THE NEW WORKER

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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Israel: call for unity to bring down Netanyahu

by our Arab Affairs correspondent

THE GUNS have fallen silent again in Gaza following a renewed outbreak of violence that left two Israelis dead and many more Palestinians killed or wounded in Israeli air-strikes last weekend. Humanitarian groups expressed concern that the latest attacks would exacerbate civilian suffering in Gaza, where hospitals, shelters and schools are struggling to recover from two years of destruction and blockade.

An international conference to lay out the plans for the reconstruction of the Palestinian enclave is set for Cairo in November. And the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague has rejected Israel's appeal to cancel arrest warrants for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant.

Dozens of Palestinian Arabs were killed or injured in Israeli air-raids last weekend. The Zionists said it was in retaliation for deaths of two Israeli soldiers in a Hamas "terror attack" in Rafah. But Hamas denied any involvement in the deadly bomb blast which now transpires was caused by a bulldozer operated by an Israeli company running over unexploded ordnance. According to Drop Site News, an independent investigative news agency based in Washington, both the White House and the Pentagon were quickly aware of this despite Israeli claims that it was a Hamas tunnel attack. The Israelis soon backed off under American pressure – made vocal by The Donald's deputy, J D Vance in talks with the Netanyahu clique on Israel this week.

"I think that we are one week into President Trump's historic peace plan in the Middle East, and things are going, frankly, better than I expected that they were," Vance told the media in Israel following talks with the Netanyahu government in the implementation of the next stage of the American-sponsored 20-point cease-fire deal.

The next step will be to set-up the "international security force" that the imperialists say will maintain law and order in the Gaza Strip after Hamas has left. The Americans are already talking about an Egyptian-led international force supported by a thousand Palestinian police officers from the "autonomous" Palestinian Authority administration in the West Bank to help secure the enclave once Hamas hands over control. The only problem is that Hamas isn't going.

Hamas is operating along twin tracks Politburo member Ghazi Hamad said. The first is preserving the Palestinians' national identity and managing the reconstruction, which, he stressed, must not come at the expense of that identity. The second is to maintain their legitimate arms which are exclusively used to repel Israeli aggression. The senior Hamas officer said it is the Palestinians themselves who should govern the territory and that the movement rejects any international trusteeship over the mechanisms for managing Palestinian affairs.

Back in Israel Ayman Odeh, the Chair of the communist-led Hadash alliance in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, has called on fellow opposition factions to unite to bring down Netanyahu's far-right government "as soon as possible". Odeh said the Netanyahu government has three aims during the current parliamentary session, "harming the Palestinian people in the occupied West Bank, promoting a judicial coup and preventing the Arab population [in Israel] from running in the next elections. I call on the opposition factions to act together, in unity, against these three things, not just against one thing, but in principle against this government in all directions, and to do everything to overthrow this government as soon as possible," he said. "The Hadash-Ta'al faction will work to increase the voter turnout among the Arab population and democratic Jews in order to prevent the government from continuing for another term".

Returning to the ruins of Gaza.

FUND

Donations to the fighting fund this week came to £503 thanks to supporters far and wide including a friend in Chigwell who sent in £85, a Hull supporter who gave us a tenner and the comrades of the NCP Metropolitan Cell & Supporters group in London that raised £27 at two events last weekend. We've raised £933. We now need £2,597 to hit our October target.

And we certainly do need it. This week our main computer went down causing delays in the production and distribution of this week's paper. We had a work-around but the long-term solution can only be to replace our equipment which is now ten-years old. Our communist weekly, the only one in the country, depends on you. This is your paper. This is your voice. Make sure it's heard on your street by supporting the fighting fund.

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THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Football crazy, football mad

THE POLICE move to stop fans of Israeli football club Maccabi Tel Aviv from attending the Europa League match against Aston Villa in Birmingham next month was a prudent and wise decision. Sir Keir Starmer's attempts to reverse the decision were foolish and shameful. Jeremy Corbyn and Zarah Sultana were right to criticise Lisa Nandy and Starmer for their disgusting attempt to link the ban on racist hooligans to anti- semitism. Their Independent Alliance bloc in parliament says Nandy, the Culture & Sports Minister, should resign. "Lisa Nandy's grossly misleading comments have served as the basis for appalling accusations about the motivations of those who support this ban.

"The government has taken an issue of public safety and distorted the facts for political ends – and it has been caught out.

"This is about a group of fans with a history of racism and violence. This is not about banning Jewish people. The attempt to conflate the two is a shameful attempt to exploit the fear and anxieties of Jewish communities".

Starmer's pathetic efforts have now been rendered meaningless by the Maccabi club which said this week that it wasn't going to sell tickets to the match to their fans, even if the decision was overturned because a "toxic atmosphere' had been created around the fixture through 'hate-filled falsehoods'.

But the truth is Maccabi Tel Aviv fans have had a long history of violence and anti-Arab racism. On the day of the match with Ajax in Amsterdam last year their fans rampaged through the Dutch capital attacking anyone they thought looked like a Muslim or a Palestinian supporter before fleeing when enraged Ajax fans and passers-by took to the streets to drive them out of town.

After the match, which Ajax won five-nil, the Zionist lie-machine went into top gear to portray the riots as a pogrom while reactionary Dutch leaders and a host of other European politicians joined in the chorus of bourgeois outrage at what they called a "Jew hunt" led by the "anti-semitic gangs" of Amsterdam. They said the violence was an attack on Jews but no such attacks were reported against the local Jewish community. And in the following days the "pogrom" narrative fell apart as more details and witness accounts surfaced.

In 2023 in Cyprus, Maccabi supporters were arrested for possession of flares and smoke bombs. Others engaged in fights with local residents. In Athens in March 2024, Maccabi fans beat up a man carrying a Palestinian flag ahead of the game with Olympiacos. And only last week a local derby between Maccabi and Hapoel Tel Aviv was cancelled after what the Israeli police described as "public disorder and violent riots" which led to 12 people and three police officers being injured.

The decision of the Birmingham authorities to ban the Maccabi fans on safety grounds has been welcomed by many. But some say it doesn't go far enough. Palestine solidarity campaigners say that the game should be abandoned altogether because Israel has committed genocide in Gaza. Others say that Israeli football teams, which are not even located in Europe, should be banned by UEFA from all competitions. We agree.

Allowing Israeli football teams to compete in international competitions allows Israel to cynically present itself as a normal country, obscuring the truth of its oppression of Palestinians.

Israel's genocide against Palestinians in Gaza has killed many tens, if not hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, including many hundreds of Palestinian footballers. It has destroyed Gaza's football stadiums, training grounds and pitches.

The Israel Football Association directly participates in Israel's crimes against Palestinians. It governs football clubs based in illegal Israeli settlements on stolen Palestinian land in the occupied West Bank. Palestinians, facing down Israel's military assaults and ethnic cleansing, have long demanded that Israel is banned from international sporting and cultural bodies as a means of holding it accountable for its crimes, just as apartheid South Africa was. We agree!

More anti-China nonsense

LAST SUNDAY the *Daily Telegraph* published an article entitled "Fresh fears raised over China's wind turbine factory in Highlands". In it Ian Williams, a former British correspondent in China, says that the wind turbine factory planned by China's Ming Yang Power in the Scottish Highlands would pose "an enormous threat" to the United Kingdom's national security.

Although the report claims that "fresh concerns have been raised" this is nothing but a rehash of an old but familiar narrative – certain Western media outlets have repeatedly branded China's involvement in Western infrastructure projects as "national security threats".

intention

Yet, it is worth noting that the article was published amid the aftermath of the so-called "China spy" case in the UK, with a clear intention to deliberately link China's normal commercial investments with the unsubstantiated "espionage risks". Ian Williams' remarks in the *Telegraph* are even more absurd: he claims that the wind turbines should not be viewed as "pieces of inanimate metal" and even suggests that these "incredibly smart Chinese-made structures" could be used as "a means of surveillance or espionage".

For certain conservative factions in the UK, wind turbines are indeed not mere "pieces of inanimate metal," but rather a "sitting target" meticulously crafted to stir up sentiment and smear China. From the so-called "spy" case and the site of the Chinese Embassy in the UK, to the security guideline issued by MI5, some British politicians and media have persistently labelled everything related to China as a national security threat. Behind this lies their ulterior motive to advance anti-China political goals through the securitisation of normal exchanges.

Li Guanjie, a research fellow at the Shanghai Academy of Global Governance & Area Studies, says that "the ongoing hyping of China-related issues by certain UK Conservative politicians and media outlets is a calculated partisan strategy. By persistently disseminating false information and manipulating public discourse, they aim to intervene in the government's decision-making. These tactics are particularly pronounced against the backdrop of the UK government's unclear stance, striving to cultivate a tougher policy toward China".

Such narrative manipulation, driven by political self-interest, is fundamentally detached from the UK's genuine security concerns and overlooks the country's national interests and practical development needs. According to a recent report by the Financial Times "China's cost advantage in turbine manufacturing had grown huge at about 40 per cent, at least compared with Western rivals" which will strongly support Britain to decarbonise its power system by 2030.

Moreover, the Ming Yang Power's substantial £1.5 billion investment in Scotland is expected to create up to 1,500 jobs and boost the local economic development. The fact that senior officials of the Scottish government repeatedly met with Ming Yang officials to encourage the firm to invest in Scotland underscores their recognition of the project's tangible benefits. Therefore, the politicisation and securitisation of wind power facilities will severely hinder the UK energy transition progress and ultimately harm its local economy and public welfare.

ket test

The Ming Yang investment still awaits final approval from the British government. The outcome will be a key test for the government – it will measure whether the government can make a rational choice between political noises and economic benefits. Perhaps the greatest security challenge facing the UK today is not the imagined fear of China's "enormous power over UK energy grid," but rather whether its policymaking can free itself from the interference of irrational anti-China rhetoric.

Global Times

Worker's Notes

Ireland: End of partition now foreseeable

by Theo Russell

THE REUNIFICATION of Ireland could realistically happen in 2032, following a series of elections in the UK and both parts of Ireland, a meeting last week at the House of Commons in London heard.

The meeting, What is The Irish Unity Dividend?, organised by Sinn Fein, was addressed by Ben Collins, author of a new book, *The Irish Unity Dividend,* a former Unionist who now supports a united Ireland, the MPs Dáire Hughes (Sinn Féin) and Colum Eastwood (SDLP), and Kevin Meagher, author of *A United Ireland: Why Unification is Inevitable.*

Since the Good Friday Agreement 25 years ago the relationship between Northern Ireland and the Republic have been transformed. Incomes in the Republic have doubled since 1998, while in the North they have barely risen at all in real terms.

When partition happened in 1921 the North had thriving shipbuilding and textiles industries and worldwide trade links, while the South was seen as overwhelmingly agrarian and economically isolated. Today that has been reversed: the Republic is now more international and far more prosperous than the North.

The North has suffered fifty years of appalling administration, discrimination and sectarianism under the British-backed Unionist ascendancy, and seen the almost complete collapse of its industries since 1945.

Living standards and productivity in the Republic are now far higher than in the North, which is in turn by far the poorest region in the UK. In fact on many counts citizens in the Irish Republic are better off than in the UK.

Author Kevin Meagher (fourth from left) addresses the meeting.

Health service waiting lists are twice as long, and deaths from cancer are 24 per cent higher, in the North compared to the South. The average lifespan in the Irish Republic is now two years more than in England & Wales, and one of the highest in the European Union.

These dramatic changes mean that many people in the Republic are now questioning whether "taking on" the North would become a burden, added to the possibility of violence in the North spreading to the South.

peanuts

The annual Westminster grants to the North are around 10 billion Euros a year, but as leading Irish economist David McWilliams pointed out recently, "this (the Irish Republic) is a €300 billion economy, €10 billion is nothing to us, it's peanuts".

Under the Good Friday Agreement reunification is guaranteed by the British government, but like Scottish independence, it still depends on positive votes in both parts of Ireland, and success depends on the politicians giving a lead and getting down to the nuts and bolts of unification, such as public sector jobs, taxes, pensions, and much more.

As Ben Collins put it "we still have to force the pace in order to actually realise that goal, and no real movement can happen without the Dublin government taking a lead." That lead could materialise in the next few years if Sinn Féin forms a government in Dublin.

The consensus among the panel was that all the necessary pieces could fall into place for a successful border poll which could happen in 2032, leading to actual reunification after 111 years.

For generations the calls for a united Ireland, a "32 county republic", have been purely political demands, a rallying point for Irish self-determination, full independence and sovereignty, and an end to the incalculable costs and suffering caused by eight centuries of English, and British, interference in Ireland.

But today the reunification question has moved on to highly detailed discussions on the practicalities of unification, involving all the political parties, intellectuals, economists and ordinary citizens in both the North and the South. Possibly for the first time since 1921, we can now realistically look forward to an end to the partition of Ireland in the foreseeable future.

Path clear for challenge to Palestine Action ban

by Ed Newman

THE COURT of Appeal has ruled that a full judicial review of the government's ban on Palestine Action can proceed next month. The judges noted that the Home Office's preferred route, namely appealing through the "Proscribed Organisations Appeal Commission (POAC)" would not adequately address the plight of hundreds facing prosecution under a potentially unlawful order.

The three-judge panel, led by Lady Chief Justice Sue Carr, dismissed the Home Office's attempt to block the case, upholding an earlier ruling by Mr Justice Chamberlain that had granted co-founder Huda Ammori permission to contest the ban. A Home Office spokesperson, however, insisted that the organisation remains proscribed and warned that supporters "will face the full force of the law."

Huda Ammori hailed the verdict as a landmark victory. "The court of appeal has rightly rejected [the former home secretary] Yvette Cooper's attempt to block a legal review of her absurdly authoritarian ban – while granting us additional grounds on which to challenge it".

first time

The ruling marks the first time in British history that a proscribed organisation has won the right to challenge its designation under the Terrorism Act in open court.

The banning of Palestine Action was widely condemned by civil rights advocates as an attack on freedom of expression and peaceful protest. The decision effectively placed the direct action movement on the same list as terrorist groups like ISIS, criminalising anyone publicly supporting it. Since the ban, over 2,000 activists have been arrested, many for nothing more than holding placards stating, "I oppose genocide, I support Palestine Action".

In its ruling, the Court of Appeal not only dismissed the Home Office's appeal, but also expanded the scope of the case, adding two new grounds of challenge to the existing ones.

This strengthens the movement's legal position ahead of the November 25th hearing, which will run for three days and could set a precedent for future civil rights cases.

Legal experts say the outcome of next month's hearing could redefine the limits of government power to suppress dissent under the guise of national security.

Elbit Systems, whose British plants have been the focus of Palestine Action's protests, is the largest Israeli military manufacturer and produces 85 per cent of the Israeli military's land-based equipment as well as 85 per cent of the drones used by the Israeli air force.

Dons at War

by New Worker correspondent

FROM ABERDEEN to Exeter over 65,000 University and College Union (UCU) members at 137 universities are hovering their pens over ballot papers about strike action in a fight to protect jobs, wages and working conditions. They have until the end of November to make up their minds. The result will be aggregated across all 137 institutions, which means a yes vote will see strike action in the new year.

UCU, and the other unions involved, GMB, Unite, Unison and EIS have rejected a 1.4 per cent pay offer from the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA). Another matter which is on lecturers' minds is the fact that university employers want to get rid of thousands of jobs.

Jo Grady, the union's general secretary, says "over 15,000 jobs up for the chop. Meanwhile, staff who remain are being told to accept a huge real terms pay cut as they see their teaching and student learning conditions degraded. Our members have no choice but to vote yes for strike action and fight to protect higher education". She added that "Vice-chancellors need to understand how angry their workers are, stop

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harming the sector and return to the negotiating table. Failing to do so will only lay the ground for disruption across UK universities".

Unite national officer for education Andy Murray chipped in to say "the employers' offer fails to value our members and makes them bear the cost for the broken funding model in higher education. Unite's members have been left with no option to ballot for industrial action. Strike action will cripple the sector".

pitiful

The Educational Institute of Scotland University Lecturers Association (EIS ULA) is doing the same. Garry Ross, the union's National Officer for Higher Education said that "1.4 per cent is a pitiful pay offer and fails to reflect the expertise and dedication of staff who, without them, universities could not operate. Employers have taken their staff for granted for too long, evidenced by years of eroded salaries whilst some institutions continue to make multi-million-pound surpluses and hold significant reserves. All we are asking for is a fair, cost-of-living pay uplift to help staff pay their bills and mitigate rising inflation".

The EIS ULA state the rejected award is effectively a three per cent real terms pay cut and points out that: its members in EIS FELA (Further Education Lecturers' Association) received a 4.14 per cent rise on the 1st September this year, which the mathematically minded will note is a significant increase in percentage than their colleagues in the higher education sector. It also notes that EIS teacher members in earlier rejected a 4 per cent pay offer and complains that NHS and other public sector workers won bigger pay awards this year, recognising their value and assisting them with the cost-of-living increases they are experiencing.

The union wants to see the academic authorities "return to the negotiating table with a significantly improved pay offer to avert widespread disruption across Scottish universities". Another union involved, Unison, reports that more than 90 per cent of members who took last summer's consultation also rejected the 1.4 per cent offer. General secretary Christina McAnea, whose members represent support staff, said "This latest offer is another blow to employees who've endured years of effective wage cuts and persistent low pay. Workers deserve a fair deal, one that recognises their vital contribution to students and the wider university sector".

Local Battles

AT IMPERIAL College, the University of London's technology college, teaching and non-teaching staff just as the new term began and on the autumn graduation day. About 1,200 staff belonging to various unions, walked out over a two per cent pay increase imposed by Imperial.

Unite general secretary Sharon Graham said: "Imperial College is the UK's top university thanks to the dedication of its staff. Despite enjoying a very strong financial position, the university is attempting to cut those same workers' pay in real terms".

Unite also point out that Imperial College staff wages have decreased by seven per cent in real terms since 2018, and the present offer did nothing to remedy that decline, despite the fact that the University had a total income of £1.33 billion last year.

entirely

Regional officer Ahlam Khamliche added "Imperial College is entirely responsible for the disruption that will be caused to students and academics. It can more than afford to put forward a fair pay rise, but it is refusing to do so. This dispute will continue to escalate until Imperial puts forward an offer that is acceptable to our members."

Unite was joined in this action by UCU whose members voted in favour of actions by 77 per cent on a 59 per cent turnout.

UCU general secretary Jo Grady said "staff are the backbone of Imperial and deserve an actual pay-rise. It's a disgrace they are being forced to take industrial action to protect their livelihoods. Striking is a last resort for our members, but this action shows they have had enough and are prepared to fight back. We call on Imperial to look again at its refusal to increase its pay offer and work with us to find a constructive path forward, or face disruption on campus across October and November".

15 days

At the University of Leicester UCU members have taken 15 days of industrial action this month in response to the university's plans to cut jobs in in six academic areas: Geography, Geology & the Environment; the School of Education; Chemistry; Modern Languages; History and Film Studies. UCU members reject plans to direct investment into a narrow range of "growth" areas with high student numbers, which will damage Leicester's reputation as an institution with a broad range of academic disciplines.

One thing university lecturers and support workers could do to improves their salaries would be to get themselves regraded as Vice-Chancellors. Durham University students' paper, Palatinate, recently discovered that its Vice Chancellor is paid 10.7 times the average staff member. This could doubtless be replicated across the country.

In general terms, for over a decade, higher education staff have seen their pay eroded by inflation while workloads have soared. Buildings have grown shinier, vice-chancellors' pay packets have ballooned, but those delivering the teaching and research: lecturers, librarians, cleaners, and support staff have been left behind. Increasingly universities, once proud institutions of public learning, are run like businesses: students treated as customers, staff as disposable assets.

Unsurprisingly staff have had enough. The current wave of discontent is fuelled by years of broken promises and failed negotiations. While university bosses plead poverty, they pour millions into vanity projects and bloated management. Meanwhile, over two-thirds of researchers and teachers are now on insecure, fixed-term, or zero-hour contracts, with no guarantee of employment beyond the next term.

creeping

At the heart of the dispute is the creeping marketisation of higher education. Since the introduction of tuition fees, universities have been forced to compete for students and funding. Courses are cut if they don't "turn a profit", while staff are told to do more with less.

The *New Worker* has always stood with workers in their struggles, so we stand now with university staff. Their fight is our fight: for decent pay, secure jobs, and a public education system that serves the many, not the few.

20 years ago this week
in the New Worker

28 October 2005

DEPUTY Prime Minister John Prescott last week surprised many by joining the ranks of critics of Tony Blair's gallop to privatise everything he can lay his hands on before he loses his job.

Prescott voiced concerns that the proposals in the new White Paper on education are likely to discriminate against the poor and favour the middle classes.

Prescott also cast doubt on whether the new semi-privatised city academies, that Blair wants to see multiplied around the country, really do raise academic standards.

The DPM's new stance is the latest in a series of divisions and retreats to emerge from within the Cabinet. A week ago pressure from the unions forced Trade and Industry Secretary Alan Johnson to retreat on Government plans to raise the retirement of public sector workers to 65.

We have seen the Cabinet so divided over the extent of a ban on smoking in public places that the announcement of the policy was delayed by days of wrangling.Then health sector unions and left Labour MPs forced the Health Secretary to drop plans to transfer hundreds of thousands of health service jobs into the private sector.

The education White Paper, published last Tuesday, seeks to do much the same with education. It proposes the abolition of all local education authorities and giving schools the freedom to decide their own teaching and admissions policies.

There will be many more schools run on the city academy principle – a private sector company, charity or religious group will put up a small proportion of the funding for the school and in exchange will gain control over the school's teaching and admission policies. Parents will be encouraged to take an active role in managing their children's school – and if they don't like any of the local schools they are told they can club together and start their own.

Education Secretary Ruth Kelly says this will result in a greater variety of schools and give parents wider choice. It will not, of course. The choice will go to the schools – they will choose which pupils they want and pupils with rich parents will be the most attractive.

Pupils with learning difficulties from poor homes will be relegated to the under-funded sink schools that will have them. The result will be worse that the split between grammar and secondary modern schools introduced by the 1944 Education Act.

The Communist Movement in Palestine and Israel

by Nikos Mottas

THE COMMUNIST movement in Palestine and Israel is as old as the 20th century upheavals that reshaped the Middle East. It is not the story of dominant political forces or large armies, but of a small and persistent current that, for over a century, has tried to carve out a political path distinct from partition, conquest, and exclusion. Palestinian and Israeli communists – Arabs and Jews – built joint organisations, resisted colonialism, opposed military occupation, and spoke for coexistence at moments when the surrounding climate favoured division and hostility.

The communist ideology arrived in Palestine during the last years of Ottoman rule and the early British Mandate. In 1919 Jewish socialist immigrants from Eastern Europe created a nucleus that soon became the Communist Party of Palestine (PCP). For its first years it was dominated by Jewish cadres, but under guidance from the Communist International and in response to local realities, the party began to recruit Palestinian Arabs in the 1920s and 1930s.

The communists were active among workers in Haifa's ports, in the railways, and in the oil industry. They supported the creation of the Federation of Arab Trade Unions and promoted joint Arab-Jewish organising, though they faced hostility from both British authorities and Zionist-led institutions such as the Histadrut. During the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939, communists took part in strike committees and demonstrations. Their impact was limited by state repression and suspicion from nationalist forces, but they remained one of the few political currents insisting that Arab–Jewish solidarity was possible.

By the early 1940s, growing tension within the PCP led many Arab cadres to form the National Liberation League (NLL). The NLL supported workers' rights, opposed colonialism, and, in line with the Soviet position at the time, endorsed the 1947 UN Partition Plan as a step toward self-determination.

When the State of Israel was declared in 1948, many NLL members who found themselves inside the new borders joined with Jewish communists to form the Communist Party of Israel (Maki). This created a rare binational political framework at a time of war and mass displacement. One of Maki's leaders, Meir Vilner, a Jewish communist, even signed Israel's Declaration of Independence. He would later emerge as one of the parliament's sharpest critics of Israeli military policies.

From 1948 until 1966 Palestinian Arabs in Israel lived under military administration, facing travel restrictions, land confiscations, and heavy surveillance. Maki became one of the only legal political frameworks where Arab citizens could organise. The party ran newspapers in Arabic (*al-Ittihad*) and Hebrew (*Kol HaAm*), building a bilingual public sphere.

Communists won municipal power in towns such as Nazareth, where they repeatedly held the mayoralty. Leaders like Emile Habibi and Tawfiq Ziad combined local governance with cultural and political activism. Ziad, also a poet, became a national figure whose words and speeches resonated well beyond Nazareth.

By the 1960s, ideological disagreements deepened. The Arab-led, pro-Soviet and anti-Zionist faction – joined by Jewish leaders like Vilner – split away in 1965 to form Rakah (New Communist List), while a smaller Zionist-leaning faction kept the Maki name.

The split coincided with dramatic regional changes. After Israel's victory in the June 1967 war, Rakah was one of the very few parties in the Knesset to call for immediate withdrawal from the newly occupied territories and recognition of Palestinian national rights. Their stance, condemned at the time as treacherous, anticipated positions that decades later would become part of international consensus.

Throughout these decades, Palestinian and Israeli communists maintained close ties with the Soviet Union and other socialist states. The USSR gave political backing to the NLL and later to Rakah, recognising them as the legitimate communist representatives in Israel and Palestine. The Soviet press regularly reported on their activities as voices of peace and anti-imperialism.

This alignment brought resources: training for cadres, scholarships for Arab students in Eastern Europe, and steady coverage in Soviet Arabic-language radio. It also brought constraints, since party positions were often shaped by Moscow's changing policies –such as the endorsement of the Partition Plan in 1947 or support for détente in the 1970s. Eastern bloc states, including Czechoslovakia and East Germany, also provided forums for Arab and Jewish communists to present their cause internationally. The party's Soviet alignment gave it international visibility but also fuelled accusations inside Israel that it was a foreign agent.

In 1976, when the Zionists announced extensive land expropriations in Galilee, Arab local committees – many led by communists – organised a general strike on 30th March. The day, now known as Land Day, ended in bloodshed when Israeli security forces shot and killed six demonstrators. The event consolidated Palestinian political identity inside Israel and confirmed the communists as central figures in its expression.

During the first intifada in the late 1980s, communists inside Israel and in the occupied territories played a role in protests and civil resistance. In the West Bank and Gaza, communist groups reconstituted themselves, sometimes splitting over strategy – some advocating armed struggle, others supporting recognition of Israel alongside a Palestinian state. Inside Israel, Rakah and its allies formed Hadash (Democratic Front for Peace & Equality) in 1977. Its programme combined socialist demands with a clear call to end the occupation and dismantle settlements.

Palestinian communists also positioned themselves against the rise of Islamist currents, most notably Hamas. They criticised Hamas's Islamic fundamentalism, its use of religion as a political framework, and its attacks on civilians, arguing that such strategies undermined the prospects for a democratic and inclusive Palestinian movement. For communists, the path forward lay in secular, class-based resistance and in building institutions that could unite all Palestinians regardless of religion or sect.

In parallel, explicitly Marxist–Leninist organisations developed in the West Bank and Gaza. The most prominent was the Palestinian People's Party (PPP), founded in 1982 as the successor to the underground Palestinian Communist Party of the 1970s. The PPP joined the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and was among the first Palestinian factions to endorse a two-state solution on the 1967 borders. Its leaders maintained that socialism and national liberation were linked, but that the immediate priority was independence and ending the occupation.

A smaller group, reviving the name Palestinian Communist Party (PCP), re-emerged in the 1990s. Unlike the PPP, the PCP rejected the Oslo Accords, denounced the Palestinian Authority for collaboration, and insisted on an uncompromising Marxist–Leninist line. It maintained close ties with regional communist movements and

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Israeli communist logo

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presented itself as the "orthodox" communist current.

Both the PPP and the PCP have consistently opposed Hamas, with the PPP focusing on the incompatibility of political Islam with democratic pluralism, and the PCP denouncing Islamist politics outright as reactionary and sectarian. Though smaller than nationalist or Islamist forces, these parties remain active in unions, civil society, and international solidarity networks, keeping alive the Marxist tradition in Palestinian politics.

In recent years, Hadash and Maki have continued to survive as joint Arab–Jewish movements. They run *al-Ittihad,* maintain municipal power in some towns, and hold seats in the Knesset. Their work, however, now unfolds in an increasingly hostile environment.

Since October 2023, as the war in Gaza escalated into genocide, Hadash MPs have been among the only voices in the Knesset openly denouncing Israeli policy. In July 2025, tens of thousands of Arabs and Jews joined the largest joint protest since the war began, organised by the Peace Partnership coalition. On the platform, Hadash leaders Ayman Odeh, Aida Touma-Sliman, and Ofer Cassif demanded an immediate ceasefire, an end to starvation in Gaza, and accountability for war crimes.

These stances come at a personal cost. Cassif has been suspended from the Knesset many times for criticising the army and calling for international action against Israeli war crimes. He has also been arrested at protests in East Jerusalem. Odeh has repeatedly been expelled from the Knesset podium for speeches accusing the government of crimes against humanity. Touma-Sliman has spoken against the siege of Gaza and the use of starvation as a weapon of war.

Hadash members protest.

Under these conditions – marked by censorship, suspensions, threats, and deepening authoritarianism – these MPs continue to act as one of the last organised voices for Arab–Jewish solidarity in Israel. Their persistence shows that the communist current is not a relic but a small, embattled movement still active in today's conflicts.

It is sometimes claimed – either deliberately or out of ignorance – that "there are no Israeli communists" or that all Jews in the party are "settlers". This is both historically and politically inaccurate. Jewish communists have organised in Palestine since 1919 and have been part of Maki and Hadash throughout Israel's history. Their programme has long called for withdrawal from occupied territories and the dismantling of settlements. Far from being settlers, they have consistently opposed the settlement project itself.

More importantly, dismissing them as settlers erases their role as one of the few frameworks where Arabs and Jews have acted together politically. Their history is not one of dominance but of resistance – resistance to colonialism, inequality, and the occupation.

The communist movement in Palestine and Israel represents a century-long attempt to build a politics different from the dominant currents of nationalism and militarism. Its leaders and activists – Arab and Jewish – have rarely been in power, but they have persisted through repression, splits, and wars. From early labour struggles in Haifa to protests against the current war in Gaza, they have remained a visible if small current that insists on equality and solidarity.

IDoC

The Russian Ambassador speaks

Alexander Kelin, the Russian ambassador in London, talked to RT last week

RT: In recent weeks we have witnessed a number of harsh, if not aggressive, anti-Russian statements by former British officials. The former head of MI5 agreed with those who believe that Russia and Britain are already at war and former Defence Secretary Ben Wallace proposed making Crimea "uninhabitable". What is behind this new round of escalating rhetoric? Does it reflect the approach of Prime Minister Keir Starmer and other current politicians?

The comments you mentioned are indeed provocative and unacceptable, regardless of who voiced them. They are whipping up anti-Russian hysteria. They also accustom the population to the idea of the permissibility of a military conflict with Russia. But these are all retirees trying to remind us of themselves. Officials do not directly express themselves in this way, but they do not disavow such attacks either.

Representatives of the Labour government often reproach us for "reckless and dangerous" steps and statements. But much more reckless are the arguments of such figures as Ben Wallace. During his tenure at the head of the British Ministry of Defence, he did a lot to inflate the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, which he seems to be very proud of. Now he's in fact repeating the rhetoric of neo-Nazi circles in Ukraine, which more than 10 years ago pushed the residents of Crimea and Donbas to make a choice in favour of reunification with Russia. Behind all this escalation of rhetoric, there is obviously a strong discomfort from how events are developing on the ground, where the situation of the armed forces of Ukraine is steadily deteriorating.

The British government was one of the first in Europe to publicly announce plans to send a military contingent to Ukraine, and also came up with a number of initiatives that Russia regarded as provocative. What is London's ultimate goal in pursuing such a hostile policy towards Russia?

From the very beginning, London has not hidden its interest in fomenting the Ukrainian conflict in order to inflict a so-called strategic defeat on us. What exactly is meant by this, we do not really understand to this day. Then they began to say that the security of Ukraine is closely related to the security of Europe. But what does Britain have to do with it?

Now they are talking about an immediate, unconditional truce, without going into how the conflict will be resolved. It is obvious that London is against such a negotiated solution that would lead to a permanent, rather than temporary, cessation of hostilities, and most importantly, would eliminate the root cause of the Ukrainian crisis. Here, it seems, they have not abandoned their intention to drag Ukraine into Nato, to deploy Nato strike potential on its territory. Obviously, the goal of the "coalition of the willing" is precisely aimed at preserving the anti-Russian potential of Ukraine, preferably with the presence of Nato forces on its territory.

All these plans are absolutely transparent for us, we will respond adequately. The West should be well aware that when

they talk about some price that Russia must pay for the Ukrainian crisis, they should not forget that they, in turn, will be presented with a bill. The longer they feed the Kiev regime, which has de facto already turned Ukraine into a non-existent state, the more dearly they will ultimately have to pay.

Some politicians argue that the UK is a sworn enemy of Russia and that the peoples of our countries have long been hostile to each other. However, Moscow's official position is that Russia has no unfriendly peoples – only unfriendly governments. How does this relate to the current state of relations between Russia and London?

Contradictions between our countries have existed for a significant part of the history of bilateral relations. It was Britain that provoked them. Unfortunately, at the current stage, relations are in a protracted crisis through the fault of official London. The government (both Labour and Conservative) is the initiator and participant of many unfriendly actions. The British establishment and the media close to them are trying to instil hostility towards us in the country's population. Therefore, they spread fake news about the alleged threat from Russia and about actions that our country has never committed. They create a toxic atmosphere around those who consider it necessary to at least continue the dialogue. Moreover, Britons interested in cooperating with Russia are now being intimidated by the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme. It obliges people to report to the authorities about almost any interaction with our state.

Against this background, there is no need to talk about active contacts at the population level. But we do not interfere with people-to-people contacts, we do not close our borders to tourists. Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of our attitude towards the British people in the current conditions is the desire to preserve the memory of the alliance during the Great Patriotic War, and to demonstrate our sincere respect for the participants in those events.

In the media, much attention is paid to the possible transfer of intelligence by Washington to Kiev for long-range missile strikes on Russian territory. However, it is known that London has been carrying out similar actions for a long time. Why does this fact go largely unnoticed in the headlines? And how does this affect Russia's reaction to UK policy?

The information that the British side is providing comprehensive military support to Kiev, including the transfer of weapons, intelligence and training of military personnel, has always been in plain sight and has been repeatedly commented on by us. London has long established itself as one of the main sponsors of the Kiev regime. This is not a surprise to anyone. All this is being closely monitored by the Russian side and, of course, taken into account when building our policy towards the UK. We are against any escalation. As I said, in the end, everyone who helps the Zelensky regime fuel the war and damage us will be presented with a bill. In what form is a separate question.

Many British media interpreted President Vladimir Putin's recent speech at a meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club as a threat to Europe, mainly because of the President's words that Russia should in any case respond to the plans to militarise the European Union. At the same time, his statement that Russia is not considering the possibility of invading Europe was omitted in many cases. What do you think about this reaction from the British media?

Now the British press in any situation makes a choice in favour of promoting the topic of escalation, rather than détente. Hysteria is being whipped up under the slogan of a growing direct Russian threat to the countries of the alliance. Under these conditions, it is hardly in the interests of the sponsors of this campaign to broadcast the "peaceful" theses of the President of Russia. They are trying in every possible way to instil in the population the idea of the need to prepare for an armed confrontation with our country. And it is clear why. France and Germany are in the biggest crisis. The same is true in the UK. It is necessary to divert the attention of fellow citizens from the numerous problems in which the country is mired. We do not forget about the efforts of the military-industrial complex, which is interested in obtaining long-term contracts.

As you may remember, after the end of the Cold War, the expression "peace dividend" was in vogue. This meant that due to the reduction in spending on huge military contingents and weapons stockpiles that had become unnecessary, the economies of European countries freed up huge funds for economic development and improving the quality of life of people. They could be properly used for the benefit of countries. But it didn't work out that way.

Now the Labour leadership is actively talking about a "war dividend", apparently hoping to increase the revenues of the debt-ridden budget at the expense of revenues from the military industry. You are also right that the statements of our leadership about the absence of threatening intentions towards Europe are being ignored here. They do not fit into the current political line of the West.

The Russian Foreign Intelligence Service says that London plans to carry out a provocation on the territory of Ukraine – we are talking about an attack on a Ukrainian naval vessel or on a civilian vessel of a foreign state with the subsequent imposition of responsibility on Russia. Have you informed your British colleagues that Moscow is aware of such plans? And what is the reaction in the UK to this information?

As you know, London is directly and actively involved in the preparation and implementation of provocations by Ukrainian wards. Moreover, it consistently increases the degree of confrontation without thinking about the consequences. I am sure that the above-mentioned signals reached the addressees and were received properly.

I can only draw your attention once again to the fact that anti-Russia hysteria in the media is being artificially hyped. Even when there is no specific news-break, it is either created, for example drones appear from somewhere in European airspace, or extracted from some past archives, such as Bucha. In these materials, as a rule, there are a lot of emotions that are aimed at provoking an irrational anti-Russian mood in the audience. Such a "warmed up" audience will easily believe even the most ridiculous and unsustainable rubbish.

LETTERS

Dear Comrades

The various false accusations of anti-semitism help people to understand how they are being made outcasts; and this, as part of the world counter-revolution that the capitalist system prepares against them.

With neo-colonialism, the imperialism of capitalism managed to cope with the loss of the colonies. Now, the overall costs of all its counter revolutions has become exorbitant compared with what it still manages to plunder from the world.

The economic-social-political system of capitalism has no future. And it knows it.

This makes it mad. It makes it feel desperate and uncomprehending; it makes it feel thrown out of life, and wanting to take everyone down behind itself, into its grave...

Charles' (past) Divine Right to Conquer now combines with the (present) Fascist Right to Kill without declaring war. To take us back not just to Feudalism but to the Bronze Age perhaps? For "around the reign of the first pharaohs, servants, court officials, and artisans were sacrificed to accompany the ruler in death".

We are going not towards extinction but towards the planned economy of the world. In its struggle against feudalism, capitalism was led to concentrate the great advances of human intelligence, science, technology and production to a level of productive ability that now requires global configuring.

Through neo-liberalism – and of course in its own interests – high finance imperialism tried to plan the economy through the decentralisation of markets. Although this brought industries closer to necessary raw materials, it could not lead to objective planning because each major market compete against the other, along national lines.

Through MAGA in the USA - and still in the interests of centralised world finance imperialism - the Trump administration tries to impose a command structure on the capitalist markets. The delocalisations are being replaced by attempts at re industrialisation. The Executive branch of the US State tries to copy what it classes as "the command economy" of a workers' state like China. But as this centralising drive is based on competition in the US, it only benefits the few competitors at the centre.

Trump wants to steal a march on China's superior economic ability. But in China, the Chinese revolution won for humanity the right to give precedence to the common good over and above the private interest. That democratic right was won through the Communist Party. There is no private capitalist interest, or weapon, that can destroy it.

Like the 'delocalisations' of the past, Brexit and MAGA represent the futile attempts of capitalism to overtake the workers' states. Trump's behaviour shows the enviousness of capitalism, its incomprehension, and its unreasoned fear of a workers' state like China.

Marie Lynam
London

Dear Comrades

A fabulous bit of telly in the mid 70's was the Bill Brand series. It was produced by Thames TV and it ran through the long hot summer of 1976 – there were 11 episodes, 50 minutes each between 7th June and 6th August.

The creator Trevor Griffiths was, like many actors and dramatists at the time, still very much within the orbit of the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP).

As for the series itself, it charts the progress of a radical Labour MP who is member for an industrial constituency, Lanleigh, near Manchester.

Brand, played by Jack Shepherd, is a former Liberal Studies lecturer at a local technical college. He is determined to improve the lives of textile workers in his constituency but he finds himself in constant conflict with party whips.

Lynn Farleigh plays Miriam, his estranged wife. Alan Badel is a left leaning Cabinet Minister, David Last, (based on Michael Foot) who is connected with "The Journal" (a bit like Tribune). Plus Arthur Lowe appears as the Prime Minister (who is a Wilson-like figure).

Critics say it was a "ground breaking and unashamedly intelligent drama." It was "off-beat and non-commercial". It had "viewers glued to their seats". And it is still available on DVD.

Alan Stewart
Wakefield

Dear Friend

This past week, as a part of the most recent ceasefire deal, Israel was forced to release 1,968 Palestinian prisoners. Even through minimal news coverage, we've seen the devastating condition of those released, who showed visible signs of starvation and extreme torture.

More than 9,000 Palestinians remain in Israeli prisons, including 400 children, and arrest raids have continued in the West Bank throughout the week.

Write to the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and demand the release of Palestinians still held prisoner by Israel, and support for Palestinian human rights groups documenting and advocating for justice for those who have been detained.

Earlier this week, I was fortunate to have the chance to speak with Sahar Francis, the renowned Palestinian human rights lawyer and long-time advocate for the rights of Palestinian prisoners. She gave a grim assessment of the situation of Palestinian prisoners right now, and where things might be headed.

Palestinian prisoners were already facing horrific conditions before,

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The editor welcomes letters from our readers. If you have a contribution to make please make sure it reaches us before Wednesday. You can send your letters to: PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ, or email party@NCP.clara.net

Diary

UNTIL 10 NOV
Folklife Films: Gentle, Angry Women film about young women taking up the Greenham Common mantle. Various locations in England. Book on FF website.

UNTIL 14 NOV
Prince Charles Cinema: Films of Andrei Tarkovsky's season. (Soviet film director 1932–86.) PCC, 7 Leicester Place, London WC2H 7BY. Detail and tickets on PCC website.

THURS 30 OCT
General Federation of Trade Unions Educational Trust: New Unionism & Eleanor Marx. 19:00. Online talk. Book on GFTUET website.

SAT 1 NOV
Scottish CND: For a peaceful nuclear-free Scotland! Conference. 10:00–16:00, Adelaide Place Baptist Church, 209 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4HZ. Book on SCND website.

SAT 1 NOV
Society for Co-operation for Russian and Soviet Studies: HGW Davie on Everything for the Front! Resource Management in the Red Army 1941–1945. 14:00–15:00, In person, SCRSS, 320 Brixton Road, London, SW9 6AB.

SAT 1 NOV
International Brigade Memorial Trust: Len Crome Memorial Conversation. Panel on the Toxic legacy: the lasting impact of Francoism on Spanish Democracy. 14:00, In person, Marx Memorial Library.

SUN 2 NOV
Musicians for Peace and Disarmament: Concert for Peace. 15:00, Venue Lauderdale House, Waterlow Park, Highgate Hill, London N6 5HG. Book on CND website.

SAT 8 NOV
New Communist Party: Reception to commemorate the 1917 October Revolution. 18:30, Party Centre, London SW11.

TUE 11–SUN 16 NOV
Havana Glasgow Film Festival. 10th Anniversary Details from https://hgfilmfest.com/

SUN 16 NOV
Working Class Movement Library: Radical Readings. 14:00–17:00, Maxwell Hall, University of Salford, Crescent, Salford M5 4WT.

THURS 20 NOV
Marx Memorial Library: Vic Clarke: Reds on the Green: Clerkenwell and Chartism. 16:00, In person, MML.

SAT 22 NOV
Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Workers Organising Against Genocide Trade Union Conference. 10:00–17:00, London. Register on PSC website.

SAT 22 NOV
CND: Stop British nuclear expansion: how to reverse the government's disastrous war drive. Conference. Green House, 244 – 254 Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9DA.

THURS 27 OCT
General Federation of Trade Unions Educational Trust: The Matchwomen's Strike. 19:00. Online talk. Book on GFTUET website.

SAT 29 NOV
Marx Memorial Library: Manfred Sohn: Engels Memorial Lecture.

SUN 14 DEC
Visible Women UK: Unveiling of communist writer Sylvia Townsend Warner statue. 13:00, Goulds, South Street, Dorchester DT1 1BS.

THURS 26 JAN
General Federation of Trade Unions Educational Trust: Mary McArthur and the National Federation of Working Women. Online talk. Book on GFTUET website.

SAT 7 FEB
Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Latin America Conference. 10:00–17:00, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BD.

but this has accelerated beyond anyone's worst nightmare over the past two years as Israel unleashed its genocide. Palestinians in Israeli detention are being routinely subjected to unspeakable levels and types of torture. Lawyer and family visits, which were already highly restricted, are becoming even more rare. This means that what we know about the condition of prisons is just the tip of the iceberg.

Israel's attacks on Palestinian human rights groups have also increased, just when they are needed most, with a laser-sharp focus on those who have facilitated submissions of evidence to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The USA has joined Israel's attempts to prevent Palestinians from submitting evidence to the ICC. The Palestinian Addameer (Conscience) campaign, which works in support of prisoners' rights, is one of four Palestinian human rights groups which have recently been sanctioned by the USA.

The British government has acknowledged that Israel's treatment of Palestinian prisoners amounts to war crimes. Yet it has continued to conduct 'business as usual' with Israel, including through the constant flow of arms exports. We must continue to demand the British government take action to end all its involvement in genocide and apartheid.

Whilst the ceasefire has stopped the bombing of Gaza for now, it does nothing to address the underlying situation of occupation and apartheid which gave way to the genocide in the first place. The ongoing struggle of Palestinian prisoners is a reminder that the work to end Israel's apartheid system is far from over.

Sahar Francis echoed what many have told us: our huge marches in London, and our ongoing BDS boycott campaigns, have given so many Palestinians hope and renewed trust in the power of international solidarity. But our work ahead is clear: we must keep up our campaigning until the entire system of apartheid is ended, and every political prisoner is released.

Ryvka
Deputy Director
Palestine
Solidarity Campaign
London

Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

LAST WEEK we reported on the SNP's annual conference, incorrectly stating it marked the end of the conference season. Unfortunately we forgot about the Scottish Greens who had their annual bash in Edinburgh.

Theirs is not a happy ship. First their internal elections to establish rankings for their regional list candidates in the forthcoming Holyrood elections were marred by allegations of fraud and incompetence. In Glasgow the former leader, Patrick Harvie, maintained his top spot by the simple expedient of suspending a potential challenger at a convenient time. To add to the jollity, North East MSP Maggie Chapman lost her top spot amidst charges that rivals were recruiting relatives to swing the election in their favour. The Internal Election Officer resigned because of a failure to count the votes properly and the party then putting out a false statement that all was well.

The slightly more important leadership election was a four cornered affair which involved three of the eight sitting MSPs who entertained the nation with mutual accusations of being either sell-outs or ineffective.

One of the victors, the delicate Ross Greer, accused his fellow party members of bullying him so severely that he was hospitalised with serious chest pains. Late last year he drafted a letter of resignation from Holyrood because members were so horrid to him, but changed his tune to win votes and said 99 per cent of the Green members are nice people.

The result was a resounding victory for "None of the above" – the 6,650 or 87.5 per cent of the claimed 7,600 party members who couldn't be bothered to vote. Of the 950 members who did, 322 cast their first preference votes for Gillian Mackay. Coming second was Ross Greer with 298 votes. In third place was failed former Minister and definitely outgoing former joint leader Lorna Slater on 264 votes. She was lucky that there was a fourth candidate to spare her the indignity of coming last in the shape of the sole non-MSP in the contest, one named Dominic Ashmole, who secured just 66 votes. In comparison the Green Party in England managed to get a third of their 64,581 members to vote for their new leader.

Rhetoric about hoping to "reinvigorate the party's grass roots energy and sharpen its progressive edge" seem to have a bit to go if the leaders cannot inspire more than five per cent of their own members to vote. For that reason, we remain somewhat sceptical of the latest claimed 8,279 membership figure.

The Scottish Greens have been around since 1978 when they were a branch of the Ecology Party, and separated from what was the UK Green Party in 1990. Their first MSP, Robin Harper, stepped down in 2011 and later left the party after he announced he would vote No in the 2014 referendum independence. He's now in the Labour Party and works with Gordon Brown's think tank.

The Greens have seven out of the 129 Holyrood seats – including the office of Presiding Officer which no other party wants as it means they lose a voting member. They won these on 8.1 per cent of the List vote, and a mighty 1.3 per cent of the constituency vote. Their short-lived time ministerial office did not endear them to SNP whose parliamentarians made no bones about being glad to see the back of them.

In last year's general election they fought in 44 out of the 57 seats collecting a massive 3.8 per cent of the vote. Further down the food chain, they now have 35 councillors – those in Glasgow supporting an SNP administration. With a few exceptions most of these seats are in the poshest urban areas. Their chief stronghold is in the west end of Glasgow where they can be seen slurping organic coffees on expense accounts from the government-funded charities which employ them to build a fairer Scotland or something sounding equally worthy.

Despite the fact that they have a reputation for being progressive the reality is very different. They say they are "eco-socialists". They want to close the Trident nuclear submarine base in Scotland. They want to replace council tax (just like everyone else) and have free bus travel. But they want to rejoin the European Union and they also ardently support the Zelensky fascist regime in Ukraine. They also promote ludicrous anti-China scare stories, claiming that a Glasgow Chinese restaurant was a nest of spies, perhaps on the grounds that the woks were satellite dishes.

While they like to talk about child poverty and nationalising buses they are keener on the rights of men to use women's toilets and making heroin legal than traditional environmental matters. They forced out Andy Wightman, their one serious expert on land reform, for not taking seriously the gender issues which have caused so much grief to the SNP. Just about the only green issue they regularly mention is salmon farming, a topic on which they make regular ritual denunciations by way of press releases.

The bourgeois press heavily promotes the Green parties, north and south of the border, as a suitable home for lefties let down by Starmer's Labour Party. This has proven a very successful policy in the spiritual home of the Greens, Germany, where Die Grünen have long been seen as a safe pair of hands by the bourgeoisie in preventing communists gaining influence among those sick of the endless betrayals of the Social Democrats. The Greens were the most enthusiastic advocates of carving up Yugoslavia for the benefit of German imperialism. Essentially a bourgeois liberal trend Die Grünen are part of the German bourgeois consensus that supports Nato, the American alliance, Israel and the puppet regime in Ukraine.

People's Korea stands firm!

The KFA Cambodia official delegate with NCP leader Andy Brooks, Dermot Hudson and other campaigners at the meeting.

by New Worker correspondent

THE KOREAN PEOPLE are marching towards socialism and have achieved great miracles, thereby building a great future for the country and the people. That was the message of Dermot Hudson who joined millions of Koreans celebrating the 80th anniversary of the foundation of the Workers Party of Korea during his trip to the land of Juche earlier in the month.

"Pyongyang was a blaze of light and colour at night. The imperialists are lying when they say that there is no electricity in the DPRK.

Rather than 'everyone starving' we saw no homeless or beggars on the streets" the Chair of the UK Korean Friendship Association said. "People get free housing and food only costs 0.3 dollars per month. Just compare that to the UK. No comment"!

And this was echoed by all those who had come to hear Dermot Hudson talk about his recent visit to People's Korea at the Kings Cross Neighbourhood Centre in London last weekend. The official delegate of KFA Cambodia, together with NCP leader Andy Brooks and KFA activists from Staffordshire and the West Country, opened the general discussion which looked at the meaning of Korean-style socialism as well as the 'digital colonialism' of the imperialists and the brainwashing of the BBC and the rest of imperialist lie machine.

Dermot Hudson will be giving a report back to the new Ipswich *New Worker* Cell & Supporters group in February and it was decided to hold a picket of the BBC in London next month.

Remember Ukraine's political prisoners!

by New Worker correspondent

ACTIVISTS from International Ukraine Anti Fascist Solidarity (IUAFS) protested at the Ukrainian embassy in London last week against the ten year prison sentence for Anatoly Miruta for distributing humanitarian aid, along with thousands of Ukrainian citizens who have been prosecuted, or even some cases murdered, for allegedly co-operating with Russian forces in the past three and a half years.

Miruta and his mother had organised a makeshift shelter in Syniak, a village north of Kiev where locals collected water and charged their phones, when the town was occupied by Russian troops in March 2022. Miruta said at his trial that all the Ukrainian authorities, soldiers and police had fled from the village, "leaving the people to fend for themselves".

This month he appealed against his sentence, claiming that the court had ignored statements supporting his case and allowed dubious testimonies from previously unknown witnesses.

The protestors also carried placards declaring "Gonzalo Lira – We haven't forgotten you", a reminder of the Chilean-American blogger living in Kharkov who was persecuted by the Kiev government and died in prison in January 2024. An envelope containing this sign was left at the embassy.

A banner calling for justice for the families of the 2014 Odessa House of Trade Unions fire tragedy, and the 1945 Red Army Victory Banner, were also displayed.

During the protest, a Ukrainian embassy car with the number-plate "UKR 1" arrived, and seeing the protest drove past without stopping. No doubt the passengers, quite possibly including ambassador Valery Zaluzhny, did not want to engage with activists or risk being photographed with them.

The protest was, as always, disciplined and peaceful, and engaged politely with diplomatic police who came to monitor the action.

If Mr Zaluzhny had wished to enter the embassy, we would have gladly made way for him to do so.

Activists from IUAFS intend to continue to campaign in solidarity with democrats and anti-fascists in Ukraine until peace and democratic rights are fully restored in that country, and the scourge of Banderism and Banderite terrorism has been eliminated.

An Introduction to Marxism-Leninism

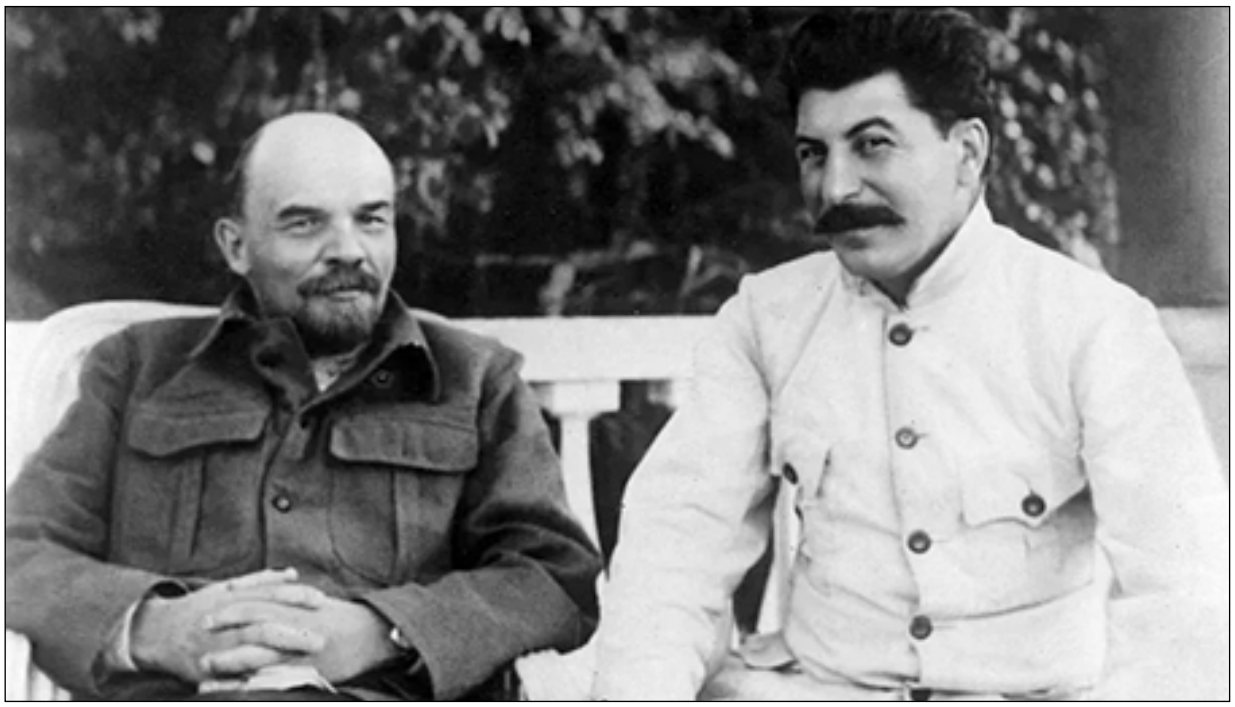
by John Maryon

FOR ANYONE, especially new comrades, wishing to understand the dynamic philosophy of Marxism-Leninism there is in my view no better insight than to study *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* by J V Stalin. A concise and clear work, written in 1938, that outlines the essential theory of Marxism-Leninism.

Its founders were Karl Marx and Frederick Engels with further development by Vladimir Lenin as he applied the philosophy to build socialism in the Soviet Union. It is an important philosophy that guides communist parties in their vanguard role and in the building of socialism. Stalin had the ability to explain complex ideas without simplification or being patronising to his audience.

Dialectical materialism is a major component of Marxism-Leninism. It is called dialectical because it studies changes that are interconnected with other things that may also change. The theory is materialistic because it accepts that physical processes are governed by specific laws. Historical materialism is the extension of the principles of dialectical materialism to the study of social life. It is an application of the principles of dialectical materialism to the phenomena of the study of the life of society, to the study of society and of its history.

Human history reflects a complex struggle for survival. There is a fundamental difference in the way society and natural processes develop. There are no conscious forces in the purely physical world but social development is influenced by thought and the actions of people. People have the ability to shape their own destinies and forge progressive trends in a society . Historical materialism is a core component of the philosophy developed by Marx and Engels. It is only when grasped and understood by the masses can it become a motive force for the development of society. Scientific communism is also an important part of Marxist theory which studies the laws, forms and methods of the class struggle.



It is important to understand what is meant by productive forces and production relations and how they relate to each other under both capitalism and socialism. The productive forces are the means of production including the workers. Production relations are the relations existing between people in the process of production, exchange and distribution of wealth. Historical materialism shows that under capitalism contradictions will exist between productive forces and production relations and that they can only be resolved through class struggle. A struggle to break-up the old system of production relations and replace it with new ones to ensure a more fairer distribution of wealth within a more stable framework.

Marxist-Leninist philosophy challenges that of fatalism which is promoted by those who are afraid of change and want to keep things as they are. Fatalists believe that what will happen is fated and can make no difference to the outcome. Marxists maintain that we make our own history by our actions. We have heard people say 'what will be will be' but they are stuck in a rut and will be cut off from human progress.

The building of socialism is far more than raising production or economic indicators. It is concerned with the evolution of human thought along with social and cultural progress. The failure of comrades in the past to recognise this fact has led to serious setbacks. 'You can't change human nature' is a hackneyed old cliche trotted out by the bourgeoisie who don't want change and the unthinking who don't understand it. In reality things are changing all the time. Change however is not uniform. In some parts of the world women are still regarded as second-rate citizens to be abused and treated with cruelty. In the Soviet Union Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman to enter space.

A politically planned economy with public ownership and control of major and strategic industry, utilities, transport and financial institutions is a core requirement of Marxism – Leninism. Public ownership ensures that the value created by workers is used to pay direct and social wages while creating funds for future investment. Money, the life-blood of capitalism and mechanism for exploitation, will cease to dominate and to control society. Wealthy capitalists would no longer be able to dictate political and economic policy. Power would be exercised by the Communist Party on behalf of the people which it serves. This is the system employed by the socialist countries today.

Proletarian internationalism is one of the basic principles of Marxism Leninism. It stems from an awareness that the class struggle has a vital international component and stresses the need for effective worldwide solidarity. Proletarian internationalism governs relations between all peoples of the international working class and between communist parties. Lenin wrote. 'There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism and that is working wholeheartedly for the revolutionary movement and revolutionary struggle in one's own country and supporting in all ways possible every other country without exception'.

Utopian socialists had a dream of an ideal society. Engels was able to show how socialism could be achieved by turning that utopian vision into a science that led to an understanding of the laws of development of society, of the contradictions of capitalism and the role of the working class in class struggle. Communists should not just criticise the injustices of capitalist society but to examine and explain the nature of the capitalist mode of production and its laws of development. Such an approach exposes the raw nature of capitalism that is essentially based upon the theft of surplus value created by workers by an upper class of parasites.

Lenin and Stalin.

THE NEW WORKER

Middle East makeover: the game has changed

by Farhad Ibragimov

LAST WEEK, a series of high-profile events – including a phone call between Presidents Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump and the visit of Syria's interim leader Ahmed al-Sharaa to Moscow – nearly overshadowed another meeting with far-reaching implications: the visit to Moscow of Ali Larijani, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

Larijani's talks with Putin covered everything from energy and trade to regional crises. Yet what made the trip extraordinary was not the agenda, but the message. The Iranian envoy arrived carrying a personal letter from Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, a gesture that underscored the level of political trust between Moscow and Tehran and signalled that the two powers are deepening a long-term strategic dialogue despite mounting Western pressure.

This was Larijani's second visit to Russia this year, following his July trip shortly after the 12-day Iran–Israel war. At that time Tehran was eager to present its regional assessment and discuss the growing tensions around its nuclear programme. Moscow, in turn, offered to help stabilise the situation and revive diplomatic channels. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov even reaffirmed Russia's readiness to facilitate the revival of the nuclear deal and resume the export of enriched uranium for peaceful purposes.

For Washington, Iran remains a top strategic concern. Despite the Americans' focus on Ukraine and Gaza, the USA cannot guarantee Israel's security without addressing what it views as the "Iran problem". In the eyes of American policy-makers, a nuclear-armed Iran would upend the regional balance and unsettle Gulf monarchies like Saudi Arabia and the Emiratis – all wary of Tehran's growing influence among Shia communities in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and Iraq.

Tension spiked again after reports that Tehran was negotiating to purchase Russian fighter jets – a move that could mark a new phase in defence co-operation. For Washington and Tel Aviv, such contracts are more than just arms deals; they are proof that the Moscow–Tehran partnership is evolving into something much deeper than tactical alignment. What's taking shape is a new framework for regional security – one that places Iran as both a strategic ally and an essential node in Russia's expanding Middle Eastern network.

The American side is expected to raise these concerns at the proposed Putin–Trump summit in Budapest. Ukraine will remain a central topic, but Washington's unease about Russia's growing Middle Eastern footprint is likely to surface as well. For the USA, the region remains a vital geopolitical theatre – and it now fears losing the initiative there.

Larijani's visit, coming right after the Syrians, was no coincidence. Moscow is signalling that it intends to anchor itself as the principal mediator among the region's rival powers. The Syrian president's visit reaffirmed that Damascus has no plans to distance itself from Russia; on the contrary, it seeks deeper co-operation, particularly in rebuilding infrastructure and maintaining stability. Russian military bases in Syria remain key deterrents against external interference.

Iran's situation is more complex. The change of leadership in Damascus has cooled relations with Tehran, largely due to Iranian over-reach in Syrian domestic affairs and the new government's attempts to balance its foreign policy. This is where Moscow steps in – uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between its two partners. With strong political trust, established military channels, and a reputation as a pragmatic external actor, Russia could mediate a "reset" between Damascus and Tehran based not on ideology but on shared regional interests.

Tehran, for its part, knows that the close alliance it once enjoyed with Syria won't return anytime soon. But neither side wants confrontation. That episode illustrates Moscow's new role: not merely a participant, but the key communication channel among regional powers. It also shows that all major actors – from Tehran to Tel Aviv – now see Russia as a trusted intermediary.

The Israeli factor adds another layer. Despite Israel's continued airstrikes on Syrian border areas, the new Syrian leadership appears more pragmatic – less focused on rhetoric and more on rebuilding the country and securing stability. Meanwhile, Iran anticipates a second round with Israel. Iranian media increasingly frames renewed escalation as inevitable, but this time under new conditions: with Tehran's improved missile arsenal and strengthened regional alliances, its confidence has visibly grown.

President Putin's recent remarks at the CIS summit in Tajikistan shed light on this dynamic. He revealed that Israel had sent a message to Iran through Moscow, expressing interest in avoiding further escalation. That episode illustrates Moscow's new role: not merely a participant, but the key communication channel among regional powers. It also shows that all major actors – from Tehran to Tel Aviv – now see Russia as a trusted intermediary.

Putin likely briefed Larijani on these contacts, including his call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In doing so, Russia reinforced its position as both mediator and architect of an emerging multilateral format – one where Tehran, Damascus, and Tel Aviv could eventually negotiate a new regional balance through Moscow's good offices.

Taken together, the recent visits of al-Sharaa and Larijani – and the likely Putin–Trump meeting – mark the onset of a new geo-political phase. The Middle East, once again, is becoming the arena where the future of global power is decided. Despite US rhetoric about "prioritising Europe" Washington knows that strategic leadership in the 21st century is being determined in the region.

For Tehran, the lesson is clear: partnership with Moscow is not a matter of convenience, but of strategy. Iran understands that without Russia, it would struggle to maintain regional stability or resist mounting Western pressure. Its participation in frameworks such as BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and the Eurasian Economic Union reflects a pragmatic pivot – one aimed at integration, diversification, and resilience, not confrontation.

Gone are the days of ideological maximalism. Iran's foreign policy today is guided by a clear logic: survive, adapt, and expand influence through diplomacy, not defiance. In that sense, its growing alignment with Moscow is more than an alliance of necessity – it's a calculated bet on a multipolar future in which Russia and Iran emerge not as outliers, but as anchors of a new Eurasian order.

Will Tehran buy new Russian fighters?

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