

The Palestinians have always chosen resistance

by our Arab Affairs correspondent

THE PALESTINIAN resistance has denounced imperialist plans to drive the Palestinians out of the Gaza Strip to turn the enclave into “the Riviera of the Middle East”. So have the Saudis who Donald Trump hopes will soon pour their oil money into the ailing American economy to help “Make America Great Again”. Many believe that the proposed Trump-Putin summit will take place in Saudi Arabia or another of the oil-rich feudal Arab Gulf kingdoms. But Trump’s ravings now may put that in doubt.

Trump’s criminal plan, naturally condemned by People’s China and Russia, was too much even for the Europeans to swallow. France and Germany dismissed Trump’s plan while British Foreign Secretary David Lammy said that Palestinians should be able to “live and prosper in their homelands...we’ve always been clear in our belief that we must see two states. We must see Palestinians live and prosper in their homelands in Gaza and the West Bank”.

And Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of the Independent Alliance in Parliament, blasted Trump for hosting Netanyahu, who is a wanted criminal under the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC). He then declared his rejection of Trump’s scheme, saying the

“Palestinians aren’t going anywhere”.

Following talks in Washington this week with Israeli premier Benjamin Netanyahu Trump says his administration would spearhead an economic development that would “supply unlimited numbers of jobs and housing for the people of the area”.

“The US will take over the Gaza Strip and we will do a job with it, too. We’ll own it” Trump said adding that Washington would be responsible for clearing destroyed buildings and dismantling “dangerous unexploded bombs and other weapons”.

Trump said he envisioned the US taking a “long-term ownership position” over the enclave. “This was not a decision made lightly. Everybody I’ve spoken to loves the idea of the United States owning that piece of land, developing and creating thousands of jobs with something that will be magnificent,” he said. Trump also expressed his hope that displaced Palestinians in Gaza would be “permanently” resettled and the enclave could become home to the “world’s people”.

“So I don’t think people should be going back to Gaza. I think that Gaza has



been very unlucky for them. They’ve lived like hell. They lived like you’re living in hell. Gaza is not a place for people to be living,” he said.

Asked if American troops could be sent to Gaza to maintain security, Trump said it was a possibility. “As far as Gaza is concerned, we’ll do what is necessary. If it’s necessary [to send in US troops], we’ll do that,” he said.

But Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas commended Egypt and Jordan for their firm stance against the forcible displacement of the people of Gaza. The head of the “autonomous” Palestinian Authority on the West Bank, also praised Saudi Arabia’s continued opposition to Israeli settlement expansion, land theft, and forced removals, reiterating its commitment to an independent Palestinian state. Calling for urgent international intervention, Abbas urged the UN Security Council to uphold international resolutions and take “immediate action to protect the Palestinian people, safeguard their right to self-determination, and end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land”.

Maher Mezher, a senior figure in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), accused the US of “leading the attacks on Resistance forces in Gaza and Lebanon”.

The Islamic Jihad Movement also condemned Trump’s statements, saying they confirm that “his administration is directly orchestrating the genocide,

displacement, and expansion of occupation”. Islamic Jihad said that any attempt to displace Palestinians would fail. “Before Trump talks about displacing our people, he should remember that 15 months of relentless bombing with US weapons have failed to force them out. The Palestinian people have always chosen resistance – before Trump, and long after him”.

FUND

This week’s postbag brought in £1004 for the January appeal which ends with a grand total of £2,636 – well short of our £3,500 monthly target. The February fund-raising campaign starts now to hit our target for the month and with a bit of luck make up for last month’s short-fall.

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THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Freedom for Palestine – no to ethnic cleansing!

No one, apart from the Israelis, can take Donald Trump's plan for Gaza seriously. The Zionists always denied that the true aim of the genocidal assault on Gaza has been the destruction of the Palestinian population, and denial of all of their rights including the right to self-determination. They lied.

So did those lackeys of US imperialism in Britain and Europe that not only provided diplomatic cover for Israeli aggression but armed and funded the Zionist state in its drive to crush the Palestinian resistance.

Jeremy Corbyn, the former leader of the Labour Party who now heads the Independent Alliance bloc in Parliament has, however, taken the principled stand holding Israel and those who are still sending arms to the regime responsible for genocide in Palestine.

"The death toll in Gaza has already been updated to 61,709," Corbyn said. "The true scale of Israel's atrocities is only just emerging – and officials must face justice for every single life lost. So should those who continued to send weapons, knowing full well they were enabling genocide".

Trump's proposal is, of course, nothing new. It echoes plans that have been discussed by Israeli officials for many decades. Kicking out the Palestinians to turn the Gaza Strip into a millionaires playground may seem a good idea to the likes of Trump and Netanyahu but it is only a recipe for yet another war – and this time round, going on what Trump is saying, it will be American troops confronting the Arabs.

The Americans came unstuck in Iraq and the Israelis lost the Gaza war. Trump's threats will not succeed in what the Zionist guns failed to achieve. Trump will not achieve what Biden could not do.

Despite their vast resources, US imperialism and its Zionist lackeys have not broken the will of the Palestinian people. The Palestinians, who defied Zionist terror for 15 months, will not bow to the empty threats of Donald Trump.

New Labour woes

This week a Scottish Labour MP warned that the next government may be a "hard-line far-right effort" if Labour does not deliver "improved living standards". Brian Leishman, who represents Alloa & Grangemouth, criticised his own party's government for not providing financial compensation to the 'Waspi' women who campaign against the way in which the state pension ages for men and women were equalised at the expense of many women.

Leishman was one of 10 Labour MPs who supported a Bill introduced by the SNP Westminster leader Stephen Flynn that would require ministers to publish measures to address the findings of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) report which recommended paying compensation to women born in the 1950s whose state pension age was raised.

Labour's embrace of Tory austerity has led to further unpopularity on the street. And this week a new public opinion poll puts Nigel Farage's Reform UK party ahead of Labour and the Conservatives. A YouGov survey puts Reform, at 25 per cent, narrowly ahead of Labour at 24 and the Tories on 21 per cent. The Liberal Democrats stand on 14 per cent, while the Greens are now at nine.

The Starmer government pleads poverty to justify means-testing the pensioners' winter fuel benefit. It won't pay compensation to the three million or so women who were not properly informed about the state pension age increase. But it can find plenty to fuel the proxy war against Russia and pay for Trident and the rest of our so-called nuclear deterrent.

Why was USAID kicked out of Russia?

by Ilya Tsukanov

PRESIDENT Trump has promised to "make a decision" on USAID's future after getting rid of the "radical lunatics" running it after DOGE (the American Department of Government Efficiency) chief Elon Musk said it was time for the "criminal" agency "to die". Russia banned Washington's long-favoured soft power tool in 2012. Here's why.

Russia knew about the US Agency for International Development's "criminal" nature long before Elon Musk's epiphany.

USAID was expelled from the country after post-election street protests in Moscow verging on an attempted "colour revolution", with the agency accused of using its grant network to try to influence politics and civil society after the 2011-2012 Russian parliamentary and presidential elections.

USAID's mission in Russia was narrowed to political influence operations in the 2000s, including funding for civil society groups like the Golos (Movement in Defence of Voters Rights) election watchdog, the Memorial and Moscow Helsinki Group rights organisations, and others.

These organisations engaged in increasingly sharp criticism of the Russian government prior to the US aid agency's ouster, helping to radicalise a portion of the population toward more pro-Western opposition views through the popularisation of their positions.

USAID first entered Russia in 1992, immediately after the USSR's collapse, and spent nearly \$3 billion over 20 years on 'democracy, human rights and civil society promotion' programmes.

In reality, USAID's work

in the 90s was aimed at cheerleading the gutting of Russia's social and economic system during the painful transition to a market economy, and meddling in politics in support of liberal, pro-West politicians against conservative, populist and neo-communist forces.

Nowhere was this more evident than during the 1993 constitutional crisis and the 1996 elections, which saw radical opposition to liberal reforms crushed and the voting rigged, with USAID-backed "independent media", publishing houses and NGOs cheering on the processes.

The US amassed a literal journalistic empire during its stay in Russia. Up to the year 2000 alone, its National Press Institute held 2,300 briefings and seminars attended by over 57,000 journalists, provided training for 2,700 media specialists, management and consulting services for 84 newspapers, and support for other print, TV and internet media.

On the economic front, USAID provided "techni-

cal advisory services and material support" for the infamous voucher privatisation scheme. This programme cemented immense wealth transfers worth hundreds of billions of dollars from the state to private and foreign coffers.

In the 90s, USAID ambitiously outlined 14 "strategic objectives" for Russia, from fiscal, monetary, social service and energy reforms to US "joint ventures", civil and legal training, environmental programs and even women's reproductive health.

Political stabilisation and the maturing of the modern post-Soviet Russian state ultimately sealed USAID's fate.

But perhaps the greatest damage done by USAID to Russia has been in its backyard, where billions of dollars spent over the past 35 years helped to put neighbours on a path to NATO and European Union membership, and literally rewrite history books to cast Russia as an enemy. Nowhere has this effort paid off more than in Ukraine.

Sputnik



Workers Notes

University Battles

by New Worker correspondent

BEFORE long we can expect to see picket line placards with Latin slogans and algebraic equations on them. This is due to drastic cuts being imposed on British universities up and down the country.

Almost a quarter of the top (Russell Group) UK universities are cutting staff numbers and chopping budgets, resulting in about 10,000 redundancies being planned. The University College Union (UCU) is already mounting individual protests in response, but more co-ordinated action is required. In Wales...

400 jobs

...at Cardiff University 400 jobs and whole departments are being closed. These include degree courses and schools including nursing, modern languages, music, ancient history, translation, religion and theology. The university says that with a £28 million deficit this year it has no choice, a point disputed by UCU who says it has ample reserves.

The Welsh Government says it will be increasing their grant to universities by nearly £22 million next year. But Universities Wales, which represents the eight Welsh universities, say they need much more because together they have a £70 million deficit.

Tuesday saw a rally outside the Welsh parliament against the Cardiff cuts. This was timed to coincide with first Welsh draft budget debate. UCU want "the Welsh Government to properly fund further education and intervene to save universities in Wales". The government response has not been favourable and UCU will be balloting for strike and other industrial action in protest.

The National Union of Students' Welsh President said the NUS "would support a strike if absolutely necessary".

At the rally Thanasi Hassousas, Reader in medical education at Cardiff University medical school, told the BBC that "all academic staff in the medical school have had letters of proposed redundancy and staff are angry and worried" and the measure was "a dereliction of duty to students and staff".

Closing a nursing course is clearly not the best way of resolving the staffing crisis in the NHS. Helen Whyley, the executive director of RCN Wales, said she was "very concerned" by Cardiff's proposals and deplored the cuts: "Its school of nursing has a longstanding reputation for excellence, producing highly skilled, compassionate nurses who have gone on to serve communities locally and across Wales". Even worse, closing the theology department will see a terrible shortage of ministers and thousands more Welsh people suffering eternal damnation.

A lecturer in healthcare at the demonstration, Mike Johnson, pointed out that it was unbelievable the Welsh Government didn't know about the cuts until a week before they were made public.

Other teaching unions joined in the protest. The National Association of Head Teachers said it has made Freedom of Information requests to obtain details of what extra 'consequential' funding Welsh schools will receive on the back of increased education spending in England, but have had no response.

The union's Welsh national secretary Laura Doel said "schools in Wales lack the sustainable, equitable investment they need just to do the basics, let alone meet education reform demands. Sticking plasters and short-term fixes are no longer sufficient". And the local UCU branch demands that the university use its £188 million reserves to "fund a

fund a longer, more cautious, and sustainable recovery which doesn't destroy the lives of its staff".

Though Cardiff will survive in some form Trinity Saint David, the oldest university in Wales, is closing its original campus in Lampeter

which was founded in 1822. Further west Swansea University has also cut 342 jobs blaming a £31.2 million deficit.

Welsh higher education minister Vikki Howells washed her hands of the matter by saying "it was up to the universities to balance the books" and sternly warned "there wouldn't be any additional Welsh government funding available, unless we were looking to cut back from other areas such as the NHS, education, or public services that we all rely on".

The Plaid Cymru education spokesman denounced this as "a complete dereliction of duty. They've been warned of the financial crisis facing this vital sector in Wales for years and have done nothing about it".

The case of Cardiff illustrates the fact that British universities have undergone constant cost-cutting and restructuring for the past three years as rising costs and declining tuition fee income from domestic students have eroded budgets.

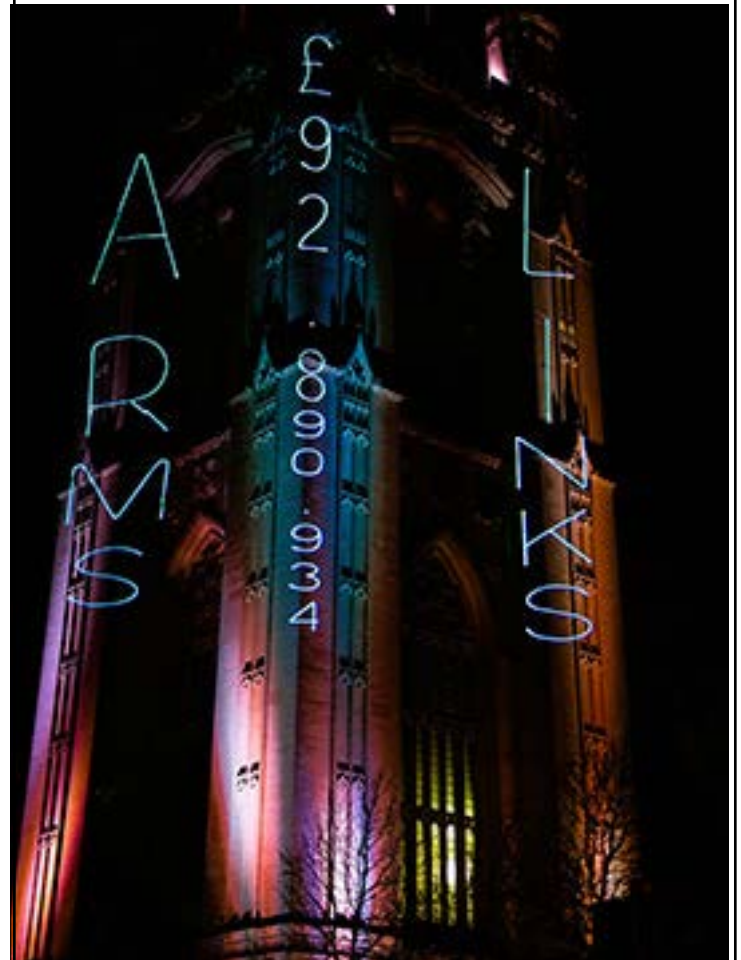
The Bigger Picture

These "drip-drip" cuts meant they had largely passed under the public's radar. A vice-chancellor told the Guardian that "if the BBC or John Lewis was cutting 5,000 or 6,000 jobs, we'd hear all about it but what we're seeing in universities isn't being noticed".

British universities have for decades relied on foreign students who bring with them much higher fees. This is now drying up. As its own institutions are dramatically improving China only sends post-graduate students for a bit of polish instead of first degrees. Already a small but growing numbers of students head to China and not just for the language and literature but to learn about their advanced technology. High fees for British universities are no longer seen as a sign of quality by overseas students.

Jo Grady, the General Secretary of UCU, warns that "if vice-chancellors do not step back from the brink and work with us to protect jobs, serious industrial unrest cannot be ruled out".

All lit up in Bristol!



With Photo: Credit Rob Browne

LOCAL Palestine solidarity campaigners and students called-out the University of Bristol over its massive arms industry links, the fourth highest of any university in the country. On the opening weekend of the

Bristol Light Festival they mounted a dramatic laser projection projecting the figure of £92,890,934 and other protest slogans onto the 215 ft high iconic Wills Memorial Tower, one of the highest buildings in Bristol.

High-caste universities such as Oxford and Cambridge are lowering their entry requirements to attract more home-grown students, which, while a good thing for Oxbridge means that lesser institutions find they have difficulty filling places to the extent that many courses become unviable even when they offer decent and useful subjects.

English universities rubbed their hands in delight when the new education secretary, Bridget Phillipson, raised fees for local students in England to £9,535 but this of course is bad for potential students who largely depend on the Bank of Mum and Dad. In all about 90 British universities are busy restructuring and imposing compulsory or voluntary redundancy schemes.

On the banks of the beautiful Tay

Staff at the University of Dundee have already voted to take strike action to oppose job cuts aimed at reducing the university's £30 million deficit. On a 64 per cent turnout 74 per cent supported strike action.

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The deficit was announced in November by the Principal who promptly resigned along with several other senior managers. Management invited unions to join a resilience committee. But the committee has no decision-making powers and a recovery plan has not been shared with the unions. It is still uncertain as to how many jobs are to go.

Melissa D'Ascenzio, the UCU branch co-president, said "by voting in these numbers UCU members at the University of Dundee have been crystal clear that the university needs to think again before cutting jobs and the use of compulsory redundancies. The ballot result is a mandate for industrial action and to oppose job cuts...senior managers need to listen to their staff, unions and local politicians, including the Minister, and engage openly and honestly about the best future for the university, its students and staff, and the city".

North

At the University of Sheffield International College (USIC), managed by the private company Study Group, staff have voted to take strike

action over proposed job cuts. With a turnout of 72 per cent, all those who voted supported strike action.

This vote follows USIC's announcement that 36 staff members in student support and academic teaching teams are at risk of redundancy by April. Management say the job cuts are necessary due to a decline in student numbers this academic year, which affected the company's finances, although it has also referred to the situation as a "short-term gap".

The college is operated by Study Group, which renewed its ten-year contract with the University of Sheffield, and is located in a university building. Study Group use the university's branding for preparation courses for international students who plan to continue their studies at the university. Students from around the world enrol to improve their English, study skills, and subject specialism in preparation for their degrees. Courses at USIC cost up to £26,000 per year.

After the ballot result was announced UCU branch chair Sam Morecroft said "it is clear these redundancies have nothing to do with falling student numbers and everything to do with an attempt to force an untested standardised operating model on our college, which will

increase staff workload and reduce the quality of academic and pastoral support our students receive. Study Group now needs to begin meaningful negotiations and look at other cost-saving measures to close what it says is only a short-term financial gap".

In the land of the prince-bishops Durham University is planning to cut 200 jobs to make £10 million worth of cuts this year with another £10 million next academic year. UCU said it was initiating formal dispute procedures on the grounds that compulsory redundancies have not been ruled out. Here cuts were targeted at professional services and support staff who provide the backbone infrastructure that allows the university to run smoothly.

UCU said "cutting staff costs will result in a diminished student experience and in a context where workload is already a significant cause for concern."

Meanwhile staff threatened with a restructure by Sunderland University management have been told they cannot tell colleagues they are at risk of losing their jobs, apparently to prevent "unnecessary unrest". UCU regional support official Jon Bryan said "it is outrageous for staff who have been threatened with the sack to effectively be

gagged by the university and prevented from telling their colleagues. Wanting to manage the messaging of change with students is understandable, but the HR department wants to vet all requests from impacted staff to speak to other colleagues, which is a cruel way to deal with those who have been impacted". And Newcastle University told staff last week they will have to cut down research work not directly supported by external grants. Here too a £30 million programme of cuts will result in 300 jobs going.

and South

A strike ballot on the same issue is underway at the windswept concrete towers of the University of East Anglia (UEA) when nearly a sixth of the workforce were put at risk of redundancy.

Management threaten to cut over 190 staff to meet continued budget shortfalls at the institution. This will hit at least 30 staff in the faculty of medicine & health sciences, 25 in the faculty of science, 22 in the faculty of arts & humanities, and at least 90 from departments across professional services at the institution. In 2023 over 400 staff left UEA in 2023 due to a projected £40 million deficit.

At the start of the ballot for action Jo Grady said "our members will be voting yes to strike action because they refuse to pay the price for management's continued failings. Just 18 months ago, UEA staff were on strike in a dispute which saw one in ten of the former workforce lose their jobs".

She concluded by warning that "senior managers have a small window of opportunity to end the cycle of decline and work with our members to secure the future of the university, if they refuse to do so they are laying the ground for significant industrial unrest".

The University of Kent is also wielding the axe. Staff at the Canterbury and Medway campuses have been told they can apply for voluntary redundancy until the 16th February. This came after vice-chancellor Georgina Randsley de Moura told staff the university was going down the pan, or rather

"way below its targets and projections" and the "picture doesn't look set to improve". Again this was blamed on a fall in overseas students. She did however offer staff a guide on how to use a redundancy calculator...

Belfast blues

Across the Irish Sea staff are up in arms following proposed redundancies at Queen's University Belfast (QUB) just days after it announced plans to open a branch in India. Such schemes are a major cause of financial strain as they have a habit of collapsing, but at least they allow senior managers a chance to collect lots of air miles.

In contrast to the planned 270 voluntary redundancies a new campus is planned for the "GIFT City" or Gujarat International Finance Tec-City in the suburbs of Ahmedabad. The redundancies amount to more than five per cent of its workforce and are blamed on a financial deficit of over £11 million for 2024-25.

Queens say "there will be no compulsory redundancies" adding that it is one of "several actions to manage costs in response to financial challenges". It says "Northern Ireland universities face an additional challenge as numbers of home students are limited by the Maximum Student Number (MaSN) cap, and the income for teaching home students does not cover the whole cost of teaching, creating a deficit".

QUB promise the new campus will "help reinforce partnerships and opportunities for innovation with local industry, government and business sectors across India and Northern Ireland".

UCU has strongly denounced the university's plans, arguing that as Queens receives large wads of cash from Stormont's Department for the Economy and they should prioritise job retention in Northern Ireland. Local UCU official Katharine Clarke said QUB should be "prioritising expansion abroad rather than safeguarding jobs in Belfast," and said the cuts would be bad for remaining staff.

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

KING GYANENDRA of Nepal dismissed his government and declared a state of emergency on Tuesday morning in response to the growing strength of the Maoist guerilla war in the west of the country. Premier Sher Bahadur Deuba has been placed under house arrest and troops and armoured cars are patrolling the streets of the capital, Katmandu.

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has called a general strike and its People's Liberation Army guerillas are calling on Royalist forces to lay down their arms and join them. In a nationwide address the CPN (Maoist) has called on all the

political parties and all strata of society to "create a storm of countrywide rebellion united under a minimum common slogan" for a people's democratic republic and a constitutional assembly.

This is the fourth time that the king has sacked his prime minister in less than three years. The king has played the tyrant since he assumed the throne in 2001 after a shoot-out in the royal palace that claimed the lives of most of the royal family. Gyanendra was not in Kathmandu at the time but many suspect he was behind the massacre that left the crown to him.

In 1996 the Maoists took up the gun to overthrow the high-caste Hindu monarchy and replace it with a people's democracy. The guerillas now operate in 68 of Nepal's 75 districts and they have set up their own revolutionary governments in at least four of them.

No elections have been held for over five years and the

king has appointed governments drawn from the major parties in the poverty-stricken Himalayan Kingdom, including the Communist Party of the Nepal and the Nepal Congress Party. Deuba, the leader of the Democratic Congress bloc, had argued for fresh parliamentary elections this year despite the civil war that has claimed over 10,000 lives - many of them victims of the Royal Army's indiscriminate "encirclement and kill" counter-insurgency tactics.

The king has few allies among the constitutional parties who played the major role in leading the democratic movement which ended the old royal autocracy in 1989. Most of them want to cut the power of the crown and some of them would support the demand for a republic although none of them are prepared to throw their lot in with the Maoist guerillas, whose power is increasing.

Donbas communists: Our historic mission

by Boris Litvinov

Boris Litvinov, is the First Secretary of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) District of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF)

OUR troops have advanced some 35 to 40 kilometres from Donetsk, which means the capital of the Donetsk People's Republic is now beyond the reach of Ukrainian artillery and tanks. Now the administrative border of the Donetsk Republic with the Dnepropetrovsk region is just 10 kilometres away from the front. But there are still many problems due to the supply of Western weapons such as missiles and modern drones. So the attacks on Donetsk are still ongoing with weapons supplied to Ukraine from the United States, Britain, France, Germany and other NATO countries. But whatever weapons are used against us the decisive factor is the fighting soldier – the infantry.

Of course, many people are now discussing the forms in which negotiations on ending the war will take place, but the question is, who will participate? And what will the negotiations be about?

At the moment, the DPR is not a participant in the negotiation process, as it was in 2014-2020. Today we are a legitimate region of the Russian Federation, according to the Constitution. Any negotiations on war and peace should be conducted by Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Government of our common country. But, in our deep conviction,



Russian troops move forward.

tion, negotiations with Zelensky should not take place. Zelensky's legitimacy as President of Ukraine ended last May, when new elections were due to take place. He, Zelensky, is nothing to us right now. He can't decide anything. In fact, Zelensky is totally dependent on the United States and he is completely unable to make any independent decisions, so negotiations are possible only between the United States and Russia. But Ukraine will not even be the main subject of these negotiations.

Negotiations can be about areas of interest in the world; about global political and economic reconstruction like after the Second World War. And in such a new configuration of the world, Ukraine will become only part of a global issue.

Well, the main issue should concern all possible guarantees for the establishment of peace between states with different ideas about their future. No one

should impose their will on others. Every state should develop independently of the wishes of others. And the peoples living in a particular region of the Earth must decide for themselves who to unite with, which state to be a part of, and which peoples to build their future with. We, the residents of Donetsk, Lugansk, and then Zaporizhia and Kherson, made our choice in a referendum – we will build our future with Russia. And this is the will of the overwhelming majority of the population of our republics and regions.

Now we see that Trump has already identified his areas of interest in Canada, Mexico, Greenland and Panama. And Russia also has its own post-Soviet areas of interest.

Russia stopped cooperating under the Warsaw Pact in 1991 in the forlorn hope that NATO would end its hostility to Russia. And one of the fundamental problems for Russia and its allies is that the NATO mil-

itary bloc is moving step by step closer to Russia's borders.

Nevertheless the time will come when none of the military blocs will threaten the other and there will be no military bases near the borders of Russia or the historical and traditional territories that were under Russian influence. We think that Trump probably understands this, and that the expansion of NATO to the East was a mistake.

European politicians – Macron, Starmer, Scholz and others think that they have a chance to end Russia, and that they should not miss this chance. In fact, European countries have been trying to do this for several centuries. Over the past 200 years, Russia has defeated Napoleon and the Ottomans; Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. Fourteen of the Entente countries including the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan who intervened against Soviet Russia

in 1918 during the civil war that ended in their defeat in 1922. And the Soviet Union defeated the German Nazis and their allies during the Second World War.

The Western countries tried to unleash a new world war against the USSR in the 60s of the 20th century. And the Cold War, declared by the West against the Soviet Union in 1946, has not stopped to this day, having turned into a hybrid war.

The Russian people were able to withstand all these difficulties, thinking not so much about their personal well-being, but about preserving their historically formed land, preserving the covenant of their ancestors, strengthening the unity of the Orthodox faith and respect for the faith of the peoples inhabiting Russia, thinking and realizing the dream of humanity about a just society.

The people of Russia demonstrate solidarity in defending their interests, dedication, heroism and confidence in achieving victory over any invaders. It has always been so, and it will be so in the future. And today, in the struggle for our true sovereignty, in the struggle against neo-fascism, in the new struggle against the West, we see that history repeats itself.

The 19th century Prussian Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, said "Make alliances with anyone, start any wars, but never touch the Russians...the Russians cannot be defeated, we have seen this for hundreds of years. Russians, even if they are dismembered by international treaties, will reconnect with each other

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as quickly as particles of a cut piece of mercury”.

We are doing everything necessary to ensure that these warnings reach the minds of those who once again dream of ending Russia.

The Ukrainian state has turned out to be untenable. It can only exist together with Russia, and it has always existed as part of Russia. After the abdication of Czar Nicholas II from the throne in February 1917, the bourgeois rulers in Kiev proclaimed the independence of Ukraine. They held out on bayonets and money from foreign invaders for less than three years. But when they united with Russia and the other Soviet republics into a single socialist state – the USSR, Ukraine turned into a world-class advanced republic with a population of 52 million.

After the temporary cessation of the existence of the USSR, Ukraine again tried to build its independent country – again relying on money, weapons, and an alien Western ideology. And the result: the economy is in decline, the population is impoverished, Ukraine is being robbed by everyone, a war has been waged with its historically fraternal Russian people, and the population has shrunk to less than 30 million. This is the result of independence. Today, wars for the interests of the West are destroying the gene pool of Ukraine. More and more new generations are being thrown into the fire of war.

We, the residents of Donbas, Zaporizhia, Kherson, and the whole of Russia, un-

derstand our historical mission – to live in peace with all peoples, freely manage our own destiny, and build on our land a just society that many peoples of Europe, Asia, America, and the whole Earth have dreamed of for centuries.

And we, in our desire, will surely come to the victory of reason over the forces of evil. This is what our predecessors did, and we will continue to do so.

The Trump plan to deport the Paletinians

by Fouad Baker

THE Trump plan to deport the Palestinian people from Gaza and the West Bank cannot be viewed in the same way as his rhetoric about purchasing Greenland from Denmark, merging Canada with the United States or controlling the Panama Canal and the Gulf of Mexico.

The plan to deport Palestinians is presented with high seriousness, and preparations for it are taking place behind the scenes to move the residents of Gaza to Egypt and from the West Bank to Jordan. This plan is based on communications between Donald Trump and his counterparts, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, King Abdullah of Jordan, as well as secret communications with other countries, such as Albania and Indonesia as well as some members of the Or-



Returning to Gaza.

ganisation of Islamic Cooperation, especially Saudi Arabia.

During Donald Trump's first presidential term, from 2016 to 2021, he altered the equations that Palestinians had established, which emphasised that no regional settlement could occur without resolving the Palestinian issue. Trump undermined this equation when he imposed the “Deal of the Century” in 2020, moving the American embassy to Jerusalem and recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights that Israel seized in 1967.

Trump also signed the Abraham Accords, which are treaties and agreements to normalise relations with Israel, that included Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, (UAE), Morocco and Sudan, as well as forming a military alliance under the guise of so-called economic peace.

With his new term, since assuming office on 20th January 2025, Trump has reintroduced the issue of resolving the Palestinian cause, this time with his desire to win

a Nobel Peace Prize and end wars in the world. However, this also comes at the expense of the Palestinian people and their inalienable national rights, as outlined in international legal resolutions, including the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, the right to self-determination and the right of return as per [United Nations] Resolution 194.

Secret diplomatic moves

The new US administration, alongside Israeli diplomats, has quietly begun seriously discussing Trump's vision of deporting Palestinians. They are engaging with several Arab capitals to push this plan forward and apply heavy pressure, through the gateway of accepting Palestinians as short-term humanitarian refugees, pending the reconstruction of Gaza.

This plan involves a period of taking in Palestinians for between six months to a year, with their return to Gaza in 2026 once the reconstruction is complete. The plan subtly includes, though not openly

stated, the possibility that these Palestinians may not return to their cities and villages – much like in 1948, when their departure was intended to be temporary, but they still have not been allowed to return despite all international resolutions.

According to diplomatic sources, Israel is communicating with certain countries like Albania and Indonesia, to see if they will accept Palestinian refugees. The discussions are revisiting aspects of the 2020 Deal of the Century, particularly the integration of Palestinians displaced in 1948 into the countries that hosted them, such as Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

Israel has also opened a dialogue with some members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) over a plan to resettle 5,000 Palestinian refugees annually over a span of 10 years, totalling around 50,000 refugees.

Now the Trump administration is striving to engage with Saudi Arabia to normalise relations with Israel and to abandon its conditions

relating to the two-state solution and the Arab Peace Initiative. According to sources close to decision-makers in Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom has become more flexible in its approach to the Arab Peace Initiative, under the pretext that it cannot be implemented all at once, but rather gradually, starting with normalisation with Israel, to open political dialogues and prospects related to the Palestinian issue.

The new Trump administration has returned to its previous tactics from the first term, exerting economic pressure on the Palestinian Authority. It has cut aid and support for American development projects in the West Bank and plans to use the reconstruction of Gaza as leverage against Hamas.

The aim is to pressure Hamas not to reclaim authority over Gaza by stalling reconstruction efforts, holding back funds and donations from other countries and preventing them from being transferred to Gaza. The Trump administration also seeks to control the

reconstruction fund, which is currently being organised by some European countries and certain Arab regimes that oppose Hamas' control over Gaza.

According to technical experts, Gaza will require several years to rebuild, to erase the remnants of Israeli aggression and clear the rubble of destroyed buildings. In this context, the new Trump administration justifies the temporary humanitarian refugee status for Palestinians in Gaza for six months, while being fully aware that reconstruction would take at least eight years if it were to proceed – assuming there are no political obstacles or funding restrictions.

Possible scenarios

The scene of Palestinians returning to their homes in Gaza through the Netzarim checkpoint – now destroyed – illustrates the deep connection of the Palestinian people to their land, despite the widespread devastation. This shattered the illusion of absolute victory that Netanyahu spoke of.

Hamas, with a tactical move involving the release of the Israeli prisoner Arbel Yehud, achieved strategic success by securing the return of residents from northern Gaza. It has become increasingly difficult for Israel to resume the war, even if the ceasefire agreement were to collapse, especially with the unsearched civilians walking through the Netzarim crossing.

Furthermore, the renewal of the war is no longer in the hands of Netanyahu or [Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel] Smotrich, who

opposed the ceasefire agreement. The decision now lies with Trump, who seeks to rescue Israel from military defeat and turn it into a political victory by deporting Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank.

This plan would continue the annexation of Palestinian territories, normalise relations with Arab countries – specifically Saudi Arabia – and undermine the two-state solution. The true deal this time will be an American-Saudi-Israeli deal.

Trump is attempting to replace the genocide that was inflicted on the Palestinian people [by the Israelis during the Gaza war] with political genocide. This time, it is not only aimed at the authority in Gaza, but also at the Palestinian Authority [that runs the “autonomous” West Bank zones]. By besieging the Jenin camp and confronting the Palestinian militias in the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority seeks to present its credentials to the new US administration in an effort to maintain its political position and prevent its collapse. In the absence of a

unified Palestinian national strategy, Trump's plan remains intact, and it is difficult to counter it. This first and foremost falls on the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority (PA), which refrains from implementing the Beijing Declaration, calling for a meeting of the unified Palestinian leadership, and the PA's failure to form a national unity government that includes everyone, thus avoiding collective responsibility in confronting the American-Israeli plans.

This calls for international efforts to confront the looming danger to the Palestinian cause, with the goal of pressuring the Palestinian Authority to implement the Beijing Declaration, form a national unity government that includes competent national figures, hold comprehensive Palestinian elections, rebuild Gaza and overcome external obstacles in order to block Israel's questionable projects. The Palestinian people have affirmed to the entire world, through the powerful scene of their return to northern Gaza, their unwavering attachment to their land

and their rejection of the forced displacement plan, despite all the destruction and massacres committed against them.

No matter how much Israel tries to impose racist and colonial policies against them, the Palestinian people will resist until their last breath. As Israeli historian Ilan Pappé states in his book, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*: “the olive tree has pierced the trees imported by Israel from outside Palestine and planted in Palestinian land to reinforce their narrative that they are the rightful owners of the land”.

Similarly, the Palestinian people will defy all these plans with their will and rejection of colonial projects and policies of fait accompli. They will invent new forms of resistance, as they have done in previous stages, and they will amaze the world with their diverse strategies.

The author is an international lawyer and a member of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)

The slaughter continues

by Guillermo Alvarado

THE news that a ceasefire agreement had been signed between the Zionist State and Hamas, which could mean the end of the Palestinian genocide in the Gaza Strip, was greeted with great enthusiasm by the international community. But some call this truce “fragile” because of Tel Aviv's expressed will to appropriate this Palestinian territory and fill it with Jewish settlers, as is happening in the West Bank, where the theft of the Palestinian people's land continues unabated.

violates

On the one hand, there is Israel's record, which is characterised by the fact that it frequently violates its commitments with impunity with the support and complicity of the Western powers, as has been demonstrated in the last 15 months.

Not only does Israel violate its commitments, but it also fla-

grantly violates the guarantees enshrined in international treaties for the protection of civilians, hospitals and health centres, and the disproportionate use of force in times of conflict.

The carnage, in fact, continues. After the announcement of the truce Israel launched new air raids and ground attacks on the already devastated Strip, causing 71 deaths and about 200 wounded.

The lack of will of the Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is looking for pretexts to create an unexpected crisis to resume the fighting, also plays a role.

Although the truce includes the withdrawal of Israeli troops to a strip of land near the Gaza Strip, the Israeli leader has repeatedly stated that he will maintain the military occupation of the Palestinian enclave.

It should be noted that the agreement reached is limited to a cease-fire. It is by no means a firm and lasting peace treaty which opens the door to future incursions under any pretext.

Of course, the West will press for everything to be implemented, not for humanitarian reasons, but because the truce includes in its second stage the reconstruction of what was destroyed in Gaza, which is almost everything, and this, let us not forget, is a very good business for the real estate consortia that are eagerly awaiting their opportunity to exploit it.



LETTERS

Dear Comrades

Since its takeover of power in our homeland, Syria, on 8th December 2024, which was a result of a military offensive fully supported by colonialist members of the aggressive NATO bloc, the obscurantist junta has begun a crackdown on our people's social rights. Tens of thousands of workers have been laid off from state and public sector facilities, with many such facilities having been liquidated. Discrimination against citizens on the basis of belief and affiliation has been escalating, amidst continuing acts of kidnapping, assassination, burglary, looting and extortion.

On 29th January 2025 an expanded meeting was held among the leaders of these armed groups – who owe their capture of most of the country to a mere historical coincidence rather than possessing any qualifications other than brute force – in which the obscurantists' political tyranny became even more apparent, as attendants agreed to entrench an authoritarian rule. A single individual was granted absolute executive and legislative

powers, forming a blatant dictatorship subordinate to the Turkish mandate. Notably, this grave step was preceded by numerous meetings with representatives of imperialist centres and reactionary Arab regimes, and in the constant presence of the Turkish guardians, indicating the decision was taken with the approval of these circles.

All promises of achieving, or at least taking steps towards, democratic freedoms were thrown into the garbage dump. The constitution of 2012 was abolished, rendering Syria a state without a constitution, to be governed by the whims of obscurantists and the interests of the forces backing them. Interestingly, the revoked constitution did not mention in any form a ruling party; rather, it stipulated general social rights, thus being an obstacle to turning Syria into a nest of reactionary, obscurantist forces and their masters. Turkish colonialism aims to achieve in Syria changes of an extremist, obscurantist nature, of which it is incapable in its own country.

This ominous meeting also took the decision to dissolve numerous patriotic parties, including the Syrian Communist Party. We regard

this decision as a mere first step to be followed by more repression against all true patriotic and democratic forces.

Standing on its history of over a century of struggle in various circumstances, the Syrian Communist Party will not submit to this oppressive decision. It will continue to fight for the rights of the masses and to regain the independence and sovereignty of its homeland. As Syrian communists, we do not fear oppression or persecution – as evidenced by our history. The Syrian people knows us for our firm commitment to our principles and integrity in our service to the people. In our view, the most urgent task at this grave stage is to work to unite forces of good in our country from all backgrounds to stand up to obscurantist tyranny and despotism.

Together in the Struggle for a Free Homeland and a Happy People!

**Central Committee
Syrian
Communist Party
Syrian Arab Republic**

Dear Comrades

Newcastle United Fans Against Saudi Sportswashing have been highlighting human rights abuses carried out by the Saudi dictatorship, which owns 80 per cent of our club for 3 years. They have protested at matches, have a website and produced four fanzines in support of Saudi citizens imprisoned by the regime using the club to divert attention away from their many crimes and abuses. At the moment activists at the club are highlighting the cases of Salma al-Shehab and Manahel al-Otaibi, Saudi women imprisoned and abused, simply for using social media to advocate for women's rights. They also publicised the cases of Saudi men condemned to death when they were minors. In the past they exposed the behind-the-scenes collaboration of Newcastle City Council

with the Saudi state owners of the club. The regime has spent £500 million on sports washing in Newcastle.

A previous council leader even asked the Saudi state to finance school meals in Newcastle. Recently the North East Mayor visited Saudi Arabia with Keir Starmer where the PM invited the person who ordered the murder and dismemberment of Jamal Khashoggi to a football match!

**John Hughes
Bahrain Freedom
Movement
London**

Dear Comrades

All over the Western world American vassals are in a state of panic. They may well remember the quotations attributed to Henry Kissinger: "America has no permanent friends or enemies, only interests" and "The illegal we do immediately. The unconstitutional takes a little longer". For so many years they have shamefully grovelled to their masters in Washington and worshipped an assumed elitism which they fail to recognise as blatant aggression and a desire to bully and dominate the whole world.

A growing anxiety for bourgeois politicians has been accompanied by a sense of denial as their empires crumble around them. The debacle which has ensured following their complicity in blowing up the Nord Stream gas pipelines has seen European industry collapse with major companies failing or being forced to flee abroad. A total failure of Project Ukraine has destroyed their dreams of NATO expansion, the pillage of Russia and ultimately People's China. And now with the USA apparently reducing its commitment to Europe it seems certain that they will be left to pick up the pieces of their folly.

America's new priorities appear to include an entrenchment to its local region, with threats to annex Greenland, subjugate Canada and take over the Panama canal. Denmark's possible threat to send additional teams of huskies to Nuuk and the inaudible response of the usually hysterical European Union and NATO blocs to events is unlikely to cause the Trump administration much loss of sleep. With US hegemony

Diary

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 Cameraman, The Poets and the Pits: Miners' Strike 40th Anniversary Exhibition. Afternoons. WCML, 51 Crescent, Salford M5 4WX.

SAT 8 FEB

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

SUN 9 FEB

Socialist Labour Party: Continuing Resistance in Palestine West Bank, 15:00-18:00, Shaheed Udham Singh Centre, 346 Soho Road, Handsworth, B21 9QL

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.

THUR 13 FEB

Stop the War Coalition: Demand the charges against Chris Nineham be dropped 12:30, Westminster Magistrates Court, 181 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5BR

SAT 15 FEB

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Freedom for Palestine. National Demonstration. Assemble Whitehall 12:00 for march to US Embassy, 33 Nine Elms Ln, Nine Elms, London SW11 7US

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.

SAT 22 FEB

International Ukraine Anti-Fascist Solidarity: Protest outside Brixton Underground Station, Brixton Rd, London SW9 8HE. TBA

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.

SAT 22 MAR

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Protest: 12:00 Town Centre leafletting. 13:00-15:00, Rally, High Level Bridge over Devonshire Dock, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria.

SAT 22 MAR

Campaign for Trade Union Freedom: Rally on the Employment Rights Bill. Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BB.

SUN 23 MAR

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

CONTACT US...

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exposed for all to see most craven Western leaders continue to remain hapless and confused.

People's China however remains the chief focus of American foreign policy. Looming new trade sanctions risk creating a major world recession that would make the Great Wall Street crash look like an insignificant event. The threat of another proxy war, or even WW3, caused by the US provoking tensions over China's Taiwan and also taking every possible opportunity to stir up trouble with the aid of its stooges in the Pacific region remains a serious risk. A strict adherence to the One China Policy remains a sacrosanct red line for Beijing. Through its own efforts, hard work and competent governance by the Communist Party of China the socialist country has grown to become an economic and military superpower which will no longer be threatened or bullied. Unlike the US it seeks cooperation, mutual trust and sincere friendship; not world domination.

John Maryon
Suffolk

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Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

THE SNP had some good news arising from an opinion poll carried out for the Herald on Sunday. It predicts that at the next Holyrood elections the SNP will remain the largest party in the Scottish parliament. But this is not due to any great swing to the nationalist cause. The poll, in fact, predicts a fall in their seats, but it's due to a collapse in the two main opposition parties, Tory and Labour. It is universally agreed that Sir Keir Starmer and Rachel from Accounts are to blame for Scottish Labour's woes thanks to scrapping the universal winter fuel payment for pensioners and reversing promises to compensate women affected by the raising of the pension age. The Tories have been particularly badly hit by the emergence of Reform UK, but to a lesser extent Reform have been attracting disgruntled Labour voters as well. However, many incumbent

SNP MSPs do not appear so convinced. At least eight of them are planning to stand down, with more likely to follow. Former First Minister Humza Yousaf has already announced his departure from Holyrood. Lesser lights such as James Dornan, Richard Lochhead, Joe Fitzpatrick, Ruth Maguire, Michelle Thomson, Elena Whitham and Christine Grahame are all departing. None of these names will mean much to most readers, although Joe Fitzpatrick will be fondly recalled as the minister who presided over the highest ever drug deaths and Michelle Thomson is famed for her dodgy property business which saw her deselected as a Westminster MP, but being a close friend of Nicola Sturgeon saw her magically reappear at Holyrood. Among those suspected of stepping down include Ms Sturgeon who is now clearly a very part time MSP. She is now busy working on her memoirs. Public Finance Minister Ivan McKee, and his boss, Finance Secretary Shona Robinson are also likely to go along with Colin Beattie, former SNP Treasurer. Swinney will be delighted if football fan and ex-health secretary Michael Matheson retires, but he has form for clinging on like a limpet.

Counting the Pennies

As a result of some undignified horse trading over the Scottish Budget we can be almost certain that the Parliamentary term will continue until the bitter end. The SNP did a deal with the Liberal Democrats, and their former allies the Greens, to ensure their Budget will be passed and thus ensure the SNP Government staggers on until April 2026. The deal was met with fury on the nationalist fringe. Alba's Acting leader Kenny MacAskill deplored the deal because "the SNP will continue to be held hostage in negotiations with the Liberal Democrats and other Unionist parties, thus keeping Independence firmly on the back burner". This is a reference to a small but deal breaking demand from the Lib Dems that the SNP Government cease using government funding to produce research on independence. As the "Independence Papers" were much mocked this was small matter financially, but one of considerable symbolic importance. This did not prevent Alba's sole MSP, Ash Regan, from congratulating herself for persuading the SNP to increase funding to mitigate the cut to winter fuel payments and further expand free school meals in return for her support. The Greens managed to secure £2 million for a pilot scheme for a £2.00 bus fare cap across an as yet unspec-

ified region, and extending free school meals to pupils in the first three years of secondary school who are in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment. Apart from stopping civil servants writing SNP tracts, the Lib-Dems secured more funding for drugs services and hospices. They were too polite to say that addiction services had suffered from SNP cuts under the late lamented Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon. Scottish Lib Dem leader Alex Cole-Hamilton said the deal "comes off the back of all the wins". As a result the SNP have promised to "look much more closely" at replacing a hospital in Lerwick, Kilmaron Special School and Newburgh railway station which interestingly are all in Lib-Dem strongholds. These were very small concessions by the SNP who are probably grateful that no greater demands, such as much needed funding for council services, were mentioned. Labour said it will be abstaining, leaving only the Tories to vote against it. Labour earlier offered support if the SNP were to speed up the policy to end the two-child cap in Scotland which UK ministers are keeping in place elsewhere, but despite their rhetoric about ending this evil, the SNP were not interested. While opposition parties could in theory unite to bring down the SNP government they wisely do not want to be associated with the chaos which would result from failing to pass the Budget. While civilisation would not collapse any new developments would be postponed, including promised wage rises for public sector workers who also have votes.

our furry friends

On Monday First Minister John Swinney made an unusually speedy, cut-and-dry decision. This was to say that the SNP was not going to ban cats. Such a proposal

had earlier been more or less made by the Scottish Animal Welfare Commission (SAWC), which is part of the Scottish Government's structure. The SNP Government originally said they would consider the report but soon backtracked. One of the protesters was Nicola Zelent, warden at Lothian Cat Rescue in Bonnyrigg, who said the charity had dozens of calls from worried cat owners fearing they would have to give up their pets or even put them down. The SAWC does not like cats because they behave like cats and hunt bats and birds. Their specific proposals were to introduce "containment zones" within which there would be restrictions on cats to protect wildlife in "vulnerable areas". This would include rules requiring cats to be kept indoors and banning them in "new housing developments in rural areas" near "conservation-sensitive areas". The SAWC claimed that such policies are already in place across the globe such as Australia, where in some areas cats have to be kept on a leash, but it also denied recommending such ideas. Its specific proposals included demanding the SNP legislate for compulsory microchipping and registration of cats, which is already the policy of cat loving bodies. Cats will be delighted that they never recommended compulsory neutering. Meanwhile controversy over our Scottish wild cats continues. In 2019 the "Highland Tiger", who easily breeds with domestic and feral cats, was declared to be on the verge of extinction by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. This sparked off renewed efforts to maintain the pure-blooded wild cat strain through breeding in nature reserves. In October 2023 the first 19 were released into a secret location in the Cairngorms National Park. Since then many more have been released with only two known to have died.

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

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by New Worker
correspondent

Standing up to racism in London!

THOUSANDS of people took to the streets of London last weekend to protest against a far-right march in favour of Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, the jailed racist who calls himself “Tommy Robinson”. Some five thousand anti-racists rallied in central London for the protest organised by Stand Up to Racism that was supported by the TUC, 17 trade unions, and a coalition of faith groups, national campaigns and Labour and Green politicians.

The far-right demonstration, some 5,000 or so “football lads” and third-rate fascists – was a fraction of the 25,000 that marched at their most recent mobilisation in October. Eyewitness reports suggest infighting and rowing amongst the far right demonstrators. Anti racists argue this reflects tensions within the far-right camp, such as the distance Nigel Farage has attempted to create between his Reform Party and Robinson’s street movement, as well as other pressures amongst

these far right groupings and individuals.

Eyewitnesses at the far right demo say they heard Islamophobic chants while Howard Cox, a former Reform Party London mayoral candidate, called for unity between the Faragists and Robinson’s followers, and echoed Trump’s release of the Capitol Hill rioters by calling for the release of all the August far right rioters in Britain. Another speaker said “round them up and kick them out” and “start the deportation programme for those who refuse to assimilate”.

With the racists threatening to mobilise again on 22nd March, Stand Up To Racism is only the more determined to turn our day of protest as part of the international World Against Racism day of action into a serious anti-racist mobilisation to continue to take on the far right and oppose them.

Weyman Bennett, co-convenor of Stand Up to Racism, said



“Today we might not have brought the 20,000 strong demonstration we delivered in October, but with a much shorter

turn around time and so early in the new year we are feeling energised, encouraged and determined in the fight to

drive back the threat of the far right and fascists after today’s impressive showing.

“To see their num-

bers plummet so dramatically to something like a quarter of what they put on the streets in the autumn – it shows both the weakness and divisions on their side, and it shows we can continue to build a strong united force that can keep bringing to pressure to dissipate, demoralise and defeat them.

“This will take an enormous and ongoing effort, and a real seriousness – we must not be complacent. But take hope from today – what we do matters, we can, if we bring consistent pressure from a broad and united movement taking action – and we can turn this tide.

“In the week of Holocaust Memorial Day, we must remember the lessons of the 1930s. We cannot repeat the history that will lead to more future generations repeating the question: ‘But why didn’t everyone do something?’ – a united movement that exposes and opposes the fascists and calls out the racist swamp they operate in can stop them”.

by New Worker
correspondent

Welcoming the Chinese New Year!

CHINESE Ambassador Zheng Zeguang joined tens of thousands of Londoners celebrating the start of the Chinese New Year in the heart of the capital last weekend. Some 800,000 people joined in the Spring Festival celebrations organised by the London Chinatown Chinese Association (LCCA) in Trafalgar Square, Chinatown and other landmark places.

The LCCA has hosted Chinese New Year celebrations in Trafalgar Square for 24 consecutive years, making it the largest Chinese New Year celebration event outside Asia. This year’s opening ceremony lasted for six hours, with lion and

dragon dances enchanting the audience. Similar performances and more including parade floats were also organised in Chinatown and Piccadilly Circus, attracting tourists from all over the world who tasted first-hand the charm of traditional Chinese culture.

Ambassador Zheng said that the Spring Festival, the social practices of the Chinese people celebrating the traditional new year, has now been officially designated as part of UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, which adds a particular meaning to this year’s grand celebrations.

The Chinese New Year celebration is all about renewal, family



unity, and prosperity. And this is exactly what people from across the UK and beyond have gathered here for – to celebrate peace, solidarity, friendship

and collaboration. It also shows their support for China-UK friendship and cooperation.

He thanked the LCCA for its long-stand-

ing effort in promoting cultural, educational and commercial cooperation between the two countries, and extended best wishes for the Chinese New

Year to the Chinese community, students and Chinese-funded institutions in the UK and to people across the UK and all over the world.

by Ramzy Baroud

THE headline in the Times of Israel says it all: “For the First Time, Israel Just Lost a War”.

Regardless of the reasoning behind this statement, which the article divides into fourteen points, it suggests a shattering and unprecedented event in the 76-year history of the State of Israel.

The consequences of this realisation will have far-reaching effects on Israelis, impacting both this generation and the next. These repercussions will penetrate all sectors of Israeli society, from the political elite to the collective identity of ordinary Israelis.

Interestingly, and tellingly, the article attributes Israel’s defeat solely to the outcome of the Gaza War, confined to the geographical area of the Gaza Strip. Not a single point addresses the ongoing crisis within Israel itself. Nor does it explore the psychological impact of what is being labelled as Israel’s first-ever defeat.

Unlike previous military campaigns in Gaza – on a much smaller scale compared to the current genocidal war – there is no significant strand of Israeli society claiming victory. The familiar rhetoric of “mowing the lawn” which Israel often uses to describe its wars, is notably absent. Instead, there is a semi-consensus within Israel that the ceasefire deal was unequivocally bad, even disastrous for the country.

The word “bad” carries broad implications. For Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, it represents a “complete surrender”. For the equally extremist Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, it is a

Israel’s ‘first defeat’ will shape its future



An Israeli prisoner is handed over.

“dangerous deal” that compromises Israel’s “national security”.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog refrained from offering political specifics but addressed the deal in equally strong terms: “Let there be no illusions. This deal – when signed, approved, and implemented – will bring with it deeply painful, challenging, and harrowing moments”.

justify

Foreign Minister Gideon Sa’ar, along with other Israeli officials, tried to justify the deal by framing Israel’s ultimate goal as the freeing of captives. “If we postpone the decision, who knows how many will remain alive?” he asked.

However, many in Israel, along with an increasing number

of analysts, are now questioning the government’s narrative. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had previously rejected similar ceasefire agreements in May and July, impeding any possibility of negotiation.

In the time between those rejections and the eventual acceptance of the deal, tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed or wounded. While these tragedies have been entirely disregarded or dismissed in Israel, many Israeli captives were also killed, mostly in Israeli military strikes.

Had Netanyahu accepted the deal earlier, many of these captives would likely still be alive. This fact will linger over whatever remains of Netanyahu’s political career, further defining his already controversial

and corruption-riddled legacy.

Ultimately, Netanyahu has failed on multiple fronts. Initially, he wanted to prevent his right-wing, extremist coalition from collapsing, even at the expense of most Israelis. As early as May 2024, many prioritised the return of captives over the continuation of the war. Netanyahu’s eventual concession was not driven by internal pressure, but by the stark realisation that he could no longer win.

The political crisis that had been brewing in Israel reached a breaking point as Netanyahu’s administration scrambled to navigate the growing discontent. In an article published soon after the ceasefire announcement, the Israeli daily *Yedioth Ahronoth* (Latest

News), declared Netanyahu politically defeated, while his Chief of Staff, Herzl Halevi, was blamed for military failure.

In reality, Netanyahu has failed on both fronts. Generals repeatedly urged him to end the war, believing Israel had achieved tactical victories in Gaza. During the war, Israel’s political and social crises deepened.

resorted

Netanyahu, at the helm, resorted to his old tactics. Instead of demonstrating true leadership, he engaged in political manipulation, lied when it suited him, threatened those who refused to follow his rules and deflected personal responsibility. Meanwhile, the Israeli public became increasingly disillusioned with the war’s

direction and frustrated with Netanyahu and his coalition.

In the end, the entire Kafkaesque structure of Israeli governance collapsed. The failure to manage both the political crisis and the military strategy left Israel’s leadership weakened and increasingly isolated from the public.

Of course, Netanyahu will not give up easily. He will likely attempt to satisfy Ben-Gvir by insisting that Israel retains the right to return to war at any time. He will likely enable Smotrich to expand illegal settlements in the West Bank and may try to redeem the military’s reputation by escalating operations there.

These actions may buy Netanyahu some time, but they will not last. The majority of Israelis now seek new elections. While previous elections have ignored Palestinians, the next election will be almost entirely defined by the Gaza War and its aftermath.

Israel is now facing the reality of a political and military failure on a scale previously unimaginable. Netanyahu’s handling of the situation will be remembered as a key moment in the country’s history, and its consequences will continue to affect Israeli society for years to come.

Netanyahu’s departure from the political stage seems inevitable – whether because of the war’s outcome, the next elections, or simply due to illness and old age. However, the material and psychological impacts of the Gaza War on Israeli society will remain, and they are likely to have irreversible consequences. These effects could potentially threaten the survival of Israel itself.

People’s World (USA)

Flight 5342: What caused the plane crash?

American Airlines Flight 5342 - Bombardier CRJ-700

Carrying: **60 passengers + four crew**

Length: **106ft 1in (32.3m)**



Wreckage in the Potomac River



NO ONE should be surprised any time Donald Trump exposes himself as the vile, disgusting, ultra right-wing bigot that he is. Still, it's almost impossible not to be outraged.

A case in point is the 29th January American Airlines crash near Ronald Reagan airport in Washington. With absolutely zero evidence, Trump immediately blamed diversity, equity and inclusion programmes (DEI), allegedly instituted by former President Joe Biden, for allowing less qualified air traffic controllers to be hired.

He specifically called out the Federal Aviation Administration for "actively recruiting workers who suffer severe intellectual disabilities, psychiatric problems and other mental and phys-

ical conditions under a diversity and inclusion hiring initiative". That's bullshit. Racist, sexist, ableist bullshit.

One might think it would be more reasonable to investigate first, then assign blame. Not this president. Given an opportunity to scapegoat people of colour, immigrants, women and gender-oppressed people, LGBT people or people with disabilities, Trump will do so – facts be damned.

After a brief moment of silence, Trump went into his tirade against DEI, showing zero compassion for the 67 people who died after the mid-air collision between a passenger airplane and a military helicopter. This was the deadliest airplane crash in the United States since 12th November

2001.

What has come out is that the air traffic control tower servicing the airport was understaffed. One controller was monitoring both airplanes and helicopters; before 9:30 pm that normally should have been two separate jobs. The crash occurred at 9:00 p.m. According to the Associated Press "on Wednesday [Jan. 29] the tower supervisor directed that [the two jobs] be combined earlier [than 9:30 pm]".

This was an accident waiting to happen. According to the union representing air traffic controllers, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA), in an analysis obtained by the *New York Times*, "more than 90 per cent of the country's 313 air traffic control facilities

China hits back at US tariffs

PEOPLE'S CHINA HAS announced retaliatory tariffs on American goods after US President Donald Trump initiated a trade war by imposing an additional 10 per cent tariff on all Chinese products.

China's Finance Ministry said it would levy 15 per cent tariffs on US coal and liquefied natural gas and 10 per cent on crude oil, farm equipment and some American-made vehicles. Beijing is also imposing new export controls on certain minerals, including rare earth elements

critical to the electronics industry.

This comes after Trump said he would delay plans by at least a month to impose tariffs of 25 per cent on Canada and Mexico. Trump's reversal came after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promised to take steps to crack down on fentanyl smuggling at the US border – even though Canada contributes less than one per cent of fentanyl consumed illegally in the United States.

And Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said Trump called off the tariffs after she agreed to

send 10,000 troops to the border. President Sheinbaum said: "He asked me how long I wanted to pause tariffs. I said, 'Forever.' He told me, 'How much time?' I told him, 'A month'. I'm sure that during this month we'll be able to deliver good results for his people and the people of Mexico".

President Sheinbaum said that under the deal, the United States pledged to slow the illegal trafficking of weapons to Mexico, though Trump's account of the agreement on social media made no mention of that commitment.

Radio Havana Cuba



Lin Jian, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson -- no winner in a trade war.

operate below the Federal Aviation Administration's recommended staffing levels". Moreover "persistent staff shortages and an underinvestment in safety systems have led to an alarming number of close calls between aircraft".

Under capitalism, bosses are forever seeking ways to cut costs by shrinking the work-force. This is true for workers in the public sector as well as in the private sector.

Along with reducing the number of jobs, this practice contributes to a high level of on-the-job

stress among air traffic controllers. This stress was a major health and safety issue in the 1981 strike by the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organisation (PATCO). Then-President Ronald Reagan broke the union and fired every single union member who didn't cross the picket line.

Eventually the controllers who replaced the fired PATCO members realised they needed a union and formed NATCA. Union members are dealing with the same or

worse conditions of overwork and understaffing that led to the PATCO strike.

An objective investigation, if one takes place, would reveal the facts around this tragedy.

It will be up to workers and oppressed people to connect the dots and realise that capitalist cost-cutting and constant quest for higher profits, not DEI, caused the deadly plane crash – one that could have been prevented.

Workers World (USA)