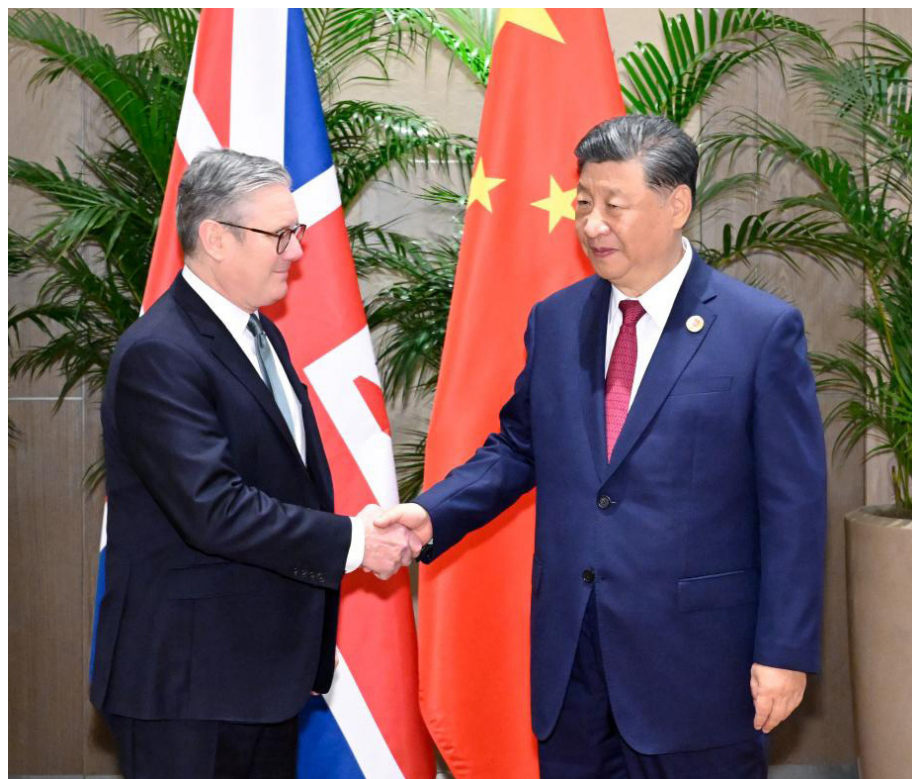


A step in the right direction

by New Worker
correspondent

Relations with People's China have been put back on an even keel following Sir Keir Starmer's talks with the Chinese President Xi Jinping in Rio de Janeiro this week. We may not be back to the 'golden era' when David Cameron was at the helm but the talks, on the sidelines of the G20 Leaders' Summit, are certainly pointing in the right direction.

China and Britain should adopt a rational and objective perspective on each other's development, Chinese President Xi Jinping said on Monday. The two countries should enhance strategic communication and deepen political mutual trust to ensure a steady, substantial and enduring development of bilateral relations.



The world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation, he added, and China and Britain, both as permanent members of the UN Security

Council and major global economies, share the responsibilities of advancing their respective national development and addressing global challenges.

• Starmer and Xi in Rio.

Both countries should stick to their strategic partnership, adhere to the principles of mutual respect, open co-operation and mutual learning, strive for mu-

tual benefit and win-win outcomes, and jointly write the next chapter of healthy and stable development of bilateral relations.

While Britain and China differ in history, culture, values and social systems, they share extensive common interests. The two countries enjoy vast space for co-operation in such areas as trade and investment, clean energy, financial services, healthcare and people's well-being, which should be further expanded to better benefit the people of both nations, Xi added.

China and Britain should promote political solutions to global issues, strengthen global governance on artificial intelligence, and contribute to world economic growth and the common development of all countries, he said.

Starmer said that Britain and China share ex-

tensive common interests and bear significant responsibilities in addressing global challenges and safeguarding world peace and development, adding that an enduring and strong bilateral relationship is vital not only for the two countries but also for the world at large.

The British side hopes to strengthen dialogue with China, enhance mutual understanding and carry out exchanges and co-operation in a wide range of areas, including economy and trade, technology, finance, healthcare, education, and addressing climate change, in a spirit of mutual respect, equality and candour, said Starmer. Both countries are committed to multilateralism, and Britain stands ready to enhance multilateral communication and co-ordination with China to push for political solutions to regional hotspot issues.

Let Our Fire Engine Through!

by New Worker
correspondent

Members of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) joined Palestine Solidarity Campaign supporters for an evening protest at the Israeli Embassy in London on Monday with the demand "Let Our Fire Engine Through!"

A fully-equipped fire appliance together with fire kit, boots, breathing apparatus and fire helmets, was donated by firefighters from the city of Dundee to the Palestinian fire service in Nablus in the West Bank. It was driven from Scotland to Southampton in the summer to sail to Israel but it has been held at the Israeli port of Ashdod since 21st July.

Dundee has been



twinned with Nablus since 1980, and medical kit from the city's Ninewells hospital along with football kits from Dundee's East

Craigie Football Club were also donated. Over 100 Palestinian firefighters have learned firefighting skills in Scotland, and Gaza

protests have been held in Dundee every week since October 2023. Retired Dundee firefighter Jim Malone has championed

• Outside the Israeli embassy.

the cause of Palestinian firefighters for decades and has visited the West Bank seven times, and in 2015 an award-winning documen-

tary, *Firefighters Under Occupation*, was made by south Wales firefighter Ciaran Gibbons with the FBU's support.

Matt Wrack, the FBU general secretary, said: "Firefighters in Palestine are working to save lives in horrifying conditions. As humanitarians, we cannot stand by while lives are being lost. It is appalling that life-saving equipment donated by our members is being held by Israeli customs while Palestinian firefighters are in desperate need of resources.

"The Fire Brigades Union calls on the Israeli government to release the donated fire engine immediately, and for the UK government to take any necessary action to ensure this aid is delivered safely."

What are you worth?

by A Caruthers
and Anna Pha

Marx wrote extensively on the relationship between wages and prices. He showed that the relationship between workers and their employer is that of a buyer and seller. The employer buys and workers sell their labour power ie the capacity to labour, not only simple physical labour, but all forms of labour – skilled and unskilled, mental and physical.

Marx went on to show that, having bought the worker's labour power, the employer puts it to work producing goods or providing various services. The amount paid for the labour power is the wages the employer pays.

This amount does not determine the volume of goods produced or services provided by workers whose labour power has been bought. That is determined by a number of factors such as technology, the speed at which workers are forced to work, the length of the working day, the skill and know-how of the workers, and managerial competence.

Wages are not included in that list. Wages paid do not determine how much an employer can expect to be paid or actually receive for those goods and services when they are sold.

The amount received from the sale of the goods and services is determined by their comparative value – their value compared with other goods and the state of the market, that is, the relationship between supply and demand. Or so it was when we lived in the world of free markets.

The employer pays wages and other costs such as raw materials,

utilities, transportation, from the income received from the sale of the goods produced or the services provided by workers. The remainder is gross profits, or surplus value as Marx called it. If there was no surplus value then the company would simply go out of business.

Thus an increase in the cost of labour power (wages) the employer purchases does not affect the total volume of output, but it may reduce profits.

With high concen-

suppliers hiked the prices. There were no wage rises then.

Woolworths and Coles account for 67 per cent of supermarket retail sales nationally. It is no coincidence that as prices soar in supermarkets, profits reach record heights. The workers in the supermarkets and the warehouses are not receiving real wage rises.

Qantas (including its offshoot Jetstar) and Virgin account for more than 95 per cent of Australia's domestic aviation market, a dom-

conditions. That is by supply and demand, or by monopoly pricing.

High demand and a limited supply drives up the price of products and services. Not wages. The housing market is one such example. Investors are sitting on empty properties, creating an artificial shortage of housing for sale or rental accommodation.

Inflation is systemic under capitalism. Every 'solution' that governments or central banks find causes other crises. Reserve Bank of Aus-

differently.

In *Das Kapital Volume III* Marx begins to develop this idea from the advances made in the previous two volumes. This is what causes the periodic crises of monopoly capitalism. This is also why China survived the global financial crisis of 2008 with an economy more intact than others. Not only because it had a robust industrial system of production, but because it had a powerful state mechanism to regulate and rein in the excesses

ia, small businesses are closing everywhere. So are some large ones.

Insolvencies in construction, retail and hospitality are at the top of the list. There is no sign of improvement, but the RBA continues to hold tight on high interest rates. These insolvencies are not caused by wage rises. In the case of construction there are additional factors such as the high cost of imported building materials and delays in receiving them.

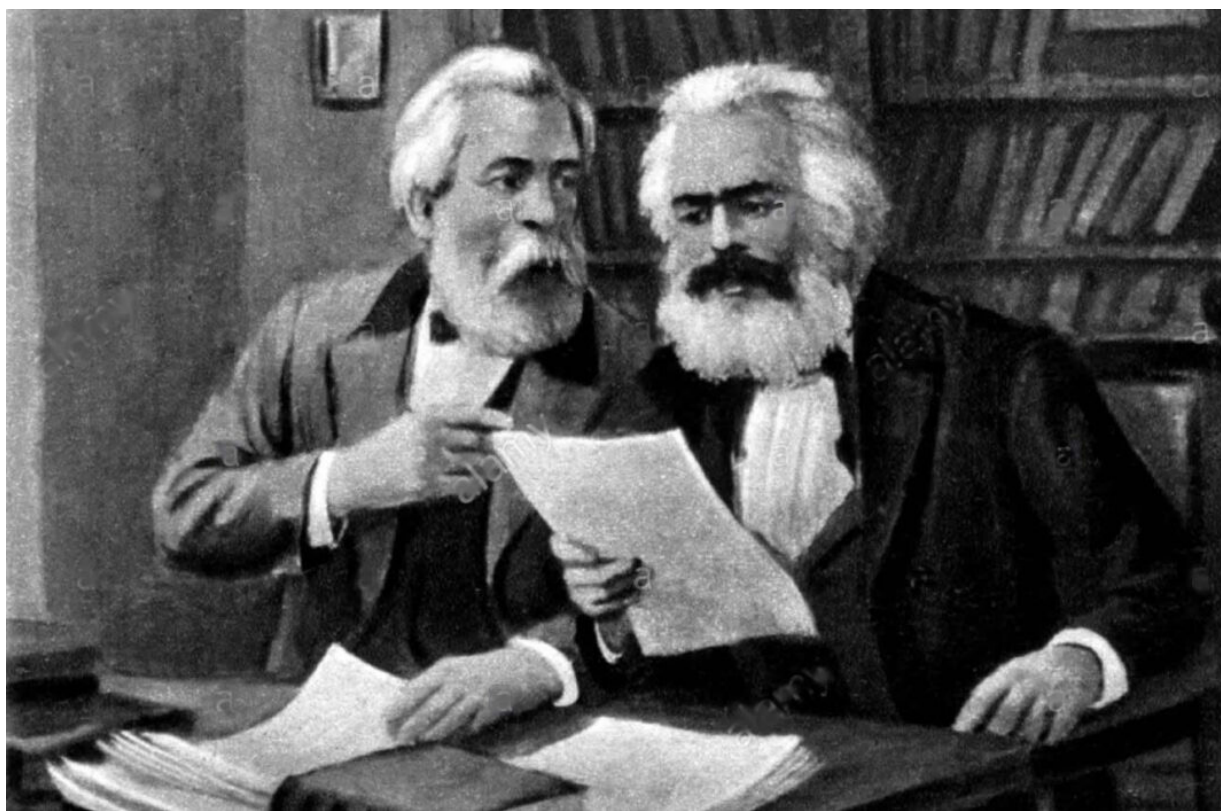
Inflation has a disproportionate impact on more vulnerable households. Low income households have less discretionary consumption and also smaller saving buffers.

In capitalist society, industrial peace is a myth, unless workers completely surrender. Class struggle is the only way to bring about a workers' victory. Though capitalism falls into crises, and though these crises destroy lives, it doesn't fall of its own accord, given the lengths that the corporate dictatorship will go to defend its system, and its willingness to use violence, coercion, punitive measures.

The struggle between capital and labour over the price of labour power is part and parcel of the capitalist system. It cannot be overcome by legislation, forms of conciliation or arbitration or any other means, no matter who prescribed them or brings them into being.

It is the action of workers and their trade unions that are decisive. The only way workers can counter and overcome the impact of inflation is through united and militant struggle in their trade unions for higher real wages and other benefits. That struggle never lets up under capitalism.

Guardian
Australian communist
weekly



• Engels and Marx in London.

tration of capital and growth of large monopolies, prices can be fixed by manipulation and the formation of cartels.

Under monopoly capitalism there is a tendency for prices to continually rise. When free competition capitalism was dominant, this did not happen.

Supply and demand still operates, but to a lesser extent. Who could forget the \$12 iceberg lettuces during the Queensland floods, the pandemic, and fertiliser shortages! Supply could not meet demand, so

inance that dwarfs industries such as banking and supermarkets. The Big Four banks command more than 70 per cent of the total market share in the country's financial sector.

These corporations make monopoly profits pushing prices to the limits that markets will bear. In the case of Qantas, the number of seats was restricted placing pressure on demand. They collude to control prices and supply.

Prices are determined, irrespective of wage levels, by market

tralia (RBA) interest rate hikes aimed at shrinking the economy (real value of household income) lead to recession.

Although prices rise, and while monopoly capital is making record profit, Marx and Engels argued that eventually all the excesses of capitalism never end well. They claimed that just as profits for monopolists rise, historical evidence showed that the rate of profit will eventually fall. Most serious economists agree that this tendency exists. Marxists interpret the solution

of capitalist expansion.

Marx and Engels always stressed the fact that economics only makes sense from the ground up. People and labour are the building blocks of their analysis of capitalism. The problem with monopoly capitalism is not just that it is monopolistic (socialist systems can also be monopolistic in a different way, as in public-owned monopoly of transport, post, healthcare, education, social needs), but rather that it affects labour, and destroys livelihoods. In Austral-

The Lebanese city Israel destroyed

by Daria Aslamova
in Nabatieh

We are following an ambulance through the completely deserted city of Nabatieh, where only a few families remain. The city has been completely destroyed. We are going to the city centre to film what has been left of it. We are following rescuers to have at least some hope that we are not going to be bombed.

We have one minute to film the ruins as explosions may take place at any moment. I am probably the only journalist in Nabatieh, an ancient city that Israel has completely destroyed. Rescuers risk their lives every day just to pull people out from under the rubble. The situation here is utterly catastrophic.

Rescuers are covering us up in a hope that a Red Cross crew will not be bombed. Yet, they bomb ambulance vehicles and make no exceptions – they bomb absolutely everything.



• Battling the flames in the ruins of Nabatieh.

This used to be a flourishing city, the heart of the south. The border where the fierce fighting is taking place is literally 15–20 kilometres away. As we drive through the streets, we can see that the entire city has been completely destroyed, there are ruins all around.

The tactics that Israel is using in Lebanon are reminiscent of the tactics used in the Gaza Strip. Israel demolishes whole cities to the ground and displaces everyone living there. More than a quarter of the population of Lebanon are already refugees who have lost everything. They flee to the north only to be bombed again. About half a million Lebanese have fled to Syria.

This is a major humanitarian, social and military catastrophe of horrific proportions. Lebanon does not have its own air defences; they have nothing to fight back with. The people of Lebanon are defenceless against Israeli missiles.

Pravda.ru

Britain's hand in the Ukraine war

The full-fledged war in Ukraine has been ongoing for more than 1,000 days. According to various estimates, the Ukrainian army has lost almost a million soldiers killed or wounded, and around 15 million people have fled the country. The national debt has grown to about \$14 billion. A third of Ukraine's entire energy system has been destroyed.

One of the coldest winters is coming to the country, while the military is retreating. The Ukrainian

army is dependent on Western supplies. Meanwhile, the amount of destroyed NATO equipment has reached more than 7,000 units. Russian forces have destroyed at least one example of each type of the glorified Western weapons.

Zelensky's ruined the country and sold its sovereignty but he still refuses to negotiate. Kiev's foreign patrons will not allow the bloodshed to end.

One of the leading roles is played by Britain. The British government first forced Kiev to sabotage the Istanbul agreements and then ordered Zelen-

sky to legally prohibit any negotiations. The British military is behind numerous Ukrainian military operations that escalated and prolonged the hostilities. One of them was the bloody landing on the eastern bank of the Dnieper River in 2023. The Ukrainian media revealed that the UK inspired and co-ordinated the landing in Krynk. The British military oversaw the creation of the Ukrainian Marine Corps. Special Boat Service commandos advised and supplied Ukraine. London demanded that they cross the Dnieper immediately

after the destruction of the Kakhovskaya hydro-power plant. The British thought that the breakthrough would allow the Ukrainians to first gain a foothold and then advance towards Crimea. The Russian army thwarted their plan. After prolonged battles, the Ukrainians retreated with heavy losses.

London is waging war with Ukrainian hands. The British are fans of landing operations, and Ukrainians are their guinea pigs, used to update their manuals in a modern warfare mode.

The *Grayzone* news website exposed the leaks revealing that top UK mil-

itary figures plotted to escalate and prolong the Ukraine proxy war at all costs.

'Project Alchemy' was created by Lieut-General Charlie Stickland under the leadership of the Ministry of Defence in London in the first days of the war. It is aimed at engineering a long, grinding war through covert operations involving the maximum number of NATO countries in the conflict. It was behind numerous operations, including the attack on the Crimean Bridge, attacks on the Black Sea Fleet, loud

propaganda provocations, the sabotage of the "grain deal" and so on. They were covertly training 'Gladio'-style stay-behind units in Ukraine and grooming the British public for a drop in living standards caused by the proxy war against Russia. All its operations are sponsored and controlled by the British government. In their wildest dreams they saw the collapse of the Russian Federation and the weakening of Europe. But when the Kiev regime loses, their names will be heard at the new Nuremberg.

South Front