

## Gaza prevails against Genocide!

by our Arab Affairs correspondent

The Gaza truce is holding as Palestinian prisoners are freed and Israeli captives go home. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians return to scenes of death and destruction in the north of the Gaza Strip. Israel bans the UN relief agency that has provided vital humanitarian aid to the Palestinian refugees since 1949. Donald Trump repeats his call for the forced relocation of Palestinians from the war-torn Gaza Strip to Egypt and Jordan. And Zionist settlers who fled attacks by the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah during the war refuse to return to their settlements in northern Israel amid fears of another round of fighting following continued Israeli violations of the agreement that ended the conflict.

Israel officially cut ties with the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) last week, a move which will jeopardise the delivery



of critical services after 15 months of the war on Gaza. Under the ban, UNRWA will no longer be permitted to operate on occupied Palestinian soil, and all contact between the agency and Israeli officials will be prohibited.

UNRWA was created in 1949 to provide relief, health and education services for the Palestinian Arabs who lost their homes and livelihoods during the Arab-Israeli wars following the establishment of the Zionist entity in 1948. UNRWA supports around six million Palestinian refugees within and outside Palestine, providing services such as schools, primary health centres and other social services.

The Zionists repeatedly accused it of undermining Israel's security and claim UNRWA employees were involved in the devastating resistance attack of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

A UN report on the agency's activities refuted these claims however, indicating that the Israeli occupation was yet to provide any evidence linking UNRWA employees to "terrorist activities".

Meanwhile Trump doubles down on his desire to ethnically cleanse the beleaguered Palestinian enclave. He told reporters on Monday that: "When you look at the Gaza Strip, it's been hell for so many years... There have been various civilisations on that strip. It didn't start here. It started thousands of years before, and there's always been violence associated with it. You could get people living in areas that are a lot safer and maybe a lot better and maybe a lot more comfortable." Asked if this means he no longer believes in a two-state solution, Trump avoided answering directly, saying he'd discuss

the issue with Benjamin Netanyahu when the Israeli leader comes to meet him in Washington.

Egypt, Jordan and the Palestine government that runs the "autonomous" zones in the occupied West Bank have all come out strongly against Trump's displacement idea, saying that Palestinians should be allowed to remain in Gaza, where members of Israel's far-right government have been calling to re-establish Zionist settlements and calling for the "voluntary migration" of Palestinians from the enclave. It has also been denounced by the Israeli communists and the communist-led Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Hadash).

"The return home in north-

ern Gaza of tens of thousands of Palestinians is the real answer to Trump's forced displacement wishes," says Aida Touma-Sliman, a Hadash MP in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament. "By proposing the mass expulsion of Gazans, Trump is realising the settlers' vision of ethnic cleansing. This is a catastrophic proposal and a war crime. It must be resisted by the entire international community – especially by the Arab regimes that are floated as destinations for transfer. Trump doesn't understand that a people that survived 470 days of destruction on their land will not surrender to transfer. Gaza is Palestinian, and it must be reconstructed by and for its people."

### FUND

This week's postbag contained £569 for the January appeal, including £50 from a Yorkshire comrade, a tenner from another in Hereford and another £50 from a pillar of the fighting fund in Essex. The fighting fund now stands at £1,632. Our target is £3,500, so we've still got a mountain to climb and only one more campaigning week to do it.

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# THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

## Never Again!

The slogan used by liberated prisoners at the Buchenwald concentration camp to denounce Nazism is always recalled on 27<sup>th</sup> January, now known as Holocaust Day. That was the day in 1945 when the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz was liberated by Soviet troops advancing into the Third Reich.

Millions, including some six million Jews, suffered and died in that unspeakable horror. And this year, on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its liberation, King Charles joined world and religious leaders to mourn those who perished in Nazi death camps to pledge that future generations must never allow the horrors of the Holocaust to be forgotten or repeated. But the role of the Soviet Union that liberated Auschwitz is being deliberately ignored by the imperialists and their lackeys who use Holocaust Day to justify their own moral bankruptcy.

The decision to exclude Russia from Auschwitz's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorations sends a troubling message to the world about the value of historical truth. When we start erasing inconvenient aspects of history to suit present-day narratives we lose sight of the lessons that history teaches us. The Holocaust and the broader atrocities of the Second World War were enabled by dehumanisation, propaganda and the denial of reality. To combat these forces in our time we must commit to an honest reckoning with the past even when it is uncomfortable.

Selective amnesia is dangerous. The Second World War was a global conflict which required immense sacrifices from the Allied Powers that combined to defeat Nazi Germany and its Axis allies. But no country paid a higher price than the USSR. Over 27 million Soviet citizens died in the war including 8.7 million battlefield losses. To erase or diminish that contribution is to distort the historical record and risk undermining the shared understanding that has underpinned the post-war international order.

It is undoubtedly true that the Holocaust was perpetrated in a climate of anti-Semitism and abhorrent racism deliberately fostered by the Nazis and the German ruling class. The Nazis didn't invent anti-Semitism but they stoked it up and fanned the flames to make pogroms seem respectable and even 'patriotic'. But it was not the existence of racist ideas on their own that led to Nazism and the "final solution" but the ruling class of finance capitalists, which wanted war and territorial expansion.

It was this class that used the Nazis to advance its aims and which systematically elevated racism – and particularly anti-Semitism – in order to find an excuse for wholesale theft, super exploitation and war to provide a convenient internal enemy on which the attention of the people could be focused.

The Nazis said the Jews were to blame for people's ills. They said that it was the Jews who bled the country dry. They claimed that the Jews were the enemies of the Germans and the entire human race. These lies were told in order to conceal the real exploiters and parasites – the capitalist class as a whole. It ensured that capitalism was not blamed while millions of innocent Jews, most of whom were working class, were persecuted.

The leading German bankers, manufacturers and other big capitalists made a great deal of money from the war itself, and from forced labour and the camp system in general. They survived the fall of the Third Reich largely unscathed and some of their successors are still leaders in the field today.

Yes, we should all learn from the Holocaust. We should learn to struggle against every form of racism. But we should also learn that it was capitalism that backed Hitler, it is capitalism which resorts to unleashing fascism when it cannot rule in the old way and it was capitalism which created the gas chambers of Auschwitz – these are the lessons of history.

# Trump land grab rejected

by Yang Sheng and Liu Xin

**Panama says that its sovereignty is non-negotiable and Denmark says Greenland is not for sale after US President Donald Trump refused to rule out military or economic coercion to gain control over the Panama Canal and Greenland. Trump also says he's going to rename the Gulf of Mexico the "Gulf of America", a name he said has a "beautiful ring to it".**

Trump's suggestion that the USA might reclaim the Panama Canal – potentially by force – unsettled Panamanians, who used to live with the presence of the US military in the Canal Zone and were invaded by American forces once before.

Panama's foreign minister, Javier Martínez-Acha, made his country's position clear at a news conference hours after the American president mused aloud about retaking the canal, which the USA built but turned over to Panama in the late 1990s.

"The sovereignty of our canal is non-negotiable and is part of our history of struggle and an irreversible conquest," Martínez-Acha said. "Let it be clear: The canal belongs to the Panamanians and it will continue to be that way."

Asked at a press conference at his Florida resort whether he could assure the world he would not use military or economic coercion as he tries to gain control of the Panama Canal and Greenland, Trump said: "No, I can't assure you on either of those two. But I can say this, we need them for economic security."

Trump also suggested he would impose tariffs on Denmark if it resists his offer to purchase Greenland, which he said is vital to US national security. Shortly before Trump's comments, his son arrived in Greenland for a visit.

When asked about Trump Jr's visit to Greenland, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen told Danish TV that "Greenland belongs to the Greenlanders" and that only the local population could determine their future. She agreed that "Greenland is not for sale" but stressed Denmark needed close cooperation with

the USA, a NATO ally.

The Danish king has shocked some historians by changing the royal coat of arms to feature Greenland and the Faroe Islands more prominently – in what has also been seen as a rebuke to Donald Trump. In his first new year speech, the king said: "We are all united and each of us committed for the kingdom of Denmark. From the Danish minority in South Schleswig – which is even situated outside the kingdom – and all the way to Greenland. We belong together."

Earlier in the month Trump Jr arrived in snowy Greenland on his father's Trump Force One private plane, the latest sign of the president's desire to take ownership of the vast Arctic island. But if the Danish king's latest move is anything to go by, the USA has a fight on its hands.

In addition to Greenland and the Panama Canal, Trump has set his eyes on Canada many times. Trump reacted to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's resignation in a Truth Social post on Tuesday, stating: "Many people in Canada LOVE being the 51<sup>st</sup> State. The United States can no longer suffer the massive Trade Deficits and Subsidies that Canada needs to stay afloat. Justin Trudeau knew this, and resigned."

Trudeau dismissed a suggestion by Trump that he might use "economic force" to make Canada the 51<sup>st</sup> US state. "There isn't a snowball's chance in hell that Canada would become part of the United States," he said. And Ontario Premier Doug Ford countered Trump's proposal by making an offer to purchase two neighbouring US states. "To the president, I'll make him a

counter-offer. How about if we buy Alaska? And we'll throw in Minnesota and Minneapolis at the same time?" Ford said. "You know, it's not realistic."

Diao Daming, a professor at the Renmin University of China in Beijing, says that: "Trump aspires to leave a legacy as a president who made a unique contribution to the USA. It's now hard for him to make big changes in terms of both internal reform or foreign affairs, so seizing more territories for the USA could be an option, aligning with his 'America First' ideology and appealing to his penchant for bold, attention-grabbing actions."

All these territories possess significant strategic value, but the problem is the USA has no sovereign disputes with Panama, Canada or Denmark, and if the new US administration tries to annex these lands with military or economic threats, this would set a dangerous precedent for the world's sole superpower to disregard international laws and norms, Diao said. "This would be extremely unfair for the countries like Denmark, Panama and Canada, and the global order and the international system would be deeply interrupted and fall into greater chaos."

Earlier, Trump posted a video of his private plane landing in Nuuk, the Arctic territory's capital, in a landscape of snow-capped peaks and fjords. "Don Jr and my Reps landing in Greenland," Trump wrote. "The reception has been great. They, and the Free World, need safety, security, strength, and PEACE! This is a deal that must happen. MAGA. MAKE GREENLAND GREAT AGAIN!"

*Global Times*





## Workers' Notes

by New Worker correspondent

**The Starmer Government's Employment Rights Act is presently going through the Committee stage in the House of Commons, which is where the detail gets worked out after having been approved in principle. It has come under scrutiny by none other than Lord John Hendy KC, at the Anjou Lunch Club, earlier this month.**

Hendy has long been active in this field starting with the miners' strike of 1984-5 and the Wapping dispute with Rupert Murdoch's News International in 1986. Being a mate of Jeremy Corbyn saw him getting promoted to the red benches.

Hendy takes an unsurprisingly dim view of the measure. It is clearly very far from what Labour claim is "the biggest upgrade of workers' rights for a generation" and while it might be the first serious overhaul of workers' and union rights for 50 years, this Bill "almost completely fails to do the minimum necessary to redress the balance". A particularly serious matter as Hendy thinks this is "a unique opportunity – probably the only one in our lifetimes – to reform the law at work".

He points out that at present nearly 38 per cent of those on universal benefits are actually in work with almost a million in poverty with households where someone is working, a clear result of the present weakness of trade unionism.

This weakness is reflected in the bald statistics that tell us that the coverage of collective bargaining has fallen from over 80 per cent between 1945 and 1980 and is now down to quarter. Peak union membership of 13.5 million in 1979 is less than half that today.

He points out that there were six Acts of Parliament between 1982 and 1992, attacking unions and the concept of collectivism in gener-

al. Two specific aspects of this neo-liberal offensive were the removal from the conciliation service ACAS of the right to promote collective bargaining. In addition "the Ministry of Labour was eroded into non-existence".

In 2021 the then opposition Labour party promised great things. The *New Deal for Working People* emerged. This was shaped by Andy McDonald, the Middlesbrough MP. Tellingly he is still a backbench MP and not even a humble junior minister.

The original version included goodies such as Fair Pay Agreements to be negotiated through sectoral collective bargaining in order to reverse the decades-long of decline in collective bargaining. This would have seen worker and employer representatives sit down to negotiate Fair Pay Agreements that would establish binding minimum terms and conditions.

This was adopted at both the 2021 and 2022 Labour Party conferences, which Starmer applauded. In accordance with long-standing custom however, Labour Conference decisions are ditched whenever the leadership is worried about the *Daily Mail* denouncing them.

And so it came to pass: the commitment to restoring collective bargaining was dropped and the programme retitled *Make Work Pay* shortly before the election. The only part of the policy that remained in the Manifesto was a commitment to "establishing a new Fair Pay Agreement in the adult social care sector", collective bargaining for other sectors vanished like snow off a dyke.

Even here the Bill is very weak. Hendy notes that while it plans to establish an Adult Social Care Negotiating Body and a School Support Staff Negotiating Body, these bodies do not constitute collective bargaining. This is due to the fact that "so many aspects of the arrangements are not determined bilaterally by the negotiating parties but by the

Bill or by regulations made by the Secretary of State under it, regardless of the wishes of the parties".

In other words, the unions have simply been ignored. What a surprise.

Hendy points out that "there are problems with almost every aspect of the Bill. Clearly, the Bill needs amendment if we are to improve living standards, fulfil our international legal obligations to encourage and promote collective bargaining, and re-empower unions on behalf of workers."

Perhaps over-optimistically, he thinks that improvements to the Bill can be made. "The game is not lost, but it is getting more urgent," he said, but also added that business is lobbying for very different objectives. Already "the comprehensive industrial relations reforms of the *New Deal for Working People* have been filleted in this Bill, the guts ripped out".

Worse "there is no obvious sense of urgency on the union side to insist on the New Deal, repeal Thatcher's anti-union laws and restore to unions the legal space in which they can again effectively defend and improve the lives of those who work". Gosh, who would have guessed that union biggies have no more liking for bolshie workers than the bosses.

Hendy observes that neither himself nor Professor Keith Ewing, another expert, nor any other progressive employment law expert has been consulted. He laments that it has been impossible to see who has been giving the Government advice, but suspects it is lawyers paid for by bosses. How could he be so cynical?

### The Fine Print

To return in more detail to the limited negotiating bodies for social care and school staff, it is clear they will have very restrictive remit. The Secretary of State will choose the

third-party representatives who hold the balance between workers and bosses. The Bill lays down very limited subjects negotiating bodies can touch, and the Minister will have the final say in the event of stalemate. It also tightly defines the concept of "social care worker" to include only those employed in regulated social care services, or employed directly by the individuals they assist, thus omitting those "self-employed" or in the gig economy.

While it allows for unions to access workers on employers' premises it has a cunning cop-out to exclude any part of the workplace "used as a dwelling". As care home are exactly that, this can exclude access to all parts of a care home except parts used exclusively by non-resident staff. The Bill explicitly limits discussion to approved topics, to such matters as diversity and inclusion, health and safety, the deployment of new technologies, and with no mention of actual wages.

We now turn to specific aspects of the Bill. First the important question of union recognition. The statutory Central Arbitration Committee (CAC) is supposed to declare for recognition in the face of employer opposition if unions can demonstrate sufficient levels of support. That sounds reasonable, but industrial relations are not always a game of cricket. Over the last 25 years since the rule was made the procedure has been a dead letter whenever employers take a tough stand, as at Amazon where the workforce was subjected to constant hostile propaganda and new workers brought in to dilute the workforce.

The new Bill makes only very minor changes to the rules on statutory recognition. At present applications for recognition are only admissible where the union has a membership of at least 10 per cent. The Bill allows for that threshold to be lowered by future legislation to any-

where between two and 10 per cent. The other minor change is to alter the threshold for recognition from a majority of those voting and at least 40 per cent of the workers to just an overall majority. Provisions for outlawing the dodgy practices employed by Amazon are tellingly vague. Electronic voting is essential to overcome such practices. Another barrier to union recognition is the problem of bogus self-employment. This has long been a major problem for the unions. It has been defined as "a situation in which a person registered as self-employed, a freelancer, or a temp is de facto an employee carrying out a professional activity under the authority and subordination of another company". This is a way for bosses to get around social welfare and employment legislation, allowing them to avoid employer's social security and income tax contributions.

The decision of the Supreme Court in December 2023 that food delivery riders were not to be regarded as workers, with the result that their union could not make an application for recognition, is something that must be reversed, according to the Institute of Employment Rights (IER) who also point out that the rule about existing non-independent 'staff associations' is an excuse for preventing the start of procedures to allow the recognition of proper trade unions.

The Bill has little to say about this however, and indeed only muddies the waters with the coexistence of several employment statuses (employee, limb-b worker, or self-employed). This will allow employers to continue using different legal devices and HR tactics to defeat employment status claims.

The IER fears the recent rise in employers' National Insurance contributions will only encourage bosses to look for loopholes to dodge their employment law and tax

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liabilities. The same body says the Bill (together with other relevant employment legislation) should be amended to provide a watertight definition to ensure that “All rights contained in the Bill should apply to workers defined as ‘any individual who is engaged by another to provide labour and is not, in the provision of that labour, genuinely operating a business on his or her own account’.”

## Zero-Hours

Another example of the watering down of Labour’s pre-election promises includes that which explicitly “will give working people security in their day-to-day lives – this involves banning exploitative zero hours contracts” with “An ongoing commitment to protect the integrity of these policies and that it ‘will put in place anti-avoidance measures where necessary’.” The icing on the cake was that “everyone” will have “the right to have a contract that reflects the number of hours they regularly work, based on a twelve-week reference period”.

Now that the election is safely out of way the Bill is slightly different. It requires the employers to offer “guaranteed” hours to only some

zero-hours and low-hours workers, these will reflect hours worked over a reference period, perhaps 12 weeks. The IER expects employers will probably try to use low – rather than zero- hours – contracts to get around the law as the concept of ‘low hours’ has not been defined. Another way around the rules won’t apply to some ‘temporary’ contracts, which may or may not apply to seasonal workers. Agency workers are clearly ignored. Nor is there anything to ensure workers are not bullied into refusing an offer of a guaranteed-hours contract.

The right to strike or take other industrial action without getting sacked is, of course, fundamental to workers. The Bill will abolish the 2023 Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act that was never implemented, and was disliked by most bosses, and it will largely but not completely repeal most of the Trade Union Act 2016. Despite explicit promises however, the more damaging 1982–1992 anti-union laws will be retained intact. Starmer’s Bill does not even comply with the UK’s international obligations to meet International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards. Britain has been in breach of the European Social Charter because “the scope for workers to defend their interests through lawful collective action was

**The Campaign for Trade Union Freedom is organising a major rally on the Employment Rights Bill on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2025 at the NEU headquarters, Hamilton House.**

**Speakers confirmed include Mick Lynch (RMT), Lord Hendy KC, Mick Whelan (ASLEF/TULO), Maryam Eslamdoust (TSSA), Prof Keith Ewing, Tabusam Ahmed (Unite London & Eastern Region),**

excessively circumscribed” by such means as the requirement to give notice about strike ballots, excessive periods of notice, while the protection of workers against dismissal when taking industrial action was inadequate. Nothing in the Bill addresses these matters. Labour’s earlier promise to “end the Conservatives’ scorched-earth approach to industrial relations” has been totally forgotten with solidarity and secondary action still effectively outlawed.

## Fire-and-Rehire

Fire-and-Rehire, has been widely denounced. When P&O sacked 800 workers in March 2022 even Boris Johnson promised legislative action to prevent it. As might be expected nothing was done and it is still easy to get away with so long as there is a “substantial reason” or a “sound business reason”.

The Bill has a section creating a new right to claim automatic unfair dismissal where the dismissal occurred

because an employee did not agree to vary their contract or is sacked and replaced by another employee or is re-employed on worse terms.

It does not outlaw the practice entirely by allowing bosses to argue that they had to do so in order to remain in business. Any clever accountant will be able to show that it was dire necessity. The only differ-

ence is that bosses now have to argue their case. It even allows the P&O case to be repeated by not addressing the fact that workers were sacked without any alternative and replaced by agency workers.

Also lacking is a much-needed mechanism for workers to seek a speedy remedy in such cases. Long drawn out cases only benefit lawyers.

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## 28<sup>th</sup> January 2005

*A CONTROVERSIAL Government plan to close all 46 fire control centres in England and replace them with nine new control rooms runs “a very high risk” of “total project failure” according to a confidential report to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister that was leaked to the Fire Brigade Union.*

*The FBU says this risk is made higher by the Government’s under-estimate of how much the proposed technology for the new centres is likely to increase in price.*

*The union has conducted its own research – based on other Government private sector IT projects – and claims*

*the knock-on effect from the probable extra costs of the IT system will severely affect the whole service.*

*The leaked Government report warns of cuts in fire services and massive job cuts leading to cuts in the fire service, lives in danger and increases in council tax.*

*The job cuts will be between 600 and 1,500 full-time staff. A brand-new London control centre may have to move at a cost of £13 million.*

*Local Government minister Nick Raynsford accused the union of being “irresponsible” and raising public alarm at the ODPM report and accused the FBU of quoting from it selectively.*

*The report says that the private sector will have a big role in providing the nine control rooms, which will be “based on a Company Limited by Shares, or a Company Limited by Guarantee”, although they will stay under fire service control.*

*The private sector will provide the new buildings under an expensive rental agreement known as a Private*

*Developer Scheme, which will eat up nearly a quarter of the annual operating costs.*

*The private sector will also supply the technology under a separate contract estimated currently at £754 million. If they stay within budget this would lead savings of £90,000 over a decade for each fire authority.*

*But the FBU’s own research showed that the £754 million needed for the new control rooms could easily exceed the £1 billion mark, resulting in cuts to frontline services and increases in council tax. The Government’s “worst-case” financial scenario for the project is a cost over-run of only £107 million, or around 12 per cent, unfeasibly low when compared with the Government’s track record in other projects.*

*The union’s research is based on numerous official reports on Government IT projects, which nearly always suffer delays or cost over-runs.*



# 2025: What to expect?

by Timothy Bancroft-Hinchey

Alexander Pushkin once said “ecstasy is a glass full of tea and a piece of sugar in the mouth”.

The glass, full, the external image visible to all. The sugar, hidden inside the mouth, the power within us to sweeten the tea, make our contribution, make a difference, shape the future.

As a commentator on geopolitical events over the last few decades, I bind myself to two self-imposed rules: Firstly, not to write or speak before I have read and listened widely and feel secure that what I write or say is the truth. Curiously, Pravda, in Russian, means “truth”. And here I am again, trying to see all sides of a story.

Secondly, I believe in decency, which means not attacking people when they are down or unable to defend themselves. So, no comment here on President Biden. So in this light, what do I have to say about 2025?

I am not going to concentrate solely on America and the change of President/Government because as far as I am concerned, Washington’s jurisdiction starts and ends where the borders of the USA start and end. This does not include Africa, Russia, Panama, Greenland or Canada.

That said, there are some disturbing comments and acts by President Donald Trump and the new boy on the block, Elon Musk, which need addressing. First off, both of them have the right to say what they want, however what they say, in their positions, frames the public perception of them.

Donald Trump may be excused for using the buzzwords “Leader of the Free World” because there are old Anglo-Saxon chimeras about Lebensraum (living room), Wandern (Wandering overseas) and in more modern times, Führer. However, saying the USA needs Greenland



to protect the ‘free world’ needs a logic check. Anyway he is not my leader, I didn’t vote for him. And what does ‘free world’ mean for people unable to go out and buy a loaf of bread for fear of being attacked by a druggie? How free is that?

Firstly, the status of Greenland under international law, is that of an autonomous territory of the Kingdom of Denmark. As such, it is part of the European Union. Unfortunately, international law went by the wayside in Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya and in Syria, where terrorists were supported by Western powers and international law was flouted.

Under international law, the only legal justification for military action against a sovereign state is under the terms of Article 51 of Part 7 of the UN Charter: “nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence...”

Neither Greenland, nor Canada, nor Panama are shelling US citizens, none of these countries are importing weapons systems hostile to the USA, none of them are committing massacres against US citizens, or people of US origin living in these countries, none of these countries have battalions strutting around in swastikas chanting “Death to Americans and Jews” and so

there is no possible argument to proffer as to the right to self-defence.

Panama is an independent state and has the right to engage companies from wherever it chooses to manage all or parts of the Canal, and the Head of State of Canada is the King of the United Kingdom, Charles III.

It is difficult to imagine that Donald Trump, being an intelligent and experienced player on the world stage, and arguably a better candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize than Barack “Obomber” Obama was, is serious in making such ridiculous claims. If he is, the notion arises that he is launching a reality-show style of leadership. But let us remember, for now, his speech was political and how many of a politician’s claims come to be is another matter.

As regards Elon Musk, again, it is difficult to imagine how a highly intelligent and successful businessman, pioneer and scientist can involve himself so brazenly with far-right political movements in Europe, a continent he is not from and from which he does not hold any rights of citizenship. In Europe, the pervading idea is “Mind your own business” or “What the...?”.

The world today does not need more violence. We have enough already, we have enough provocations, hy-

pocrisy, enough of the military-industrial complex using NATO as the cutting edge of the policies of the BARFFED (Banking, Arms, Resources, Finance, Food, Energy and Drugs lobbies). These have given us the world we see around us, one in which natural resources are being used faster than they are replaced, one in which the human species is showing a total lack of respect for the animals and plants we are supposed to share our home with.

The world we live in is one in which companies make more out of war than out of peace and indeed, provoke wars to sell weapons to murder families to get rich. It is a world facing huge challenges created in part by human-induced climate change and 100 per cent by human-created pollution from the bottom of the seas up into space.

The challenges we face demand a new approach, one called for time and time again in the Bible, the Quran, the Vedic books...those of us who have sat down and read these books from cover to cover, as I have, understand that humankind moves two steps forward, one step back, sometimes more, a repeated cycle of failure to come together and move forward as one.

The challenges we face today demand:

a) A peace conference

- b) Development and education over deployment of troops
- c) Respect for the environment
- d) Answers to questions posed by the digital age

It is easy to take sides in a military conflict. All you have to do is arbitrarily draw a timeline, view all events from that line forwards, ignore the root causes of the conflict and play the blame game. Those who are incapable of seeing the whole story, I do not engage with because I do not have the inclination or the time to waste. Those mature ones who have done the background reading, I am prepared to discuss with. The newspapers speak of two conflicts. The Middle East and nobody has found a solution. The other is, of course, Ukraine, which has highlighted the fact that the West hates Russia and always has done. I have been saying this for decades, now finally the penny has dropped. Perhaps.

I have written much about the latter on here and continue to lament the loss of life on either side, understanding that nobody likes to be invaded and families do not like losing loved ones, quite obviously. But that goes for all sides, and people do not like being massacred, treated as sub-humans, derided as pigs, called under-men and suffer death threats and pogroms, which is what started this whole thing off. Perhaps if people had listened to Russia, perhaps if the USA had allowed Ukraine to implement the terms of the Minsk Agreements, which would have kept Ukraine intact...but as Moscow says, this was not of President Trump’s doing and now that President Biden has gone, I am going to say no more.

Bottom line: Sit down and listen and this goes for the Middle East also. How can allowing Israel to build colonies on lands that it has stolen be

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constructive to creating peace? And if Israel's argument is that the Palestinian lands belong to it as war spoils, then they cannot complain if eventually someone takes their land, as war spoils. Today, Israel can rely on superior technology. Today. And tomorrow? The day will come when the bully gets a bloody nose, and probably without any friends to run crying to. Solution? Peace conference, two-state solution. Confidence building, peace and reconciliation. It is not hard, if you try.

And the same goes for the many other conflicts around the world that do not reach the

news because they are in far-off, hot and dark places. We need an international peace conference, these things have been happening and brokering the peace since the end of the Thirty Years War in the 1640s.

That said, we need the UN to be respected, we need to remember that without weapons there are no wars, so who is selling weapons and why? And where are India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Iran, Nigeria, South Africa, Brazil, Spain, Mexico in the Security Council? The UK has the veto but India does not? France has but Brazil has not?

Just the NATO countries' collective military spending per annum is

one point two trillion dollars, enough to end poverty worldwide in one single year. Think about it. Develop the less developed countries and you solve the immigration crisis, you attack marginalisation which breeds extremism and terrorism and those who make money from it. Add to this a fight against corruption, remembering that you need a corrupter to get someone corrupted.

It is true that human activity is not the only cause of global warming and climate change, it is cyclical. However, human activity quickens up the process. Indeed, we are using resources faster than they can be replenished, we are

cutting down forests and depriving the planet of clean air to breathe. Solution: Planting trees, adopting clean energy and remembering that drilling can cause earthquakes. Drill, baby, drill is followed by Quake, baby, quake. Watch this space.

Furthermore, we have polluted the planet from the bottom of the seas up to space. Either we fight a collective war against plastic and other pollution, or we suffocate by the year 2100.

Answers to questions posed by the digital age? They are many.

First, the destruction of chains of cognitive reasoning by wizzy, wunderbar one-touch solutions to problems,

without reasoning. This means young people are not trained to think things through based on precepts of 'if' and 'then'. Notice how common sense has disappeared today and with it, respect for any form of authority. It is becoming a 'take what you can' society and 'the hell with everyone else'. But it is a society and people have to live in it together.

So digital world, yes (it cannot be stopped) but remembering cognitive skills have to be nurtured to become human nature. And with this, a return to problem solving based on common sense and a wider view that takes the future into account.

Every day, thousands

of jobs are being lost. Jobs are families. Families are communities and communities are a society. Are our education systems coping with the new digital reality? Are the classrooms fundamentally different from what they were 50 years ago? Is the school programme that different? Are our welfare systems geared to fewer workers living longer lives? Who pays into the kitty? How does the kitty distribute social welfare benefits and pensions?

These are the problems facing us in 2025, and here we are looking at one another down the barrel of a gun or a green night-sight. Kinda pathetic, isn't it?

Pravda.ru

# The West can't always pressure the Global South

**Global Times reporter Wang Wenwen interviews Mahathir Mohamed, former prime minister of Malaysia, about the rise of the Global South and its global implications. As China-US rivalry intensifies in the Southeast Asian region, he also offers suggestions for how both countries can get along with each other in the future.**

by Global Times

**What do you think of the resurgence of the awakening of the Global South? How should the West view this change?**

This is a trend in the South. In the past, we had the Non-Aligned Movement, which was the third force where the world was divided into two camps. Both camps tried to get the support of the South, but the South had its own agenda as well as its own problems. So the South decided to set up the Non-Aligned Movement that was more political. But now it is more about economy. And the idea of the coming together

of the South is because there is always pressure in the economic field due to the conflicts between the East and West.

For example, when sanctions are placed against China, then the South suffers, because trade is obstructed. So the South should have equal power to reject decisions made by the North and have its own strength to counter what is done by the North. That is where it is necessary for the South to come together in order to be stronger.

I think the West must accept that they cannot always put pressure on the Global South, because the Global South

has got its own problems, and the Global South does not want to take sides with the East or the West. We want to be able to access both the East and West, because we are looking at trade. If we lose the East or West, then that will affect our growth, trade, economy and development.

Actually, the Global South is not fully formed yet. They are just coming together. It is important for them to have some kind of a council to consider actions taken by the North and how they deal with its actions.

**As the West-dominated world order faces**

**a historical loosening and the trend of building a new world order emerges, do you foresee a potential conflict in 2025?**

For some time after the end of the Cold War, the USA became the most powerful country in the world. But now it is being challenged. And the USA does not want to give way to China. They want to remain the dominant country in the world. There is an attempt by the West, basically the USA, to prevent China from challenging the West and becoming the Number One country in the world. We want people to stop confronting each other

and we don't want to see any single global power. They should realise that this world cannot be controlled by one country anymore. Now, the world is more internationalised. Therefore, things should be settled through an international organisation, not by any global power.

**How does the rise of the Global South contribute to a fairer and more just global order?**

We want a forum where everybody is treated equally. We show respect to organisations like the United Nations and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), where everybody should

be equal and have the same rights based on the democratic system of majority decision. But at this moment, we find that the veto power in the United Nations and the strength of the big powers in organisations like the WTO do not result in fair trade practices.

There is a lot of talk about globalisation, the abolishment of borders, and free trade. But there is no such thing. At the moment, there is no total globalisation. The world is divided into three factions – East, West and South. And big countries, for example, although they talk about free trade, consider themselves entitled to



impose sanctions. Sanctions mean there is no free trade. We should promote free trade and eliminate sanctions. The right of major powers to impose sanctions should be abolished. Instead, we should settle problems through international organisations, such as the United Nations and the WTO, where everybody is represented without the dominance of any superpower.

**US President Donald Trump has vowed an additional 10 per cent tariffs on Chinese goods. What do you think of such moves?**

The USA promotes free trade. But when the USA makes selective application of taxes for goods from any country, that means it is not practising free trade. Free trade means competition. It's difficult for the USA



**against the backdrop of the current changing international landscape?**

We should avoid what used to be called ‘gun-boat diplomacy’. Nowadays, it is not a gun-boat but battleships. That increases tension. We always have problems between countries. The best way to settle problems is to sit down around a table and discuss the problem. And to solve the problem, both sides must be prepared to make compromises. You cannot get 100 per cent of what you want. You have to give up some in order to let the other party also do the same so that it is a win-win situation and will sustain peace and good relations.

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to compete with China because China is a big market by itself. It has 1.4 billion people. So China is in a position to compete and succeed in world trade. The USA wants to maintain its dominance in world trade. But the cost in the USA is very high compared with China. So they feel that the only way to stop China is by imposing sanctions and increasing taxes. That is not fair. What should be done is that all countries should sit together and determine the level of tax that can be applied in order to mitigate the disparity in terms of cost.

**What lies ahead for China-US relations over the next four years? Do you see the Taiwan Straits as a potential flashpoint?**

When the USA purposely provokes China, the idea is to increase tension within China. When there is tension, then Taiwan needs to rearm. They have to buy weapons from the USA. And the USA makes money out of the supply of weapons.

America is the biggest producer of weapons, and it can only sell weapons if there is a war. Therefore, it tries to instigate wars between countries such as Ukraine and Russia and between Taiwan island and the Chinese mainland. So everywhere America goes, they are always provoking war. What needs to be done is to reduce the weapons trade, to reduce the manufacture of weapons and to control the exports of weapons, because this leads to war. And war is about killing people and destroying countries. We need to work for peace and trade fairly between countries.

**What are the implications of China-US relations for the Asia-Pacific region, especially Southeast Asia?**

You will remember that when the countries of Southeast Asia became independent, there was confrontation between many of the countries and there was even minor war. But the leaders of ASEAN countries decided that war does

not settle problems. So they came together, five countries came together and formed ASEAN. And since then, there have been no conflicts between ASEAN. There are differences but they don't go to war. We want to see peace in this area because only through peace can we develop.

But the USA is telling us that we should confront China. Some countries are affected by that. They want to see China blocked by the USA and even welcome the US Navy to come into the South China Sea. But generally, Malaysia, for example, doesn't want to have any conflict with China and we want to have good relations with China, because we feel that China is a great market for products from ASEAN and that helps with the growth of Malaysia. Tension in the South China Sea would obstruct trade between the ASEAN countries and China.

**What is your suggestion for China and the USA to get along with each other in the future**

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NCP Lit. PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ.  
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## LETTERS

## Dear Comrades

When as a young lad doing my *Daily Worker* round on the shop floor I never imagined that one day the paper would abandon what I regarded as a sharp political analysis, it's proud adherence to proletarian internationalism and it's essential role in educating and inspiring a new generation of comrades. The rot set in as the paper faithfully followed the CPGB revisionist line that abandoned socialism and adopted a social democratic position. It effectively severed its commitment to the working class and the class struggle as it adopted the nebulous title of the *Morning Star*.

Today the *Morning Star* is but a pale shadow of its much respected predecessor. Class struggle has been replaced by reformism. Proletarian internationalism has ceased to exist as the *Morning Star* aligns itself with the geo-political actions of imperialism in Ukraine, as outlined in Elijah Traven's much appreciated letter [NW:2281, 6 Dec 2024]. The betrayal of the people of Donbas is shocking. The *Morning Star* cultivates confusion and leaves its readers without a full understanding of important issues. Jumping on to populist bandwagons along with moaning and whinging are no substitute for a detailed Marxist analysis of events.

Regime change continues to be a top priority for US foreign policy, as it seeks to strengthen and expand its world hegemony with a strategy that pro-

vokes wars and conflicts from which it seeks to benefit. It is in these key areas that the *Morning Star* shows the true colours of the fake left. Instead of giving vital support to those states and people's resisting imperialist aggression, the *Morning Star* increasingly weakens the international class struggle. A battle, in which comrades are fighting for their lives, is often weakened by using vague or imaginary issues as a smokescreen for its betrayal.

The *New Worker* continues to stand by those workers who make great sacrifices in their struggle for freedom and independence. As a result we receive no advertising revenue, no sponsorship from the right-wing labour movement or donations from the super-rich. At home we encourage working people to stand up and fight for their rights. Internationally we champion Cuba and the DPR Korea while supporting the 'one China policy' and supporting all the many victims of imperialist aggression.

**John Maryon  
Suffolk**

## Dear Comrades

Good to see in the *Morning Star* of 10<sup>th</sup> January [NW:2284, 10 Jan 2025] the photograph of Genady Zyuganov, Russia's communist leader, paying tribute to the 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Josef Stalin, at the Kremlin Wall, by Lenin's Mausoleum, in the Russian capital.

There is no doubt that most of the reading material published here in the West about Stalin has been written unsurprisingly by those hostile to him, given their anti-Soviet and anti-communist bias. Writers such as Trotsky, Deutscher, EH Carr, Souvarine, etc, have all been equally inspired by the hatred of their subject. Their information can be somewhat interesting, yet

it is often of minimal value. It must always be treated with caution. Often, for instance, it is tendentious and unverifiable. If the rules of evidence, followed even in a bourgeois court of law, were applied, a large amount would be held inadmissible.

There is, however, striking evidence by Western academics of the almost wilful refusal by them to write about Stalin dispassionately. Judgements by these academics are so contrary to the facts as to be perverse, but sadly, they are all too representative of much that has been written about Stalin here in the West for numerous decades.

Moreover, attempts by bourgeois historians to 'understand' Stalin are usually strangled by 'ethical' principles and 'moral' indignation. They are also quite unwilling in general to admit that Stalin had any other purpose or indeed had abilities of any kind except cunning or ruthlessness, when he was in actual fact a political colossus, a truly exceptional leader and the main architect of the Soviet Union's huge military and economic might, leading to the remarkable achievement of the Soviet Union becoming a world super-power.

**A McKerl  
Fife**

## Dear Comrades

This year sees the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Labour's great victory in 1945. Labour's Manifesto for the 1945 General Election made clear that the party was a "socialist party and proud of it". The goal was, it said, to establish a "socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain".

Churchill tried to play on people's fears. Attlee would need "some sort of Gestapo" to implement his programme he told an incredulous populace in an infamous radio broadcast.

The public didn't buy

it however. They remembered the pre-war politicians who turned a blind eye to unemployment. And they noted how, once the Government had been forced to abandon non-intervention during the war, state action had produced positive results.

In the event Labour romped home, making 203 gains and securing 393 seats to the Tories 213. In the process they took 47.8 per cent of the vote and had a majority of 183 over all the other parties.

An early substantial achievement on the part of Labour was the creation of the NHS in 1946. Nye Bevan had seismic battles with the doctors. He did make concessions. He allowed private practice to continue for instance. Plus he allowed GPs to assume the role of self-employed contractors rather than employees. But despite these setbacks the principle of a service free to all at the point of delivery was retained (for the time being at least!).

A National Insurance Act was also passed in 1946. It created a comprehensive system of social insurance and was based largely on the Beveridge Report (published in December 1942). Plus there was the National Assistance Act (1948) for those who fell through the National Insurance net.

Legislation was also passed with regard to housing. Here Attlee's government faced real problems. There was a shortage of both labour and timber. And building companies were more concerned with repairing and improving homes in the private sector. Despite this, the 1945 Government built over a million homes.

**Alan Stewart  
Wakefield**

## Dear Comrades

It is very important to show clearly that the world com-

*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.

## UNTIL 25 APRIL

Wellcome Collection: *Hard Graft: Work, Health and Rights*. Free exhibition. 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE.

## UNTIL 15 JULY

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

## UNTIL 25 JUL

Working Class Movement Library: *Collectors, The Camera-man, The Poets and the Pits: Miners' Strike 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition*. Afternoons. WCML, 51 Crescent, Salford M5 4WX.

## SAT 1 FEB

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Annual General Meeting. 09:30–16:30, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1 4RL.

## SAT 1 FEB

Stand Up to Racism: Stop the Far Right: Oppose Tommy Robinson supporters. Demonstration, Central London. Details TBA.

## WED 5 FEB

Arise: Isaac Saney on his *Cuba, Africa, & Apartheid's End*: 18:30–20:00. Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU. Book on Eventbrite.

## THUR 6 FEB

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Protest against Sadler's Wells ties to Barclays. 19:00, Sadler's Wells East, Stratford Walk, Olympic Park, London E20 2AR.

## SAT 8 FEB

Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Latin America Conference. 10:00, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BB. Details and tickets at latinamericacommunity.co.uk

## SAT 8 FEB

Stand Up To Racism: Protest against racist Kay Hopkins. 16:00, St Michael & All Angels, 74–76 Leonard Street, Shoreditch, London EC2A 4QS.

## MON 10-SUN 16 FEB

Trades Union Congress: HeartUnions week. Nationwide events on TUC website.

## WED 12 FEB

Socialist History Society: Sheila Rowbotham on Writing about my Life. 19:00, Zoom meeting. Register on SHS website.

## THUR 13 FEB

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Nationwide day of action. Organise an event at your workplace for. Workplaces4Palestine

## TUE 18 FEB

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: Trump's second term: NATO, War and the Economy – international webinar. 18:00–

20:00. Register on CND website.

## THUR 20 FEB

Marx Memorial Library: Steve Silver on Anti-Fascism in the 1930s/40s. 19:00, Online event. Register on MML website.

## WED 5 MAR

Socialist History Society: Laleh Khalili on Imperial Politics in the Indian Ocean. 19:00, Zoom meeting. Register on SHS website.

## THUR 6 MAR

Marx Memorial Library: Rachel Holmes on Eleanor Marx on Clerkenwell Green. 18:00, in person. MML, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU. Book on MML website.

## SUN 16 MAR

Marx Memorial Library: Annual Marx Memorial Oration. 13:30, Highgate Cemetery, Swains Lane, London N6 6PJ.

## THUR 20 MAR

Marx Memorial Library: Mary Davis the Ford Dagenham Women's strike. 19:00, Online event. Book on MML website.

## SUN 23 MAR

Scottish Morning Star Supporters Spring Conference. Scottish TUC, 8 Landressy Street, Bridge-ton, Glasgow G40 1BP.

## THUR 27 MAR

Marx Memorial Library: Decolonising Education: learning for the Future. 18:00, Onsite and Online event. Book on MML website.

## THUR 3 APRIL

Socialist History Society: James Crossley on AL Morton: Life in the Radical Tradition. 19:00, Zoom meeting. Register on SHS website.

## MON 14-FRI 25 APRIL

Lakenheath Alliance for Peace: Camp protesting against US nuclear weapons returning to Britain. RAF Lakenheath, Brandon Road, Lakenheath, Brandon, Suffolk IP27 9PS.

## MONDAY 28 APRIL

Workers Memorial Day: See TUC website for nationwide local events.

## THUR 1 MAY

International Workers' Day. London rally: Assemble 12:00 for March to Trafalgar Square. See TUC and SUC websites for other events to 5 May.

## SAT 7 JUNE

Marx Memorial Library: Book-sale. 11:00 at Library.

## FRI 18-SUN 20 JULY

Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival: Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum, Dorchester Road, Tolpuddle, Dorset, DT2 7EH, Book on TTM website.

## SUN 7 SEPT

Burston Strike School: Annual Rally, Church Green, Burston, near Diss, Norfolk IP22 5TP.

The editor welcomes letters from our readers. If you have a contribution to make please make sure it reaches us before Wednesday.

You can send your letters to: PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ, or email party@NCP.clara.net



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...continued from page 8

munist movement has not all slipped into opportunism, unlike the parliamentary Greek or French and German parties.

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**Boris Trosinsky**  
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## Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

**Electoral politics have resumed with a quartet of local government by-elections. Two were held for bizarre reasons.**

In Shetland North, the Labour councillor resigned on the grounds that he never wanted to be a councillor but stood as paper candidate in 2022, never expecting to get elected, but secured a seat when only two other candidates submitted nomination papers in the three-member ward. This time round there was a contest resulting in a victory for an Independent who defeated a rival Independent 887-94 on a 39.4 per cent turnout.

Nevertheless, the most bizarre reason for a by-election was that at Edinburgh's Colinton & Fairmilehead ward, where two seats were up for grabs. One became vacant when the Liberal Democrat who won the seat from Labour in a November by-election resigned a week later after moving out of the area. The other was caused by SNP councillor Marco Biago resigning on securing a party job at Holyrood. He is the former MSP who, on being rejected as an SNP

parliamentary candidate in favour of Angus Robertson, famously said that members would "rather have a pompous impressionable idiot than me".

The present contest saw the Tory and Labour candidates secure victory, but only after eight and 13 counts respectively, due to the large number of Independents standing including one Bonnie Prince Bob, a well-known local artist. On a turnout of 31.9 per cent the Tories, came first, followed by Labour, Liberal-Democrat, Green and Reform in that order. The result does not alter the fact that Edinburgh has a minority Labour administration.

At the Bannockburn ward of Stirling Council the death of a Labour councillor triggered the contest, which was won by the SNP candidate whose triumph on a 17.6 turnout came after six counts to give him a majority of the votes. In the first preference votes Labour came a distant second just ahead of Reform UK. The result makes the SNP the largest party on the council, with nine members out of 23.

## A Flagship Sinks

The death of one of the flagship policies of the Scottish Government has been announced by Social Care Minister Maree Todd. This was Nicola Sturgeon's National Care Service plan policy that had been ill for some time, so the announcement was something of formality.

This plan was announced just after the COVID-19 pandemic. No less than £27 million has been spent on preparatory work.

The plan met with widespread opposition from public sector unions and even SNP-run councils. The former opposed what was basically a privatisation of social care,

while councils were opposed to losing control of one of their few remaining major responsibilities.

Although Todd announced she was dropping the first part of the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill, which would have established regional care boards reporting to ministers, it looks however, as though she is seeking to establish an advisory body instead.

Todd warned she will serve up a reheated version, saying: "I have concluded that we must deliver our Scottish National Care Service without legislating for structural reform, securing a different means to deliver our goals."

In a case of the pot calling the kettle black, Tory Health spokesman Dr Sandesh Gulhane, a GP, describes the SNP administration as "A shower of charlatans", adding that the announcement "amounts to flagship failure".

Labour's deputy leader Jackie Baillie said: "Scottish Labour welcomes the remaining provisions, but it's clear that the National Care Service is no more – what a waste of time and money without making a single improvement to social care or difference to Scots' lives."

After Todd's announcement, former health secretary Jeane 'Fag-Ash' Freeman expressed anger with the SNP dropping plans that were developed under her watch. "I feel angry. I feel dispirited because it is beyond my understanding how all of that support has been lost."

## Nationalist Woes

Meanwhile the SNP purge continues unabated.

Leader John Swinney is removing the last allies of former CEO Peter Murrell, including the party's long-serving senior lawyer, Scott Martin. The Chief Operating Officer, Sue

Ruddick, and seven others, who have all held top positions in the SNP during the Operation Branchform investigations have also departed.

According to the *Herald on Sunday*, a disgruntled member of staff told them: "It's chaos for the SNP right now. We have these long-serving staff leaving, Nicola and Peter divorcing, the police investigation still ongoing. It never ends."

Last November when the SNP announced plans to cut HQ jobs from 26 to 16 it seemed to be evidence that their membership has fallen more than admitted. The *Mail on Sunday* has had sight of a recent document by Treasurer Stuart McDonald which admits that "since peak membership in 2018/2019 numbers have approximately halved". In addition, "income in 2023 was down by almost 25 per cent compared to 2015 and it has continued to fall throughout 2024".

The SNP's membership is estimated to be around 60,000 – still the largest in Scotland but half that of its 2019 peak.

It remains solvent by HQ taking more from branches. The proportion of membership dues allocated to branches is being reduced from 25 to 15 per cent. SNP MSPs will now have to pay more of their salary into party coffers. They now have to cough up £3,900 or 4.3 per cent of their salaries, whichever is higher.

At the same time, the leadership is rewriting the party's constitution to make it more difficult for the rank-and-file to get rid of the leadership.

At present a potential leadership challenge needs 100 nominations from party members in not less than 20 branches.

A proposed new rule increases this to 1,500 signatures, or 2.5 per cent of the claimed membership. Incumbents will be exempt from needing to pass the

1,500 mark, giving them a flying start.

These changes will be debated at the next conference where they are almost certain to be passed thanks to the "payroll" vote, according to nationalist critics who point out it is now impossible to get that many at the annual conference.

The SNP might take comfort from the fact that over at Alba their two former MSPs, Kenny MacAskill and Ash Regan, are contending for the leadership. Both are equally convinced that they have the endorsement of their deceased leader, Alex Salmond.

MacAskill has the Salmond family's backing, but Regan's supporters claim that Salmond and MacAskill had a bust up over their late leader's alleged use of party funds and staff to organise his show at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2023. Salmond only narrowly persuaded MacAskill from standing down from the party's finance committee in protest at these goings on.

Perhaps the Society for Psychical Research could be called in to adjudicate on this matter once and for all.

Another solution can be found by giving the job to a leading Alba supporter presently desperate for a job: Tommy Sheridan.

The disgraced former leader of the Trotskyist Scottish Socialist Party, that once held six seats in the Holyrood parliament, has now qualified as a social worker (on top of his law degree). But he has had no luck in find work in these professions. He is presently suing Glasgow City Council for discrimination because they would not employ him as a social worker.

Sheridan claims, but the council disputes, that he has been blacklisted permanently because of his conviction in the famous perjury case against the *News of the World*. Such is life...



**Sadler's Wells:**

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**Protest at the opening night of Sadler's Wells East**

**Thurs 6 February, 7pm**  
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# Saying no to genocide!

by New Worker correspondent

On 27<sup>th</sup> January, International Holocaust Memorial Day, the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN), arranged an alternative memorial service outside the Polish embassy in London to call for the arrest of Israeli premier Benjamin Netanyahu, who was attending the official service at Auschwitz, the former Nazi death camp in Poland. The Polish government had already promised to ignore the ICC (International Criminal Court) arrest warrant issued against Netanyahu for potential war crimes.

Interestingly the Russians, who liberated Auschwitz, have not been invited to the official ceremony for some years, while German politicians, representing the country that committed the Holocaust, are honoured guests.

Two of the themes of the protest were education on other lesser acknowledged and unpunished

crimes and genocides and the misuse of the Nazi Holocaust to prevent criticism of Israel and its actions.

Stephen Kapos is a Jewish child Holocaust survivor. As a child, he wore the yellow star and avoided deportation from Budapest to the camps in 1945 by going into hiding. He was a long-standing Labour Party member, in the same local branch as Keir Starmer, until he was threatened with expulsion in 2023 for agreeing to address a Holocaust Memorial Day event that the Labour hierarchy disagreed with. So he resigned instead of being expelled.

Stephen has always supported the Palestinian cause and calls for the end of illegal occupations and since October 2023 he has spoken tirelessly for this cause; for a ceasefire, the end of weapons sales, and for the decisions of the ICC and ICJ to be implemented. He sees his Jewishness as central to his support for the Palestinians and spoke of his disgust at the Nazi Holocaust being used to



cover up and justify the ongoing slaughter in Palestine, and now Syria and Lebanon.

Clare Glasman, from disabled advocacy group WinVisible, spoke of how

the Nazi Holocaust began with the dehumanisation of the disabled and sick before moving on to other marginalised groups in society, and how the Aktion T4 Euthanasia Programme,

beginning in 1939, gassed disabled people in Germany years before the Final Solution and the extermination camps.

Other speakers from Rwanda, Vietnam and

Kenya spoke of more recent genocides from direct experience, and the need to use these crimes as examples to prevent them happening again. A speaker from Colombia covered the New World from the arrival of Columbus to the African slave trade.

One constant across the speakers was that what the Nazis did in Europe was not new. Western countries had behaved the same way in Africa, Asia and the Americas for centuries. What was new was bringing colonialism to Europe and treating Europeans in the same way as what was then seen as the 'lesser breeds'. Across the globe, bourgeois politicians are using divisive rhetoric and tactics to divide people and set them against each other, aided by the media. All speakers spoke of the importance of people and communities under attack to stand together and support each other, how Palestine is the crucial issue of our time and the need for international support and solidarity.

## Southampton stands up to the Kippers!

by Ben Soton

Last Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> January, thousands of Sotonians stood up to the far-right UKIP and its leader Nick Tenconi. Tenconi attempted to hold a march from the Bargate in the centre of the city to the Cenotaph about a mile further north. But a counter demonstration organised by Stand Up to Racism and supported by Southampton trades council and a number of other community groups made a mockery of this event.

The police stopped the counter-march from pro-

ceeding along Above Bar Street however, effectively

enabling a small UKIP rally to take place at the Ceno-

taph. Meanwhile members of the far-right outfit shout-

ed abuse at counter-demonstrators as they marched through the city. There was a protracted stand-off between anti-fascists and the Kippers around Watts Park, the site of the war memorial. Eventually both groups dispersed.

In recent years UKIP has transitioned from an anti-EU, populist party to one taking a more overtly fascist stand. UKIP calls for mass deportations and is using the recent murders in Southport to spread racial hatred.





# Trump 2.0 terrorises migrant workers

by Otis Grotewohl

Upon being sworn in on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025, President Donald Trump abruptly unleashed racist attacks against undocumented workers and migrant families.

Trump used the inaugural address as a forum for his assault. In his speech, he threatened to pass “a series of historic executive orders” aimed at targeting migrant workers and their families. At one point, Trump threatened to invoke the use of the archaic “Alien Enemies Act” of 1798 as a tool for mass deportations.

## Day one: executive orders against migrants

Trump reportedly signed more executive orders on the first day of his second administration than any previous American president. Many of the executive orders focused on immigration.

Among the various actions was declaring “a national emergency” to increase military presence at the border with Mexico, suspending asylum and the US Refugee Admissions Program and restarting the border wall construction. Trump also made promises to “dismantle” all the previous Biden administration’s immigration policies and programmes.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) units made sweeping arrests across the USA overnight. The president’s executive orders now allow ICE agents to conduct raids



in public places that were previously off-limits, such as schools, hospitals and places of worship.

Immigrants who come from Haiti, Africa or Latin American countries are targeted and abused by ICE officials and agents, as well as by racist, armed MAGA militias such as the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers. Due to rampant homophobia and transphobia, LGBT migrants are particularly vulnerable to vile mistreatment by these government and neo-fascist forces.

One executive order that is facing major push-back is the new administration’s attempt to overturn “birthright citizenship”. In signing the controversial order, Trump brazenly defied the bourgeois US Constitution by directing government agencies to no longer recognise the citizenship of children born in the USA.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution reads “all persons born or naturalised

in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside”.

As of this writing, state officials in at least 20 states, along with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), have filed lawsuits challenging the plan to reverse birthright citizenship. US District Court Judge John C Coughenon in Seattle temporarily blocked the order on 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

## Ruling class strategy: Deception, fear and division

The US ruling class has spread lies and misinformation about immigrants for centuries. Anti-migrant propaganda is commonly pushed by capitalist rulers

and fascist demagogues to instil fear and sow division within the working class.

One big lie that is often spread is the false association of immigration with “crime”. This xenophobic narrative has been weaponised against immigrant workers for centuries and was commonly used as propaganda against Catholic immigrants in the early 1900s. Bigoted politicians, the capitalist state apparatus and the corporate media have historically linked immigration and crime to serve their own agenda.

In fact, a 2019 report conducted by the conservative CATO Institute admitted that “undocumented immigrants were 37.1 per cent less likely to be convicted of a crime”.

A more recent study released by the US Department of Justice’s National Institute of Justice office determined that “undocumented immigrants are arrested at less than half the rate of native-born US cit-

izens for violent and drug crimes and a quarter the rate of [US]-born citizens for property crimes”.

Another lie that is often peddled is the incorrect concept that undocumented workers somehow “threaten” job security of other workers. This notion is a blatant attempt to pit working and oppressed people against one another. It is bosses, and not migrant workers, who hire, fire, evaluate and lay off employees.

Undocumented workers are often subjected to the most dangerous and low-paying jobs. Additionally, they pay billions of dollars in taxes each year for government services they cannot legally receive.

According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy: “More than a third of the tax dollars paid by undocumented immigrants go toward payroll taxes dedicated to funding programs that these workers are barred

from accessing. Undocumented immigrants paid \$25.7 billion in Social Security taxes, \$6.4 billion in Medicare taxes and \$1.8 billion in unemployment insurance taxes in 2022.”

Statistical facts have not stopped Trump and his ilk from spreading deliberate lies about migrant communities. Trump consciously recognises the leverage his new administration has in promoting division and fear. The billionaire class that Trump surrounds himself with benefits most when the working class is disunited.

## Working-class fight back needed

Workers and oppressed people who remember the last Trump administration are rightfully nervous about the new one.

The Democratic Party leadership is now crying “foul” against Trump’s executive orders, but they are partially responsible for the new onslaught being carried out against undocumented workers and their families. The Biden–Harris administration spent the last four years moving politically to the right on immigration, normalising attacks against undocumented workers.

Marxist–Leninists unconditionally stand with all workers, regardless of citizenship or nationality. An independent movement of working-class solidarity and collective unity is necessary to combat the vicious attacks against migrant families.

*¡Ningún ser humano es ilegal! No human being is illegal!*

*Workers World (USA)*



# Trump Likely to Dump Ukraine

by Dhairya Maheshwari

Supporting Ukraine was a top priority for the Biden administration, but with Trump back in power, observers suggest America may dump Ukraine and prioritise his 'America First' policy and the MAGA agenda.

Addressing the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos last month the Ukrainian president, Vladimir Zelensky, said that "Europe needs to learn how to fully take care of itself", as he noted the uncertainty in the Western camp following the inauguration of Donald Trump.

Citing previous statements by US officials, Zelensky said that the Indo-Pacific remained the "top security priority" for the USA, followed by the Middle-East and Europe.

Zelensky's comments were reflective of the "widespread sentiment of trepidation and caution" prevalent in European capitals says Seshadri Vasan, the Director-General of Chennai Centre for China Studies (C3S). Zelensky could see the "writing on the wall", which is that



• Russians moving West!

Trump would "dump" Ukraine.

He noted that Trump wants his NATO allies to increase the defence spending to five per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It's likely therefore, that he will "cut down on American military aid to Ukraine, which has already surpassed \$62 billion under the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI), the highest among Western allies".

"Zelensky doesn't want to be left in the lurch, as he knows that the USA has been the biggest military donor to Ukraine since 2022. Like other European leaders, Zelensky understands that Trump and Putin have a decent political equation. With the Gaza conflict already having been resolved just before Trump took office, the attention would now be on resolving the Ukraine conflict through dialogue

and diplomacy involving both Ukraine and Russia," Vasan explained.

Trump's previous statement on resolving the Ukraine conflict within "24 hours" after being sworn-in clearly showed that he won't be exhausting much of his political capital or American taxpayers' money on sustaining the same levels of military support to Ukraine as seen in the Biden years, he added.

Vasan said that Trump

has given a clear sense of his priorities by signing Executive Orders restricting illegal immigration, pulling the USA out of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Paris Climate Deal, pausing foreign aid for 90 days as well as focus on expanding energy exports.

At the same time, Trump held a telephone call with Chinese President Xi Jinping in the lead-up to his inaugu-

ration, discussing trade, fentanyl and TikTok among other issues.

"To what degree would the European Union heed to Zelensky's appeal and fill the vacuum left by the US is something left to be seen, but it is unlikely that Europe would come together to oppose Trump, due to their own internal political contradictions and the adverse economic spillovers of anti-Russia sanctions," Vasan said.

Resolving the Ukraine conflict would be the "litmus test" of American foreign policy says former Indian Ambassador Anil Trigunayat, a Distinguished Fellow at the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF). Both Trigunayat and Vasan agreed that the Trump administration would further shore up America's support in the Indo-Pacific, a region where successive US administrations view China as a strategic rival. But Trigunayat thinks that Trump could also hold a meeting with Xi in coming weeks in order to reduce tensions in the Indo-Pacific region.

*Sputnik India*

## What does making America great again mean?

by Raúl Antonio Capote

**They say that second parts are never very good, especially if the firsts were very bad. The new administration in Washington showed, before, during and after the inauguration, what boots its members are wearing.**

Nothing that happened there was accidental, neither the gestures of the

president, nor the lofty words full of threats, nor the exalted performance of Elon Musk; everything that happened there was perfectly prepared, studied and rehearsed to have an effect on the public.

In Yankee style, it was the world premiere of the first chapter of "Make America Great Again". Of course, we understand that they are America and

the rest are the backyard; we should not overlook what "making America great again" means for the American power.

Donald Trump's actions on the night of his inauguration clearly define the methods his government will use to defend Washington's interests on a global scale.

As the *Financial Times* asks, is there any common

logic to Trump's provocative statements?

"Perhaps he looks into the future and sees a world where the "rules-based international order" no longer applies, and power over the global economy has shifted to three zones of influence: the Chinese in East Asia, the Russians in Eurasia and the Americans, with an exclusive sphere of influence in the Western Hemisphere,

stretching from Greenland in the Arctic to Chile," the business daily assessed.

The truth is that "being great again" does not mean let's make the world a better place together, but rather 'I am the one in charge, whether you like it or not'.

A few minutes after his "fun" show at the Capitol, in less than a day in office, Trump signed

dozens of executive orders, eliminating some 80 decisions of the previous administration.

The marathon session before the cameras and those present was intended to be a demonstration that he will "deliver what he promised" during his election campaign.

Will they also plant the American flag on Mars?

*Granma*