

Imperialists lash out but Iran hits back!

by our Arab Affairs
 correspondent

Iranian drone and missile strikes on Israel and the feudal Arab states that do America's bidding continue round the clock while the attacks on energy facilities have sent the price of oil and gas soaring throughout the Western world. The Americans and Israelis are continuing their deadly air-raids on Iran – hitting oil and gas complexes and targeting religious and political leaders in an increasingly futile bid to force the Iranians to beg for mercy while the Islamic Republic pays them back in their own coin with deadly effect.

In Tel Aviv, Benjamin Netanyahu told the media that “we are winning and Iran is being decimated”, but reality tells another story. The American and Israeli war-planes may have mastery of the skies but they’ve lost control of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Their much-vaunted nuclear aircraft-carriers have been withdrawn. The *Abraham Lincoln* limped away after it was repeatedly hit by Iranian missiles

in the Gulf and the *Gerald R Ford* was withdrawn following a mysterious fire that took over 30 hours to contain that some say was sabotage by dissident crew members. The Straits of Hormuz, the only maritime passage out of the Gulf and the route for about a quarter of the world’s liquefied natural gas and seaborne trade, is closed to all but Chinese, Indian and Russian vessels.

The Israeli ‘Iron Dome’ can’t stop Iran’s rockets. Iranian missiles are pounding Tel Aviv and strategic targets throughout the Zionist entity. Ben Gurion airport, Israel’s main air-line hub, is closed after coming under repeated Iranian attack and the rail network paralysed after the main rail hub in Tel Aviv was knocked out.

According to official Iranian data, at least 1,348 civilians have been killed and more than 17,000 people injured. But 22 Israelis have also died and nearly 4,000 have been wounded in the conflict. The Americans admit to 15 dead and some 200 injured. They’ve also lost 23 war-planes – some put down to “friendly fire” and “accidents”.

Last week Trump got no takers for his call for an “international” naval force to end the Iranian blockade. In a rant on social media he called NATO a “paper tiger”, accusing his allies of refusing to join the military campaign against Iran. He said that European members now complain about high oil prices but “don’t want to help open the Strait of Hormuz”, calling them “cowards” and warning that “we will remember”.

But Prof Fyodor Lukyanov, an expert on international affairs,



their own energy supplies after those supplies were jeopardised by the US-Israeli attack on Iran.

“Tehran had repeatedly warned that it might attempt to close the strait if attacked. Washington and Tel Aviv dismissed these threats. They assumed Iran would not dare, or would not be able, to act. They were mistaken.

“Now European NATO members, along with Canada, Japan, south Korea and Australia, face a difficult choice. They can join an escalating military confrontation that they did not initiate, risking casualties and further destabilisation. Or they can resist the wishes of their principal ally. For now, most appear to be choosing the latter.”

• Iran’s Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi in Tehran’s Al Quds Day demonstration last week.

told RT that: “Washington now expects its allies to help solve a crisis that it itself helped create and does not entirely know how to resolve. President Donald Trump and his administration have suggested that their European and Asian partners should deploy naval forces to the Strait of Hormuz to ensure freedom of navigation. In practice, this means asking them to protect

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FUND

Second week of this month’s appeal with £877 in the pot thanks to the supporters who raised £200 at the social at the Party Centre last weekend, plus £200 from an East Anglian comrade and £75 from another in Chigwell. The fighting fund for March now stands at £1,304. Our target, as always, is £3,500.

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THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Turning the screws on Labour

Unite the union has decided to cut its donations to the Labour Party by 40 per cent. Labour will lose over half a million pounds from one of its major affiliates – and all down to the Starmer government’s refusal to intervene in the year-long Birmingham bin strike that was triggered by the Labour-run council’s move to cut the bin workers’ wages.

Unite general secretary Sharon Graham told striking members that: “We’re pushing back on one of the most vile attacks on workers we have seen in a long, long time.

“And the joke about this – it’s not an attack from Rupert Murdoch, not an attack from Amazon. But an attack from a Labour council, under a Labour government. Labour should hang their heads in shame. They’re an absolute disgrace.”

She’s right, of course. But punishing Labour is one thing – changing its course is another. Although Sharon Graham was the outsider who upset the grandees’ apple-cart when she won the race for the top job in her union in 2021 on a left platform, it was still a battle of the bureaucrats; she only differs from the other full-timers that she defeated in showing more deference to rank-and-file militancy than her predecessors. But generally her faction differs little from all the other ‘left’ factions that run most of our unions today. Their leaders see themselves as ‘professional negotiators’ rather than workers’ leaders. They see mass action as a last resort and then only as a bargaining factor. None of them want to assert real control over the party the unions still largely fund. All they want from Labour is a bigger piece of the action.

That, some say, is how it’s always been. It’s not for nothing that the cartoonist David Low portrayed the TUC as a ‘cart-horse’ in the 1950s. But there were exceptions. The post-war Communist Party of Great Britain helped to draw-up the constitution of the electricians’ union – in the days when local stewards could call strikes and every strike was “official” from day one unless later deemed “unofficial” by the Executive.

By the 1970s the old communist party, with its staid Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Union Rights, embraced the view that the highest form of life was that of a full-time official. It was easily eclipsed by ‘rank-and-file’ movements led by the left social-democratic posers in a variety of self-styled Trotskyist fronts. Those that climbed up the greasy pole of the union apparatus soon sold out. Their grass-roots organisations came and went. But that’s not to say the method was wrong. Look at the Anti-Nazi League of the 1970s. It has evolved into the anti-fascist and anti-racist mass movement that confronts the Faragists and the likes of the man who calls himself “Tommy Robinson” on our streets today.

This is what we need to get back to in the unions today – building a united front with all left forces ready to build a genuinely rank-and-file movement and willing to take on the employer for higher wages and fight for peace and socialism.

Fanning the Flames

The security of Hormuz doesn’t depend on the number of warships patrolling it.

US President Donald Trump took to Truth Social to call on allies on Saturday – explicitly naming China, France, Japan, south Korea and the UK – to send warships to the Strait of Hormuz. His argument was straightforward: these countries depend on this waterway for their energy supplies, so they should share the responsibility for keeping it open.

The remarks made headlines. But they deserve a harder look. Is this really about ‘sharing responsibility’ – or is it about sharing the risk of a war that Washington started and can’t finish?

The Strait of Hormuz is barely 50 kilometres wide. But what it carries – energy, commerce and the fragile order of an entire region – is far heavier than any warship sailing through it. If Iran closes it, the damage won’t be limited to the USA. Every energy-importing nation would feel the pain. Shared stakes, shared burden – seems fair. But there is a fundamental problem with this framing: Who ignited the crisis in the Strait of Hormuz in the first place? Who is still bombing Iran?

The cause of the tension in the Strait of Hormuz is not a shortage of naval vessels, but rather an ongoing war.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi addressed this directly during phone calls with his counterparts from Kuwait, Bahrain,

Pakistan and Qatar for exchanges of views on the situation in Iran. “This is a war that should not have happened – it is a war that does no one any good,” he said, noting that “without the UN’s authorisation, the US and Israel attacked Iran in the process of the ongoing US–Iran negotiation, which clearly violates international law.” In other words, someone lit the fire. Now they’re asking the world to help put it out – and split the bill.

Crowding a volatile waterway with warships from multiple nations doesn’t create security. It creates flashpoints. If any single vessel were struck, the consequences could rapidly spiral beyond anyone’s control. This is less international co-operation “to keep the Strait open and safe” and more a carefully structured transfer of risk.

The Middle East issues have taught this lesson more than once: military force can win battles – however, it cannot secure stability or build trust. Relying solely on military power risks deeper disorder and long-term instability.

From Iraq to Libya, from Afghanistan to Syria, every US-led military intervention came with promises of order and security. Each one left behind a deeper disorder. The crisis in the Strait of Hormuz today is not an isolated incident – it is the accumulated consequence of decades of policy choices, now reaching a boiling

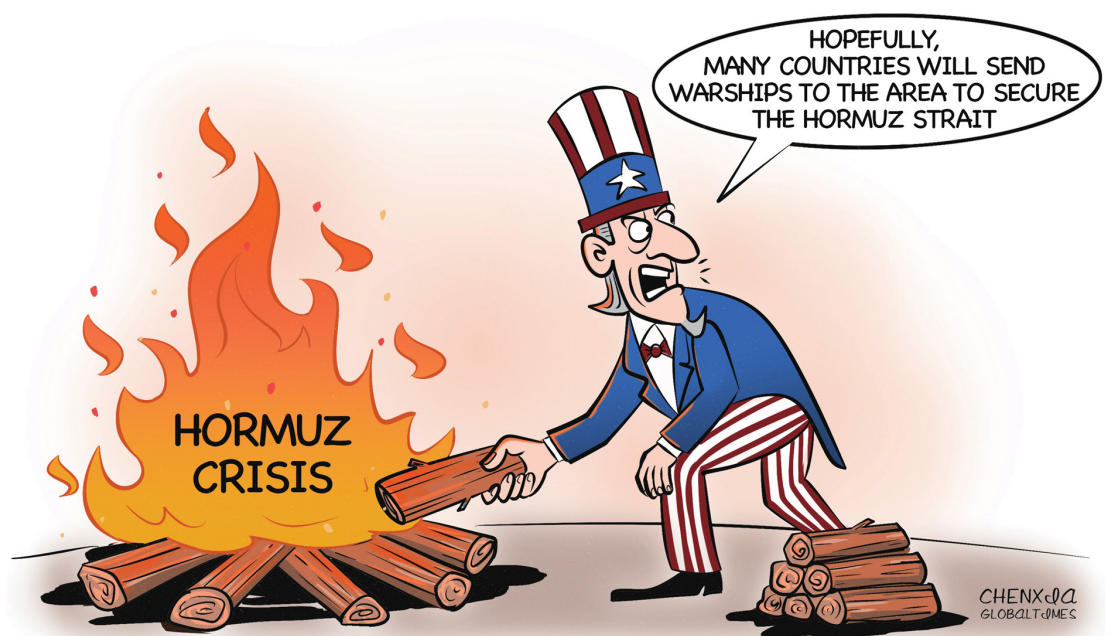
point. Iran’s threat to close the Strait is, at its core, a last-resort deterrent. It is not Iran’s preferred outcome. Iran’s own oil exports pass through the same waters. If the war stops, the threat disappears.

Washington is asking who will send warships. Beijing is asking how to stop the war. The contrast in approach is sharp. This isn’t just diplomatic tone – it’s a fundamental difference in how the problem is understood, urging a shift toward diplomatic solutions instead of military escalation.

Foreign Minister Wang has also laid out China’s principles for addressing the Iran situation. All sides should return to the negotiating table as quickly as possible, resolve differences through equal dialogue, and make efforts to realise common security, he said, highlighting the principle of promoting political settlement of hotspot issues. Wang called on major countries to act in the spirit of justice and righteousness, and to contribute more positive energy to peace and development of the Middle East. Each of these principles speaks directly to what has gone wrong in this conflict.

One thousand warships cannot achieve what one negotiating table can. The security of the Strait of Hormuz does not depend on how many navies patrol it. It depends on whether the guns fall silent.

Global Times



Workers' Notes

Steve Sweeney injured in Lebanon

by
New Worker correspondent

Steve Sweeney, the former *Morning Star* journalist who now works for *Russia Today* (RT), was injured in an Israeli strike while filming in Lebanon this week. When he was in the UK, Sweeney was well-known to comrades for his support of the International Ukraine Anti-Fascist Solidarity campaign. Sweeney and his cameraman, Ali Rida, were wounded in an Israeli strike while filming in southern Lebanon. An Israeli warplane fired a missile at their filming position near Al-Qasmiya Bridge, not far from a Lebanese military base.

Rida said the Israeli jet deliberately attacked the crew despite their wearing flak-jackets displaying their press credentials. Rida's camera captured the moment of the strike as he filmed Sweeney's report. The footage shows the missile hitting less than 10 metres behind Sweeney as he ducks for cover. He also shared footage of doctors removing shrapnel from Sweeney's arm. But he says both he and Sweeney are fine, joking that "it turns out that when a missile is flying at you, you can hear it".

Margarita Simonyan, the editor-in-chief of RT, said: "Both men are conscious in hospital. Doctors are diagnosing [the] extent of shrapnel damage. War journalists are not legitimate targets. We pray for them!"

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova has condemned Israel over Thursday's strike, saying the attack on journalists wearing press markings cannot be called accidental given the killing of two hun-

dred journalists in Gaza. "Especially since the rocket did not hit a 'significant strategic military facility', but rather the location where the report was being filmed," she said, adding that the Russian government is "awaiting the response of international organisations". The Israelis are thought to have deliberately murdered hundreds of journalists reporting in Gaza and the West Bank over the last three years.

The attack on the RT team comes amid Israel's "limited and targeted" ground operations against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, after the resistance movement returned to the battlefield following the killing of Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on the first day of the American-Israeli onslaught against the Islamic Republic.

On Wednesday, Israel threatened to target bridges in southern Lebanon. The Israeli military said it aims to hit crossings over the Litani River to prevent Hezbollah from moving reinforcements and weapons south, and they've declared the area south of the Zahrani River a military zone, warning that any vehicle there could also be targeted. More than a million people have been displaced by Israel's ground offensive and airstrikes since the start of the month.

A ludicrous invitation to criminalise political speech

by
Jennie Walsh

A judge threw out a "no case to answer" defence without giving his reasons as the trial of two leaders of Britain's Palestine solidarity movement returned to court this week.

District Judge Daniel Sternberg denied the application by defence barrister Mark Summers KC on behalf of Stop the War Coalition vice-chair Chris Nineham and Palestine Solidarity Campaign

Salute to Marx!

by
New Worker correspondent

Last weekend friends old and new, including diplomats from the Chinese and Cuban embassies, gathered at a reception at the NCP Party Centre in London to remember the life and times of Karl Marx, who died in London on 14th March 1883.

MC'd by NCP National Chairman, Richard Bos, guests paused for the formal part of the social to hear a number of speakers pay tribute to Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of the modern communist movement.

The immense contribu-

tion that Marx and Engels made in the struggle for the emancipation of the working class can never be forgotten said Andy Brooks, the NCP leader whose sentiments were echoed by Michael Chant from the RCPB (ML) and a member of the Metropolitan Cell & Supporters Group – as well as Dermot Hudson of the Korean Friendship Association and Theo Russell from International Ukraine Anti-Fascist Solidarity who also spoke about the work of their campaigns.

And finally as no NCP event can ever end without a collection for the *New Worker* fighting fund, Richard made the appeal which raised £200 for our communist weekly.



• Andy Brooks pays tribute to Marx.

director Ben Jamal.

He gave no reasons for dismissing it as the trial resumed at Westminster magistrates' court following a week-long break given to the prosecution to prepare its response to the application.

Mr Summers had just 15 minutes to make his 12-point argument to support the application.

He referred to the conditions imposed by the police to prevent the Palestine coalition marching from or to the BBC in Portland Place and confining the 18th January 2025 demonstration to a static protest.

Mark Summers argued that the judge had a duty to consider the legality of the restrictions imposed by Met Commander Adam Slonecki under principles of public law.

He highlighted that the Court of Appeal had already ruled in a previous case that

imposing conditions on the basis of "more than minor" disruption was unlawful, which he said nullified the case.

In addition, the law did not provide for the police to impose conditions to be placed on demonstrations based on the concept of "cumulative disruption".

Mr Summers insisted that to argue the conditions were still a necessity on the assessments made by Commander Slonecki that the march presented the risk of "significant disruption" was a "gross legal error".

He said that Slonecki did not correctly apply a balance of rights under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, adding that the Crown's case was effectively that human rights are "irrelevant".

"If that's the position you take and you are prepared to

follow the Crown in dismissing human rights, then all I can say is bon voyage and I'll see you in the High Court," Mr Summers told the judge.

In dismissing the defence's arguments, the judge noted that he was not obliged in a magistrates' court to give his reasons.

When the court moved to closing statements from the prosecution and defence, Mr Summers said he would not call any defence witnesses and that the Crown case was "hopeless".

Concluding the defence case on the second and final day of the resumed trial, Mark Summers called the Crown's case against Chris and Ben a "ludicrous invitation to criminalise legitimate protected political speech about the misuse of state power against people's civil liberties".

He described Chris and Ben's actions in the run up to the 18 January Palestine protest as nothing more than those of "civic organisations engaging in political campaigning in a democracy".

He noted that conditions imposed by the Met had created widespread public criticism which, on previous marches, had led to compromise. These included a march that formed

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up near Regent Street and went to the Israeli Embassy, which the police tried to prevent from setting off until two hours later than the originally advertised time, but eventually relented. But this time (18th January) the police refused.

The court heard that letters in support of the protest going to the BBC, signed by members of Jewish organisations, Holocaust survivors, journalists, judges, politicians and others were all ignored.

Mr Summers emphasised that Mr Jamal and Mr Nineham were both highly respected movement leaders with an extraordinary record of managing some of the biggest demonstrations ever seen in this country.

He said: "Why would they suddenly decide to defy police conditions, jeopardising future marches, their reputations, and political support?"

Officers in the control room and on the ground were in complete ignorance of the plan for a "flower delegation" to walk towards the BBC to lay flowers, even though it had been announced by Ben Jamal from the stage.

The plan, clearly explained by Ben, was that, if stopped by police, the delegation would lay the flowers at their feet.

This Mr Summers said was a "sensible, symbolic proposal" and could only have succeeded with police permission.

He said: "From beginning to end, events had been a humourless Ealing comedy. At no point did either side understand the intentions of the other."

At the police cordons the delegation believed they had been permitted to walk through police lines.

In footage from a police body-worn camera, not previously disclosed by the prosecution, an officer was

heard telling the delegation: "You've got to filter through. Filter, filter, filter. Take your time getting through."

Mr Summers asked: "Why would it occur to them [the delegation] that they were being instructed by the police to do something unlawful?"

On the incitement charge against Ben, Mr Summers said it was "utterly hopeless" as he was "engaged in the very opposite of inciting people into a criminal breach of the conditions imposed by the police".

He was seeking to channel it into a "powerful and lawful act of political expression and symbolism". And after the "awful arrest" of Chris Nineham, what did Ben do? He actively picked up a loud-hailer, calmed the crowd and got them to disperse.

The judge has reserved judgement until 1st April.

Stop the War

No to Racism in Colchester!

by New Worker correspondent

The Colchester Arts Centre was packed out last weekend for a Love Music Hate Racism gig in support of local anti-racist campaigning. Hundreds of people turned up on for the multi-cultural, multi-genre event organised by Colchester Stand Up to Racism on Saturday.



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

17th March 2006

WESTERN politicians could barely conceal their glee at the news of the death of Slobodan Milošević, who died of an alleged heart attack last Saturday. But they've been shamefacedly silent about the circumstances surrounding his death in the Dutch prison of the 'International Court' set up by imperialism to try him for 'war crimes'.

The former Yugoslav leader had been suffering from high blood pressure and other heart problems for some time.

Milošević complained about the treatment he received from the doctors assigned by the court, while doctors he trusted were not allowed to see him.

Two weeks ago Milošević asked to be transferred to Moscow for an examination by Russian specialists. The Russian Government pledged that he would be returned to the court after any course of medical treatment in Moscow. This was denied. Milošević wrote to the Russian Foreign Minister complaining that he was being prescribed drugs only used for treating leprosy or tuberculosis. He feared he was being poisoned.

Milošević was found dead in his cell at the International Court's complex in Scheveningen on Saturday 11th March. Although the cause of death was put down to a heart attack, a Dutch doctor says he found traces of drugs in Milošević's blood that may have neutralised the treatment prescribed for his heart conditions. Bizarrely, this doctor suggests Milošević may have been deliberately taking unauthorised drugs as part

of ploy to get transferred to Moscow for treatment.

We are repeatedly told by the imperialist media that Slobodan Milošević was the first head of state to be tried for crimes against humanity. What is rarely admitted is the fact that there is nothing in the UN Charter that gives authority to the UN Security Council to set up a body like the 'International Criminal Tribunal on the Former Yugoslavia'.

Although the Yugoslavia he led, which consisted of Serbia and Montenegro, was defeated by American and European imperialism in 1999, the war ended with a negotiated settlement for Kosovo that was never honoured by NATO. Although the fighting ended, the campaign to remove the Yugoslav and Serbian leader who continued to be an obstacle to imperialist designs for the Balkans continued. Western money was pumped into the hands of venal Serbian politicians willing to dance to their tune. Milošević was defeated in the 2000 elections and arrested at gun-point in 2001 to be packed off to this war-crimes tribunal.

Goodbye to All That: Trump as the World Destroyer

by Vijay Prashad

On 27th February, two days before the Israeli and US aircraft and missiles struck Iran, US President Donald Trump told reporters in the White House that he was interested in a “friendly takeover” of Cuba. On 3rd January the Americans had kidnapped the Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, and then on 29th January Trump signed Executive Order no 14380 to prevent any country from supplying oil to Cuba. Within two months, from early January to early March, the USA had seized one leader (Venezuela), killed another (Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei), and threatened to overrun a third (Cuba). The list is not complete: there are other countries that are within Trump’s gun sights, ultimately at the bottom of his list the biggest prize – China.

The reasons for the attacks are ultimately specious: narco-terrorism against Venezuela, nuclear weapons against Iran, and for ‘democracy’ against the Cuban Revolution. None of these claims are rooted in facts. Neither Maduro nor any of the senior leaders in the Venezuelan government have been involved in narco-trafficking, let alone narco-terrorism (whatever that is); neither does the Iranian government have any interest in nuclear weapons (in fact, it has made the opposite statement repeatedly); and neither does the USA have any interest in the establishment of democracy in Cuba, which indeed had begun a process to deepen democracy when the Cuban Revolution ejected the mafia culture of the USA in 1959. The kinetic information war of the USA against these three countries has been ferocious but false, although falsehoods are difficult to



undermine when the USA and its Global North allies largely control the channels of news and information in the world.

Trump’s assault on Venezuela came with speed and results, having seized Maduro and hastily forced the remainder of the government into an involuntary compromise to prevent an escalation. If the Americans had stopped after that hyper-imperialist attack, then Trump could have rested on his laurels and gone into

the mid-term elections later this year with the Venezuela campaign as his badge of honour. But this was insufficient for Trump. He had larger plans, and that was the undoing of his own narrow political dreams. The attack on Iran, while it has devastated Iran’s infrastructure, has trapped the USA. There is no easy exit from that war. Trump recognises that the assassination of the Supreme Leader did not intimidate the Iranians,

who immediately used their arsenal to bring pain not only to Israel and to American military bases in the region, but to any ally of the USA and Israel that continues to support these aggressive powers.

The missile and drone strike by Iran on the Gulf Arab states and the closure of the Straits of Hormuz signalled the seriousness of Iran to defend itself. Iran knows that any short-term ceasefire will permit Israel and the USA to

resupply their militaries and to then continue the war against Iran on their terms, whereas to continue the assault now forces the rest of the world to bear the pain – through the instability of oil prices and oil supplies – and hopefully, for Iran, will force the world to put pressure on the USA and Israel to make a permanent arrangement with the Islamic Republic. Since the USA and Israel have already damaged so much of Iran’s infrastructure, the Islamic Republic’s leaders feel like they have nothing to lose by the continuation of the conflict, since they have much more to lose if the USA and Israel redouble their attack at a future time. Iran wants a grand bargain. It cannot get this with a short-term ceasefire. The mendacity of the West is clear to Iran, and it will not fall for any such false notes.

Trump is trapped because Iran refuses a short-term ceasefire. He did not expect this. He thought the Iranians would be overwhelmed by American and Israeli military power and would therefore make a voluntary compromise. This was a serious miscalculation by the USA and by Israel. The Iranians are a proud people with an old and unbroken link to an ancient civilisation that was not disturbed by full-scale colonisation; and the Islamic Republic has a core ideology rooted in notions of sovereignty that are deeply held and hard to shake. They do not want to return to the Shah’s reign from 1953–1979, nor do they want to become vassals of the USA. Their claims are for Israel to end the occupation of the Palestinians and for the USA to abandon their military bases in the Middle East.

These are political demands that are the basis for a serious negotiation. But neither the USA nor Israel

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are serious countries; they think that they will be able to subordinate all of their adversaries, just as they have done to Syria (which is now governed by a former al-Qaeda chief on behalf of Israel) and to the entire Gulf Arab region (except for Oman and Yemen) which are governed by monarchies set up either by the British or the Americans and are effectively petrol pumps for the world. Over the course of the last four years, China had urged on a process of reconciliation that began to make serious gains, through a trilateral process that included China, Iran and Saudi Arabia and that began in Beijing in 2023 but then continued in November 2024 in Riyadh and in December 2025 in Tehran. These meetings showed the possibility of a different arrangement in the Middle East, one that would not have relied upon US hyper-imperialism but on negotiation and goodwill. The US-Israeli as-

sault on Iran has disrupted this process and has set it back by decades. There is no accident here. The Americans and the Israelis did not want to see any such grand bargain between Iran and Saudi Arabia, since such a grand bargain would have been entirely against the interests of the USA and Israel.

The attack on Iran, just as the attacks on Venezuela and Cuba, is not an isolated incident. It is part of a larger pattern: the systematic attempt to discipline states that refuse to align with American geopolitical priorities. For decades, the USA has relied primarily on sanctions, financial isolation and covert destabilisation against governments it considers hostile. Iran, Venezuela and Cuba have long been among the most heavily sanctioned countries in the world. But sanctions themselves are a form of economic warfare. They have devastated civilian economies, restricting access to trade, finance

and vital imports while inflicting widespread social hardship. What is unfolding today is a shift from economic siege to direct military intervention. The strike on Iran and the intervention in Venezuela together signal that Washington is prepared to escalate beyond sanctions when those measures fail to produce regime change. The message is not only directed at Tehran or Caracas. It is addressed to the entire Global South: sovereignty is conditional upon obedience to the geopolitical order dominated by the USA and its allies.

The operation in Venezuela illustrates this clearly. Caracas had forged close relations with countries such as China, Russia, Iran and Cuba, forming part of a loose bloc that challenged US dominance in the Western Hemisphere. For Washington, this alignment represented an unacceptable strategic challenge – particularly in a region historically treated as its

sphere of influence.

The Confusion of India's Government

On 9th March, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar addressed parliament on the situation in the Middle East. Jaishankar ignored the larger geopolitical questions of sovereignty and dignity for the world, ignored even the letter of the UN Charter. Instead, he emphasised energy security, trade flows and the protection of Indians in the region and called for "dialogue and diplomacy": all important issues, no doubt, but framed technocratically and not morally. The evidence of the moral failure was that Jaishankar did not explicitly mention the US-Israeli violation of Article 2 of the UN Charter, nor did he mention the ongoing genocide of the Palestinians. But even these three issues – energy security, trade flows and

the protection of Indians in the Gulf – are rooted in a geopolitical matrix defined by US-Israeli authority in which India is not sovereign.

India's relations with the Middle East go through a US-Israeli framework and are not produced by a non-aligned view of the world. It is a pity that Jaishankar did not use the opportunity to call upon the BRICS+ states, of which Iran is a member of good standing, to produce a different diplomatic architecture than what governs this conflict, which would necessitate a BRICS+ approach to the UN to sanction the USA and Israel for a war of aggression.

If there are no consequences for the USA regarding its actions in Venezuela and Iran, then there is nothing to stop the American war path against Cuba – an immediate concern – or against China – a much more dangerous prospect. Cuba is resilient and the Cuban Revolu-

tion will refuse any voluntary surrender to the USA. The Cuban Revolution is open to negotiations and dialogue, but not at the cost of its own sovereignty and dignity. But if there is no price to be paid by the USA for its hyper-imperialist attacks, then why should it not invade Cuba or bomb Cuba or not increase its aggression against China, and then eventually every country in the Global South. Trump is the world destroyer. He is unconcerned with the impact on ordinary people's lives. He seeks preponderant power for himself and for the USA.

Countries in the Global South need to stand up to stop the madness of an imperial USA. There are no two sides to this conflict. There is only the maddening hyper-imperialism of the USA and its allies. And then, there are the rest of us, struggling to preserve the world as it is and then struggling to build a better world.

People's Democracy

Worker by day – writer by night

by
Li Hang

By day, Zhang Sai weaves through the crowded streets of Wuhan, the capital of Central China's Hubei province, delivering food from restaurants to apartments. By night, after hours of cycling and climbing stairs, he retreats into a quieter world of books and writing, preparing for his second personal book.

At 39, Zhang has held a string of jobs, including factory worker, security guard, courier and deliveryman, but one thing has remained

constant: his love of reading.

"Reading is like a window" says Zhang. "It lets me see a wider world and enriches my inner life."

For him, books have not only nourished his mind but also inspired his signature work. Reading has become inseparable from who he is.

Born in a rural village in Zhumadian, Central China's Henan province, Zhang's reading habit started early.

His mother kept a cabinet of classic Chinese literature, from the *Dream of the Red Chamber* to the works of Zhuangzi. In an era be-

fore television reached most homes, books became his greatest source of entertainment and education.

By the age of 16, Zhang left home for Guangdong to work in factories, carrying with him a single book: *Fortress Besieged* by Qian Zhongshu. He recalls the novel's clever metaphors, wordplay, and humour as leaving a lasting impression on his imagination, lessons that would later influence his own writing.

Even in the demanding environment of factory life, Zhang maintained his reading habit. As an introvert who doesn't like social

gatherings, books became his refuge.

His dedication was sometimes met with scepticism; co-workers wondered why a labourer would read classics like *Madame Bovary* or *Boule de Suif*. But Zhang remained undeterred.

He would walk five kilometres to a library after night shifts, carrying two buns for sustenance along the way.

After borrowing books, he would return to the factory, fall asleep immediately and wake with the comfort of a book in hand. Over the years, half his luggage was filled with books, the other half with clothes.

Zhang's reading tastes are broad. He devours the works of Chinese poets Zhu Shuzhen and Li Qingzhao, the American poet Emily Dickinson and the British novelist Virginia Woolf. But Eileen Chang holds a special place in his heart. Even after switching to courier and delivery work, he kept a copy of Chang's *Little Reunions* on his pillow.

Reading didn't just shape Zhang's imagination; it influenced his life path. His interest in writing began in school.

"I started with classical literature. In elementary school, I was drawn to poetry" Zhang said. "Sometimes I would

take the poems in my textbooks, keep the original rhyme but change the content. That was my first attempt at creating something of my own."

But it wasn't until he graduated from middle school and went to work in a factory that he began writing seriously. At the time, the rise of Han Han – the high school dropout who became a famous writer – was a huge inspiration for him.

"Seeing someone my age achieve that made me think I could have a dream of becoming a writer too," Zhang said.

He began with daily journal writing as a way to practice his craft. "I wanted to write

a great work, something like *Fortress Besieged* – a fun, fictional story, maybe even a martial arts novel. That was my goal.”

In the autumn of 2021 a leg injury forced him to pause his delivery work. He returned to a factory and began documenting the experience

in *Dreaming Beyond the Factory*, a non-fiction work capturing three years of labour, the challenges of failed job interviews, and long-distance parenting. The book was published in August 2025 by the Shanghai Translation Publishing House in collaboration with *One-Way Street*

magazine.

After publishing his book Zhang’s material life hasn’t changed much, but he feels more motivated to keep writing. Zhang said he plans not only to earn enough to pay off his mortgage but also to push his writing to new heights in the future.

He returned to Wuhan’s streets, delivering food once again. Yet he continues to write, this time exploring experiences beyond factory life.

His reading habit remains unchanged, and his nightly routine includes poring over literature and jotting down

notes for his next project. At home in Henan, his two children are growing up surrounded by books, just as he did.

Zhang does not impose reading rules but creates an environment rich in literature, allowing his children to develop a natural interest. “I never tell them what

to read,” he said. “I just want them to enjoy it as I did.”

“Reading has become part of my life” Zhang said. “Even now, delivering food and writing, books are still at the centre of everything I do.”

Global Times

Congress call for Hind Rajab

by
Ed Newman

US Democratic Party politicians have introduced a bill demanding that the State Department explain exactly what it did to investigate the circumstances of the killing of Palestinian child Hind Rajab, and whether any Americans were involved, says the *Hollywood Reporter*.

The ‘Justice for Hind Rajab Act’ will have to go through committees and floor debates in both chambers of Congress before it comes to a vote. It undoubtedly faces an uphill battle in a Republican-dominated legislature.

Rajab was a six-year-old Palestinian girl from Gaza whose agonising death at the hands of Israeli soldiers on 29th January 2024 has become symbolic of the widespread violations of international humanitarian law committed during Israel’s genocide in the enclave, where over 72,000 Palestinians have been killed.

The text of the bill, which is being introduced by Peter Welch in the Senate, and Pramila Jayapal and Sara Jacobs in the House of Representatives, says that if it is enacted into law, the secretary of state and the secretary of war will be compelled to produce a

report within 45 days that explains whether the killing ran afoul of the US Foreign Assistance Act and the Leahy Law.

The Leahy Law prohibits the USA from providing arms or military assistance to foreign militaries that violate human rights. The American State Department has an ‘Israel Leahy Vetting Forum’ as part of the law.

Lawmakers also want to know the identities of the Israeli soldiers who took part in Rajab’s killing and whether any of them are also US citizens.

The bill effectively demands that the US government hand over everything it knows about the incident, including whether the Department of Justice ever investigated human rights violations.

“Since October 7 2023, the United States has provided more than \$21,700,000,000 in military assistance to Israel, which has funded a majority of the expenses needed by the Israel Defence Forces to conduct the war in Gaza,” the bill says.

“According to information from the Government of Israel, an estimated 10,000 people from the United States were activated for the war in Gaza,” it adds. “According to reports from the Gaza Ministry of Health, more than



20,000 children have been killed in Gaza.”

The Biden administration had repeatedly referred reporters to the Israeli government when asked about investigations into Rajab and other alleged war crimes in Gaza, but critics have pointed to that approach as a stalling and diversion tactic.

“The same day the Justice for Hind Rajab Act is being introduced

in Congress, Israel has announced it is dropping its prosecution into the on-camera rape and torture of a Palestinian detainee at the notorious Sde Teiman facility” says A New Policy, an American advocacy campaign. A New Policy was founded by two US officials who resigned because of the Biden administration’s unconditional support for Israel’s assault on Gaza

following the Hamas-led attacks on southern Israel on 7th October 2023. “It’s obvious – Israel can’t be trusted to investigate itself,” A New Policy said. “That’s why we need international bodies like the International Criminal Court (currently under US sanctions) to pursue their case, why we need to apply the Leahy Law to Israel and why we need Bills like the Jus-

justice for Hind Rajab Act.”

Jayapal and Welch hosted a screening of *The Voice of Hind Rajab* on Capitol Hill last month. Unfolding over the course of 24 hours and set entirely at a Palestine Red Crescent Society call centre, 52 miles from Gaza, the *Voice of Hind Rajab* is a docudrama that dramatises the efforts of Palestinian aid workers to save the pleading child on the phone.

An investigation in June 2024 revealed that Rajab and five of her family members were targeted with 335 Israeli army bullets as they attempted to flee northern Gaza in their car. For three hours, Hind was the sole survivor, trapped alongside her slain relatives.

Desperate for help, she called the Palestinian Red Crescent, but paramedics Yusuf al-Zeino and Ahmed al-Madhoun were both killed by the Israelis before they could rescue her. A harrowing recording of Hind’s final phone call, released after the incident, captured her chilling plea: “I’m scared of the dark, come get me.”

It formed the basis for the highly acclaimed film, which has already received awards on the festival circuit.

Radio Havana Cuba

LETTERS

Among the first casualties of the American-Israeli war on Iran is the Formula 1 car race that is held in the Gulf this time of the year. The Bahrain and Saudi Arabian Grand Prix weekends in April have been cancelled as a result of this war. Formula 1 has concluded after “careful evaluations” that it is not safe to hold either race because of the ongoing conflict across the region. The Bahrain event at Sakhir was scheduled for 10–12 April, while the Saudi event in Jeddah would have taken place a week later. This is the second time that the F1 race in Bahrain is cancelled in the last 50 years. The first cancellation was in 2011 at the peak of the Arab Spring, which reached Bahrain. Cancellation of the F1 race is seen as a blow to Bahrain’s crown prince.

As the destructive war drags on, Bahraini people opposed to it are targeted by the Khalifa regime. In the early hours of Tuesday 17th March a young citizen, Ahmed Jalal, from Al Markh town, was detained in a house raid. The regime’s agents in civilian clothes stormed the house, causing extensive damage to its contents and creating mayhem among its occupants. Ali Adel Abbas, from Al Ma’amir town, was arrested on 8th March after responding to a summons from the regime’s torture officers. From Dar Kulaib, Ahmed Sultan was arrested. Mahdi Al Jallawi from Bilad Al Qadeem was snatched by regime’s forces to the torture centres. On Monday 2nd March Ali Hussain Sabt from Karbabad town was arrested during a protest against the war.

Five Bahrainis were arrested allegedly for taking photos of sensitive places. They have been subjected to severe torture and accused of being agents of Iran. A blind man has also been arrested. Jaffar

Ma’tooq, who had been repeatedly detained, was arrested because he openly rejected the American-Israeli attack on Iran. And a cleric, Sheikh Ahmed Al Hayki, from Samaheej town, was arrested at the airport. He was returning home in response to a directive by the regime for Bahraini students in Iran to come back before the war started.

From energy exports to tourism, the economies of Gulf nations are at risk from a prolonged conflict in the Middle East. Although the six Gulf countries have diversified their economies, hydrocarbons still account for about 30 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP). The blockade of the Strait of Hormuz is also preventing them from importing goods, while the region relies on imports for 85 per cent of its food supply. The economies of the Gulf are suffering some of the worst damage.

Saeed Shehabi
Bahrain Freedom Movement
London

Donald Trump is an aberration or rather he is the vile successor of a long line of fascists who shut down public debate, attempt to humiliate their opponents, endorse violence as a response to dissent and criticise any public display of democratic principles. The USA has reached its endpoint with Trump, and his presence should be viewed as a warning of the possible nightmare to come. Trump is not an isolated figure in American politics; he is simply the most visible and ‘popular’ expression of a number of extremists in the US Republican party, who now view US bourgeois ‘democracy’ as a liability.

Marco Rubio, in particular, supports an ideology that reduces certain populations to ‘anonymous beings’, eg the prevailing

attacks on immigrants, refugees and economically disadvantaged people in the USA. Primo Levi, the great writer and survivor of Auschwitz, called the use of de-humanising people one of the core principles of Nazi barbarism. Fast forward to Trump’s incitement of violence at his rallies, coupled with his overt bigotry, his call for mass surveillance, this discourse of mass hatred, his willingness to arm other nations with nuclear weapons and his embrace of politics as an extension of war. Undoubtedly, Trump is a monster without a conscience, a politician with a toxic set of policies. But he is also a product of finance capitalism and a long legacy of racism and violence. This is truly a time of monsters. Trump is simply the most visible and certainly one of the most despicable of them.

A McKerl
Fife

People’s China is forging ahead with high quality and sustainable growth utilising the latest scientific and technological advances coupled with the rapid adoption of AI. The transition from ‘Made in China’ to ‘Created in China’ reflects the country’s spirit of innovation and its level of industrial transformation. Emerging technologies, new business models and the adoption of cutting-edge applications for digital and environmental projects have become the growth drivers for China’s economy. All this takes place against a background of a complex global environment created by export controls, tariff barriers and a depressed world economy. The important question is: How will the workers of China benefit?

China has announced plans to establish the zero-carbon transformation of 52 Industrial Parks (IPs) throughout the country

by 2030, selected to ensure that all autonomous regions will have the opportunity to benefit from new energy applications, advanced manufacturing and computing. Industrial Parks have long been major users of energy and hence responsible for high carbon-dioxide emissions. Wind turbines, large solar farms and grid connection to other renewable sources, combined with new low-energy processes, will form the core of the energy transition. Applied effectively, overall costs of production should fall rapidly. It’s a win-win situation and the workers will benefit from better job opportunities while enjoying a clean, healthy environment. A lush green world where bio-diversity will grow and nature’s beauty will flourish for the workers to enjoy.

Chinese Modernisation may be regarded as a civilisation project. Given China’s tragic past of humiliation, fragmentation and external domination, its goals are based upon the need to avoid subordination ever again. It places the needs of its people, long-term planning and social stability at its core. The modernisation drive works to support ethical, cultural and institutional continuity with the aim of fostering a rich and diverse culture. It is structured to ensure that the benefits of Modernity are shared by all. For the workers of all ethnic groups the opportunity to enjoy a rising standard of living within a stable and secure environment.

The Communist Party of China is determined that no one will be left behind as the nation becomes more prosperous. The tasks and challenges it faces include keeping unemployment at a low level as AI advances. New developing service industries including the

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.

UNTIL SUN 29 MAR

Screen Cuba: Films to Change the World. Showings of Cuban films at London, Oxford, Pontypridd, Nottingham, Manchester and Leeds. Details and bookings at <https://screencuba.uk>

UNTIL 14 APRIL

Marx Memorial Library: Introducing Marxist Classics. 19:00. Online fortnightly Tuesday classes. Register on MML website.

UNTIL 18 APR

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 MAR

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Arms Factory Protests Day of Action: Bristol, London, Newcastle, Shenstone and Towcester. Details of locations and times on PSC website.

WED 25 MAR

International Ukraine Anti-Fascist Solidarity: Protest 16:00–19:30. Opposite Downing Street, London SW1.

WED 25 MAR

Marx Memorial Library: Trade Councils, Communities and Trade Unions: rebuilding class cohesion. 19:00. Online panel discussion. Book on MML website.

THURS 26 MAR

General Federation of Trade Unions Educational Trust: The General Strike in its Aftermath. 19:00. Online talk. Book on GFTUET website.

SAT 28 MAR

Marx Memorial Library: Second-hand book sale. 11:00–15:00. MML, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU.

SAT 28 MAR

Together Alliance: Anti-far right demonstration. Assemble 12:00. Park Lane, London for rally at Trafalgar Square, London SW1Y. Details TBA.

SAT 28 MAR

Scottish Cuba Solidarity Campaign: End the US Blockade against Cuba. Vigil. 13:00–13:45. Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8AA (front of M&S) and fourth Saturday of every month.

SUN 29 MAR

Solaris (1972 Soviet sci-fi film). 11:30. The Prince Charles Cinema, 7 Leicester Pl, London, WC2H 7BY.

WED 1–MON 6 APR

Lakenheath Action for Peace: Peace camp. Details TBA.

SAT 11 APR

Morning Star: 1926–2026 Organised Labour 100 Years From the General Strike. 09:30–17:30. Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BD.

SUN 12 APR

East End Walks: From Yiddish to Bangla: Street Life and Culture from Whitechapel to Brick Lane 1880s–1980s. 10:30–13:00. Book at <https://www.eastendwalks.com>

THURS 16 APR

Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Merseyside Cuba Solidarity fundraiser: 19:00. The Casa, 29 Hope St, Liverpool, L1 9BP.

FRI 17 APR

TUC Midlands: Mary Macarthur Lecture. 19:00–22:00. Workers’ Institute, Black Country Living Museum, Tipton Road, Dudley DY1 4SQ. Details TBA.

SAT 18 APR

National Housing Demonstration, central London, Details TBA.

TUE 28 APR

Workers Memorial Day. Nationwide events.

THURS 30 APR

General Federation of Trade Unions Educational Trust: Day Nurseries & ‘British Restaurants’: Women Workers in WW2. 19:00. Online talk. Book on GFTUET website.

FRI 1–MON 4 MAY

May Day events nationwide.

SAT 2 MAY

Stand Up To Racism: Unite the People Against Racism and the Far Right. Demo, rally and festival. Chamberlian Square, Birmingham B3.

THURS 7 MAY

Peggy Seeger ‘Songs for the Workers’. One-off concert. 19:30–21:30. Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Rd, London NW1 7AY. Book on website www.efds.org/whats-on

SAT 9 MAY

Levellers Day. Includes commemoration in churchyard and march round village. 10:30–16:00. Warwick Hall, Church Green, Burford OX18 4RY.

SAT 9 MAY

Ipswich New Worker Group Meeting: The Socialist Alternative for a Stable and Peaceful World. 14:00–16:00. Ipswich Institute, 15 Tavern Street, Ipswich IP1 3AA.

SUN 10 MAY

East End Walks: Bakers and Bankers early Jewish life in London 1650s–1870s. 10:30–12:30. Book at <https://www.eastendwalks.com>

SAT 16 MAY

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Nakba Day demonstration. London. Details TBA.

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...continued from page 8

care needs for an ageing population will create more job opportunities. Higher education is being adapted to provide the new knowledge and skills necessary for a rapidly changing environment.

China's government invests heavily in supporting advanced research in key strategic cutting-edge technology. This is to ensure the country's secure long-term development and so be in a position to avoid future threats from imperialism. It also seeks to boost the retail economy with a stimulus package of trade-ins to encourage sales of home appliances, digital products and new energy-efficient vehicles. During the 2024–25 period, 500 million consumers benefited from this initiative with 3.92 trillion yuan of new business generated. Modernisation is introduced to provide Lifestyle uplift. New initiatives have been introduced to subsidise the installation of elevators in old residential communities and updating equipment in elderly care facilities. All these measures will contribute to a stable society with rising standards of well-being for working people.

Modern societies have evolved to define two types of worker – white collar and blue collar. In capitalist society this difference is used to establish an artificial class barrier. In practice both are of course working class. In China, both types of worker exist but subtle changes are taking place that are starting blur any distinction between the two. For a worker on a production line their input is changing from one of mere assembly to a role that demands high engineering skill and an in-depth knowledge of science, technology and computer skills. Many boring, dirty or risky tasks are now carried out using robots. The ability and precision needed to build a massive bridge is only

achieved because workers have the necessary level of skill and knowledge. China is embarking upon a national recalibration aimed at stabilising, upskilling and professionalising all working people.

For rural communities where over the last 40 years some 800 million have been lifted out of poverty, modernisation has enabled residents to access improved education, health care and take advantage of new employment opportunities. Plans are now being made to move a similar number of people from low to medium income levels. Urban regeneration is being pursued vigorously to address issues resulting from dense populations, very old buildings and narrow alleys. New buildings with up-to-date sanitation and increased living space are being rapidly developed but every effort is made to retain a traditional architectural appeal.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the USA and its Western allies proclaimed that we had now entered a post-ideological world that was the culmination of human development. In practice, we had entered an era of unipolar hegemony in which the USA promoted regime change to foster debased American values. Resistance is building with China, The Russian Federation and the BRICS nations standing-up to imperialism. President Xi Jinping has advocated common prosperity through Modernisation to reflect the fact that humanity lives in a community with a shared future. The USA, on the other hand, attempts to perpetuate a unipolar world that serves the interests of Wall Street and the Military Industrial Complex. For the workers of People's China, they may look forward to a harmonious future with confidence while Western nations decline.

John Maryon
Suffolk

Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

It's been hectic this side of the border with the Scottish parliament banning dog racing and voting against legislation that would have given terminally ill people in Scotland the right to choose the 'assisted death'. But proceedings that would have challenged the legality of the banning of a Palestinian direct action campaign have been delayed after an intervention from the Crown.

On Wednesday 18th March Edinburgh Sheriff Court was set to hear a 'diet of debate' about whether it was justifiable under human rights laws to arrest people protesting against the banning of Palestine Action as a terror group. This means that the court will consider legal arguments only – with no input from witnesses – to decide if the arrests of people holding placards reading "I oppose genocide I support Palestine Action" was proportionate and lawful.

The Starmer government's suppression of free speech was going to be tested in a Scottish court. If the Scottish Court ruled that it was unlawful to arrest peaceful protestors under the Terrorism Act, this will also have profound reverberations for cases in England and Wales.

Now the Crown, on behalf of the Lord Advocate, has unilaterally required the court to refer the proceedings to the High Court.

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

A spokesperson for Defend our Juries Scotland said: "We are surprised by this sudden and unilateral move by the Crown on behalf of the Lord Advocate. We can only assume it indicates that the Crown anticipated a win for the defendants, who face charges under terrorism legislation for holding signs in peaceful protest of the UK Government's complicity in genocide, and were keen to avoid embarrassment in the Sheriff's Court. We are confident that our Human Rights will be upheld in the High Court and look forward to the Debate."

The Lord Advocate is the senior Scottish Law Officer advising the Scottish Government and heading prosecution services. The Advocate General, who advises the UK Government on Scots law, was party to the decision and represented in Court on Wednesday. The move underscores that these proceedings are a test for both governments.

Last month the Westminster government's decision to proscribe the group was found unlawful on Judicial Review in the High Court of England and Wales. The ban remains in place while the Starmer government pursues an appeal. A Judicial Review under Scots Law, scheduled to take place this week, was also postponed to June after the UK Government requested additional evidence sessions. The decision to move the Diet of Debate in Scotland is yet another link in this chain of chaos and uncertainty.

Meanwhile, more than 2,700 people are facing charges under the Terrorism Act 2000, including 34 in Scotland, for taking part in Lift the Ban protests. The lengthy delays leave them in limbo, with many facing devastating consequences on their day-to-day lives. Scottish activists will have to wait another four weeks for a further procedural hearing.

The UK and Scottish governments are divided

in their response to the Israeli genocide in Gaza and the banning of Palestine Action. The Starmer government continues to give full support to Israel while Holyrood has declared that what is happening in Gaza is genocide and voted to boycott Israel. But this has made little difference on the ground in Scotland.

Police Scotland has resorted to covert and erratic arresting, muddying the more principled words of the Scottish parliament. Now the same seems to be happening in the courts.

In a joint statement, Defend Our Juries in Scotland and the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign said: "If our government prioritises its relationship with the Israeli war machine so much that it charges peaceful protestors under the Terrorism Act, what does this show about the forces uniting against the people of Palestine?"

"We watch in horror as we see how comfortable the government in Westminster is to sacrifice Palestinian lives for reasons that are unfathomably trivial and inhumane. We hope that the Scottish courts can take a reasoned, independent opinion."

Meanwhile Palestine solidarity and civil rights campaigners are calling on the Scottish Government and Courts to act

with clarity, principle and independently from Westminster, calling for actions, not words, on the boycott, divestment and sanctions of Israel, and for all charges against peaceful protestors to be dropped.

Defend Our Juries spokesperson, Lex Korte, said: "To use terrorism powers to criminalise those who take direct action against genocide, and to then further prosecute those who stand up for all of our freedoms and civil liberties, by peacefully and silently holding placards and wearing T-shirts with political statements, is an abhorrent attack on democracy and our shared humanity as a whole.

"If the Lord Advocate dropped all of these cases, refused to prosecute peaceful people practising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, perhaps they would have the capacity to enforce and prosecute the International Criminal Court Act and end the production of Israeli weapons on Scottish soil.

"This would be a strong move towards enacting the sentiment of the Scottish Parliament to boycott, divest from and sanction Israel. We urge the Lord Advocate to come to the rational and legally sound conclusion, and drop all charges."



The eternal memory of Marx

by New Worker correspondent

Marx died in his study in London on 14th March 1883 and was buried in Highgate Cemetery. To commemorate his passing the Marx Memorial Library has for many decades held an annual graveside oration at his tomb at the Cemetery in north London. And this year London communists joined other comrades and friends, including the ambassadors of People's China, Cuba, Laos and Vietnam, at his graveside last Sunday.

Karl Marx and Fried-

rich Engels wrote the *Communist Manifesto* and laid the foundations of modern scientific socialism. The immense contribution Marx and Engels made in the struggle for the emancipation of the working class can never be forgotten.

Marx passed away in London at the age of 64 after a life-time of struggle to build the revolutionary movement. "Marx was before all else a revolutionist" Engels said. "His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to



• Italian comrades at the oration.

contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation. Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival."

Karl Marx was buried in the same grave as his wife in Highgate Cemetery; it was marked with a simple headstone in accordance with Marx's wishes. In 1954 the grave was moved to a better position and it was decided to commission a more impressive tomb. The current

monument, a bronze head atop a granite plinth, was designed and made by Laurence Bradshaw who was commissioned by the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB). It was unveiled by Harry Pollitt, the General Secretary of the CPGB, in 1956.

The Marx Memorial Library is the trustee of the Marx monument in the cemetery and the event is organised by the Library, which was opened in 1933 with the aim of advancing education, knowledge and learning in all aspects of the science of Marxism, the history of socialism and the working class movement.

Free Mikhail and Alexander Kononovich!

by Theo Russell

Last Friday the Kononovich brothers Alexander and Mikhail, joined comrades from across Europe at an online meeting organised by the Turkish-based Anti-Imperialist Front.

The brothers, members of the Leninist Communist Youth of Ukraine and ethnic Belarusians from the West Ukrainian Volhynia region, were arrested on 7th March 2022 and tortured in a Kiev detention centre. At that time the NATO puppet president Zelensky banned every opposition party in Ukraine. The Communist Party of Ukraine was permanently banned on 5th July 2022, with all of its assets seized.

They are currently under house arrest and wearing ankle tags, and the case against them is still going through the courts. They explained that while the government had failed to provide credible evidence

against the brothers, they are hoping to stop the case as soon as possible and then send them straight to the front line of the war.

Mikhail Kononovich told the meeting that: "The Kiev regime knows we are not guilty and is trying to end our court case in any way possible. When it was

opened they thought we would agree to confess our guilt, they thought they could break us, but we are communists, so it didn't work out like that. And the main thing is that they under-estimated the level of international support we received.

"Their aim now is to

end the case as quickly as possible and then send us immediately to the front line of the war.

"We know that thousands of comrades are fighting for us, and it's not possible for us to betray them. We have families, we have children, and we don't want to die, we're not

idiots, but it's better to die than to betray all of you."

Less than three weeks ago Alexander was kidnapped outside the courthouse and sent to a military recruitment centre. He was only saved from being sent to the front because Mikhail had a phone and sent a message to inter-

national supporters. He compared the situation in Ukraine with that of Chile after the 1973 Pinochet coup.

Such kidnappings have occurred ever since the 2014 coup, with police standing by and judges covered by death threats from the Nazi gangs. The brothers are currently under house arrest and wearing GPS ankle bracelets.

The meeting also discussed the possibility of the brothers being sent to serve their sentences in an EU state on the basis that the Kiev regime can't guarantee their safety. They said this had actually happened to some other defendants from Ukraine.

It was agreed at the meeting to hold an emergency protest at Ukrainian embassies around the world, including Russia, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Serbia, Greece, Germany and Britain, and a further protest on Saturday 4th April.

FREEDOM FOR



MIKHAIL AND ALEKSANDER KONONOVICH



World Federation of Democratic Youth
Federación Mundial de la Juventud Democrática
Fédération Mondiale de la Jeunesse Démocratique

From Bay of Pigs to Speedboats: Trump Still Doesn't Get It

by Nathan Richardson

There are moments when the class character of imperialist aggression reveals itself with brutal clarity. February 25th, 2026, was one such moment. Cuban border guards intercepted a Florida-registered speedboat just one nautical mile off Cayo Falcones in Villa Clara province. The vessel carried 10 armed Cuban exiles operating from American soil. When the patrol approached to enforce sovereignty, the infiltrators opened fire. Cuban forces defended themselves, killing four – including at least one US citizen – and wounding six.

Weapons, ballistic vests and military-style equipment were seized. Havana correctly described it as a foiled “armed infiltration for terrorist purposes”. Washington, as always, denied any government role. Secretary of State Marco Rubio called it “not a US operation” and announced yet another “independent investigation”.

This is not an isolated incident. This is the latest chapter in US imperialism’s six-decade war to crush the Cuban Revolution – the very same criminal methods the CIA employed against Fidel Castro and Comandante Ernesto Che Guevara. Let us recall the historical record without embellishment.

In April 1961, US imperialism sent 1,400 CIA-trained mercenaries to invade Cuba at Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs). They expected the



Cuban people to welcome their ‘liberators’. Instead, the revolutionary militias – led on the battlefield by Che Guevara himself – destroyed the invasion force in 72 hours. The defeat was total and humiliating for the empire.

Yet Washington did not learn. Under the code-name Operation Mongoose (1961–1963), the CIA launched hundreds of sabotage missions, bombed civilian targets in Havana and carried out at least eight documented assassination attempts against Fidel Castro – exploding cigars, poison pills, contaminated diving suits, even an exploding conch shell. They recruited the Mafia to do their dirty work. When those plots failed, they turned their guns on Che.

In 1967, in the mountains of Bolivia, CIA-trained Bolivian rangers, advised on the ground by Bay of Pigs veteran Felix Rodriguez, captured Che Guevara. They executed him the following day, severed his hands as trophies and paraded the body like a hunting

prize. Washington celebrated the murder of one of the greatest internationalist revolutionaries of the 20th Century. The parallels with the February 25th, 2026, speedboat raid are not coincidental – they are systemic.

Then: Florida-based exiles, armed and directed by the CIA, set sail to attack sovereign Cuban territory. **Now:** A Florida-registered speedboat, loaded with armed exiles from the same counter-revolutionary networks, attempts infiltration.

Then: Washington denied direct involvement while the CIA pulled the strings. **Now:** Rubio denies government involvement while the State Department ‘investigates’.

Then: The strategic objective was to assassinate the revolutionary leadership and install a puppet regime serving US monopolies. **Now:** The objective remains exactly the same – to overthrow the socialist government and transform Cuba into a neo-liberal colony.

The only addition in

2026 is the intensified economic war. Following the American-orchestrated ouster and kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in January 2026, Washington imposed a total oil blockade on Cuba. Venezuelan tankers were seized. Third countries were threatened with sanctions. The island’s fuel supplies – already strangled by the 65-year criminal blockade – collapsed. Hospitals rationed diesel. Blackouts lengthened. The speedboat raid was launched precisely when the Cuban people were being deliberately starved into submission.

This is classic imperialist logic: strangle the revolution economically, then send in the armed provocateurs. Donald Trump and his fascist administration do not ‘fail to learn history’. They consciously reject its lessons because those lessons expose the limits of imperialist power. Trump tweets about the “failed Castro regime” as if the Bay of Pigs never happened, as if Che’s heroic example

never inspired millions across Latin America, Africa and Asia, as if the Missile Crisis never demonstrated that Cuba cannot be broken by threats and blackmail.

The Cuban people have already defeated invasions, blockades, biological warfare, and decades of terrorist attacks that murdered thousands of civilians. They defeated them through the heroism of their revolutionary armed forces, through proletarian internationalism, and through the unbreakable conviction that their socialist homeland belongs to the workers and peasants – not to Wall Street.

The 2026 speedboat provocation exposes once again the bankruptcy of US imperialism. Unable to win the battle of ideas, unable to offer the peoples of the world anything but exploitation and misery, the empire resorts to the gunboat and the blockade. When these fail – as they failed at Playa Giron, as they failed against Che – they simply tighten the noose and call it ‘democracy

promotion’. This is not foreign policy. This is gangsterism on a state level.

The blood spilled in the waters off Cayo Falcones stains the hands of the same US ruling class that ordered Che’s murder and the Bay of Pigs invasion. They have learned nothing because they cannot afford to learn. To learn would mean admitting that a small socialist island has the sovereign right to exist outside the sphere of imperialist domination. To learn would mean abandoning the dream of turning every country in Latin America into a client puppet state.

The Cuban people have every right to defend their revolution by any means necessary. The USA has no right to send armed exiles, impose genocidal blockades, or threaten invasion. Every progressive, anti-imperialist and working-class force in the USA must raise its voice: End the criminal blockade! Stop the provocations!

The empire’s desperate aggressions are the death throes of a decaying system that still believes the Caribbean is its private lake. Cuba has shown the world how to resist. Now the international working class and all progressive forces must match that courage with concrete solidarity. From the streets of Miami to the factories of Detroit, the message must ring out loud and clear: Cuba is not for sale. Cuba will never be a puppet. The revolution lives – and it will triumph!

IDO C

Bullseye!

A schoolful of screaming kids!

by
**Timothy
Bancroft-Hinchey**

28th February. Iran, Min-ab, Hormozgan province. Shajareh Tayyebah Primary school massacre. Hands blown off little girls. Not even an apology...

The USA, a joke, a pariah, the worst state terrorist nation in the history of humankind, a coward. Its President pats himself on the back after carrying out senseless bombing attacks on a nation whose only chance of defending itself is to attack those who attack it and after its air defences are destroyed. Where is the glory in that? It's like kicking a guy to death after he is down. And the Orantango claims victory, along with that whackjob female who claims to be an evangelist, or what. More like a nutter. This isn't victory, it is cowardice and the one standing up like a hero is the Islamic

Republic of Iran.

As the days draw on, more and more reports point the finger at the USA being responsible for the massacre of over 150 children in Iran, although from Washington we hear denial and a counter argument that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) was responsible.

International experts identify the missile as a Tomahawk which the IRGC does not possess, neither it appears, does Israel. So who was it, the Holy Spirit?

Liar, coward or psychopath

Surely, the USA knows where its missiles were fired and at what? Claiming it was the other side when they know full well who it was, is either the sign of a barefaced liar, a coward,



every night of their lives, when they wake up in the morning. The more they try to block it out, the louder it will become. Deafening screams as a missile buried them alive, screaming for their mothers. Is this supposed to be funny? Are those who elected Trump holding their hands on their hearts and singing God Bless America? Are the Satanic Trumpist Christians along with that whackjob attanatta bana anna female singing Hallelujah?

They probably are. But let us see who is saying that the perpetrator of this massacre was Washington. None other than the USA's own Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a thinktank based in New York. Along with the *New York Times*, quoting the same source.

The source according to the CFR is a US military investigation, cited by the *New York Times* and the claim is as follows: "What appears to be one of the deadliest civilian casualty events in recent US military history...the United States struck an Iranian elementary school on the first day of the war."

Now, whether or not it was the USA, and multiple sources are claiming it was, this would never have happened if the senseless and illegal attack had not been carried out, would it? So Donald J Trump has this feather in his cap. His political epitaph will be, and is, 175 screaming schoolchildren roasted alive in an illegal war that he launched while negotiating with the other side.

Only a coward carries

out an act of backstabbing like that. While smiling, shaking hands and negotiating, you build up military assets and attack. Like a snake, like a disgusting, crack-starved drug addict. So much for US diplomacy and the genius at its head, one Mr Rubio.

So whatever the results of this investigation as time goes on, whatever the manipulations, however much material is pulled from the Net through manipulation of Mega Data (that's how they do it, wipe the slate clean and deny anything happened), the fact of the matter is that this outrageous and murderous attack is a violation of international law by the USA and who else, Israel, yet again and these attacks amount to mass murder and terrorism, making those responsible criminals, murderers and terrorists.

Trump, Hegseth and Rubio have already written their political and personal epitaphs, along with the Butcher of Gaza, that sickening freak who gets off on the slaughter of 75,000 civilians. There is a nice hot corner of Hell waiting for these demons.

And next, rising prices. Who is going to pay the bills? In Europe, and around the world, fuel prices are already rising and that means food prices will follow. Maybe Messrs Trump, Hegseth and Rubio would like to dig into their pockets, man up and pay the bills that they are responsible for.

Bottom line: If Iran cannot have nukes, then why the Hell can Israel? Because it has murdered 75,000 civilians?

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the sign of a psychopath or incompetence, in which case why is that Hegseth person still in office?

All we can do at this point is read the reports and listen to the experts and as we read the reports and listen to the experts, there is a growing pile of evidence that the USA was indeed responsible. This being the case, it matters not why or how. It matters not even whether it was the USA or its sickening sidekick Israel, whose fetish for slaughtering kids

is apparent after Gaza. Tens of thousands of them. This is not going away, whoever was responsible.

The Orantango says it was not the USA, as Hegseth stands by with a daft expression on his face saying nothing. So who was it?

This is not going away. Some 175 people were slaughtered, most of them screaming children. Let their screams deafen Trump and Hegseth and Rubio every night as they go to bed, every time they try to make out with their wives, during