

# Iran ready for American attack!

by our Middle East affairs correspondent

Iranian forces are on high alert as an American armada sails to the Persian Gulf to prepare for a new imperialist onslaught against the Islamic Republic. Iran warns the United Nations over explicit US threats against the Islamic Republic while a senior advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution describes President Donald Trump as “fearful of defeat”. And life returns to normal in Iran following the suppression of the imperialist-run gangs that hijacked peaceful economic protests to unleash anarchy and terror on the streets of Tehran at the behest of Washington and Tel Aviv.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi says that the Islamic Republic’s armed forces are ready to respond “immediately and forcefully” to any attack. He said that Iran’s defence strategy has been strengthened by the lessons learned from the 12-day war with Israel and America last year. “Our armed forces are ready, and their fingers are on the trigger,” he said.

Addressing an open debate

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of the UN Security Council in New York on Monday, Iran’s ambassador to the United Nations Amir Saeid Iravani said Washington’s conduct has gone beyond Iran alone, saying that the USA continuously threatens sovereign countries with attack. He described threats issued against Tehran as explicit and ongoing, noting how Donald Trump has “openly and repeatedly threatened Iran with the use of force and military intervention”.

The envoy urged action at the international level, stressing that the UN Security Council had to explicitly condemn these violations that have been committed by the USA.

The Charter of the United Nations is “under deliberate assault”

which is “driven by those who believe power confers exemption from law and that peace should be established through strength and power,” Iravani said. “The Charter of the United Nations was never meant to be optional. It is not a menu from which powerful states may choose what suits them and discard what constrains

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them.”

Iravani went on to name examples of a “sustained pattern of unlawful actions” by the Americans that undermine the Charter, including defying international criminal court rulings, imposing a blockade on Venezuela and kidnapping its president, “issuing persistent threats, the use of force and military attack against other sovereign states” and “threatening occupation or control of foreign territories”.

“These illegal unilateral actions erode the international rule of law, undermine multilateralism, and gravely endanger international peace and security,” he added.

He further noted that the US president had “explicitly incited unrest within my country, called

for the takeover of institutions, and promoted violence under the guise of political pressure”.

Pointing to the grave human cost of these unlawful policies the Iranian diplomat said that “the United States bears full legal and moral responsibility for the foreseeable consequences of its actions, including civilian deaths, injuries, and the destruction of public and private property”.

Meanwhile Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior advisor to the Supreme Leader of Iran Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, says the US president is “greedy for power, money, and material gain” but at the same time “cautious and cowardly”. If Trump “sees that a move he has started might lead to defeat, he quickly raises his hands and surrenders”.

## FUND

This week’s appeal brought in £691, pushing the running total to £1,892 thanks to supporters all over the country including the veteran communist in East Anglia who gave us £200 and a Midlands supporter who sent in a score. Collections, donations and bankers’ orders – it all helps keep the *New Worker* fighting fund going. Remember we still need £1,608 to hit our target for January. Inflation hits all of us – including our print shop – so please help us keep our suppliers sweet and keep our presses rolling.

As wars and rumours of war spread across the world the fight against imperialism grows. On the streets of London and throughout the country millions of people are demanding justice for the Palestinians and an end to imperialist aggression. They’ve seen through the lies of Trump and his lackeys such as Starmer. And we’ve played our part. The voice of the *New Worker* is heard. But it can only continue with your support. You can help ensure that it continues to be heard loud and clear on the streets and in the struggles to come. All donations, big or small, count. Please send yours to: New Worker Fund, PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the ‘New Worker’.

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# THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

## Burnham's move

**The Labour bureaucracy's decision to block Andy Burnham's bid to return to Parliament comes as no surprise – least of all to the Mayor of Greater Manchester who has done little in recent months to mask his leadership ambitions. Burnham knows the score. His star rose with the help of the right-wing blocs that have long held sway in the unions and the Labour Party – factions that are still loyal to Starmer and the ageing gang of washed-up Blairites that advise him.**

Although some 50 Labour backbenchers and peers are calling on Labour's NEC to reverse the Burnham ban, they don't have the power or influence to force it through. But the decision to bar Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham from contesting the Gorton & Denton by-election is a double-edged sword. It removes a potential challenger to Starmer or his chosen successor, Wes Streeting, but at the same time it boosts the chances of the Faragists and the Greens – who are both making huge efforts to turf Labour out at the by-election in the Manchester constituency next month. And if Labour lose then Starmer's days are numbered.

Burnham will still be out of the running. He hasn't got a seat in Parliament and he's never going to get one as long as Starmer & Co are in charge.

Burnham's hope, however, is that Starmer will fall on his sword if the Labour vote collapses in Gorton & Denton and the regional and local elections that will soon follow in the Spring. If the 'Stop Streeting' brigade can mount a successful challenge for the leadership – possibly through Angela Rayner – Burnham's return to national politics and the high office he craves for is on the cards. The 'King of the North' has been checked. But he's still in the game.

None of this, however, is of much benefit to the working class. At the end of the day there is little that really divides Starmer and Burnham. All we are seeing is a spat within right-wing social-democracy – a beauty contest between the third-rate bureaucrat who claims to lead us and a seasoned street-wise politician who knows how to woo the voters.

Sadly, the left response has been weak and divided. The Corbynistas are too busy locked in their own internal struggles to intervene. One of their prominent, Salma Yaqoob, is openly calling on her followers to support the Greens in the Gorton & Denton by-election.

Prominent Your Party member and former Respect party leader Salma Yaqoob has endorsed the Greens in the upcoming Gorton & Denton by-election. She is urging the left to "work together to support" the Greens who are now the bookies' favourite to take the seat.

Though essentially a liberal-bourgeois front the Greens like to pose as 'eco-socialists' when gunning for votes in traditional Labour areas. Zack Polanski, the Green leader, is a former Liberal-Democrat who has seen his platform grow on calls for a wealth tax, an end to arms sales to Israel, and the defence of immigrants, asylum seekers and civil liberties as a whole.

But this is still reformism – a rebrand of the left social-democracy we see time and time again within the European Union that the Greens much admire.

Although there is a time and place for a protest vote – and Starmer definitely must go – we must keep up the fight against the whole capitalist system in Britain and throughout the world.

# The Monroe Doctrine's shift to imperialist dogma

by Javier Vadell

**When President James Monroe proclaimed the Monroe Doctrine in 1823, it was presented as a defensive principle aimed at protecting the newly independent nations of the Americas from renewed European colonial ambitions.**

In the beginning the doctrine appeared to champion republican self-determination and hemispheric autonomy. Over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries however, it evolved into a justification for unilateral American intervention, transforming from a defensive claim into an offensive imperialist dogma with long-lasting consequences for Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the period between 1823 and 1880 the application of the Monroe Doctrine was highly selective. Although the USA invoked it rhetorically as a hemispheric shield, in practice it was applied only when US interests were directly at stake, particularly in North America and the Caribbean. During this early phase, the USA lacked both the military capacity and the political will to enforce the doctrine consistently across the hemisphere. Nevertheless, the doctrine served as a symbol of American aspirations and had become embedded in American political faith rather than legal principles.

Monroe himself introduced ambiguities that later facilitated expansionist interpretations. He asserted that Washington reserved the right to judge events anywhere in the Americas based on their impact on American "peace and happiness". The Monroe Doctrine also claimed that the New World shared distinct interests and ideals separate from those of the Old World, without clearly defining them. These vague formulations allowed later policymakers to redefine those "interests and ideals" in ways that increasingly centred US economic dominance and political stability favourable to American capital and strategic control.

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, as the

USA entered its imperialist phase under the presidencies of William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, the Monroe Doctrine was openly reinterpreted. Theodore Roosevelt argued that chronic instability or "misconduct" in Latin America and the Caribbean justified US intervention as an "international police power".

In effect, Monroe's original warning to Europe was converted into an affirmative licence for the USA to intervene militarily, economically and politically. The operative value of the doctrine shifted from the protection of sovereignty to the enforcement of political stability as defined by Washington.

The harm inflicted on Latin America by this evolution was profound. Under the banner of the Monroe Doctrine and its corollaries, the USA intervened repeatedly in the domestic affairs of sovereign states, occupying territories, overthrowing governments, controlling customs revenues and supporting compliant elites. The doctrine also normalised the idea that Latin America and the Caribbean existed within an American sphere of influence rather than as a collection of equal nations in the international system.

Culturally and politically, the doctrine contributed to deep mistrust towards the USA across the region. What was once proclaimed as a shield against imperialism came to be seen as imperialism itself. How, then, should Latin America cope with this legacy?

**First**, regional unity is essential. Fragmentation has historically made Latin American

countries more vulnerable to external intervention. Strengthening regional organisations and fostering collective diplomatic positions can reduce asymmetries of power.

**Second**, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean must continue to assert principles of sovereignty and non-intervention in international forums, grounding their foreign policies in international law rather than informal doctrines imposed from outside.

**Third**, economic diversification is crucial. Dependency on a single external power has often translated into political vulnerability. By expanding trade partnerships and strengthening internal markets, Latin America and the Caribbean can gain greater autonomy in decision-making.

**Finally**, historical memory matters. Understanding the Monroe Doctrine not as a neutral or benevolent principle but as an evolving instrument of power of American geopolitics.

In sum, the Monroe Doctrine's journey from a defensive declaration to an imperialist dogma illustrates how ideas can be reshaped by power geopolitics. For the people of Latin America and the Caribbean confronting this history is not merely an academic exercise but a necessary step towards building a more sovereign and equitable future.

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*Global Times*



## Workers' Notes

### Angry scenes at Wormwood Scrubs

by New Worker correspondent

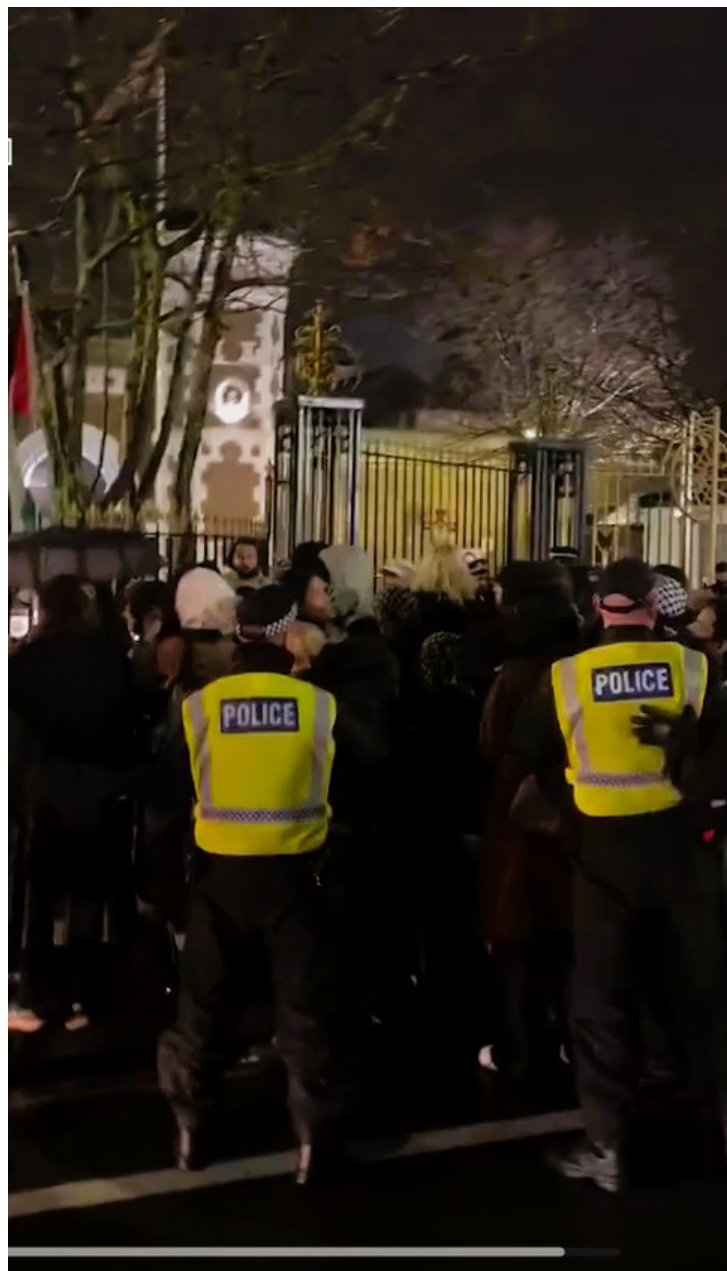
Police officers shoved protesters to the ground and kettled them outside Wormwood Scrubs jail in London last weekend during a demonstration in support of a Palestine hunger striker. And 86 people were arrested for refusing “to leave the grounds when ordered to do so”. The Palestine campaigners allegedly “blocked prison staff from entering and leaving, threatened police officers and a number managed to get inside a staff entrance area of a prison building”. Those arrested were detained under suspicion of aggravated trespass, the police said.

Remand prisoner Umer Khalid, 22, was on hunger-strike demanding bail and protesting against UK complicity in Israel’s genocidal war against the Palestinian Arabs of the Gaza Strip. He had been on hunger strike since November, briefly pausing in December due to severe ill health. Gravely ill, he’s now in hospital ending the hunger strike after his health deteriorated rapidly on Sunday with fears he was at high risk of a heart attack.

Khalid told Al Jazeera TV that “the only thing that seems to have any impact, whether that is positive or negative, is drastic action. The strike reflects the severity of this imprisonment. Being in this prison is not living life. Our lives have been paused. The world spins, and we sit in a concrete room. This strike reflects the severity of my demands.”

Umer Khalid is among a group of five activists accused of breaking into the RAF base at Brize Norton in June and spray-painting two Voyager refuelling and transport planes. The group has pleaded not guilty.

The Palestine Action campaign says two of its members were involved and red paint “symbolising Palestinian bloodshed was also sprayed across the



runway and a Palestine flag was left on the scene”. Within days Palestine Action was banned under the anti-terrorism laws, adding it to a list that includes ISIS and al-Qaeda.

Seven other protesters have been involved in rolling hunger strikes since November.

But Khalid was the only one still refusing food after three other members of the group ended their protests this month. They said one of their demands had been met after a UK-based subsidiary of the Israeli weapons company Elbit Systems was denied a UK government contract.

“Our prisoners’ hunger strike will be remembered as a landmark moment of pure defiance; an embarrassment for the British state,” the Prisoners for Palestine Group said.

The group’s list of demands includes bail, the right to a fair trial and the de-proscription of Palestine Action as well as the closure of all the Elbit plants in the UK. They’re seeking an end to

what they call censorship in jail, accusing the prison authorities of withholding mail, calls and books. And they are calling for an inquiry into alleged British involvement in Israeli military operations in Gaza and the release of surveillance footage from RAF spy flights that flew over Gaza on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, when British aid workers were killed in an Israeli attack.

### In and Out Sourcing

by New Worker correspondent

**Next Wednesday RMT stage a morning protest outside Transport for London’s (TfL) Board meeting at City Hall to demand that Mayor of London Sadiq Khan brings presently outsourced cleaners back in-house.**

Earlier TfL awarded a new five-year cleaning contract to outsourcing giant Mitie, affecting about 2,000 workers, despite

the Mayor previously telling the union that he supports direct employment.

At the same time, cleaners on the Docklands Light Railway have been taking strike action after their bosses told them that sick pay would only be available to workers who are terminally ill, which is typical of outsourcing companies.

RMT wants the Mitie contract terminated and urgent plans for the early insourcing of all TfL cleaners and decent sick pay for DLR cleaners. It also condemns the recent re-privatisation of London Overground via an eight-year contract awarded to FirstGroup.

General Secretary Eddie Dempsey said: “The Mayor was elected with a democratic mandate to run London’s transport system in the public interest. However, instead he is allowing TfL to be captured by private corporations operating beyond democratic control. Handing thousands of cleaners to Mitie for another five years, while claiming to support insourcing, exposes how hollow that commitment is at the moment.”

RMT estimates that Mitie paid out £41.5 million to its shareholders in the last financial year and made an average profit of 11 per cent on its railway and London Underground contracts, and deplores the fact that CEO Phil Bentley was paid £20.5 million over the last two years.

This is a reward for “a dreadful track record of paying poor wages and not giving staff decent employment conditions”. Partly to blame were those “TfL bosses who are more interested in appeasing their mates in big business, rather than looking after tube staff and passengers’ best interests”. RMT wants the London Assembly to launch a formal inquiry into the extent of corporate influence over TfL.

This is just one of RMT’s battles against outsourcing. It has also been involved in long-running battles on behalf of Carlisle Support Services employees on Northern’s railways. Northern outsources even basic station work to a company 68 per cent owned by Tory peer Lord Ashcroft – who collects his dividend on sunny Belize, via a nominee shareholder in wet Leeds.

Other beneficiaries of this racket are the Churchill Group, which saw owners extract £43

million in dividends and SSP/Rail Gourmet, which paid £544 million in dividends since 2018.

Dempsey said last year that: “Lord Ashcroft has used offshore trusts and non-dom status in Belize to shelter wealth from UK tax while holding major stakes in UK infrastructure services. He has no business being allowed to run any British company let alone one that super exploits outsourced railway workers.”

RMT estimated that in all six cleaning, security and catering suppliers made £150 million in profits last year from the railways and London underground. The small print of the contracts usually has clauses passing on extra costs, such as increases to the minimum wage or employers’ national insurance contributions, to the government, in other words, the risks are borne by the taxpayer and the rewards are collected by shareholders.

Labour promised in its election manifesto to bring in “the biggest wave of insourcing of public services in a generation” but this does not seem to apply to the newly renationalised Greater British Railways (GBR) network.

Lord Peter Hendy, the rail minister, has said: “The railway is absolutely stuffed full of big and small contracts, all with different terms, all producing real confusion about how we serve customers and passengers better. And I’m strongly in favour of getting individual people to get hold of bits of the railway and run them better for customers and for the economy of the country.”

He declined to make any particular commitments however, merely waffling that unions “make some interesting points, but it would be for the management of GBR to take that on board and think afresh about how we serve customers best”. Translation: Sod off.

Asda workers meantime are facing two lots of outsourcing. Although its George clothing and home operation is one of the most profitable parts, its owners are planning to transfer over 1,200 jobs at three warehouses that handle online George deliveries to DHL next year. GMB say many jobs are likely to go with some staff unwilling or unable to move to the new roles that will be consolidated at DHL’s Derby depot from Asda’s current de-

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depots in Lymedale, Staffordshire; Brackmills, Northamptonshire; and Washington, Tyne and Wear. Asda say these depots will still handle George in-store orders and food distribution.

The GMB union complains that entire families working at the effected locations will be affected and added that the private equity buyout of Asda "has been a disaster for workers, customers, the supply chain and communities. The recent job cuts announcement and now the outsourcing of clothing distribution pave the way for a full carve up of the company." Asda bosses deny this, claiming outsourcing will help them expand and that the transfer will be "under TUPE regulations, which protect their existing pay, pension and length of service".

GMB is not convinced. It fears that it "paves the way for a full carve-up of the company" by its private equity owners TDR Capital. National officer Nadine Houghton said: "It is time for TDR Capital to come clean and be honest about their plan for the business – they owe it to every single Asda worker."

As if to confirm GMB's fears, Asda is outsourcing its store security to Mitie. This will see Mitie taking over security at 1,100 locations including superstores, supermarkets, living and express stores, affecting over 2,000 security guards.

Mitie say this will assist Asda in "transitioning to a data-driven,

outcome-focused security model" that "places the safety of both customers and colleagues at the forefront". But they would say that and not make any announcement about cutting wages and worsening terms and conditions.

## Off the rails

by New Worker correspondent

**At the Transport Salaried Staff Association (TSSA) the war between the union's leader and the full-time staff represented by GMB continues. TSSA General Secretary Maryam Eslamdoust has accused GMB officials of bullying her and TSSA staff as part of a campaign to merge the unions. In turn, GMB accuses her of presiding over a culture of bullying, harassment and trade union victimisation, citing the suspension of a TSSA-employed GMB shop steward.**

Eslamdoust became TSSA leader after her predecessor, Manuel Cortes, was dismissed for inappropriate behaviour. Eslamdoust claims she is putting things right, but her enemies claim she was put in place by Cortes's supporters and that nothing much has changed. The GMB has been criticised for the same failings, resulting in an unexpected General Secretary election. It is presently facing Employment Tribunal cases by former senior staff who make accusations of sexism and bullying.

Eslamdoust, a past Mayor of Camden, has been criticised for her lack of any full-time union experience. GMB says a staff survey shows that 90 per cent described TSSA HQ as a "psychologically unsafe" workplace. Last year GMB accused TSSA of effectively derecognising it and claims staff are behind them. TSSA reps in its Network Rail branch have voted unanimously for Eslamdoust's removal in protest against her alleged misdeeds, which include banning a hostile motion against her at the AGM.

## We will remember them

by New Worker correspondent

**Russian diplomats together with Russian ex-pats living in the UK laid a wreath and flowers at the Soviet War Memorial at the Imperial War Museum in south London on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January to mark the 82<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the lifting of the Nazi siege of Leningrad.**

Members of the Russian community in Manchester also held a flower-laying ceremony at a plaque unveiled in 2020 in honoured memory of the Soviet soldiers who gave their lives liberating Europe in the Second World War and in recognition of the brave people of the besieged Leningrad.

On the eve of this date, the Russian diplomatic mission's staff conveyed the greetings of

the Governor of St Petersburg (formerly Leningrad) Alexander Beglov to the veterans of the Great Patriotic War (as the Second World War is known in Russian) who currently live in the UK.

The Nazi German blockade of the city stands as one of the most tragic yet heroic chapters in the history of the Soviet Union. It lasted from 8<sup>th</sup> September 1941 to 27<sup>th</sup> January 1944 – 872 days

of extreme hardship, hunger and deprivation. Historians estimate that no more than 800,000 of the three million inhabitants of Leningrad and its surrounding areas survived the siege.

The feat of Leningraders has become a symbol of unbreakable will, courage and self-sacrifice. The memory of those who died in the blockade will remain in the hearts of the Russian people forever.



• At the Soviet War Memorial in London.

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

## 27<sup>th</sup> January 2006

**Residents of one of the few remaining working-class neighbourhoods in south-east London are bracing themselves for a massive programme of social cleansing that will transform much of the Walworth area into an upmarket residential and commercial area.**

Back in April 2002 a report commissioned by estate agents in the Walworth area stated that: "The strong working-class element of the district has prevented gentrification in the area that geographically would

make it a prime candidate."

But on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2005 the local council, Southwark, opted to remove the biggest barrier to this threatened gentrification. The Liberal-Democrat-run council finally decided to demolish the massive Aylesbury estate: Some 2,759 council flats will be knocked down to be replaced by a mixture of private and housing association accommodation.

Immediately after his election in 1997, Tony Blair had gone to the estate to announce a whole new way of dealing with the housing problem in London. Blair spoke of "forgotten people" who are dumped in the most decaying and unpleasant surroundings without any hope of a better life. But rather than invest money and improving local council housing the government has opened the door to big business.

The estate is next to the Elephant and Castle, the transport hub for south London, far closer to the attractions of central London than people imagine.

Over the last 40 years Walworth has become home

to many different groups of immigrants who come to London in search of a safe place to live and work. Many are Africans or South Americans working in low-paid service jobs all over London.

There was time when the estates were seen as a symbol of a bright new future. Following severe bombing during the Second World War, the old rows of Victorian terrace houses were knocked down and replaced in the 1960s with spacious flats and maisonettes. But as is so often the case, the necessary maintenance work was not done. Due to the low quality of construction materials major problems soon developed.

Southwark council put the most disadvantaged people here, who would not complain too much about poor conditions making it a sink estate. Neglected by local and central government, the condition of the area got worse.

In 2001 the council tried to pass control to a housing association. The proposal was overwhelmingly rejected by tenants in a local referendum.

# Gun law ICE-style: How many more must die?

by Farrah Hassen

**This is America. On 7<sup>th</sup> January an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent fatally shot Renee Good in Minneapolis – a city long enriched by immigrants and now under assault from thousands of ICE and Border Patrol agents. How many more need to die before Congress holds ICE accountable?**

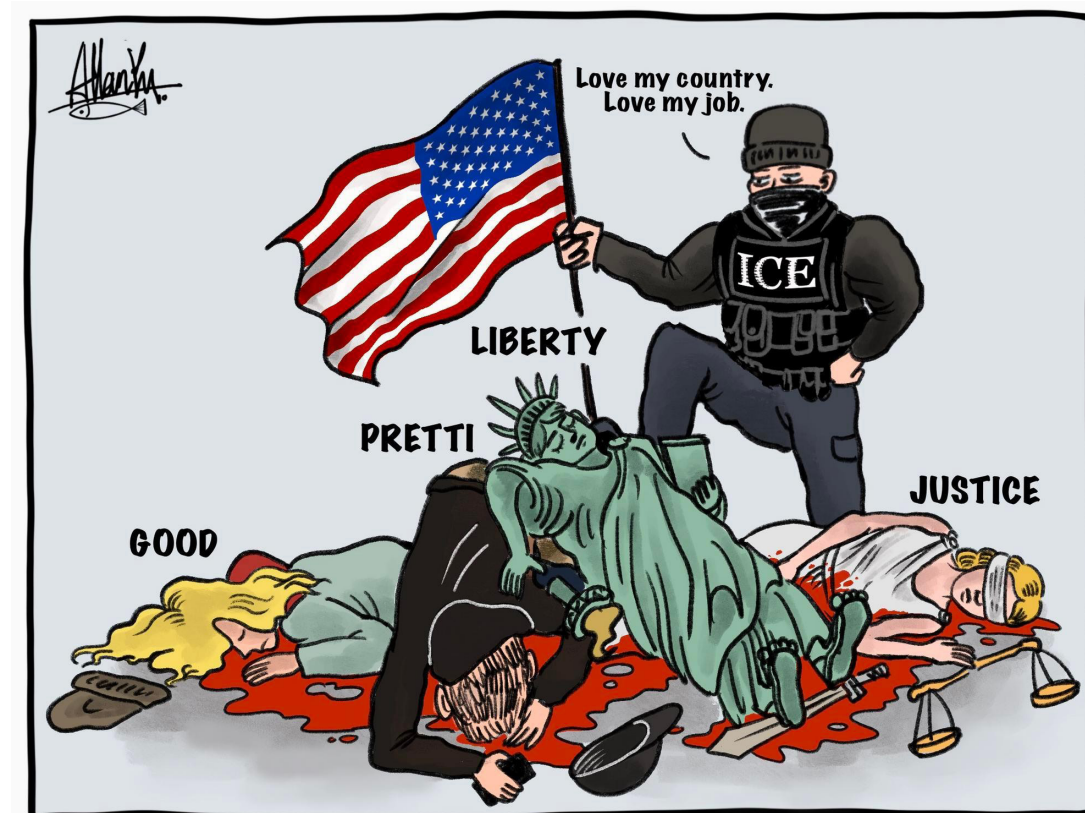
Renee Good, a 37-year-old poet and mother of three, was driving alongside her wife, Becca. They were observing an ICE raid in their community. “We stopped to support our neighbours. We had whistles. They had guns” said Becca. Sadly, at least three other people have been killed by ICE officers in the last five months.

Among them was Silverio Villegas González, a 38-year-old father and cook originally from Mexico, who was fatally shot during a traffic stop in a Chicago suburb. Keith Porter Junior, a 43-year-old father of two – and, like Good, a US citizen – was shot and killed by an off-duty ICE agent on New Year’s Eve in Los Angeles.

While the families of all these victims await justice, the violence continues. ICE agents have shot at least nine people in their vehicles since September. The Department of Homeland Security has routinely invoked “self-defence” to justify these shootings, despite video and witnesses repeatedly contradicting their accounts.

From Los Angeles to Washington DC, Chicago, Memphis, New Orleans, Portland, Charlotte and now Minneapolis, violence has followed wherever Trump has dispatched immigration agents in the name of “public safety”.

On the same day Good was murdered, ICE conducted a raid at a nearby Minneapolis high school, reportedly tack-



ling a teacher and harassing students. The next day, ICE agents in Robbinsdale, Minnesota, forcibly detained an American citizen and Red Lake Nation descendant for no apparent reason. Stories of new outrages emerge almost daily.

And last autumn federal agents descended from Black Hawk helicopters in a midnight raid of an apartment building in Chicago, detaining all its residents, including children. (That’s in addition to killing Villegas González – and shooting another person five times.)

This escalating violence is an outgrowth of ICE’s appalling treatment of immigrants. Across the country, people have been rounded up, thrown in deadly prisons, and ripped from their families – a trend that has sharply escalated under Trump.

Thousands of masked agents in unmarked cars – equipped with military-grade weapons and the latest surveillance technology – treat cities like war zones while executing raids at work-places,

places of worship and schools.

Citizens and non-citizens alike have been racially profiled and kidnapped at courthouses and off the streets without warrants or probable cause. Trump has also used ICE to attack free speech, abducting and jailing students like Mahmoud Khalil, Mohsen Mahdawi, and Rümeyza Öztürk who spoke out against the Gaza genocide.

In addition to the shootings, 32 people died in ICE custody last year alone – and as of this writing, four more people have died in custody so far this January.

Abysmal conditions in ICE prisons, including medical neglect, have resulted in these tragic and avoidable deaths, leaving families shattered and still searching for answers. Nearly 69,000 people are cur-

rently being held in ICE prisons, the vast majority of them without a criminal record. According to the independent *ProPublica* newsroom, ICE also detained over 170 US citizens last year.

ICE has repeatedly denied members of Congress entry to its detention facilities, interfering with Congress’s constitutional oversight authority. Still, Congress enables ICE’s abuses through billions in funding increases. ICE’s \$14 billion annual budget for detentions alone is more than the total military spending of 124 countries.

Across the country, more communities are responding to our nation’s descent into lawlessness by uniting around our shared humanity and demanding justice. A recent poll shows, for the first time, net positive support – including among self-described moderates – for abolishing ICE.

These Americans understand that no one is safe as long as ICE still exists, operates with impunity and terrorises communities. How many more deaths will it take for Congress to hold this agency accountable?

*People’s World*  
(USA)



• Anti-ICE protest in Los Angeles.

# Stopping Starlink: How Iran foiled Washington's 'colour revolution'

by Bappa Sinha

**On 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026, something unprecedented occurred in the annals of electronic warfare. Iran activated a multi-layered digital suppression campaign that, within hours, degraded Elon Musk's Starlink satellite internet service from functional connectivity to what engineers described as a "patchwork quilt" of intermittent access. According to *Filter.Watch*, an Iranian internet rights monitoring group, packet loss in Tehran surged from 30 per cent to over 80 per cent. This marked the first verified instance of a nation-state successfully neutralising Starlink at a national scale during an internal political crisis.**

Iran has been the most-sanctioned country in the world, except for Russia after the start of the Ukraine War. The USA, after unilaterally withdrawing from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in Trump's first term, got its allies to impose snap-back sanctions on Iran in late 2025, reverting to the harsh sanctions regime that existed before JCPOA. This led to the Iranian rial collapsing from 817,000 to the dollar to 1.42 million by late December 2025, a depreciation of over 73 per cent in less than three months. Food prices rose 72 per cent year-on-year. Annual inflation stood at

42.2 per cent. Shopkeepers in Tehran's Grand Bazaar, unable to price their goods amid daily currency volatility, shuttered their businesses in spontaneous protest. The issue is not whether Iranians had immediate reasons to demonstrate. The issue is what happened next: a co-ordinated attempt by the American and Israeli intelligence agencies to hijack economic discontent into regime change, using satellite technology as a primary weapon – and its spectacular failure.

## The infrastructure of subversion

Starlink terminals do not appear inside a sanctioned country by accident. They are costly physical devices that must be smuggled, distributed, hidden, powered and activated. Estimates suggest between 50,000 and 100,000 terminals had been smuggled into Iran by January 2026, enough to create a parallel communications network the moment Tehran switched off its internet.

Then there is the question of timing and logistics. The mass smuggling of Starlink terminals accelerated after President Biden authorised US technology companies to bypass sanctions in September 2022, coinciding with the Mahsa Amini protests. The infiltration



• This was Trump's doing....

intensified following the June 2025 12-day war between Iran and Israel, during which Musk announced Starlink's "beams are on" over Iran. The Iranian authorities said that these "beams" were used by Israeli operatives to co-ordinate drone operations and airstrikes. By December 2025, a shadow network of satellite communications had been pre-positioned across the country, awaiting activation.

The foreign intelligence fingerprints became impossible to conceal. Mossad issued a public statement declaring: "We are with you. Not only from a distance and verbally. We are with you in the field." Former US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, also a former CIA director, posted on social media: "Happy New Year to every Iranian in the streets. Also, to every Mossad agent walking beside them." These are not coded messages. They are open acknowledgements of operational

presence.

Certain Kurdish groups also joined the Israeli-American action plan. Seven Kurdish opposition groups, including the Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK) – an affiliate of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) designated as terrorist by Turkey – issued a joint call for a general strike on 8<sup>th</sup> January. The Kurdistan Freedom Party (PAK) claimed armed attacks on Islamic Revolutionary Guard (IRGC) positions in Kermanshah. Reuters reported that Turkey's intelligence agency, MIT, warned the IRGC about armed Kurdish militiamen attempting to cross from Iraq and Turkey into Iran. Tehran claims these fighters were dispatched to exploit the unrest, and the Turks passed intelligence on to the Iranians to prevent the infiltration.

The regime change playbook followed an established pattern. The US Ambassador to the United Nations, Mike Waltz, declared on 29<sup>th</sup>

December that "the people of Iran want freedom... we stand with Iranians in the streets". President Trump posted that "help is on its way". The *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Trump was presented with military strike options. By 15<sup>th</sup> January, according to the *Axios* online news agency, "dozens of top military, political and diplomatic officials in Washington and across the Middle East believed US bombs would be dropping in Tehran within hours".

## The electronic counter-offensive

Iran's response demonstrated that the Global South is no longer defenceless against imperialist technological coercion. Iran's jamming operation combined three distinct capabilities.

The foundation was GPS denial. Starlink terminals rely on GPS signals to locate themselves and establish satellite handoffs. By flooding the GPS L1 band with high-power interference, Iranian forces rendered terminals unable to calculate their positions, breaking connectivity without touching the satellites themselves.

The second layer was direct radio-frequency jamming. Iran deployed mobile jamming units

capable of targeting Starlink's high-frequency Ku-band (10.9–14 GHz) and Ka-band (18–40 GHz) frequencies. According to *Filter.Watch*, these units moved from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, creating localised disruption zones. The pattern, analysts noted, "closely mirrors Russian jamming tactics used in Ukraine".

The third element was the Russian electronic warfare systems transferred to Iran over 2024–2025. The Malaysian *Defence Security Asia* news portal confirmed the delivery of Krasukha-4 systems, truck-mounted broadband jammers with an effective range of 150–300 kilometres, capable of disrupting satellite communications across X/Ku/Ka bands used by Starlink. Iran also received the Murmansk-BN long-range EW system, which can jam communications up to 5,000 kilometres away. Iranian state media claims that specialists from Russia and China assisted in deploying these systems against Starlink.

The results were dramatic. Within 30 minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> January shutdown, Cloudflare recorded a 98.5 per cent collapse in Iranian internet traffic. Terrestrial connectivity dropped below two per cent of normal levels. But crucially, Starlink, the supposed lifeline for protesters, was rendered largely inoperative precisely when it was needed most.




## ARAGHCHI MAPS OUT THE 'MAYHEM' OF THE WESTERN-BACKED ARMED RIOTS IN IRAN





Total death toll: **3,117**

Civilians and security forces: **2,427**




Terrorists: **690**

### Public services






-  **305** ambulances & buses
-  **253** bus stations
-  **200** schools

-  **15** libraries
-  **24** gas stations
-  **350** mosques
-  **2** Armenian churches

### Civilian life

-  **700** convenience stores
-  **800** private cars
-  **300** private homes

### State institutions

-  **750** banks
-  **600** ATMs
-  **414** government buildings
-  **749** police stations
-  **120** Basij centers

AL MAYADEEN  
ENGLISH

• Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi released a detailed breakdown of the damage caused during the terrorist operation that unfolded when armed rioters infiltrated peaceful economic protests in Iran. The figures span civilian homes, public infrastructure, religious sites and governmental institutions, alongside a high death toll.

## The aborted imperialist assault

The timing is telling. On 15<sup>th</sup> January the Trump administration appeared poised to order military strikes against Iran. American troops began evacuating from their Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar. Iran closed its airspace. But

that afternoon, the order did not come. Trump announced that “very important sources on the other side” had informed him that the killing had stopped. The strike was called off. What changed?

The evidence suggests Iran's successful communications blackout disrupted the operational requirements of regime change. Without Starlink, the protest co-ordination infrastruc-

ture collapsed. Without continuous video of ‘regime atrocities’ reaching global audiences in real-time, the propaganda machine lost fuel. Without the ability to communicate with agents and assets inside the country, intelligence operations were blinded. The much-vaunted colour revolution playbook, refined in Ukraine 2014, attempted in Belarus 2020, and partially executed in Iran 2022,

had run into a technological wall.

The Iranian authorities announced the dismantling of what they described as a “foreign espionage network”. The IRGC arrested agents accused of working for Mossad, claiming to have discovered weapons, ammunition and bomb-making materials in safe houses. Videos broadcast by state media showed confiscated Starlink terminals still

in original packaging, described as “electronic espionage and sabotage items” intended for distribution in protest areas.

The contrast with Ukraine is instructive. When Russia attempted to jam Starlink in 2022, SpaceX pushed software updates within hours that countered the interference. Elon Musk boasted of the company's adaptability. Yet in Iran, hastily pushed Starlink updates failed to revive internet service. Russian electronic warfare systems, developed through combat experience in Ukraine and Syria, have been transferred to Iran. Chinese expertise in satellite interference has also reportedly been shared. Iran had improved on those techniques and foiled the CIA-Mossad plans, showcasing its indigenous capabilities. The Global South is learning to fight back.

## Conclusion

The impact of Iran's electronic warfare victory extends beyond the immediate crisis. The stranglehold that satellite technology promised to give the imperialist powers over information space has been broken at least partially, at least temporarily. SpaceX's constellation of 6,000 satellites, valued in the hundreds of billions, can be degraded by ground-based systems costing a fraction of that sum.

This is not a verdict on satellite technology, which holds genuine

potential for global connectivity. It is a verdict on the imperialist system that weaponises civilian infrastructure for regime change operations. When Musk declares “the beams are on” over a target country, when former CIA directors publicly acknowledge agents in protest crowds, when 50,000 smuggled terminals await activation, the humanitarian pretence collapses.

The implications extend beyond the Middle East. For India, the lessons are stark. The Modi government has moved to issue licenses for Starlink to operate in India, breaking with the long-standing precedent that foreign firms cannot own telecom spectrum or operate telecom services directly. This reversal, pushed through without adequate public debate under US pressure, threatens our sovereignty. If satellite communications can be weaponised for regime change in Iran, they can be weaponised anywhere. The government must seriously reconsider these ill-thought-out moves before the “beams are on” over India.

For the architects of regime change in Washington and Tel Aviv, Iran represents a strategic setback. For the Global South, it represents a lesson: technological sovereignty is not optional. It is mandatory for preserving our sovereignty.

*People's Democracy*  
(India)

## CONTACT US...

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## LETTERS

European vassal states are in a state of panic and denial as their double standards in regard to China and their pathetic groveling to the USA are starting to backfire. Even as Chinese enterprises work closely on essential infrastructure projects they are met with a false narrative aimed at imposed disinvestment. Even as US imperialism rampages around the world, threatening, bombing, imposing tariffs, promoting regime change, kidnapping, and proposing to invade Greenland, the weak and incompetent Western leaders, with the notable exception of Canada's Mark Carney, are shown to be cowardly and without principles. They have no understanding of basic diplomacy. They are allowing their economies to face total collapse. They have no hope or vision for the future.

By agreeing to the removal of advanced equipment, such as G5 installations, to pander to the paranoia of the Americans over bogus security risks, the benefits of advanced technology are denied to Europe. The restrictions on Chinese electric vehicles will drive up consumer prices as citizens are forced to purchase more expensive Western alternatives. Europe's self-imposed slow green transition and digital upgrade will have a lasting impact on its future global competition. As Europe continues to humiliate itself it gains no respect and no favours from the rogue state over the ocean that attempts to bully the world.

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

Europe is losing its independence as it follows the misguided path of serving US hegemony. While proclaiming fair competition amid accusations against China, it embarks upon discrimination against Chinese companies. Europe has maintained a notable silence over the seizure of Venezuela's President and no doubt will applaud the bombing of Iran. The threat to take over Greenland has been met with a weak and muted response that signals capitulation. Europe has allowed itself to become a mere pawn of US imperialism with its destiny in the hands of others.

Europe needs to wake up to reality. It also needs to throw out the old order. It needs socialism to ensure a better life for its people in a far safer world. Neither social-democracy, fake left windbags nor socialist parties without an understanding of Marxism can bring a permanent solution to Europe's crisis. We need a revolutionary change underpinned by an effective class struggle and we need it now. Join the New Communist Party of Britain and help us to take the struggle forward!

**John Maryon  
Suffolk**

**T i m o t h y B a n -**croft-Hinchey's excellent article in the *New Worker* [NW:2332, 9 Jan 2026] says that the USA's action in Venezuela that started on 3<sup>rd</sup> January was illegal, criminal and a blatant act of terrorism. I completely agree with him.

However, just what can the people of the USA, and the peoples of the world do about this latest US terrorist act and its many previous acts of state terrorism?

Well, I would say that for a start the American people could expand the idea of a US citizens' non-governmental tribunal. This could cover all

the illegal war-making, the war crimes and the human rights crimes of the USA.

There are precedents for such a tribunal. One of the most well-known such citizen efforts was the International War Crimes Tribunal held in Sweden and Denmark in 1967, at the height of the Vietnam war. Near the end of his long life, the great British philosopher, mathematician and Nobel prize winner Bertrand Russell collaborated with the French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre to convene a tribunal on US crimes committed in the Vietnam war. Russell and Sartre drew together a collection of deeply respected literary and political figures, including the writers James Baldwin, Simone De Beauvoir and Julio Cortazar, as well as Lazaro Cardenas, a former president of Mexico.

But we have to keep in mind that the present and past ruling classes of the USA have no respect for law in any form. Theirs is the 'justice' of the Greek philosopher Thrasymachus, who in Plato's *Republic* tells Socrates that "injustice, if it is on a large enough scale, is stronger, freer, and more masterly than justice".

These ancient and modern upholders of realpolitik believe that 'justice' is no more than the advantage of the strong over the so-called 'weak'. Thus, there is a pressing need to bring the USA into the legal community of nations where it must be held accountable for its rogue state actions. If the so-called leader of the 'free world' can violate international laws of war and human rights with complete impunity, then why should any other nation be constrained?

The peoples of this world, for the future of humanity, desperately needs a full accounting and real accountability for American war criminals.

**A McKerl  
Fife**

So, Mr Starmer thinks the best way of avoiding future increases in tariffs to force us to let the USA annex Greenland is not to strike back. "A trade war is in no-one's interest" he says, emphasising the economic and military importance of our 'special relationship' with the USA. You would think that by now it would have dawned on him that Trump is only interested in "Making America Great Again", and that he will do just as he likes with everybody and everywhere to do this and by any means. But clearly our politicians cannot see this.

Truly the old proverb is right: "A submissive sheep is a find for a wolf." Appeasing Trump is useless. We are, I think having a sort of replay of the 1930s where dictators persecuted their minority population (like Trump with his "Hispanics") and make their countries 'great again' by invading nations around them. If, as I expect, Trump seizes Greenland we will find our leaders will look away, muttering "it's harmed our special relationship/harmed NATO", then a week later go on to say how Trump had to take it before 'Genghis Khan' or someone other ogre got it, and how we are all safer for him doing so.

The question seems to be not will Trump take Greenland but when – and where he's going next to make 'America safe'. The fall of Greenland will open up floodgates to even more places taken. We could joke (no, perhaps it isn't a joke when you think about it) that if Trump wakes up one morning and thinks the Isle of Wight would make a perfect place to annex for a "strategic" place for a giant American base. Just take it over, move the 'natives' out and 'restock' the pop-

*continued on page 9...*

## Diary

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

### UNTIL 26 MARCH

Imperial War Museum: Emergency Exits: The Fight for Independence in Malaya, Kenya and Cyprus. IWM, Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, London SE1 6HZ.

### MON 2–SAT 7 FEB

Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Fidel 100 – speaking tour by grandson Fidel Antonio Castro Smirnoff. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Adelaide's, 209 Bath St, Glasgow, G2 4HZ. 4<sup>th</sup>: The Casa, 29 Hope Street, Liverpool L1 9BP. 5<sup>th</sup>: Showroom Cinema, Paternoster Row, Sheffield S1 2BX. 6<sup>th</sup>: Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB. 7<sup>th</sup>: London SOLD OUT.

### WED 4 FEB

Jewish Peaceniks: Evening of Short Films on Israel/Palestine 1950–2025. 18:00–20:00. Arthouse Crouch End, 159A Tottenham Lane, London N8 9BT. Book on Eventbrite.

### UNTIL SAT 7 FEB

Palestine Comedy Club: *Palestine: Peace de Resistance* Comedy show by Sami Abu Wardeh. Daily, 20:45–22:00. Park Theatre, Clifton Terrace, Finsbury Park, London N4 3JP.

### SAT 7 FEB

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

### SAT 7 FEB

Korean Friendship Association UK: Why the DPRK is right to have a nuclear deterrent. 15:00. Vida Wade Centre, 2 Saltoun Road, Brixton, London SW2 1EP.

### THURS 12–SAT 14 FEB

Glasgow Artists for Palestine: The Watermelon and the Olive: Art Exhibition and Sale for Gaza. 11:00–17:00. Al-Furqan Mosque, Carrington Street, Glasgow G4 9AJ.

### THURS 12 FEB

Marx Memorial Library: Book launch: Andy Friend's *Comrades in Art: Artists Against Fascism 1933–1943*. 18:30. Hybrid. Book on MML website.

### THURS 12 FEB

Workplace Day of Action for Palestine. 12:00. Organise your workplace.

### FRI 13 FEB

Ipswich *New Worker* Group: Eyewitness account of life in the DPRK by Dermot Hudson. 19:30. Friends Meeting House, 39 Fonnereau Road, Ipswich IP1 3JH.

### SAT 14 FEB

Friends of Socialist China: Book launch: Jenny Clegg's *Storming the Heavens*. 15:00. Marx Memorial Library and online. Register on Eventbrite.

### MON 16 FEB

Working Class Movement Library: Book launch: C. Ritchie *Friedrich Engels in the 21st Century*. 18:30–20:00. WCML, 51 Crescent, Salford M5 4WX.

### SAT 21 FEB

TUC/Stand Up to Racism: Workers Against the Far Right. Organising conference. London. Details TBA.

### SUN 22 FEB

International Ukraine Anti-Fascist Solidarity: International online seminar. Lunchtime, precise time TBC.

### SUN 22 FEB

*Battleship Potemkin*: Eisenstein's 1925 film with live music. 20:30. Prince Charles Cinema, 7 Leicester Pl, London WC2H 7BY. Book on PCC website.

### MON 23 FEB

Stop the War Coalition: Defend Ben Jamal & Chris Nineham – Defend the Right to Protest. 09:00. Westminster Magistrates Court, Marylebone Road, London NW1 5BR.

### TUES 24 FEB

Socialist History Society: Lyndal Roper on The German Peasants' War of 1524–6 and why you should care about it. 19:00. Online on Zoom. Register on SHS website.

### 25 FEB–18 APRIL

Townsend Theatre Productions: One-person Magic Lantern show of *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* adapted by Neil Gore. Touring show at venues up and down England. See TTP website for details and tickets.

### WED 25 FEB

Marx Memorial Library: The Archive Exposed at the London Museum. Exhibition. 16:00. First Floor, Studio Smithfield, London Museum Studios, 1 East Poultry Ave,

...continued from page 8

ulation with US citizens. Who or what would stop him – certainly I cannot think Starmer would!

**Robert J Smith**  
Sutton-in-Ashfield

We cannot be kept down by mafias, military goons or by moods. The new Unison leader Andrea Egan, who was mentioned by a contributor to *New Worker's* letters page, has proved her credentials in an article published by *Tribune*. To stop the Reform cretins in their tracks and blow up the Tory's last chance of getting their filthy hands on power all we need is a shoring up of Labour's natural voting constituency. The local elections in three months time will see Labour get a deserved public kicking. That should sharpen the knives of the traditional left in the Labour Party, and those knives must be flung quickly and viciously at the doomed Labour leader. It's our country's existence that is at stake. By shoring up Labour's natural vote in the country we begin to rein in the feeble-minded fantasists who form the body of Reform. We get the breathing space under an Andy Burnham leadership to build the party into a political execution force with Reform exposed as a party of idiots who have nothing to offer to the people or the country but bread and dripping for breakfast, dinner and supper whilst being super-exploited at work. They are the absolute enemy of the working class and labour movement.

**Elijah Traven**  
Hull

The Saudi authorities are furious at the British judicial system after a Saudi dissident was awarded a large sum in compensation. Ghanim Al Dowsari had his telephone illegally hacked by Saudi intelligence a few years ago. He took the case to the court, which awarded him the

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right for compensation. The Saudis are furious that their opponents are winning the arguments as a result of their stupid policies. Two Bahraini citizens had their computers hacked by the Bahraini regime using FinFisher spyware. The UK's High Court had ruled in their favour despite the regime's attempt to use diplomatic immunity. The Saudi case has presented a precedent that could affect the Bahraini case.

**Saeed Shehabi**  
Bahrain Freedom Movement  
London

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**Scottish Political News**

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

**What was one of the SNP Government's proudest achievements is looking a bit tarnished. This is the huge Queen Elizabeth University Hospital. Opened in at a cost of £840 million in 2015 under then Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon, it replaced several smaller Glasgow hospitals and for some specialities serves the whole of Scotland.**

Soon after opening it was given its present official title, which enraged nationalists who picketed the building deploring its name. But they neglected to protest over the infection scandals that soon emerged and have now returned to the headlines.

Some now call it the "Death Star" after the Galactic Empire's space station in *Star Wars*. Between 2017 and 2021 over 84 child cancer and blood disorder patients at the hospital were infected with rare bacteria caused by the hospital's water supply and a ventilation system that contained pigeon droppings. At least four deaths resulted.

For years NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC) denied there was anything wrong with the water supply, but they have now admitted it as a six-year inquiry draws to a close. Managers claimed that they were under pressure from their bosses in Edinburgh to get the hospital open in time for a photo opportunity. Both John Swinney and Nicola Sturgeon deny it but there were still 200 building contractors on site when it opened – and we know a great deal about their standards of integrity.

The families of the

deceased have accused NHSGGC of "deceit and conniving cowardice" by smearing and misleading during the inquiry. In June 2023 the board admitted that it hired private investigators to monitor the families of dead patients.

One parent only learned of the infection problem when another doctor queried why an unusually strong antibiotic was given and the management banned doctors from informing parents. Before becoming Labour leader local MSP Anas Sarwar took an interest in the case, which forced the setting up of the inquiry that has included complaints from a microbiologist and senior doctor, who was told to "pipe down" or she would find things "hard" professionally.

The ventilation system still falls short of national standards, but the board claims it has alternative infection controls in place, something lawyers for the parents dispute.

**Guga News**

We must alert readers to an urgent question that has aroused the wrath of tens of thousands of people. No less than 88,709 people have signed a petition to ban the annual guga hunt on the Isle of Lewis. This is the largest ever petition since Holyrood was established. Another petition established at the same time demanding mandatory collection and publication of child sexual offender data collected a mere 113 signatories.

Guga are baby gannet, which for centuries have been hunted for food in the Western Isles and are said to taste like salt mackerel. The petition, started by wildlife photographer Rachel Bigsby, called for an end to the licensing of the hunt that is permitted by permission of the NatureScot agency as allowed for in the 1981 Wildlife Countryside Act 1981.

Described as "abhorrent cruelty" by a petitioner, it is the practice of the 'Ten Men of Ness' to go out on a traditional two-week hunt in August for young gannets on the uninhabited island of Sula Sgeir. The Men of Ness take the birds from open cliffs using a pole and noose. The chicks are then gutted, salted and preserved in brine.

The SNP Government declined to take any action so as not to lose any island votes, but it will be placed in the pending tray for the next parliamentary session. The Committee Chair hopefully declared: "I hope the debate can be conducted in a civilised and rational way, even although people, of course, have very strong emotions about it." But given the state of the ferries these days islanders might well be depending on the tradition for food again...

**Sarwar's Nightmare**

The first by-election of the year has taken place, and it is not good news for Labour. This was at Glenrothes West & Kinglassie, in what was once the 'Peoples Republic of

Fife'. Glenrothes is a 1950s New Town whose architecture won it the Carbuncles Award – a prize awarded by the Scottish *Urban Realm* magazine from 2000 to 2015 for the most dismal buildings and areas in the country.

The contest was caused by the resignation of an SNP councillor and inspired 22.1 per cent of the locals to vote. As might be expected in an SNP stronghold, the SNP retained the seat with 44.3 per cent of the first preferences votes. Reform UK came from nowhere to 27.5 while Labour (who have a councillor on the ward) slumped to 15.7 per cent. Amongst the also-rans, the Tory got 6.9 per cent and the Lib-Dem on 4.47 crushed the Scottish Family Party (an obscure sect that upholds the "Judeo-Christian-inspired values of traditional Western civilisation" and is led by a former UKIP member) on 0.9.

The SNP, although aided by the absence of rival nationalists from Alba and the Greens, dropped by five per cent, Labour lost more than half their previous percentage. It took five rounds of counting however, to secure enough of the other parties second votes to get over the line.

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# Fake news and the British press

by Ed Newman

In a new episode of what the Venezuelan government calls the “media war” against the country, the official *Miraflores Al Momento* information channel, recently created to defend “the truth about Venezuela against fake news campaigns”, denounced an article published in the *Guardian* as false. The article claims, without evidence and based on anonymous sources, that acting president Delcy Rodríguez and her brother Jorge Rodríguez had secretly agreed with the USA to remove President Nicolás Maduro.

The article, written by Aram Roston and published on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026, is titled *Delcy Rodríguez assured US cooperation after Maduro’s capture* and is based exclusively on the testimony of alleged “sources involved at the highest levels of the discussions” whose identities are not revealed. The narrative



presented suggests that the Rodríguezes offered to co-operate with the Trump administration and Qatar once Maduro was forcibly removed from Venezuela.

The *Guardian* report attempts to construct a narrative of conspiracy and betrayal at the highest level, describing alleged secret communications

held since the autumn of 2025. It claims that, even after Maduro refused to relinquish power following a call with Trump in November, Delcy Rodríguez continued to transmit messages of co-operation to Washington.

The information, however, stumbles over its own contradictions. In one

paragraph, the ‘sources’ admit that the Rodríguezes’ alleged offer had a “subtle difference”: it did not include actively collaborating to overthrow Maduro but only co-operating after the fact. This ambiguity, coupled with the complete lack of corroboration from the cited public figures (such as Marco Rubio and

Mauricio Claver-Carone, who declined to comment or did not respond), clearly demonstrates the total inconsistency of the narrative.

*Miraflores* has categorically denounced the accumulation of false and malicious news against Interim President Delcy Rodríguez. It stated that

these media actions seek to “pave the way for justifying attacks against her physical and moral integrity”.

Following the kidnapping of President Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, a whole host of false or misleading news stories have been disseminated. Even on that same day, dozens of fake images of the president in prison garb or of supposed internal armed uprisings, which turned out not to be real, went viral.

Fake news often lacks reliable sources, such as interview statements or academic research backed by recognised institutions. The absence of visual evidence or videos can also be an indication of falsehood. This type of fake news tends to spread rapidly on social media, going viral and gaining traction. These narratives gain apparent legitimacy as they are shared. This can be exploited to fuel confusion, hatred or even to incite violence.

*Radio Havana Cuba*

## Michael Parenti

Michael Parenti, the American Marxist political scientist, author and lecturer, has died at the age of 92. Parenti was widely known for his sharp critiques of imperialism, capitalism and corporate power, and for his insistence that politics be examined through the lens of class interests and material conditions.

Over several decades he wrote many influential books such as *Democracy for the Few*, *Inventing Reality* and *Blackshirts and Reds*, combining academic research with a polemical style aimed at reaching au-



diences beyond the university. His work challenged dominant narratives on US foreign policy, the role of the media and the nature of liberal democracy.

On the radio and TV *Democracy Now!* channel in 2009 Parenti said: “I argue that one of the functions of a capitalist state is to defend capitalism from itself, to defend capitalism from the capitalists. It was Marx – dare we mention him? I hear he’s coming back in style. It was Marx who said one capitalist will kill many other capitalists, that the system begins to consume itself. We see that

with Bernard Madoff and the like. ...the free market does not work. It’s not free. It’s not really a market; it’s a plunder. And it has to be done away with.”

A gifted speaker, Parenti was also admired for his ability to make complex political and historical arguments accessible without diluting their substance. While his uncompromising positions often placed him at odds with mainstream academia and media, he remained a consistent and independent voice on the left, refusing to soften his analysis for acceptance or career advancement.

# The ‘Board of Peace’ cannot replace the United Nations

by Andrei Kortunov

Last week US President Donald Trump once again turned on the spotlights by launching a new major international initiative – the “Board of Peace”. Though this multilateral body is supposed to start with managing the post-conflict restoration and future development of the Gaza Strip, many argue that its real goal has a larger scale and might reflect Trump’s ambition to find an efficient alternative to the UN, for which he shows no respect.

If the pilot Gaza project turns out to be a success story, this model can be swiftly upgraded and expanded to cover many other conflict areas of the world; they already hinted in Washington that the same innovative and flexible approach may be applied later on to Ukraine and Venezuela.

The idea of the ‘Council’ does not come as a complete surprise to the international community; it has been around already for some time – at least since September of last year. It would be unfair to argue that it emerged in direct opposition to the UN. After all, the UN Security Council Resolution 2803, approved in mid-November by 13 members (with China and Russia abstaining from voting), explicitly called for a temporary international governance in the Gaza Strip and welcomed the establishment of the “Board of

Peace”.

When a more or less detailed plan was promulgated by the White House, however, the subsequent international reaction turned out to be mixed at best. The “Board of Peace” looks like an exclusive, luxury private club where an invitation must come from Trump himself. Furthermore, the permanent club card costs a billion dollars, which means that the doors of the club will remain closed to the overwhelming majority of developing nations with modest financial resources. Not surprisingly, on the initial list of invitees, there were only two countries from Africa and three from Latin America. In summary, about 60 countries – fewer than a third of all UN members – were invited to join the Council.

The decision-making process within the club is also questionable, to put it mildly. According

to what is known, the governance pattern of the proposed “Board of Peace” looks more inherent to despotic empires of antiquity rather than to 21<sup>st</sup> Century multilateral development projects.

Another apparent pitfall of the proposed “Board” is the enforcement of its decisions. It remains unclear how the “Board” is going to impose its will on the universe of headstrong, obstinate and often disobedient local and regional actors – be it in Gaza or in many other conflict-torn areas. So far, there are no appropriate legal mechanisms or administrative tools available that are capable of assuring that the “Board” decisions will be taken on the ground. Be mindful that in the case of Gaza, Palestinians have not even been invited to join the “Board” and some within the Israeli

government have serious reservations about its composition.

The long-term or even mid-term sustainability of the “Board” also remains an open question. The operational layers of the body are heavily saturated with high-level bureaucrats from the Trump administration and it is hard to imagine how this body might outlast Trump’s three remaining years in power.

And yet, even if the “Board” deals only with Gaza, three years might turn out to be absolutely insufficient to complete the post-conflict restoration project in the Strip in full. If the “Board” were to expand to other conflict places, such as Ukraine, it would require much more time, commitment and institutional capacity.

One could add that, so far, the “Board” blueprint lacks a number of important dimensions

that should be organic to any modern post-conflict recovery and rehabilitation, such as human rights, poverty reduction, climate change and environment management, community building, among others.

It looks somewhat counter-intuitive, but the plan has received most of the sharp criticism not from the Global South, not from Moscow or Beijing, but from a number of the most faithful US allies and partners. It was rejected by many EU member states and the UK and generated no enthusiasm in Canada, where they questioned the terms outlined by the US president.

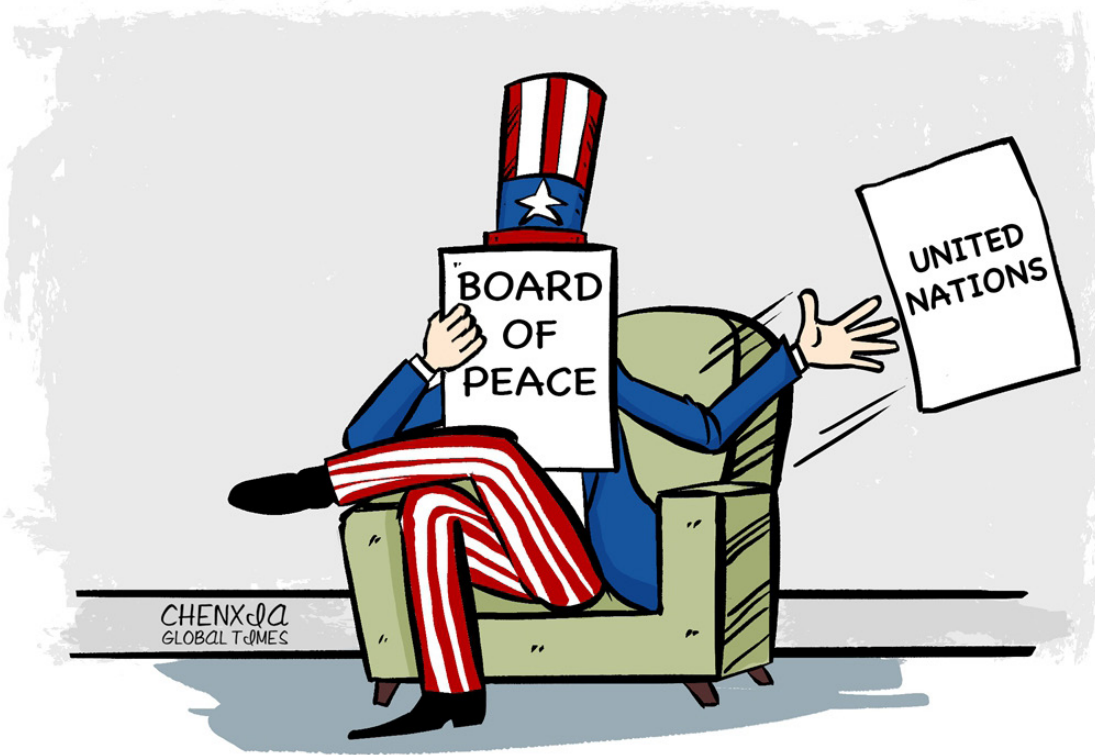
Numerous critics did not like the suggested price tag for the club membership, ambiguities of the mandate, vague efficiency criteria and likely overlaps with UN specialised agencies. Nonetheless, it is crystal clear that no real

plan for Gaza has any chance of success unless it addresses the critical issue of Palestinian Statehood, which is not the case with the “Board of Peace”.

The UN remains the sole international body that has the needed legitimacy, experience, resources and legal basis to steer large-scale post-conflict restoration projects such as the one in the Gaza Strip. All new initiatives should strive to complement the UN rather than replace it. If the “Board of Peace” becomes one of the catalysts to speed up badly needed UN institutional reforms, it would play a useful role for the international community. If it attempts to compete with UN special agencies and even with the Security Council, it will only bring more instability and chaos in the highly volatile and worrisome international environment of today.

*The author is a member of the Russian International Affairs Council.*

*Global Times*



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## Is the Future of NATO in Jeopardy?

by Pawan Atri

**The USA has openly threatened Europe and NATO over its plans to seize control of Greenland, an Arctic island administered by Denmark. NATO, the powerful 32-nation military alliance, appears to be on the verge of unravelling, with Donald Trump openly and very candidly admitting that his administration wants to annex it, underlining that Greenland is vital for America's national security.**

Moreover, Trump has continued to mock his closest European allies, including the UK, France and Italy – often warning them of imposing sweeping trade tariffs if they stall his moves to make Greenland an American territory.

NATO is a tightly-knit defence alliance, wherein an attack on a member state is bound to trigger Article 5 of its founding treaty,

meaning every member of the bloc will have to provide military assistance if an ally's territory is under an attack.

But NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte revealed on Monday how hollow European "strategic autonomy" really is, saying Europe cannot defend itself without American military support. "If anyone here thinks that the European Union or Europe as a whole can defend itself without the USA, keep on dreaming. You can't," Rutte told EU parliamentarians in Brussels. "Europe and the United States need each other."

It is highly unlikely that America is planning to exit NATO over the Greenland issue, reckons Dr Rajkumar Sharma, a Senior Research Fellow at the New Delhi-based foreign policy thinktank NatStrat.

"Trump's Greenland rhetoric and broader NATO pressure could be seen as coercive bargaining and



strategic repositioning, not alliance abandonment. By targeting Denmark, Trump could be reinforcing America's primacy in the NATO alliance to negate any kind of claims of strategic autonomy by European countries," Sharma said.

The USA, at the same time, will keep Europe dependent and prevent its rise

as a rival bloc, he stressed. Nonetheless, the internal rules of the game within NATO are undergoing a change under the Trump administration, he added.

If Washington pulled out of NATO the European security architecture without the USA could be replaced by a fragmented security system, the strategic affairs

he noted. Instead of collective defence, national priorities would be more pronounced. "In the absence of an American nuclear umbrella, countries like Germany and Poland would debate the question of acquiring nuclear weapons. Besides, the UK and France cannot realistically fill the void left by

the American exit. They cannot defend the whole of Europe, as the US can."

The USA is not seeking to exit the transatlantic alliance, retired Captain Anurag Bisen, a veteran submariner of the Indian Navy, echoed. But there are greater demands being placed by the USA on Europe to shoulder the burden. For Europe, its talk of rules-based order, global economy and geopolitical scenarios has been divorced from reality. That is why there is cynicism with Trump's attempts at resetting the world order and Europe is not prepared says Bisen.

"It's not that Europe doesn't have the resources or technology; the moot point is that Europe, like Japan, got used to the American security umbrella and prioritised social security. The talk of an EU-led NATO has long been there since Trump 1.0."

Sputnik

## Mediterranean dockers mobilise for anti-war strike

by John Catalinotto

**The grass roots Unione Sindacale di Base dockers' union (USB), located in Genoa, which led anti-war general strikes in the summer and autumn of 2025, is moving forward for an international general strike on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2026.**

"Dockers call for action. We refuse to collaborate with rearmament policies. We do not want

the docks to be privatised and become a tool of the military. We do not want to work for war," say the USB.

"At a time when imperialism is unleashing deadly aggression against the peoples of the Earth, definitively burying international law, promoting the plundering of natural resources on a global scale, putting armies at the service of the interests of large multinational corpo-

rations and supporting a gigantic rearmament campaign, workers can block the gears and stop the death machine.

"This war they want to unleash on the planet affects us all. But we can still stop it by joining forces, building international relations and strengthening solidarity among peoples," the USB said.

The political demands of the USB regarding these general strikes were made

clear in their *Dockworkers Don't Work for War* declaration last year. These include demands to "end the genocide of the Palestinian people by Israel, openly supported by its allies, the USA, NATO and the EU; to open stable humanitarian aid corridors; to reject the EU Re-Arm plan; and to claim European and Mediterranean ports as ports of peace". The statement also noted that the war economy is cutting dockers' wages,

rights and health and safety protections, including reduced working hours.

"The genocide is still ongoing, as are many other wars, while it is now clear that the [EU] re-armament plan is calling for the militarisation of ports and strategic infrastructure necessary for war preparations.

"These rearmament plans are welcomed by shipowners and terminal operators, as they enable

a strong push toward automation, a reduction in employment and an erosion of trade union freedoms."

This call has been joined by USB Ports from Italy, Enedep Greece, Organisation Democratique du Travail Morocco (ODT), Liman-Is from Turkey and LAB from the Basque Country.

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