

Gaza War: Further talks are pointless says Hamas

by our Arab Affairs correspondent

Hamas will no longer engage in ceasefire negotiations with Israel, seeing no point in doing so while Israel continues its genocidal offensive in Gaza. A leading member of the Islamic Resistance Movement that runs the besieged Palestinian enclave told the media this week that “there is no sense in engaging in talks or considering new ceasefire proposals as long as the hunger war and extermination war continue in the Gaza Strip”. Basem Naim, a Hamas Politburo member, called on the international community to pressurise the Israeli leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, to end the “crimes of hunger, thirst, and killings” in Gaza. He was speaking a day after Netanyahu said the population of the enclave “will be moved” in a new Israeli offensive that would entail “the conquest of the Gaza Strip and the holding of the territories”.

Meanwhile an unarmed civilian vessel carrying volunteers and aid destined for Gaza remains stranded at sea after it was hit by drones in international waters. The *Conscience*, a Freedom Flotilla Coalition ship, was attacked by drones 14 nautical miles off

Malta on Friday 2nd May. The ship was sailing to Gaza with over 30 campaigners on board to “challenge Israel’s illegal siege and blockade”.

Climate activist Greta Thunberg, who had planned to join the vessel on its way this week, blamed Israel for the drone attack. “This is yet another crystal clear example of how international law and human rights are being completely disrespected,” she said. “I was part of the group who was supposed to board that boat today to continue the voyage towards Gaza, which is one of many attempts to open up a humanitarian corridor and to do our part to keep trying to break Israel’s illegal siege on Gaza.”

Another campaigner, Andre Callus, said “now we have seen that Israel is even daring to attack in the heart of the Mediterranean sea, just close to so many European countries, and even at this stage, what we see, the reaction to this is silence”. But others say that the fact that no Western power has so far reacted to the drone attack on the humanitarian ship shows the impunity of Israel and the complicity of the West in Israel’s genocidal campaign against the Palestinians.

The Freedom Flotilla Coalition has asked the Maltese government to allow their ship to enter Maltese waters to repair the damage and continue its journey towards Gaza. But the Maltese Prime Minister, Robert Abella, says that unless his government is allowed to inspect the *Conscience*, it will not allow it to dock. “As soon as we establish the fact that the ship is indeed carrying humanitarian aid for Gaza, we will take care of the repairs. We need to be in control, especially when the ship has no



• Free food distribution in Gaza.

flag, no insurance, and we don’t know what’s aboard,” he said.

Nearly all of Gaza’s 2.3 million residents have been displaced many times since Israel began its war on the Palestinian enclave in October 2023. The humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip has grown increasingly dire since a total blockade was imposed by Israel on 2nd March, causing widespread food shortages as Israel carries out deadly attacks across the enclave. The Palestine Red Crescent says food supplies in Gaza have now completely run out in both local markets and humanitarian distribution centres.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) echoed these concerns, calling for the immediate entry of humanitarian aid and warning against its politicisation. “The level of need among civilians in Gaza right now is overwhelming,” said ICRC spokesperson Christian Cardon. “Under international humanitarian law, Israel has an

obligation to use all means available to ensure that the basic needs

of the civilian population under its control are met.”

FUND

The May appeal is up and running with a first week total of £735 in the bag thanks to donations from supporters in Chigwell, Essex, Staffordshire and Wales. We now need £2,765 to hit our fighting fund target by the end of the month.

This month we’ve all paused to remember those who fell in the struggle against fascism during the Second World War – a struggle that ended in victory largely due to the heroic efforts of the Soviet Union and the communist resistance in Europe and the Far East. Written out of bourgeois history and school textbooks, our imperialist leaders would like us to forget the Soviet role in bringing down the Third Reich or that the Soviet Union even existed beyond the hideous characters that pass for scholarly comment in academia today.

But the communist movement lives on throughout the world – in the people’s democracies building a new life in Asia and on the island of Cuba and in popular movements across the Global South and the Western world.

Help us get the message across and build the communist movement here in Britain. Make sure that the communist voice is heard every week in every factory, office and neighbourhood across the country by supporting the fighting fund.

We are the only communist weekly in the country. Help us get the word out by keeping our presses rolling. All donations, big or small, count. Please send your contribution to: New Worker Fund, PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the ‘New Worker’.

To save a stamp you can also use your credit or debit card to send contributions here: <http://newworker.org/ncpcentral/fightingfund.html>

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THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Victory Day 2025

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The war, which cost over 61 million lives, began with the Nazi German invasion of Poland on 1st September 1939 and ended on 2nd September 1945 when the Japanese Emperor Hirohito surrendered following the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by American atom bombs.

Announcing the news of the German surrender on 8th May 1945 the old king, George VI, said: “We shall have failed, and the blood of our dearest will have flowed in vain, if the victory which they died to win does not lead to a lasting peace, founded on justice and established in good will. To that, then, let us turn our thoughts on this day of just triumph and proud sorrow; and then take up our work again, resolved as a people to do nothing unworthy of those who died for us and to make the world such a world as they would have desired, for their children and for ours.” That world, sadly, has not happened.

It would be quite impossible, of course, to write all that should be said about the Second World War. But there are three key points that must never be forgotten.

The first is the imperialist nature of the conflict that was launched by German finance capital, which saw territorial expansion as necessary to break free of the constraints placed on Germany after the First World War.

The second is the impact of fascist ideas that led to the most barbarous treatment of many people, especially Jews and other minorities, under the Nazi heel. Slave labour and super exploitation soon became murder by brutality and starvation and ultimately it became mass slaughter in the gas chambers of the Nazi death camps.

The third aspect was the war against the USSR. This was more than an attack against a state, it was a direct attack on socialism. The Nazis even used this fact to try and lure other capitalist leaderships to support its anti-communist crusade against the Soviet Union.

Donald Trump can, perhaps, be forgiven for believing the Hollywood myth that the Americans, almost single-handedly, won the war. To be fair, he did acknowledge that Russia “lost millions of people, and that was absolutely an important factor”, while nevertheless adding that there was “no factor as important as us”.

Still, that’s more than some European politicians would say these days as the Soviet role in the victory is air-brushed out of history by those who choose to forget those who made the greatest sacrifice in the struggle against Nazi Germany.

Winston Churchill said that the RAF’s battle with the Luftwaffe in 1940 was the “finest hour” in what would later be called the Battle of Britain. It certainly was, but the finest hour for the world communist movement was undoubtedly the Battle for Europe.

The Soviet people, led by Joseph Stalin and the Bolsheviks, liberated half of Europe and smashed Nazi Germany while Josef Broz Tito’s guerrilla army and Enver Hoxha’s partisans drove the fascists out of the Balkans. Communist-led resistance forces had the fascists on the run in Greece, France and Italy, while Mao Zedong, Kim Il Sung and Ho Chi Minh led the fight for freedom against the Empire of Japan.

If it wasn’t for the communists, Germany and Japan would have won the war. What that would have meant can easily be seen by their actions during the conflict – the extermination of millions of Jews and others deemed unfit to live by the Nazis; concentration camps, mass slavery and dictatorial rule by industrialists, landowners, war-lords and degenerates of every kind. This was the world ruled by Hitler and Hirohito – a world that would have set back civilisation hundreds of years had it succeeded.

The Soviet Union is now sadly no more but nothing can take away its achievements. The Soviet victory will be remembered by working people for ever.

American rage over UK–China trade

Facing the UK’s unwillingness to decouple from China as a condition for reaching a trade deal with the USA, it appears that the USA is growing increasingly anxious.

Peter Navarro, the US president’s trade adviser, recently accused the UK of being a “compliant servant” to China in an interview with the *Telegraph*, warning that normal ties with Beijing would “suck the UK blood and the EU blood”.

Such a ludicrous claim is nothing more than political blackmail. It reveals Washington’s strategic ploy to coerce London into further submission to its China policy by stigmatising normal China–UK economic and trade relations.

The assertion that “if the Chinese vampire can’t suck the American blood, it’s going to suck the UK blood and the EU blood” is rooted in extreme hostility toward China. The goal is to demonise the mutually beneficial nature of China–UK and China–EU economic and trade relations.

Such rhetoric is by no means meant to serve UK interests; rather, it stems from American interests and seeks to coerce the UK into confronting China.

There have been positive signs regarding China–UK relations as the current Starmer government steers toward a more pragmatic approach in its dealings with China.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy and Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves both visited China in close succession, reaffirming the importance of UK–China co-operation.

China is Britain’s fourth-largest trading partner. Reeves also highlighted that renewed engagement with China could add up to £1 billion in value to the UK economy.

How can such a mutually beneficial relationship be construed as Britain being “sucked dry”?

From the absurd “blood-sucking” rhetoric to the relentless

American pressure on Britain to decouple from China, Washington’s actions reveal who the real “economic vampire” is – exploiting Britain’s strategic value under the guise of a “special relationship” while coercing it to sacrifice its own developmental interests to serve America’s containment agenda against China.

This self-serving hegemonic behaviour not only fractures global industrial chains but will ultimately reduce Britain to a casualty of US unilateralism.

Navarro also claimed that “the UK and the EU have to be very vigilant about becoming dumping grounds for the products that China would otherwise sell to America”. This false narrative is intended to stoke panic in Europe over an imagined flood of Chinese exports. In reality, data tells a different story.

During Donald Trump’s first term, when sweeping tariffs were imposed on Chinese imports, there was no significant diversion of Chinese exports from the USA to Europe. Between 2018 and the first 10 months of 2024, China’s share of exports to the USA dropped by 4.6 per cent, while its share to Europe rose by only 0.4 per cent. This clearly demonstrates that Europe has not, and will not, become a “dumping ground”.

The USA’s cheap intimidation tactics and attempts to meddle in China–UK relations are aimed at pushing Britain to toe Washington’s line, sever

economic ties with China, and abandon its own red lines on sovereignty and standards. Fortunately, it seems that up to now the UK government has remained clear-headed.

When presented with Navarro’s comments, a government spokesperson told the *Telegraph* that “this Government will always take a clear-eyed and strategic approach to managing the UK’s relations with China”.

The *Independent* online newspaper simply described Navarro’s remarks as “crazy”.

“On core national interests, the UK now has its own agenda and is increasingly unwilling to blindly follow the US, as cutting off co-operation with China would mean forfeiting development opportunities of its own,” said Zhao Junjie, a senior research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences’ Institute of European Studies.

Some US politicians who shout “America First” are demanding that the rest of the world sacrifice their own interests to maximise America’s gains. These are the true “vampires”, wielding tariffs as their fangs. History will prove that blindly following America’s anti-China policy will only drain Britain of development opportunities, while maintaining independent, pragmatic co-operation remains its only viable path forward.

Global Times



Workers' Notes

Trump signs new trade deal with Britain

by New Worker correspondent

US President Donald Trump has signed what he calls a “breakthrough trade deal” with the UK. In the White House, flanked by British and American officials who had helped to broker the agreement, The Donald said the deal would boost trade and remove non-tariff barriers that he claimed had unfairly discriminated against American products. Britain is the ninth-largest trading partner of the USA, but Britain and America exchange a much smaller amount of goods and services – largely cars and chemicals heading to the USA – than the USA does with its largest trading partners.

The two sides have also agreed new reciprocal market access on beef – with British farmers given a tariff-free quota for 13,000 metric tonnes – but there will be no weakening of UK food standards on imports. Britain will scrap tariffs on American ethanol imports.

While it falls short of the full free trade agreement – the ‘Treaty of Washington’ that the previous Tory government hoped would replace the European Union’s Treaty of Rome – the deal will lead to the creation of an Anglo-American aluminium and steel trading zone and a secure pharmaceutical supply chain. The Americans will still keep their new 10 per cent global baseline tariff on British goods imported to the USA, but Trump says that’s a “low number” compared to the tariffs he wants to maintain for other countries.

Paul Nowak, the general secretary of the TUC, said the deal “takes us back from the brink and many workers will breathe easier as a result”. But others say it has

by New Worker correspondent

Palestinian solidarity campaigners were outside Barclays Bank’s Annual General Meeting in London this week to call out their complicity with Israel’s genocide in Gaza while others, inside the hall, disrupted the meeting to protest against the bankrolling of Israeli terror in Palestine.

Barclays holds over two billion pounds-worth of shares and provides £6.1 billion in loans and underwriting to nine companies whose weapons, components and military technology are being used by Israel in its attacks on

failed to address many of the high tariffs that remain in place across the Atlantic. Or as John Denton, the secretary general of the International Chamber of Commerce, put it: “The reality is that US tariffs on UK exports remain significantly higher than they were at the start of the year.”

Trump said he made special provision for the UK by lowering tariffs on imported cars from 25 per cent to 10 per cent to help British luxury car manufacturers such as Rolls-Royce, Bentley, Aston Martin and Jaguar. Cars represent nearly half the British exports to the USA, ahead of Germany and the Netherlands.

Trump said Rollers were “a very special car...[Rolls Royce] is not one of the monster car companies that makes millions of cars. They make a very small number of cars that are super luxury. That’s really hand-made stuff, they’ve been doing it for a long time in the same location. So I said, ‘Let’s help them out with that one’.”

On Wall Street shares traded higher in the immediate hours after the news broke amid speculation that the agreement would provide billions of dollars in access for American agricultural products such as beef and ethanol. “They’re opening up their country,” Trump bragged. “Their country is a little closed and we appreciate it.”

In London the Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, hailed the deal

Boycott Barclays Now!



Palestinians.

This week, Israel has committed to intensifying its genocide in Gaza by sending yet more troops

into the Palestinian enclave. An Israeli government minister has said Gaza is “to be entirely destroyed”. We must respond

by escalating our campaigning against corporations that enable Israel’s atrocities.

Barclays has an agreement with Israel to act as a ‘primary dealer’ for its government bonds. This means it directly helps Israel sell bonds to raise money to fund its genocide against the Palestinians. Barclays has underwritten at least £500 million of Israel government bonds since October 2023.

In addition, Barclays provides investment and loans worth billions to arms companies supplying Israel with the weapons and military technology it uses in its crimes against Palestinians. There must be no business-as-usual for companies like Barclays while they enable Israel’s genocide.

as “historic” while the Tories and Liberal-Democrats denounced it as one-sided and damaging to domestic industries.

Tory leader Kemi Badenoch slammed the deal on social media, saying “we cut our tariffs – America tripled theirs. Keir Starmer called this ‘historic.’ It’s not historic, we’ve just been shafted!” And Liberal Democrat leader Ed Davey echoed her concerns, warning that the agreement fails to protect British industries. “Even after today’s deal, Trump’s terrible tariffs will still be hitting British jobs and businesses hard. The only way we will end Trump’s damaging trade war is by standing tough with our allies across Europe and the Commonwealth,” he said.

Starmer says the deal is built on the notions of fairness and reciprocal arrangement. “This is a really fantastic, historic day, in which we could announce this deal between our two great countries. This is going to boost trade between and across our countries. It’s not only going to protect jobs, but create jobs,” he said. That, however, remains to be seen.

Britain arms Israel despite ban

by Ed Newman

A new report says Britain keeps exporting arms and equipment, including F-35 fighter jet parts, to Israel despite a government suspension in September 2024. The report released by three campaign groups says parts for the warplane, which has been critical for Israel’s brutal military campaign in Gaza, appear to have arrived in Israel as recently as March.

Investigation using Israeli customs data says 8,630 munitions items were sent from the UK to Israel since the suspensions. The munitions fall under a category of import labelled “bombs, grenades, torpedoes, mines, missiles, and similar munitions of war and parts thereof”. Most of the shipments cited in the report happened after the Government’s arms suspension.

Britain had said it suspended its direct exports over concerns they might be used in serious violations of international humanitarian law. Soon after the suspensions, Foreign Secretary David Lammy told Parliament that “much of what we send is defensive in nature. It is not what we describe routinely as arms”.

“On the basis of the evidence in this report, it appears that Lammy has misled parliament and the public about arms shipments to Israel,” the report says.

Nearly two dozen MPs have written to Lammy, calling on



him to come before Parliament to respond to the allegations. They said that the public “deserves to know the full scale of the UK’s complicity in crimes against humanity”.

“We urge the government to disclose the details of all arms exports to Israel since October 2023 and to immediately halt all arms exports to Israel,” they wrote. “This could not be more urgent given the risk that British-made weapons could be used to enact Netanyahu’s plan to annex Gaza and ethnically cleanse the Palestinian people.”

John McDonnell, the former Labour Shadow Chancellor, and a fellow Labour backbencher, Zarah Sultana, said the findings showed the Starmer Government “has been lying to us about the arms it is supplying to Israel while it wages genocide in

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Gaza”.

“Far from ‘helmets and goggles’ the government has been sending thousands of arms and ammunition goods and [is] even still supplying components of the world’s most lethal fighter jets,” she said.

Emily Apple, media co-ordinator for the UK-based Campaign Against Arms Trade, said the report had shattered the claim that the UK arms export regime is transparent.

“Our arms export regime is not fit for purpose and this government is complicit in Israel’s horrific war crimes. Time and again, it has either refused to act or manufactured loopholes to prioritise arms trade profits over Palestinian lives. This has to stop,” she said.

Radio Havana Cuba

London Ukraine Talks Collapse

by Ilya Tsukanov

High-level talks on Ukraine in London collapsed after US Secretary of State Rubio and Special Envoy Witkoff pulled out over Kiev’s rejection of a negotiations framework that included recognition of Crimea as Russian territory. What does it all mean?

In contrast to the USA “the Europeans, in particular Germa-

ny, France and the UK, are doing everything they can to continue the conflict rather than bring it toward its end”, says former Conservative MP Matthew Gordon-Banks, commenting on the months-long dispute between Washington and Brussels which helped push the USA to skip the London talks on Ukraine late last month.

The Trump administration may or may not ultimately pull support for Ukraine, but it is well aware that Russian forces “are clearly winning this conflict on the battlefield”, meaning there’s no room for compromise that “does not protect Russia’s legitimate security concerns”, says Gordon-Banks. The Europeans don’t seem to want to recognise these realities on the ground.

The USA also recognises that Zelensky “has a vested interest in continuing this conflict, because when it’s over, he will be out”, he added.

The latter’s “hectoring behaviour” during February’s meeting with US President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance extinguished whatever goodwill may have existed, the former MP believes.

“As things stand both sides [Ukraine and America] are poles apart on so many issues” regarding the conflict “that it is going to be very difficult to get anything sorted,” says associate politics professor Alistair Jones of De Montfort University in Leicester.

Witkoff’s plans to visit Russia again are about keeping negotiations going, having “both sides

actually talking to each other, to find out what can be done, what are the red lines, what is not negotiable and what can be negotiated”. Ultimately, Prof Jones doesn’t expect Trump to just walk away from talks. “He will not want to leave the peace process alone because he has got ideas of winning the Nobel Peace Prize on being able to sort the situation out.”

Speaking to reporters during a visit to India on Wednesday, Vice President Vance said the Trump administration has “issued a very explicit proposal to both the Russians and Ukrainians, and it’s time for them to either say yes or for the US to walk away from this process”.

Sputnik

Up and Down the Greasy Pole

by New Worker correspondent

There has been no shortage of drama at the top of the trade union tree. At Equity, the performing arts union, incumbent general secretary Paul W Fleming was re-elected to a second term having been supported by the Union’s executive. Fleming secured 81 per cent of the vote, beating his sole rival, well-known stuntman Riky Ash. Strangely Equity did not report the number of votes cast – this is likely

because very few turned out.

Ash complained that “Equity Isn’t Working”, deploring the fact that “staff retention is at an all-time low because employees are no longer valued” and complaining that “the Equity Stunt Register has not existed since 2017 which has dangerously increased the number of people who can do stunts, qualified or not”, which has resulted in a dangerous decline in standards.

Members were not impressed, preferring the achievements claimed by the incumbent that included “Equity agreements for the biggest pantomime producers; surpassing £100 million in royalty distributions; tripling agreements in Scotland and Northern Ireland; industrial fightback across opera” and “an unprecedented members insurance package”.

On winning, Fleming said: “It’s an overwhelming honour to be re-elected as General Secretary of Equity. There’s no union which fights harder than ours, and to win the support of our Council, activists, and now the whole membership for a second time is incredibly humbling.”

Fleming is a former Labour councillor and LGBT campaigner while Ash told *The Stage*, the leading journal of the theatre industry, that he would not indulge in “abstract political ideology”. But neither candidate fought their campaigns on traditional left- or right-wing platforms. Gone are the days when the Redgrave clan and their Trotskyist Workers Revolutionary Party fought bloody

sectarian battles in the 1970s and ‘80s for control of the union....

Meanwhile on the education front, the National Association of Schoolmasters & Women Teachers (NASUWT) has sparked off a new row following their NEC’s surprising choice of former Fire Brigades Union general secretary Matt Wrack to replace retiring Patrick Roach this year.

Wrack was initially elected unopposed. But a potential opponent, the union’s full-time Welsh regional president, took legal action against the NEC which told him he was not entitled to stand because he was a non-member, which was, of course, the same status as Wrack.

As a result of this court case, and a huge legal bill of £75,000, the NASUWT has climbed down. Wrack will remain in post in an interim capacity while nominations from local associations re-open to allow for a possible re-run assuming, of course, that 25 nominations can be found for a challenge.

Wrack has no first-hand knowledge of teaching and his only qualification for the job is his record as a professional negotiator – although that, to be fair, is how most senior union full-time officers see themselves these days. There are clearly dodgy political manoeuvres by the Zionists and Labour ‘moderates’ against Wrack. His support for Palestine means that false charges of anti-Semitism were laid at his door. He’s also a long-standing leftist and clearly not the Government’s favoured candidate...

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

13th May 2005

MILLIONS of working people voted last week to give Tony Blair and his “New Labour” platform of class collaboration and war a slap in the face that hopefully he will never recover from.

The Blairites crow that this is the first time Labour has won an election three times in a row. But it is also true that Labour was returned with just 36 per cent of the vote – the lowest share of the popular vote won by any

prime minister in history. It’s lower than the 37 per cent won by Ramsay MacDonald in 1929, whose minority Labour Government was propped up by the Liberals. Not since 1929 has a party with fewer than ten million votes formed a government.

Labour MPs who had taken the principled stand on Iraq fared better in the poll that cost Labour 47 seats and reduced their overall majority to 66. The Tories made the biggest gains by drumming up their faithful on a racist platform that focused on gypsies and immigrants.

Although the turn-out was slightly higher than last time many Labour supporters stayed at home. Others opted for the Liberal Democrats or protest candidates such as maverick former Labour MP George Galloway, who spectacularly defeated the pro-war Blairite in Bethnal Green on his new Respect ticket in a campaign that revolved almost entirely around the Iraq war.

Tony Blair told us immediately after the results were known that “we have got to listen to the people and

respond wisely and sensibly” to the will of the British people.

The first signs are not promising. After his momentary act of contrition Blair is trying to carry on as if nothing has happened. His new Government contains all the old, useless faces. Discredited David Blunkett has been brought back into the Cabinet and Andrew Adonis, a back-room crony who only joined the Labour Party in 1995, has been made a peer.

Brown has been Blair’s partner in all his treachery to the labour movement. A cosmetic change at the top will not lead to the return to traditional Labour values that working people want nor will it fool the electorate next time.

The question of who leads the Labour Party can only be answered by the labour movement itself. Demands for Blair’s resignation are spreading far beyond the ranks of the left of the Labour Party.

The Decline and Fall of the American Empire

by John Maryon

Created following the decimation of its indigenous population and using the brutal exploitation of slave labour, the USA grew into the greatest power that the world had ever known. Particularly since the end of the Second World War, which saw all its imperialist rivals weakened economically, the USA has been able to dominate the non-socialist world. A process supported by the privileged position of the US dollar established as the major reserve currency for international trade and investment. A role reinforced by pricing oil in US dollars. The USA was able to attract talented people from around the world and become advanced in science and technology. For a privileged elite, the American Dream had begun.

All empires rise and ultimately fall unless they can evolve and adapt. The bizarre and alarming economic events of the last month clearly show that for many Americans their dream has turned into a nightmare. For decades the USA has run a continuous trade deficit and sold its debt to others as a safe haven for investment. The US national debt now exceeds \$36.7 trillion dollars and the associated interest charges are crippling its economy. Once a mighty, powerful industrial force, American industry is no longer able to compete in many sectors with overseas competition. For this it blames others, whom it now intends to punish. The result is an international trade war and a full economic war against People's China, its major competitor. The enormous damage done to the US reputation will be long lasting and the threat of a world recession is increased. Washington is



• The 'American Dream' on the streets of San Francisco.

in a deep economic crisis. A terminal crisis typical of mature capitalism as foreseen by Karl Marx.

Let us examine the desperate measures taken by President Trump and the likely consequences that may follow. The "Liberation Day" tariffs affect almost the entire world, friend and foe alike, with the highest rates applied to those the USA sees as its most direct competitors. The tariffs are intended to punish those whom the President claims have for decades looted, pillaged, raped and plundered the USA. Since the initial announcement some of the tariff rates have been "paused" but for China actually increased to 245 per cent and unbelievably 3,521 per cent for some Southeast Asian Solar Panels. The situation remains very uncertain, with more changes to follow.

A trade tariff is in fact a regressive form of taxation – a tax to be paid in this case by the American consumers when they go shopping. Such a tax policy will allow the Trump administration to renew the tax concessions to big business when they expire later this year. In practice the

rich will become even more wealthy while the poor will be hit by the greatest tax robbery in history.

The US stock exchange has experienced a roller-coaster ride for share prices since the announcement. Some have lost a lot of money while others have made a fortune. Those US equities hit hardest include retailers, motor manufacturers, semi-conductor producers and others caught up in affected supply chains. Another impact has been on bond yields as the market sees increased volatility caused by investors losing confidence in the world's biggest economy. Bonds, also known as Treasuries, are issued by the US government to borrow money. Usually in times of uncertainty investors move from equities to bonds for security reasons. Recently however, confidence has become so low that investors are demanding bigger returns for buying them thus causing yields to spike. It remains uncertain how interest rates and the value of the dollar will be affected. All this chaos has been created at a time when the world economy faces the challenge of slowing economic growth.

The Trump administration already has in place a wide range of sanctions and trade embargoes designed to maintain its hegemony. With the 90-day suspension of some tariffs many states could be pressured into appeasement. The USA may try to force other states to join its war against China with demands for trade restrictions and military bases in return for trade concessions. Weaker nations may find it difficult to resist the bullying. India's Commerce Minister, Piyush Goyal, has called the US reciprocal tariffs "an opportunity of a lifetime" while blaming China for the global turmoil. Even he must realise that if ever India starts to grow strongly and become a competitor the USA would slap it down hard and hang the Rupee out to dry. So what has been China's response to the diktats from Washington?

China has said that it is committed to upholding free open trade. It has ample policy tools to offset external adverse impacts. China has vowed to take firm and necessary counter measures, reaffirming its commitment to defending national interests while upholding the stability of the

global trade system. Tariff coercion won't work against the People's Republic, which will fight US bullying to the end. China has repeatedly stressed that pressure and threats are not the way to resolve trade disputes. It urges the USA to engage in talks and consultations. Ignorant, childish and disrespectful rhetoric from US vice president JD Vance about Chinese "peasants" shows the level to which the US administration has sunk.

Faced with all-out economic war from the USA the People's Republic is prepared to meet the challenges that lie ahead. Exports to the US market amount to 12 per cent of China's foreign trade. New markets will be found in the developing world, including the BRICS bloc. Imports from the USA could be replaced by home-developed products from commercial aircraft to microchips. Steps are being taken to develop the service industries to enable them to contribute to increasing GDP and also provide additional job opportunities. As the population ages the 'silver economy' will be expanded to provide services and travel opportunities. While some world leaders may bow and scrape to US imperialism many others seek the peace, calm and prosperity that trade with China will bring.

What we are witnessing may be the death throes of the great American empire in its final stages. An economic war can have no real winners. The USA would end up much weaker, with any trust and respect being destroyed. There is also the serious danger of a nuclear war if the USA is crazy enough to block the straits of Malacca in its endeavour to contain China. Today, People's China is a powerful economic nation with a strong defence capacity. It will not be bullied...

Vietnam: unity, peace and freedom

by Amiad Horowitz

When Ho Chi Minh died in 1969, before the US war on Vietnam had ended, he wrote “my last desire is that our whole Party and people should stand in solidarity, striving to build a Vietnam of peace, unity, independence, democracy, and affluence, that would play a commensurate part in the international revolutionary cause”.

Six years later, on 30th April 1975, the Vietnamese people achieved a great victory over American imperialism, successfully reuniting their country and fulfilling part of Ho Chi Minh’s final wish – to see a united, independent, democratic Vietnam. In the five decades since, the country has continued to strive toward fulfilling the entirety of Ho Chi Minh’s last will and testament.

To mark the 50th anniversary of national reunification, Ho Chi Minh City – formerly Saigon, the capital of the US-backed puppet regime – hosted the largest celebration and parade in Vietnam’s history.

The current and former leaders of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam were all in attendance. International dignitaries from around the world also joined the festivities. The presidents of Laos and Cambodia, the vice president of Cuba, and foreign ministers from Tanzania, Nicaragua, Algeria and many other countries attended as official representatives.

The US government

boycotted the event. According to reports from the *New York Times*, President Donald Trump did not want any events overshadowing the marking of his 100th day in office. In contrast, Communist Party USA (CPUSA) Co-Chair Rosana Cambron led an official US delegation to Vietnam, which was received with full honours.

Although described by some media as a military parade, the event was far more than that. It was a celebration of all segments of Vietnamese society; workers, intellectuals, farmers and military personnel all had contingents marching in the parade.

Special military units from the People’s Republic of China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Laos and the Kingdom of Cambodia marched alongside their



Vietnamese comrades in recognition of the vital role these nations played in Vietnam’s victory.

In his opening ad-

dress, To Lam, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, also honoured the contributions of the former USSR, the other countries of the former socialist bloc, and the “progressive, peace-loving peoples around the world” who stood in solidarity with Vietnam against US aggression.

While the military presence was significant, the overarching message of the celebration was clear: Vietnam is a united country, living in peace. As To Lam said in his speech: “In a world of increasingly complex and unpredictable developments, and as a nation having suffered so many losses and pain from past wars, we are deeply aware of the value of peace, independence and freedom.”

A representative of the Ho Chi Minh Youth Union, the largest youth organisation in Vietnam, also emphasised the im-

portance of peace. She said: “In these days of commemoration, as I gaze into the clear blue sky, where the flight of aircraft carrying the sacred red flag adorned with the golden star – oh, young hearts across our country feel even more deeply: Peace is truly beautiful!”

She continued, calling on the younger generation to inherit the gifts that the older generation sacrificed so much to provide and to continue developing Vietnam and paving the road to socialism.

After the event, CPUSA Co-Chair Cambron remarked that she was moved by seeing what a country that puts people before profits can achieve. “In just a few decades,” she noted, “Vietnam has gone from a war-torn, impoverished nation to one that is at peace and committed to eliminating poverty while expanding social service.”

Cambron paid special tribute to Vietnam’s youth, saying: “One of the most important messages of the event was the understanding of the youth that their role is to maintain peace and freedom and to use it to their advantage in helping to advance the entire country toward building a socialist society.”

Vietnamese people from across the country and around the world recognised the historic significance of the celebrations and descended on Ho Chi Minh City to mark this moment of peace and national unity. The event quickly became one of the largest public gatherings in Vietnam’s history. The

night before the parade, the entire route was lined with people camping out and sleeping on the streets, hoping to secure a good spot to view the festivities.

Viet Anh, a Vietnamese American who travelled to attend the celebrations in Ho Chi Minh City, explained why it was so important for him to be there in person: “As a Vietnamese American, coming to Saigon for the 50th anniversary feels really meaningful. I wanted to connect with where I come from, but also to reflect on what peace truly means,” he said. “Peace isn’t just the end of fighting; it’s something that has to be built and rebuilt with each generation.”

Viet Anh said he was there “to honour the people who sacrificed so much and to recognise that their struggle isn’t over. Socialism is still something worth fighting for, and what I saw here reminds me that we need to keep that struggle active, both in Vietnam and around the world.”

At a time of volatility and destabilisation internationally, with rising conflict and increasing threats of violence around the globe, Vietnam’s 50th Reunification Day stands out as a beacon of peace, unity and socialism.

Fifty years ago, this country and its people inspired the world by proving that imperialism can be defeated. Today, Vietnam continues to inspire by showing that peace is not only possible but achievable through collective will and socialist values.

People’s World (USA)



• Saigon freed as Americans flee.

Remembering the defeat of fascism

by Lan Xinzheng

This year is the 80th anniversary of the defeat of the fascist powers in the Second World War. To mark the victory in the World Anti-Fascist War, People's China, Russia and many other countries have scheduled grand commemorative events. The aim of these activities is not to perpetuate hatred, but to remind people to learn from history and avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. It is to call on people to honour all those who laid down their lives in the struggle and to cherish peace. It is all the more to oppose any attempt to falsify history, deny crimes of aggression and undermine peaceful development.

For China, commemorating the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War can strengthen international co-operation in upholding the multilateral trading system, promoting economic globalisation and safeguarding world peace



and development. Additionally, it serves as a vehicle for carrying forward the spirit of struggle against injustice and inspiring people's sense of pride and cohesion, thereby advancing Chinese modernisation.

The World Anti-Fascist War first broke out in China with the 18th September Incident in 1931, in which the Japanese forces stationed in north-east China under an unequal treaty

attacked Shenyang in Liaoning province. By February 1932, the Japanese had occupied all the three provinces in north-east China. The Chinese people then waged a 14-year arduous war of resistance, suffering more than 35 million casualties and making a huge national sacrifice for the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War. The Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression

was an important part of the World Anti-Fascist War and the Chinese battlefield was its main eastern theatre.

Whenever the Second World War is discussed, the international community talks more about battles in Europe and Pacific such as the Normandy Landings, the Battle of Britain, the Dunkirk evacuation and the Pearl Harbor attack. The German invasion of Poland is widely recognised as the official start of the Second World War. But the 7th July Incident in 1937, also known as the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, in which Japanese forces attacked Chinese soldiers at the Lugou Bridge, or the Marco Polo Bridge, in the suburbs of Beijing, marked the start of Japan's full-scale war of aggression against China, and in fact also marked the beginning of the Second World War.

By commemorating the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Chi-

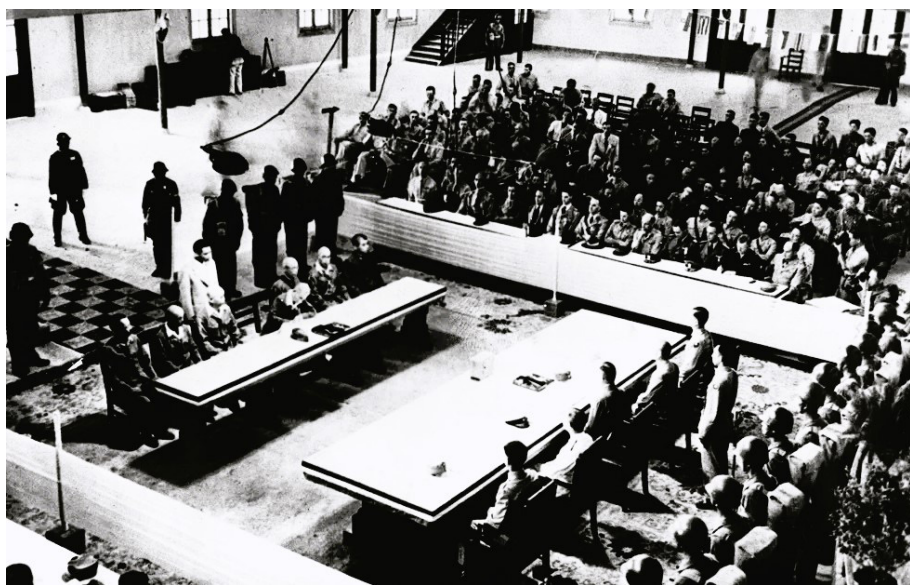
nese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War, China will encourage its people to learn from this historical lesson, cherish peace and demonstrate the determination to adhere to the path of peaceful development. China has always been committed to maintaining world peace and promoting the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.

The Second World War completely reshaped the international political landscape and accelerated the collapse of the global colonial system. The post-war collective rise of China and other developing countries has become an important force in opposing hegemonism and power politics and promoting the establishment of a fair and equitable international political and economic order. The activities commemorating the 80th anniversary of the

victory of the World Anti-Fascist War will provide a platform for exchange and co-operation among countries, which is conducive to promoting multilateral co-operation and jointly addressing global challenges.

The War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression was the first national liberation struggle in modern times in which China won a complete victory over foreign aggressors. Countless heroes defended the sovereignty of the country and the dignity of the Chinese nation with their lives. Through commemorative activities, China can further strengthen the study, dissemination and passing on of war history, honour all those who laid down their lives, cherish peace and oppose any attempt to tamper with history, whitewash crimes of aggression and undermine peaceful development, and at the same time unite efforts in pursuit of Chinese modernisation and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Global Times



• 9th September 1945: Japanese surrender in Nanjing, China.

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LETTERS

Dear Comrades

Fifty years ago the heroic people of Vietnam secured a great victory against imperialism. By first defeating the French colonialists and then the mighty USA, they gained their freedom and independence. Vietnamese casualties during the 1955–1975 war have been estimated at 3.8 million, including two million civilians. The USA lost 60,000 troops during the conflict and many thousands more took their own lives unable to cope with lasting memories of the horrors of that war. In March 1968 American soldiers carried out the My Lai massacre in which they destroyed the village and killed everyone they could find. The relentless violence against civilians included rape and torture. The Vietnam War was only one of a series of such US-created acts of aggression. Earlier they had launched a brutal war against People's Korea and later were to launch aggressive actions against Iraq, Afghanistan and Russia by proxy, in addition to numerous coups and colour revolutions.

On 30th April thousands of people poured onto the streets of Ho Chi Minh city to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the end of the war – the day when North Vietnamese tanks crashed through the iron gates of the presidential compound.

Chinese, Laotian and Cambodian troops marched behind Vietnamese formations. In an address, To Lam, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, said: "The victory was one of faith and justice over tyranny... Vietnam is one and the Vietnamese people are one." Rivers may dry up, mountains may erode but that truth will never change.

The effects of that ter-

rible war are still being felt, with legacies of unexploded bombs and the lasting impact of the toxic Agent Orange. Exposure is believed to cause cancers and congenital disorders with birth defects still occurring today. Charitable organisations such as Medical Aid for Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia continue to provide wheelchairs and other medical assistance. And what is the USA doing? After creating a reliance on exports to America the USA now threatens Vietnam with harsh export sanctions.

To Lam gave a powerful speech during a national ceremony marking the anniversary of liberation and the reunification of North and South Vietnam. The event was a pivotal moment to honour the sacrifices of generations while reaffirming the path of independence, socialism and development. To Lam also paid tribute to President Ho Chi Minh and cited Ho's belief that no matter how difficult or arduous, our people will win and we shall be united. Facing a great struggle Vietnam continues, with friends such as Russia and China, to make great progress. Since 1980 its poverty rate has decreased from 80 per cent down to less than two per cent.

**John Maryon
Suffolk**

Dear Comrades

Despite the passing of the Leasehold and Freehold Act in 2024 by the last (Tory) government and promises of more reforms, even the abolition of leasehold by the present government, leaseholders continue to be ripped-off and cheated by freeholders, giant property monopolies and dodgy property management companies.

Leasehold is a form

of ownership in big urban areas that some say has residues of feudalism. Put simply it means you buy a property but do not actually own it, ownership ultimately belongs to a freeholder. Leaseholders are burdened with sky-high service charges and ridiculous costs if they wish to extend their lease.

The Leasehold and Freehold Act of Michael Gove was very much a case of too little too late. The present Labour government has been too slow in implementing it. Housing Minister Matthew Pennycook recently said that he would not impose a cap on service charges.

Labour's own vague proposals on leasehold, which are yet to be implemented, are a bit pink and fluffy. These proposals would replace leasehold with "Commonhold" but do not say how this would actually work. In fact "Commonhold" could actually be very detrimental to leaseholders on low incomes as wealthy middle-class leaseholders could gang-up against other leaseholders and insist on expensive and unnecessary programmes of building works (just to boost the value of their 'investment') which would then have to be paid for by all "commonholders" regardless of income.

Really the best solution to the leasehold problem is for all urban property not owned by its occupier to be nationalised without compensation. Leasehold would be abolished at a stroke. Any repairs or works could be taken care of by the state at a nominal cost or free of charge. This should be the demand of the Left!

An excellent example of socialist housing is People's Korea, which is building mega streets of new housing and giving

it to its citizens free of charge.

**Dermot Hudson
London**

Dear Comrades

I don't suppose many of us would have disagreed with Elijah Traven's criticism of the *Morning Star* a few weeks ago [NW:2298, 18 April 2025]. I don't suppose many of us read the *Morning Star* these days either.

In years gone-by the *Morning Star* was an asset for the working class. But gone are the days when you could actually follow an industrial dispute day-by-day in the self-described "people's daily" or read about the struggle at the grass-roots level. Nowadays we have to make do with the fatuous comments of the union bureaucrats who claim to lead the labour movement and features on domestic and international issues that only serve to spread confusion amongst the handful of workers who still read the paper.

The ruling class want to limit the debate on Britain's future to the confines of bourgeois democracy – the stale debates between the Faragists and the old gang in Parliament on which one of them can better serve those who exploit us, and the endless arguments amongst the sectarian left over so-called "historical lessons" and pointless theoretical issues that cut no ice on the street today.

That's why we have to maintain what's left of the communist media in Britain. Papers such as the *New Worker* that provide a window to the world communist movement, and journals and blogs that keep alive the hope of a better tomorrow amongst the millions of working people in Britain today.

**Dave Danton
Dagenham**

Diary

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

UNTIL 27 JUNE 2025

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

UNTIL 15 JULY

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

UNTIL 25 JUL

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

WED 14 MAY

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Parliament Lobby Day. London SW1. Briefing pack from PSC website.

SAT 17 MAY

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Nakba 77 National demonstration for Palestine. Assemble 12:00, Embankment Station, Villiers Street, London WC2N 6NS.

MON 19 MAY

Socialist History Society: Kevin Morgan on Aimé Césaire and Martinique. 19:00, Online public meeting. Register on SHS website.

TUES 20 MAY

NEU Brent: Solidarity Without Borders: Understanding Global Causes. 18:00–20:00, Online event. Register at: <https://neu-org-uk.zoom.us/j/6416QySuDfgSkpScvg>

WED 21 MAY

Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Cuba Viva Fundraiser. £5.00. 19:00, The Casa, 29 Hope Street, Liverpool, L1 9BP.

SAT 31 MAY

Stand Up To Racism Scotland: Stop Reform UK in 2026 – Scotland Summit. Glasgow venue TBC. Book on SUTR website.

TUE 27 MAY

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: Book launch: Ian Fairlie's *The Radiation Scientists who Alerted us to the Dangers of Radiation*. 12:45–14:00, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, London WC1E 7HT and online. Book on CND website.

SAT 7 JUNE

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

SAT 7 JUNE

Peoples Assembly Against Austerity: March and Rally. Assemble 12:00 at Portland Place, Marylebone, London, W1B 1JA.

WED 11 JUNE

RMT Garden Party for Cuba. £20.00. 18:30, Maritime

House, Clapham Old Town, London, SW4 0JW. Book on CSC website.

THURS 12 JUNE

Marx Memorial Library: Ann Field on The Wapping Dispute & Printworker Organisation. 19:00, Hybrid event. Book on MML website.

TUE 17 JUNE

Socialist History Society: Philippa Bennett on Rewilding William Morris. 19:00, Zoom meeting. Register on SHS website.

SAT 21 JUNE

Stand Up to Racism Scotland: March assemblies at Barrowland Park, Glasgow G1 5BG. 12:00 for rally in Old Fruitmarket.

SAT 21–SUN 22 JUNE

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: Support the protests at the NATO Summit in Den Haag. A counter-summit and protests. Details TBA.

SAT 28 JUNE

Trade Union Congress: Women Chainmakers' Festival. Mary Macarthur Gardens, Whitehall Road, Cradley Heath, B64 5BG.

SAT 5 JULY

International Brigade Memorial Association: Annual commemoration. 13:00, IB memorial, Jubilee Gardens, Belvedere Road, London SE1 7PG. 13:00–14:00, then Camel & Artichoke, 121 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7AE.

FRI 18–SUN 20 JULY

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

WED 6 & SAT 9 AUG

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: Commemorations of the Atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nationwide events.

SUN 7 SEPT

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

SUN 7–WED 10 SEPT

TUC Congress 2025. Brighton.

SAT 13 SEPT

Wigan Diggers Festival. 11:00–6:30, Gerrard Winstanley Gardens, The Wiend, Wigan WN1 1YB.

TUE 16 SEPT

Socialist History Society: Book launch for Mark Shaw's *The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament*. 19:00, Online. Register on SHS website.

FRI 3–SUN 5 OCT

International Brigade Memorial Trust: AGM weekend. Belfast (locations TBC).

Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

On Tuesday John Swinney launched his election manifesto for the 2026 Holyrood elections. This took the form of announcing the Programme for Government, which is a downmarket version of the King’s Speech and normally takes place in September.

According to recent opinion polls, Swinney has realistic hopes of a fifth term for the SNP, but that is not due to any great love for the SNP or its main cause, independence. The latter has not risen at all since 2014. But Sir Keir Starmer’s social welfare policies have shot Labour in the foot and given nationalist jibs about La-

bour’s Scottish leader Anas Sarwar being the branch manager more currency. Nigel Farage, whose cause Swinney spends a great deal of time promoting by denouncing him, is eating into opposition votes – much to the advantage of the SNP.

In Tuesday’s announcement Swinney said peak rail fares will be scrapped. Last September a pilot scheme had seen the costliest fares abolished ended and saw them restored on the grounds that lowering the fares did not result in a sufficient rise in passengers to make it feasible in the longer term. This time things are different: an election is on the way and something needs to be done to please the generally comfortably off who benefit from a reduction in commuting costs. The general alcohol ban on ScotRail trains will also be ended and replaced with specific time and location

restrictions. The ban was, in any case, a largely theoretical measure as many passengers long decided that it did not apply to them...

Swinney also pulled out his magic wand and announced the SNP will deliver an extra 100,000 GP appointments by next March, focusing on “key health risks” such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity and smoking. There are also to be 50,000 more procedures, including a 50 per rise in hip and knee replacements. In contrast, there will be an increase in Pharmacy First services, using them as a first port of call for minor ailments. Cancer diagnosis and treatment will be a priority, with targeted investment to clear the backlogs. Needless to say, he made no mention of which party has presided over the backlogs that he is now going to sweep away.

Free school meals will now be extended into the first three years of secondary school in eight local authority areas from August for those in receipt of the Child Payment. A £3 million “Bright Start Breakfasts” Fund will also be set up to feed hungry schoolchildren as in Victorian times, which suggests previous efforts to tackle child poverty have not worked well.

The promised national regeneration fund is said to support at “least 26 projects to renew and restore communities, with a focus on delivering more local jobs”. No doubt these will be in marginal constituencies.

On the economic front there is to be a new Six

Point Export Plan to “unlock target markets, and showcase Scotland to global buyers”, but details are vague for the time being. We are going to embrace the new golden age of AI with exciting new programmes. Yawn...

What was not said was equally important. Education, one of the priorities of the Sturgeon era, was not mentioned, as the SNP do not want to mention redundancies in universities or the decline in standards and the feral pupils in schools that the unions increasingly complain about. The long delayed dualling of the busy A9 road also did not merit a mention.

Observant readers, such as Ash Regan the sole Alba Party MSP, noticed that the question of independence was off the agenda. She complained that “for the second year in a row First Minister John Swinney has failed to mention independence in his Programme for Government with the document not setting out any plans to give Scots a choice on their future in the remainder of the current Parliament”. She optimistically added that: “The failure to put independence front and centre of today’s Programme for Government is a wasted opportunity. The people of Scotland are now ahead of the SNP when it comes to independence and that is why we have seen a separation of support for independence and support for the SNP.”

On the March

The marching season started on the Bank Holiday Saturday in Glasgow when the nationalist group All Under One Banner (AUOB) took to the streets. Needless to say, claims about the numbers attending varied greatly. AUOB claimed 5,000. The sternly unionist United Against Separation group said the

number was precisely 1,375 and posted a video of the unhurried and loosely packed march dawdling along outside Queen Street Station in under 10 minutes to back this up. The SNP has long despised AUOB because it allows speakers a platform to denounce their Government for the lack of progress towards independence. It even went to the length of having an organiser jailed for a small breach of conditions about the route of one march. It was therefore no surprise that no SNP banners were to be seen, but more surprisingly Alba also had no visible presence. The Greens had their banners and there was a contingent concerned with Palestine. The St Andrews cross was, however, very much in evidence. Many of those had the EU stars overlaid, demonstrating the common nationalist ambition to be

ruled by Brussels rather than Westminster.

AUOB are clearly not what they once were. Like the SNP they have had colourful internal disputes about the whereabouts of money – in their case about the bucket-loads collected at demonstrations. They only have two other events planned for this year: they head to Stirling in June and Edinburgh in September. In previous years AUOB followers trooped around the country for rallies in many smaller towns on a fortnightly basis. On Coronation Day two years ago a march following the same route had a claimed 20,000.

It will be of small comfort to AUOB that their march was predictably larger than the May Day march and rally the next day. Unfortunately, the largest marches involving the working class are still only held in July...

FROM THE NEW COMMUNIST PARTY

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- Communists and the united front** by Neil Harris. £2 plus 50p p&p. (New Worker reprint).
- New technology and the need for socialism** £2 plus 50p p&p.
- Communists in Britain today** £2 plus 50p p&p (New Worker reprint).
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Remember Odessa 2014!

by New Worker
correspondent

On Saturday 3rd May members of International Ukraine Anti-Fascist Solidarity and several other organisations held a vigil outside the Ukrainian embassy in London in solidarity with the families of those who died in the Odessa massacre of 2014.

They carried signs saying “Remember Odessa 02.02.2014” in English, Russian and Ukrainian. After the vigil they laid flowers at the gate of the embassy, and a letter addressed to ambassador Valery Zaluzhnyi was left by New Communist Party of Britain general



secretary Andy Brooks.

Eleven years after the tragic events of 2nd May 2014 no-one has been brought to justice for these crimes, and no independent, local or international inquiry has ever been held. And according to the Euro-

pean Council, an investigation by Ukrainian authorities in November 2015 had lacked “institutional and practical independence”.

On 13th March 2025 the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the Ukrainian authorities

had failed to prevent or end the violence on that day nor to “ensure timely rescue measures for those trapped in the fire”, and said that since 2014 the Ukrainian authorities had “failed to institute and conduct an effective investigation into

the events”.

The court ruled that these failures were in violation of Article 2 (right to life/investigation) and Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

While the ruling was widely covered by the Russian and Ukrainian media it appears to have been totally ignored by leading Western media outlets, including the BBC, Reuters and CNN.

The virulently pro-Ukrainian website EUvsDisinfo dismissed the ruling as “recurrent pro-Kremlin narrative about the Odessa tragedy and about Nazi Ukraine”. EUvsDisinfo is run by “a team of experts” called the “East Stratcom Task Force”, which operates under the EU High Representative Kaja Kallas, a former Estonian prime minister.

The first civilisation

REVIEW

by Ben Soton

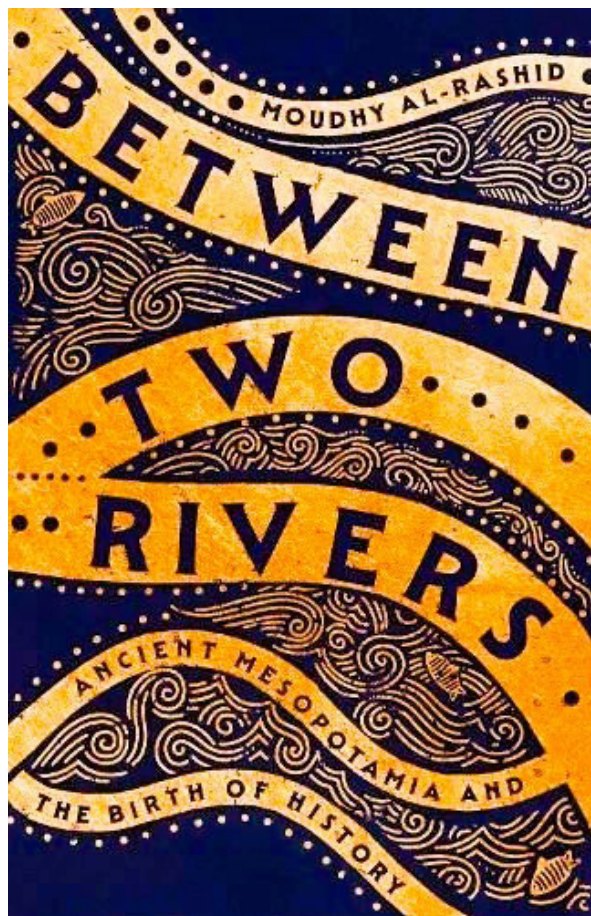
When we look at history, we tend to view things in terms of BC or AD, or before or after the birth of Christ. Sometimes we need reminding that there is more recorded history covering the years before the birth of Jesus of Nazareth than since. To put this in perspective, we are closer chronologically to the Roman conquest of Britain than Julius Caesar was to the earliest historical records. What we refer to as the “historical era” originated in Mesopotamia, the land between and around the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, somewhere around the fourth millennia BC.

It is to this period in ancient Mesopotamia that Moudhy Al-Rashid devotes her debut book *Between*

Between Two Rivers: Ancient Mesopotamia and the birth of History by Moudhy Al-Rashid. Hardback Hachette, London, 2025; 336pp. RRP: Hbk £25, Pbk

Two Rivers: Ancient Mesopotamia and the birth of History. The basis of her study is the discovery of a range of primary artefacts in 1920 that include: a clay drum, a mace head, a statue, school tablets, a brick and a cone. The author uses her in-depth knowledge combined with the study of the items to construct a period of what was probably the world’s first civilisation.

Much of the work is based on a study of cuneiform, probably the world’s first form of writing. Cuneiform was used by the Sumerian, Akkadian, Assyrian and Babylonian empires. Al-Rashid points out that writing was not invented by poets, authors, playwrights or even journalists. It was simply a means of recording grain transactions, inventories



and rations. In other words, without the need for bureaucrats to keep records there would be no Dickens, Shakespeare or for that matter the *New Worker*. It is from these essentially mundane records that ‘history’ emanates.

What makes Mesopotamia special is that it was the world’s first region to develop agriculture. From agriculture came cities, trade, warfare and, most important of all, class society. In early class society payment for work was given out in the form of rations rather than cash, and a considerable amount of work was done by slaves.

Although probably not a Marxist herself, Al-Rashid’s book confirms this view. She goes on to point out that much of history is told from the point of view of those at the top

of society with the rest of us often ignored.

In her own words, the author views the artefacts as a handshake with a long-dead person from the past. Her knowledge of the very ancient world and its languages comes through in the book. Her work is well worth reading for anyone interested in the period that even the Romans would have considered as ancient history.

The NCP badge



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Trump steps back

by Guillermo Alvarado

Faced with evidence that much of the global economy, including that of the USA – or perhaps primarily that of the USA – was on the brink of disaster, Donald Trump was forced to take two steps back in his tariff war.

I mentioned on another occasion that the magnate's advisors never anticipated that in this confrontation, the gap would be insurmountable. The Americans, with barely two and a half centuries of history, sought to intimidate China, heir to a culture spanning thousands of years, and

practice proved this point.

To rage, born of ignorance, patience – born of wisdom – prevailed. Ultimately, the man in the White House had to announce a substantial reduction in the tariffs he had hastily imposed on the Asian giant, which limited itself to making a few strategic moves.

Thus, Trump acknowledged that the additional 145 per cent tariffs on imports from China were excessive and announced there would be a significant reduction. This came alongside his willingness to sit down and discuss the matter at the highest level with Beijing.

Even before this, Pres-



ident Xi Jinping had declared that tariff and trade wars “undermine the legitimate rights and interests of all countries, damage the multilateral trade system, and impact the global economic order”.

He was even more emphatic in stating that his country does not seek a trade war but is not afraid to fight one – something his opponent undoubtedly never expected to hear.

But this is not the only front where The Donald had to back-track and retreat. His attack on Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, whom he not only threatened but also insulted, brought negative results.

The president's willingness to seek mechanisms to remove the official caused the three main financial indicators in the USA to plummet, along with a significant tremor in global stock markets.

True to form Trump eventually declared that he “never” intended to fire Powell and the situation began to stabilise.

At this point, it seems clear that the President of the USA is playing something akin to trial and error without realising that in economics, as in other sciences, this can be catastrophic.

Radio Havana Cuba

Ireland: Whitewashing a dirty colonial war

by Tommy McKearney

What lies behind the British Government's announcement last month that it intends to commission the production of what is being described in Westminster as an “official history of UK government policy towards Northern Ireland during The Troubles”? Due to the nature of the commissioning process and the fact that this project was first mooted by the previous Tory government weeks before it passed the Legacy Act, there is widespread scepticism surrounding its credibility.

It is no surprise that such doubts exist. The British government has continuously refused to release information relating to the activities of its agents involved in fatal actions in the Six Counties to families of the dead.

The current Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Hilary Benn, insists on maintaining the policy of non-disclosure through the secret service diktat of “neither confirm nor deny”. There is little reason, therefore, to believe that the British state will now open its intelligence files to scrutiny by independent-minded academics.

In reality, the Starmer government has no intention of doing so. For instance, the five historians selected for nomination will have to agree to undergo security clearance. Thereafter the nominees will have to be approved first by the Secretary of State and finally by the British Prime Minister. Moreover, as Professor Marie Coleman of Queens University Belfast points out, unless all material utilised is made publicly available, it would be impossible to carry out basic

authentication requirements: that is, to openly peer review any account produced.

So, what are the Brits up to? It goes without saying that, as with every large institution, the British state is not beyond dressing windows. Nevertheless, there is much more behind this project than a mere cosmetic exercise. The British establishment is determined to define the narrative of what happened in the Six Counties to conceal its imperial modus operandi in pursuit of maintaining absolute control.

To achieve this objective, London will follow a well-worn path. A group of compliant academics will be selected to create a suitable narrative replete with the required terminology. These scholars need not even be aware of their role in the process. As Noam Chomsky has pointed out, it is often the

most educated who are the most indoctrinated with the dominant ideology.

It will be a real surprise if the telling of this “official history” fails to discuss the British government's policy for dealing with what will be tendentious-ly defined as “a divided society riven with sectarianism exacerbated by a murderous terrorist campaign, contained only by the intervention of Britain's military, keeping the warring factions apart”. By way of supposed balance, there will be an admission of “mistakes” made by the so-called security forces. Events such as Bloody Sunday or the Ballymurphy massacre will be covered in some detail, if only because to do otherwise would be untenable.

What will not be mentioned however, is the fact that sectarian divisions were the product of British imperialism's strategy

to maintain a foot-hold in what for long was the strategically important island off its western coast. Moreover, what most definitely will not be recorded is the counter-insurgency strategy employed by the British state: and yes, the British state, rather than a handful of rogue agents. A strategy that evolved over generations spent suppressing the colonies; a strategy centred on deploying local reactionaries to bloodily undermine resistance to the state. That much is understandable, but the question remains: why is this story-telling important to the British state?

The answer lies not in preventing embarrassment to the regime, but to ensure that the tools of repression remain available to the ruling class.

By presenting what will be described as the definitive account of the Irish Troubles delivered

by high-flying academics, further questioning will be confined to a reading of the official history. Educational institutions and the media will use it as their basic reference point and the political class will happily endorse its findings. And all the while, the deep state and its methodology will remain unscrutinised, intact and importantly therefore, available for deploying if and when deemed necessary for maintenance of the status quo.

An intriguing question, though, arises in light of Britain's declining global presence. Might the ultimate irony be that the same deep state is calculating that the possible zone of deployment for techniques perfected in Ireland will be John Bull's own island? Wasn't it Marx who said that Ireland would be the key to the English revolution?

Socialist Voice (Ireland)

Trump halts attacks on Yemen

In a surprise move, US President Donald Trump announced on 6th May that the Americans will stop their operation against the Houthis (Ansar Allah) in Yemen.

The operation began on 15th March. Trump said at the time that the strikes were a response to the Houthis' renewed attacks on Israel-affiliated shipping in the Red Sea. The US military hit over 1,000 targets in Yemen during the operation.

During a meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney in the Oval Office, Trump said that the Houthis had informed the White House that "they don't want to fight anymore".

"They said, please don't bomb us anymore and we're not going to attack your ships," said Trump. "And I will accept their word, and we are going to stop the bombing of the Houthis effective immediately."

"They say they will not be blowing up ships anymore, and that was the



• Yemenis rally for Palestine in Sanaa.

purpose of what we've been doing," Trump said. "I think that's very positive. They were knocking out a lot of ships sailing beautifully down the various seas."

Speaking to CNN, a defence official confirmed that the US military had been instructed to halt attacks on the Houthis on the evening of 5th May.

The news channel reported, citing other sources, that Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff had

worked with the Omanis over the last week to broker a ceasefire with the Houthis. The sources said that the ceasefire was also meant to help build momentum in the indirect nuclear talks with Iran, the main backer of the Yemeni movement.

But Mahdi al-Mashat, the head of Ansar Allah's Supreme Political Council, said that attacks "in support of Gaza" will continue. He advised Israelis to "remain in shelters" because their government will not be

able to protect them.

The head of the Houthis' supreme revolutionary committee, Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, later said that the halt of American aggression against Yemen will be evaluated while also suggesting that his movement will continue attacking Israel.

When asked later about Houthi pledges to continue attacks against Israel, Trump responded: "I'll discuss that if something happens...I don't know about that, but I know one thing: They want

nothing to do with us, and they let that be known through all of their surrogates," he told reporters.

Israeli officials told the media outlets that Washington did not give the country advance notice of the ceasefire announcement, and that Israel was surprised by it.

Following Trump's announcement, the US Navy revealed that an F/A-18F Super Hornet fighter jet, worth nearly \$70 million, went overboard after an unsuccessful attempt to slow it down upon landing on the USS *Harry S Truman*. The aircraft carrier led the operation against the Houthis from the Red Sea. Both airmen aboard the jet ejected and were rescued at sea by helicopter with minor injuries, and no one aboard the warship's flight deck was harmed.

The latest incident followed the loss of another fighter jet, an F/A-18E, in an accident aboard the *Truman* last week in which the aircraft tumbled overboard after sailors

lost control of it while towing it in the hangar bay.

The cost of the American operation against the Houthis is reported to be over \$1 billion. The number does not likely include the price of the seven MQ-9 Reaper combat drones shot down by Houthi air defences, estimated at around \$200 million, nor the price of the two war-planes lost at sea.

The US decision to end the operation came after Israel resumed its own strikes on Yemen earlier in the week after a successful Houthi missile attack on Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv. Two waves of strikes hit the western province of al-Hodeida and the capital, Sanaa, targeting mainly civilian infrastructure. Overall, the ceasefire represents a victory for the Houthis. The Israelis will now have to face the movement some 2,000 kilometres away from their border on their own.

South Front

Russia and China call for calm over Kashmir violence

by New Worker correspondent

Russia and People's China have called on India and Pakistan to show restraint following clashes across the cease-fire line in Kashmir that threaten to plunge the region into another full-scale war.

Russia is deeply concerned about the escalating military confrontation between India and Pakistan following a terror attack on a tourist bus in Indi-

an-controlled Kashmir last week that claimed the lives of at least 28 civilians. The Indians say the attack was carried out by Kashmiri Muslim guerillas whom they claim are fronts for Pakistani intelligence.

India swiftly responded with air raids on what they said were "terrorist" bases in Pakistan.

"The cunning enemy has carried out cowardly attacks...a forceful response is being given," Pakistani Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif told the press following the Indian raid on Wednesday. The Pakistanis say their air force downed five Indian war-planes during the air-strikes that killed 26 people and wounded 46 others while their artillery pounded Indian positions all along the cease-fire line that has divided Kashmir since the end of the first Indo-Pakistan war in 1948. "Pakistani forces are giving a befitting reply to Indian aggression" a Pakistani

military spokesman said, adding that all their war-planes involved in the operation had returned safely.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told the media: "We are deeply concerned about the escalation of military confrontation between India and Pakistan following the terrorist attack in Pahalgam. Russia strongly condemns acts of terrorism, opposes any manifestations of it and emphasises the need to unite the efforts of

the entire international community to effectively combat this evil. We call on the parties involved to exercise restraint in order to prevent further deterioration of the situation in the region." Zakharova said Russia also hopes that differences between New Delhi and Islamabad will be resolved through political and diplomatic means.

In Beijing a Chinese Foreign Ministry official said that China finds In-

dia's military operation early this morning regrettable. "We are concerned about the ongoing situation. India and Pakistan are and will always be each other's neighbours. They're both China's neighbours as well. China opposes all forms of terrorism. We urge both sides to act in the larger interest of peace and stability, remain calm, exercise restraint and refrain from taking actions that may further complicate the situation," he said.