

THE NEW WORKER

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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Fierce fighting throughout the Middle East!

by our Arab Affairs correspondent

American and Israeli missiles rain down on the Islamic Republic as the Iran war enters its second month with no end in sight to the bitter conflict. The Iranians showed they can still pack a punch, with wave after wave of devastating drone and rocket attacks on Israel and American military and economic targets throughout the Middle East. Western stocks, bonds, currencies and commodities take a hammering as the Iranian blockade of the Persian Gulf throttles the global oil and gas markets. Muslim Brotherhood guerillas in Syria say they will soon join the fight if the Zionists carry out their threat to hang members of the Palestinian resistance. And on the battlefield the Hezbollah militia is beating back the Israeli invaders in south Lebanon and raiding into northern Israel.

In Tehran, the Iranians have accused the USA and Israel of genocide over the deliberate targeting of schools and education facilities in strikes on the country. Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei Hamaneh said more than 600 schools and educational facilities across Iran have been targeted in American-Israeli attacks over the last month, including the Shajareh Tayyebbeh



School in Minab where more than 160 children were killed.

”This is not an isolated act of cruelty – it is part of a systematic and brutal pattern of illegal warfare against Iran,” he said. “The term ‘war crime’ falls far short of adequately describing these atrocities. Given the explicit rhetoric of hostility toward Iranians (as a nation) expressed by US/Israeli officials, these crimes amount to genocide.”

Trump tells his dwindling band of followers that he’ll bomb Iran back into the Stone Age if they don’t give in. But others say the pathetic old man is seeking a speedy way out of the conflict to avoid a battering at the mid-term congressional elections in November. Trump wants to declare victory and end hostilities before the political damage becomes irreparable, *Time* magazine reported this week.

On the diplomatic front, the Russians say the best way to restore free passage through the Persian Gulf is for the Americans to stop their fighting against Iran. China and Pakistan have

proposed a five-point plan to end the war on Iran that calls for an immediate ceasefire and restoration of “normal passage” for vessels through the Strait of Hormuz, while a former Iranian foreign minister is calling for an “all for all” deal with the Americans with the Islamic Republic re-opening the Strait of Hormuz and mothballing their nuclear programme in return for the lifting of the sanctions regime and normalisation with the USA. Trump’s response – a national address to the American people on prime-time TV – was an incoherent repetition of the usual lies and threats that no-one takes any notice of, least of all the Iranians who say their rockets will do their

talking for the time being.

In the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, the leader of the communist-led Democratic Front for Peace & Equality said: “The latest war began in Gaza and after two and a half years of staggering loss – both in lives and re-

sources – its consequences have rippled across the entire region. What began in Gaza has now escalated into a wider confrontation between the United States and Israel on one side and Iran (with support from Russia and China) on the other – a conflict with ripple effects stretching far beyond the battlefields. In this expanding crisis, Tehran’s network of regional actors has been engaged to varying degrees, with some militias intensifying attacks even as others hold back from full-scale war...

“The war with Iran – yet another consequence of the unresolved Palestinian question – has revealed something else: the United States and Israel are unlikely to achieve their stated goal of regime change. Everything that has unfolded over the past two years shows that the Middle East will remain a region prone to repeated eruptions of violence. At the centre of that instability is the unresolved Palestinian question.”

FUND

The final week of our March appeal ended with a stomping £1,242 in the bag and a grand fighting fund total of £2,952 thanks to a Dagenham comrade who gave us £500, an East Anglian supporter who sent in £32 and another from Hereford who gave us a tenner. A London comrade added to his usual contributions with £50 and let’s not forget the other regulars whose bankers’ orders underwrite so much of our fund-raising work. We were £548 short of our target in March but let’s see whether we can make it up in April!

The monthly appeal target is £3,500. Every penny counts and we need every penny to keep our presses rolling and get the *New Worker* out to you every week.

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THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Defend the Islamic Republic

Millions upon millions have taken to the streets of Britain and throughout the rest of the world to demand an end to the imperialist war on Iran. Donald Trump and the fools he surrounds himself with talked about a “decapitation” victory. Benjamin Netanyahu thought his dream of a “Greater Israel” from the Nile to the Euphrates was about to come true. The Americans and their Israeli and feudal Arab lackeys thought that Stealth war-planes, missiles and drones would soon have the Iranians on their knees begging for mercy. But it didn’t happen. The dream of The Donald died in the smoke of burning American bases and the bombed-out ruins of Tel Aviv.

The leaders of the European Union have wisely spurned Trump’s call for help to break the Iranian blockade of the Persian Gulf. So has Starmer, who’s now trying to rebuild the links with his old mates in Brussels while still keeping sweet with the Americans and the oil sheikhs.

The bourgeois media talk about the crisis in the Persian Gulf that threatens Western supplies of oil and gas – and indeed that is a crisis for them, Soaring energy prices could plunge the imperialist world into a slump of 1929 proportions – but re-opening the waterway won’t solve the underlying problems that once again set the Middle East on fire.

The immediate issue is to end the fighting, lift the imperialist sanctions on the Islamic Republic and recognise Iran’s right to control its own economy and develop a nuclear energy programme. But the heart of the matter is Palestine. The legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arabs must be recognised, including the right of return for the millions of Palestinians whose families were driven from their homes by Zionist terror in the 1940s and the equally legitimate right of the Palestinian Arabs to self-determination and the independent state they were promised when Palestine was partitioned in 1947.

UN resolutions have provided the basis for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. First of all, Israel must totally withdraw from all the occupied territories seized in 1967, including Arab East Jerusalem and Syria’s Golan Heights. The Palestinians must be allowed to establish a state of their own on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Palestinian refugees whose homes are now in Israel must be allowed to return or, if they so wish, be paid appropriate compensation in exchange. And all states in the region should have internationally agreed and recognised frontiers guaranteed by all the Great Powers.

Defend the right to protest

Palestine Solidarity Campaign director Ben Jamal and Stop the War vice-chair Chris Nineham have been found guilty of breaking the Public Order Act this week.

Although their punishment – they were fined and conditionally discharged – was not severe, they shouldn’t have been in court in the first place. These were clearly trumped-up charges designed to stifle the massive Palestinian solidarity movement that has swept the country in recent years.

The two campaign leaders have made it clear that they will appeal and so they should. This is an attack on civil liberties. It affects us all. The verdict raises huge concerns about any further powers granted to the police through the Crime and Policing Bill, which is currently progressing through parliament. It confirms the view that these proposed increased powers represent a seismic threat to democratic freedoms.

China says: time to end the fighting

It has now been over a month since the USA and Israel launched military strikes against Iran on 28th February. Far from achieving their so-called “intended objectives”, this conflict, which was initiated by the USA and Israel without justification amid negotiations, has instead edged steadily toward the brink of losing control. Although it is uncertain how this conflict will end, its shock to geopolitics and the global order is already profound. What is urgently needed now is to prevent this conflict – one that should never have happened – from sliding into the abyss of complete loss of control.

In just one month, the perilous escalation of the conflict has far exceeded initial expectations. The flames of war have spread from the Persian Gulf to the eastern Mediterranean, and from the Strait of Hormuz to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Beyond Iran and Israel, the territories of Kuwait, Iraq, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain have also come under direct military strikes, leaving critical infrastructure and civilian safety severely impacted.

The US government initially projected that the war against Iran would last “four to five weeks” and later repeatedly claimed it would “end soon”. The facts have proven otherwise: Once modern warfare is initiated, it is difficult to stop it according to the pre-set trajectory. The American and Israeli attempt at a “swift and decisive victory” has now collapsed, and the consequences of reckless military intervention in the Middle East are becoming increasingly evident.

This war was built from the outset on severe strategic miscalculations and a morality deficit. From the bloody tragedy in the school in Minab to the black toxic rain on the streets of Tehran, repeated strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities have triggered global alarm and sharply heightened

the risk of radioactive leaks. This conflict has also imposed an energy crisis, supply chain disruptions and economic uncertainty on the entire world. With the Strait of Hormuz remaining under restricted navigation, international oil prices have surged past \$112 per barrel. If the conflict continues to escalate, the risk of a global economic recession will rise significantly, undermining the shared interests of people across all nations.

What is most alarming now is the erosion of limits on targets and the sharp rise in the risk of spill-over. The conflict is no longer confined to military objectives; both sides have begun striking key civilian infrastructure, including oil refineries, desalination plants and power stations – facilities vital to national economies and everyday life. Once this “mutual destruction” mode becomes the norm, it will trigger even more severe humanitarian disasters. The Houthis’ declaration of entry into the war not only opens a new front but also heightens risks along the Red Sea shipping lane, increasing global oil prices and logistics costs. Meanwhile, the deployment of 3,500 US sailors and marines to the Middle East has sharply increased the likelihood of a ground offensive and the danger of dragging the conflict into a protracted quagmire.

“Enough: end the eternal war” – such slogans appeared in a square in Tel Aviv on 28th March, marking one month since the conflict began. On the same day, more than 3,100 related protests were held across the USA, with “no more war” emerging as one of the protesters’ core demands. Even Joe Kent, director of the US National Counter-terrorism Center, resigned because he could not “in good conscience” support the war with Iran – a clear sign of the war’s lack of public support.

Following an airstrike on the Iran University of Science and Technology, Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps declared

that American and Israeli-affiliated universities in the Middle East would be considered legitimate targets. This serves as yet another warning: war is never a solution, and it only breeds more hatred and killing.

Although the current situation is filled with uncertainty, it also contains a potential window for de-escalation. America, Israel and Iran are all facing increasingly prominent pressure in their ongoing confrontation, which significantly constrains their strategic space and policy choices. Previously, both the USA and Iran had signalled a willingness to negotiate; the key lies in whether all parties can maintain strategic restraint under pressure, gradually restore communication mechanisms through limited de-escalation measures, and create conditions for subsequent political solutions. The conflict is now on the brink of complete loss of control, where every misjudgement and each escalation could lead to irrevocable consequences. Therefore, all parties involved in the conflict should remain calm and rational, abandon confrontational thinking, and not easily let slip the fleeting glimmer of peace.

It has been over a month, and the 168 girls in Minab can no longer grow up. War has no winners, only irreparable harm. From the outset of the conflict, China has made it clear that the urgent priority is to achieve a ceasefire and stop the fighting as soon as possible. This is a war that should never have happened and it brings no benefits to any party involved. The history of the Middle East repeatedly teaches us that force is not the solution to problems; armed confrontation only adds new hatred and breeds new crises. We once again call for an immediate halt to this conflict, to prevent the situation from escalating further and to avoid the spread of war.

Workers' Notes

A travesty of justice!

by
New Worker
correspondent

Two leading pro-Palestine campaigners were found guilty of breaching protest conditions this week. Ben Jamal, the director of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, and Chris Nineham, the vice-chairman of the Stop the War Coalition, were both accused of failing to march within a designated area set by police during a mass protest in London last year.

The logs of the Police Gold Commander Adam Slonecki reveal that enormous political pressure was placed on the police by pro-Israel groups to prevent a protest at the BBC.

Claims of disorder on the day were simply false. The only moment of violence was when Nineham was brutally pulled to the ground and hauled away by police officers.

A key part of their defence was that the conditions imposed on the protest on 18th January 2025, which prevented a march to the BBC, were unlawful. The defence submitted a detailed legal argument outlining this case. But Judge Daniel Sternberg told the court that he was not obliged to give any reasons for his decision.

Stop the War said the verdict was “extraordinary and shocking and a huge setback for civil liberties” and that there were “significant concerns about the conduct of the six-day hearing which will be raised during appeal”.

Jamal and Nineham were found guilty at Westminster Magistrates' Court of failing to comply with conditions that required the protest to stay in an area in central London and not enter the surroundings of the BBC's headquarters at Portland Place. Jamal was also convicted on two counts of inciting other protesters to breach police conditions. Both men were given conditional discharges and ordered to pay £7,500 each in costs.

Jeremy Corbyn, the former

Against racism! For Palestine!

by
New Worker
correspondent

It was a carnival atmosphere in London on Saturday as comrades joined tens of thousands of other demonstrators marching through the heart of the capital against racism and Zionism last weekend. Your Party leaders Jeremy Corbyn and Zarah Sultana were there along with Zack Polanski from the Greens, Greater Manchester mayor Andy Burnham and Diane Abbot the independent veteran Labour MP from north London.

The protest, called by the Together Alliance and Pales-

tine solidarity movements, which was backed by about 500 groups including unions, anti-racist campaigns and Muslim representative bodies, took over the streets of London last weekend.

Corbyn told the media that the “problems we face are not caused by migrants or refugees” and Zarah Sultana said “there's one minority we should be angry at: the billionaires funding division while working class people can't make ends meet”.

Some said this was London's biggest anti-racist demo in living memory. The organisers said over half-a-million people turned out on the day. Others put the number at nearer a million!



Labour leader who now heads the Independent Alliance in the House of Commons, said he was appalled at the court's decision. “In January 2025, we held an entirely peaceful demonstration in support of Palestinian people. At all times, they – and we – followed all police instructions. We ended the demonstration by laying down flowers at their feet to mourn the deaths of Palestinian children” he said. “Today's verdict is a dark day for civil liberties in this country – and is a disgraceful assault on the right to protest. My solidarity is with Ben, Chris and all those who have stood up for our common humanity in the face of genocide. This case is part of a wider attempt to intimidate the Palestinian solidarity movement into silence. They will never succeed.”

Doctors at large

by
New Worker
correspondent

The British Medical Association (BMA) is, once again, at logger-heads with the Government over pay.

Resident Doctors (formerly Junior Doctors) in NHS England are poised to take strike action for the 15th time since 2023 in

the week just after Easter. This is the response to the Government's offer of a 3.5 pay rise, which included payments for some expenses including exam fees and an increase in the number of training posts. The BMA say this is not enough; that inflation is certain to rise and that their pay has not kept pace with inflation since 2008. On a 52.54 per cent turnout, 93.4 per cent voted for action in January.

An angry Prime Minister responded to this by giving the BMA 48 hours to call off the action or he would withdraw the offer of 1,000 extra training posts that are part of a proposed 4,000 extra speciality posts created over the next three years. Health Secretary Wes Streeting says doctors are doing all right as they have had about 30 per cent over the last three years, with basic pay increased to £77,348 and average earnings over £100,000.

The response of Jack Fletcher of the BMA's resident doctor committee was to accuse the Government of shifting the goalposts and worse, making “threats about withholding jobs from doctors” when the NHS was already under strain. The doctors' union points out that despite recent rises doctors' pay is still in real-terms 20 per cent below that of 2008.

In another BMA dispute, GPs in England rejected by 98.9 per

cent on a 55.1 per cent turnout contract changes that would make patient access easier using digital means. The BMA's GP committee (GPC) warns that it would overburden GP services as it would mandate unlimited same-day urgent appointments and unlimited online consultation requests and also introduce rules affecting hospitals' acceptance of GP referrals to specialists. It fears the deal will increase workload in already under-staffed practices resulting in “a fast track to collapse GP services”, with GPs leaving for the private sector.

The Department of Health and Social Care brushed off the strike vote saying it was “not representative” of GPs who “want to make general practice fit for the future”, claiming that the new contract would see the end of the notorious “8am scramble” for appointments.

Another union, Unison, was also unhappy about the 3.5 per cent award. Head of Health Helga Pile observed that: “Many health staff will question why colleagues working alongside them have, once again, got a higher pay rise for no apparent reason. The NHS acts as one team and how employees are treated should reflect this. All health workers have seen their pay eroded by rising bills and face daily struggles to cope with

chronic staffing shortages.” This was because the majority of NHS staff were given a 3.3 per cent pay award for 2026/27. This 0.2 per cent difference is much less than that from a few years ago when doctors received a big boost to their pay, which was not matched by that for nurses and other staff, but it still rankles.

Fourteen unions have told the Westminster government that NHS staff feel “angry and let down”. The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has complained about the 3.3 rise. They have written to Minister for Health Karin Smyth saying that staff feel “angry and let down” after years of eroded wages, chronic understaffing and rising living costs.

RCN Executive Director of Legal Jo Galbraith-Marten said “3.3 per cent isn't enough and there is no excuse for government once again outsourcing responsibility for NHS pay to a failed Pay Review Body (PRB) process”. She not unreasonably added that: “Ministers should have negotiated with unions directly, as we requested multiple times. You simply can't agree fair staff pay without talking to staff.”

They want to see the end of the NHS Pay Review Body process and its replacement with direct talks between unions and ministers.

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Finally, the RCN complains that the 3.3 per cent rise might not be applied to all nursing staff. In particular, RCN England director Patricia Marquis notes that: "As salaried general practitioners see their pay increase, many nursing staff working in general practice

are still waiting to see any uplift in their salary from last year. The government is clear in its message that general practice staff should be included in this pay uplift, and we expect this to be honoured" – but this has not been done in every case, despite funding being provided for it.

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Health front

woes

by
New Worker
correspondent

Unison, the major NHS union, says members handling urgent medical calls on the NHS 111 service are leaving in droves due to heavy workloads, staff shortages and abusive callers.

Six ambulance services in England and Wales have suffered from 46 per cent of staff leaving their jobs for these reasons. Yorkshire had the highest staff turnover of 76 per cent, with the South East Coast on 62 and South Central on 44.

In all, 300,000 days were lost to ill health at the six organisations from 2021 to 2024. In particular, 91,681 days were lost in 2023/24, 31 days' sick leave for every call handler, dramatically above the UK average of four days for the workforce generally.

South East Coast Ambulance Service more than doubled that with 64 days of sick leave per handler.

A survey of more than 200 staff reported that 82 per cent said the volume of calls was the worst part of the job, with 75 citing staff shortages and 66 per cent complaining about aggressive and abusive callers. As a result, 72 per cent said they had considered leaving in the last year (which

will make things worse for the remaining staff).

Some 72 per cent reported that better pay would make the job more tolerable and encourage them to stay. Unison says this could be partly remedied by moving them up a grade on the NHS pay scale.

Contracting out of 111 services should be reversed and brought back in-house to allow greater integration of 111 and 999 services for the benefit both patients and staff.

Sharan Bandesha, Unison's national ambulance officer, points out that: "NHS 111 is a lifeline for patients and their families. The service provides vital

advice and access to care when they urgently need it. But staff are under immense pressure and it's no surprise many don't stay in the role. Bringing 111 services back in-house, paying staff properly for their work and employing enough staff to alleviate pressure would help ensure NHS 111 is fit for the future."

A necessarily anonymous 111 call handler added: "During night shifts, we get a lot of mental health calls that we have no training for. We're not even provided with guidance for callers that express suicidal intent or who are having a severe mental health crisis. These calls are very challenging."

THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

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

31st March 2006

"DO THEY want us to die at work?" a striking worker said to a New Worker correspondent at a mass rally in Manchester last Tuesday. The rally was one of dozens throughout Britain as over a million local government employees took one day's strike action in protest at threats to their pensions and their retirement age.

By Wednesday Government Ministers were holding urgent talks with trade union leaders to try to avert further strikes – several more are planned and local elections set for 4th May could be hit.

Our Manchester correspondent reported that just

about every local government building in Manchester – schools, colleges, libraries and leisure centres – was closed with a picket line outside.

There was an impressive turnout of around 2,000 for the rally, with plenty of banners from the 11 unions involved in the biggest strike in Britain since the General Strike of 1926. Nationwide more than a million workers were on strike, 700,000 of them women.

TGWU general secretary Tony Woodley said: "Three quarters of these workers are women and it is no accident that the Government has chosen not to protect their pensions in the way it agreed last year for the civil service, the NHS, teaching, and others."

Many strikers recalled the same battle a year ago, after the first time the Government tried to attack local government pensions. Then, in the run-up to the general election, the Government backed down at the threat of a strike.

In many towns throughout the country striking transport workers brought public transport systems to a halt.

The Mersey Tunnel was closed, as was the Glasgow Underground railway system, Glasgow bus station also closed.

GMB acting general secretary Paul Kenny said: "The Local Government Pension Scheme is under attack. The Government, the employers and the right-wing press are determined to extract every last penny out of local government pensioners.

"That's for those who get to the stage where they receive their pitiful average £3,800 a year pension – £1,500 a year less than most private sector pension scheme members. The Government has for many years been trying to make workers work for longer. This hasn't meant employers making any great efforts to improve employment practices to make continued working more attractive to older workers.

"Next they'll be saying by making classroom assistants, refuse operatives and grave diggers work longer they're doing them a favour!"

Will the Iran war open the road to Palestinian freedom?

by Ramzy Baroud

Some are expressing frustration that Iran's conditions to end the war have not explicitly and unequivocally included a demand to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine and dismantle the apartheid regime.

Among the conditions circulated in Iranian and sympathetic media – although not formally confirmed by Tehran – is the proposition that any resolution must include an end to Israel's war across all fronts: Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and beyond. These conditions did not, however, specifically prioritise the freedom of Palestine as a precondition to ending the war.

That frustration is neither misplaced nor marginal. For many, Palestine is not one issue among others but the defining axis of the conflict itself. Precisely for that reason, however, it cannot be approached in isolation. To treat the current war solely through what has or has not been explicitly stated risks narrowing a profoundly complex confrontation into a single dimension, when in fact it is through this broader, interconnected struggle that the question of Palestine is ultimately being shaped, contested and potentially resolved.

Several strands of analysis capture elements of this reality, but few sustain it. Some focus narrowly on Israeli domestic politics, arguing that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is prolonging the war to preserve his coalition, delay accountability and avoid legal consequences that could end his political career.

Others shift to a broader strategic reading, situating the war within Israel's long-standing pursuit of regional dominance – neutralising adversaries, expanding normalisation and consolidating its position as the cen-



tral power in the region.

A third line of analysis, closer to the mainstream, continues to operate within the declared framework of Washington and Tel Aviv. Even when it introduces criticism, it remains anchored in the language of Iran's nuclear programme, Israeli 'security' and the familiar architecture of justification.

This framework is not neutral. It systematically evades assigning responsibility to Israel for the war, just as it has persistently refused to confront the genocide in Gaza. Even its criticisms of President Donald Trump remain procedural – focused on the White House's unclear objectives, poor co-ordination and contradictory messaging – rather than on the political and moral logic driving the war itself.

Between narrowly internal explanations and an increasingly hollow mainstream narrative, the broader historical trajectory disappears from view. The truth lies elsewhere.

The Middle East has not entered a crisis suddenly. It has been shaped – deliber-

ately – for instability. What we are witnessing is not an abrupt rupture but the acceleration of a long-standing historical process that is now reaching a decisive phase.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, concluded between Britain and France during the First World War, did not simply divide territory; it engineered fragmentation. Arbitrary borders were imposed with little regard for historical, cultural or social realities, ensuring that the region would remain politically fractured and externally manageable.

This colonial framework was later reinforced through post-Second World War arrangements that transferred effective control of the region to the USA. A defining moment came in 1945, when US President Franklin D Roosevelt met Saudi King Abdulaziz aboard the USS *Quincy*, establishing a strategic formula: American security guarantees in exchange for stable access to oil resources.

That arrangement evolved, particularly in the 1970s, into the petrodollar

system, whereby global oil transactions were denominated in US dollars. The consequences were structural. Global demand for the dollar was secured and the strength of the American economy became directly tied to its influence over Middle Eastern energy flows. From that point onwards, US dominance in the region was not merely strategic – it was foundational to the global economic order.

When did this begin to shift?

A common answer points to the 2003 US invasion of Iraq. Intended to consolidate American control, the war instead destabilised the region in profound and lasting ways, exposing the limits of direct military intervention and accelerating forces that Washington itself could not fully contain.

By 2011, the USA began to recalibrate. The Obama administration's 'pivot to Asia' reflected a strategic reorientation toward China, while

in the Middle East, Washington adopted a more indirect model of engagement – often described as 'leading from behind'.

This approach was evident in Libya in 2011, where NATO forces, under US co-ordination, intervened militarily without a large-scale American ground presence, resulting not in stability but in state collapse.

Across Syria, Iraq, Yemen and elsewhere, the USA increasingly relied on proxies, regional alliances and hybrid forms of warfare. It sought to maintain influence while reducing the political and financial costs of direct occupation.

Within this evolving framework, Israel assumed a more central role. It was no longer simply an ally, but a pillar – positioned as a regional guarantor of security within a US-led order. Arab states, particularly in the Gulf, were incorporated into this arrangement as economic partners, their normalisation with Israel framed as both pragmatic and inevitable.

The Abraham Accords, signed in 2020, formalised this shift. They were not merely diplomatic agreements but components of a broader project to reorganise the Middle East in alignment with American and Israeli strategic priorities.

While widely described as a betrayal of Palestine – and rightly so – the Accords were also designed to bypass the Palestinian question altogether. Jared Kushner articulated this logic explicitly, arguing that regional co-operation and economic integration could proceed independently of resolving Palestinian rights.

The discourse itself began to shift accordingly. Israel adopted and expanded the language of a 'new Middle

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East', advancing a vision in which it occupies a central, uncontested position.

This vision was made unmistakably clear in September 2023, when Netanyahu addressed the UN and presented a map of the region that excluded Palestine entirely – a political statement as much as a visual one.

Yet even the genocide in Gaza did not fundamentally disrupt this trajectory. Several Arab governments, despite rhetorical condemnation, continued to prioritise the preservation of this emerging order, investing political capital in its survival while offering little meaningful support to Palestinians. This posture is not accidental.

Many Gulf states were not the product of anti-colonial liberation movements but of colonial arrangements. As former British protectorates, their political and security systems remain deeply intertwined with Western power. Their limited population size, territorial depth and strategic

autonomy render them dependent on external guarantees for survival.

With China still cautious in projecting military power, and unwilling – at least for now – to replace the USA as a security patron, these states remain anchored to Western political validation, military protection and technological infrastructure. From their perspective, the collapse of the existing order is not liberation – it is risk.

This helps explain the absence of any serious shift in their stance toward Israel, even when Israeli leaders openly articulate expansionist ambitions. Netanyahu himself has repeatedly framed Israel's role in terms that suggest a broader regional project – namely 'Greater Israel' – one that extends beyond partnership into dominance.

Such statements, while alarming to some, have not fundamentally altered the calculations of Arab regimes. They have long understood the nature of Israeli power yet continue to operate within a system



that rewards alignment with stronger actors, not resistance to them.

With all of this in mind, the American–Israeli war on Iran cannot be understood as a series of isolated decisions or short-term calculations. It is the outcome of a layered and cumulative historical trajectory.

Yes indeed, Netanyahu seeks political survival. Yes, US policy remains deeply shaped by pro-Israel influence. But to reduce the war

to these factors alone is to miss its structural function: the attempt to impose a new regional order.

It is precisely within this broader context that the Palestinian resistance in Gaza must be understood. It was never intended to defeat Israel in conventional military terms. Rather, its objective was to widen the scope of the conflict, disrupt Israel's ability to unilaterally reshape the region, and challenge what can be understood as an emerging 'Sykes-Picot II' – this time centred on Israeli dominance.

Israel is fully aware of this dynamic. Hence its constant framing of the war as existential, equating it with its founding moment in 1948 – the Nakba and the ethnic cleansing of Palestine.

Yet Iran's powerful response, the sustained role of Hezbollah, the involvement of Ansar Allah in Yemen and the broader consolidation of what Tehran calls the Axis of Resistance suggest that Israel may not achieve its strategic objectives after all. And this is precisely where much of the prevailing

analysis falls short.

For Iran and its allies, victory does not require a decisive military triumph. It requires endurance. Not losing, in this context, is itself a strategic victory.

Such an outcome would not simply interrupt the existing trajectory; it would begin to reverse it. The strategic arc that followed the Iraq war – reinforced by the 'pivot to Asia', the collapse of the Arab uprisings and the normalisation process – would be fundamentally unsettled. Israel's role as a regional 'security' guarantor would be weakened, compelling Arab regimes to reassess their alignments and, potentially, to explore new forms of regional co-existence – not with Israel but with Iran.

In that same moment, the USA would face a narrowing set of options: either deepen its entanglement in a region it has been attempting to recalibrate away from, or accept an altered geopolitical landscape in which Iran and its allies are no longer peripheral actors, but entrenched and unavoidable forces in shaping the region's future.

While this alone will not liberate Palestine or dismantle apartheid, it would nonetheless open new political, geopolitical and legal spaces for Palestinians to operate – spaces made possible by shifting regional balances and a loosening of long-standing constraints.

If the American–Israeli war on Iran fails, the implications will extend well beyond the battlefield. What will begin to unravel is not only the existing balance of power, but the very language and assumptions that have governed the region for decades.

In that context, global powers such as China and Russia are likely to position themselves more assertively as alternative economic and strategic partners, seeking to capitalise on a changing regional landscape.

At the same time, some European states – already signaling discomfort with US policy – may attempt to negotiate new arrangements, particularly given the strategic centrality of the Strait of Hormuz and its direct implications for global energy flows.

Countries across the Global South may also draw lessons from this moment, exploring forms of regional co-operation that challenge inherited colonial frameworks and long-standing hierarchies of power.

Taken together, these shifts do not resolve the 'Palestinian question' – but they do create openings. They expand the terrain on which Palestinians and their allies, including the global solidarity movement, can act, organise and exert pressure.

With support for Israel declining among ordinary Americans, and with global solidarity for Palestine reaching unprecedented levels – including within Western societies – the contours of a broader political shift are already emerging.

The challenge now is not simply to recognise that change is underway, but to understand its depth and direction, so as not to remain confined to partial readings of the war on Iran. It must instead be engaged as part of a larger struggle over the future of the region, in which Palestine remains central.

People's World
(USA)

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CENTRAL LONDON

REVIEW

In Search of Gerry Healy

by
Dermot Hudson

My Search for Revolution & how we brought down an abusive leader by
Clare Cowen. Troubador: 2019; 448 pp, rrp £19.99.

About a month ago I was walking around Ipswich when I came across a charity shop actually giving away free books. The title of this book caught my eye. It turned out to be a book about the scandal in the 1980s around the Workers' Revolutionary Party (WRP), a Trotskyist party, which led to the WRP splitting into eight factions – yes, eight factions!

I vaguely recall reading about the implosion of the WRP in 1985, so the book excited some interest in me. The Cowen book was basically a self-published exposé of the WRP and a narrative of the events around the expulsion of Gerry Healy, the founder and leader of the WRP.

This supposedly tell-all account was written by Clare Cowen, a WRP full-timer (of which there were 100 at one time) and a member of the party's leadership.

When I first became interested in politics in my youth during the mid-1970s, the WRP's main claim to fame was its support from the glitterati that included the famous actress Vanessa Redgrave and her brother Corin and a host of other celebrity members. In those days the WRP was possibly the biggest Trotskyist party in Britain. It was certainly the most sectarian – though that was challenged by rivals which included the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the International Marxist Group, then led by former student leader Tariq Ali.

The WRP's ascendancy on the Trotsky-



ist left was in part due to the huge amount of money they had received not just from the Redgraves but from other wealthy members of the WRP, including the author of this book, Ms Cowen.

Clare Cowen herself was not from a poor working-class background. She was born in South Africa and lived in southern Rhodesia (as it then was), and was actually from a bourgeois family that had black servants and owned gold mines. Some of Ms Cowen's money was used to bankroll the WRP and, if I read it correctly, some of the WRP's companies and properties were partly owned by her. To me the book not only illustrates the bankruptcy of Trotskyism but the dangers of what happens when revolutionary movements get mixed up with people from wealthy back-

grounds who always see things differently to a worker.

Sects such as the WRP grew after 1956 when Khrushchev's attack on Stalin opened the door to Trotskyism as well as modern revisionism. The old revisionist CPGB failed to deal with Trotskyism. They simply labelled different Trotskyist groups as 'ultra left' (even though most Trotskyist groups in the UK actually existed as entryist factions, such as the Militant Tendency, within the reformist Labour party). Little did the burnt-out revisionists of the old CPGB realise that trailing behind left social-democrats with their third-rate 'Euro-communist' drivel actually drove many young people out of the party and into the arms of the likes of the WRP.

The WRP tried to organise the unemployed through its "Right to

Work" marches. It had a trendy youth section called the Young Socialists. The WRP was, unlike the old CPGB, a very disciplined party that demanded hard work from its activists and not paper members sitting at home.

The real power in the WRP, however, rested not with the Redgraves or people such as Clare Cowen, but with the founder, leader and guru of the WRP, one Gerry Healy. Healy, a renowned ranter once described as having a "Hitlerite" speaking technique, liked to pose as a master of Marxism. But in the last years of his life Healy became a supporter of 'perestroika' and 'glasnost' Gorbachovite revisionism. This may be viewed as bizarre, but it can be argued as appropriate because Trotskyism is really a form of revisionism.

Curiously the WRP, despite proclaiming to be "revolutionary" and implying by their name that they were for proletarian revolution, actually began as a sect inside the Labour party believing in the parliamentary road to socialism and standing candidates in general elections. Like the CPGB modern revisionists who dumped the *Daily Worker* and launched the *Morning Star*, the WRP rebranded their *Workers Press* as *Newsline*.

Healy and other Trotskyists continually denounced what they called "Stalinist bureaucracy" but Healy ran the WRP in an extremely bureaucratic fashion with a huge full-time

staff plus his own security. Reading between the lines it was clear that the WRP was run like some of the worst capitalist companies. Healy was overbearing, pushy and authoritarian. He bullied staff, sacked people he did not like and even had his own BMW. In the capitalist corporate world, bosses sleeping around and demanding sexual favours is common. This is exactly what Healy did. Healy had sexual relationships with his secretary Aileen Jennings and the author of this book, Clare Cowen. Although both women remained in these relationships for a long time it was also alleged that Healy had sexual relations with dozens of other female WRP members.

By the 1980s the WRP's luck was running out. Its dominance of British Trotskyism was challenged by the likes of the SWP and the Militant Tendency. The WRP was overstretched and ran into financial trouble. Rows over money erupted. It was then that Aileen Jennings and Clare Cowen decided to spill the beans on the scandalous activities of

Healy and the rest is history.

Although the book is a great account of the workings of a Trotskyist faction, Ms Cowen has not broken with the tradition it comes from. She repeats Trotskyist anti-Stalin propaganda. She also criticises the WRP for some of the better positions that it took, such as support for the Libyan Jamahiriya and Baathist Iraq, and the defence of the Iranian revolution. Cowen also repeats some of the dafter claims about the WRP such as it having 10,000 members in the 1980s (it was about one tenth of that)! I was disappointed because I had expected to find an account of the split between the WRP and Royston Bull who founded the International Leninist Workers Party (ILWP) and later briefly rose to fame in Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party. But all mention of Royston Bull and his ILWP is omitted.

To conclude, although the book is a good read for those who like a bit of scandal, it falls very short of offering any serious insight into the WRP and the bankruptcy of Healyism.

New Worker Supporters' Groups...

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

Individual membership is £10.00 (8 Euros or \$10) for all or part of the calendar year and every member will receive a New Worker Supporters Group (NWSG) card and a copies of the Internal Bulletin for the year.

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LETTERS

The 30th March marks the 50th anniversary of the eternal “Land Day” – that day when our people in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1948 etched a legendary epic of steadfastness, facing the Zionist machinery of oppression with their bare chests. Through their blood, they declared that Palestinian land is not merely a real estate commodity for bargaining, but rather the very essence of identity and existence. Today the region is traversing a perilous historical turning point, where our people and our national cause face liquidation attempts spearheaded by imperialist forces and global Zionism, in alliance with Arab reactionary regimes.

First: The War of Genocide in Gaza and Heroic Steadfastness. This year’s commemoration of Land Day is stained with the blood of our people in the Gaza Strip, who are subjected to the most heinous war of genocide known in modern history. The Palestinian Communist Party affirms that what is happening in Gaza is not merely a military aggression, but a Zionist-imperialist attempt to uproot the Palestinian people from their origins. We salute the magnificent steadfastness of our people in the Gaza Strip, and we emphasise that our people’s firm remaining on their land despite all the immense sacrifices is the spearhead in confronting

the colonial project.

Second: The Escalation of Settler Terrorism in the West Bank and Jerusalem. While fire is being poured upon Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran, extremist settlers – under the full protection of the occupation army – are launching a frenzied war against our villages, cities and Bedouin communities in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem. These continuous assaults and forced displacement attempts aim to impose a new reality on the ground and fragment what remains of the dream of statehood and sovereignty. We call for the formation of “Popular Protection Committees” in all locations to confront the settler gangs and protect the land and the people.

Third: The Zionist-American Aggression against Lebanon and Iran. The brutal Zionist and American aggression enters its second month against brotherly Lebanon and Iran. The Palestinian Communist Party condemns this blatant aggression, which seeks to drag the region into a total war aimed at consolidating American-Zionist hegemony. We affirm our full solidarity with the resistance forces in Lebanon and the Islamic Republic of Iran, considering the battle to defend Beirut and Tehran an integral part of the battle to defend Jerusalem and Gaza.

Fourth: Our National Principles. On this glorious anniversary, the Palestinian Communist Party reaffirms the following: Adherence to the Land: The Palestinian land from the River to the Sea is one indivisible unit, and holding onto it is the core of our struggle.

Comprehensive Resistance. The choice of resistance in all its forms is the only path to reclaiming rights and liberation from the clutches of the Zionist

occupation.

National Unity. We call for closing ranks and ending all forms of division based on a foundation of struggle and adherence to historical rights, moving away from the illusions of “peaceful solutions” that have brought our people nothing but more settlement expansion and destruction.

Long Live Free and Arab Palestine!
**Palestinian Communist Party
Jerusalem
Palestine**

Timothy Bancroft-Hinchey, John Maryon, Vijay Prashad, Nathan Richardson and Ed Newman all gave truly great contributions in the *New Worker* [NW:2342] of 20th March 2026.

It seems that one of the unspoken assumptions of the Western world is that ‘we’ are great defenders of human rights, a free press and the ‘benefits’ of capitalist economics. ‘Mistakes’ might be made along the way, but the prevailing view is that ‘the West’ is essentially a force for good in the wider world. That false ideology must be challenged.

This same false ideology, for example, was the game plan the USA ran in Iran in 1953 and it was the standard one that it ran during the Cold War – that is, target a nationalistic government for overthrow in the interest of preserving the USA’s economic domination, and justify such an overthrow by manufacturing a communist ‘threat’. Such a ‘threat’ is manufactured, as in the case of Iran, by isolating the targeted economically and politically, starving its economy (or making “the economy scream”, as President Nixon put it in reference to the USA’s policy towards Chile’s Allende government) and thereby pushing that country into the arms

of the Soviet Union. Then, the Americans could claim that it must overthrow that country’s government because of its ties to the Soviet Union; ties that the USA itself forced upon them.

In her landmark piece of commentary, Jean Kirkpatrick stated what many in the USA accept as an article of faith, that “The United States is not in fact a racist, colonial power, it does not practice genocide, it does not threaten world peace with expansionist activities”. It is this belief, so firmly held by many, which allows Americans and others to continue tolerating the USA’s serial interventionist policies abroad, most notably, at present, in Iran, Cuba and Venezuela. It is a false belief, and it is demonstrably so.

**A McKerl
Fife**

Imperialism’s latest brutal war of aggression against Iran is not only illegal and barbaric but will have a lasting impact on the whole Middle East and possibly the entire world. By failing to protect its vassals and stooges in the region the USA has shown itself to be an unreliable ally. By twice using the cover of fake negotiations to hide their warmongering the Americans have shown themselves to be untrustworthy and devious. By showing no remorse for the deliberate killing of over 160 school children the USA has exposed the debased values of an evil empire in terminal decline.

As the war escalates out of control, with the increasing risk of nuclear weapons being used, demands must be made for an unconditional halt to the aggression. The response of leading Western nations has been shocking. Following the attacks by the USA and Israel, Iran responded and was hypocritically

continued on page 9...

Diary

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

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 8 APR

Queen Mary University of London. Steven Salaita on Palestine and the World: Struggle and Solidarity. 17:45–19:45. In person, venue TBA. Book on Eventbrite.

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.

SAT 11 APR

Scottish CND: Break with Trump. Demonstration 11:00–15:00. Glasgow details TBA.

SAT 11 APR

Korean Friendship Association: Characteristics of Korean-style socialism and its success. 14:00. Vida Walsh Centre, 2 Saltoun Road, Brixton, London SW2 1EP.

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

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Showing of Helena Aksentijevic’s *Israel, the Golem and the Mark of Cain*. 18:00–20:00, P21 Gallery, 21 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD,

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

Homes Not Nukes: National Housing Demonstration, 13:00. Central London. Details TBA.

SAT 18 APR

Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Emergency Fundraiser for Cuba, 19:00. NorwichVR, Oak Street, Norwich NR3 3BP. Book on CS website.

SUN 19 APR

Musicians for Peace and Disarmament: Jazz on a Spring Day. 19:00–22:00. Lauderdale House, Highgate Hill, London N6 5HG. Book at <https://mpdconcerts.org>

MON 20 APR

Labour & Palestine: Mustafa Barghouti on Justice for Palestine or never-ending Nakba? 18:30–20:00. Online event. Book on Eventbrite.

SAT 25 APR

Marx Memorial Library: Book launch: *Dona Torr, Historical Materialism & the Communist Historians* by May Davis. 15:00. Hybrid event. Book on MML website.

SAT 25 & SUN 26 APR

Bristol Radical History Festival 2026. Details on BRH Group website.

TUE 28 APR

Workers Memorial Day. Nationwide events. Details on TUC and STUC websites.

TUE 28 APR

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: ‘Nuclear Disarmament, Not Nuclear Hypocrisy’ – CND NPT Review Conference Side. 17:00–18:00. Zoom event. Register on CND website.

TUE 28 APR

Exiled Writers Ink: Tongues of Fire: A Tribute to Chilean poet Alfredo Cordal. 18:30. Instituto Cervantes, 15–19 Devereux Court (off the Strand), London WC2R 3JJ. Register on Eventbrite.

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. (London 4th).

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

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Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political
affairs correspondent

These are turbulent times. The Middle East ablaze. The price of oil and gas soaring and the UK economy on the rocks. Once again, we hear the siren call of the Remainers for a referendum to return to the European Union – and not just from the Lib-Dems and the SNP. Washington or Brussels? Either way a lose-lose choice for Scottish workers. But other alternatives exist – especially in China.

Enormous potential exists to deepen economic, trade and cultural co-operation between People's China and Scotland, says Dr Andrew G Ross, a senior lecturer in International Business & Strategy at the University of Dundee. As one of the world's largest economies, China's strength lies in its scale, sophisticated manufacturing eco-system and growing technological capacity.

China plays a central role in global supply chains for electronics, machinery, electric vehicles, batteries and renewable energy technologies. China's large and increasingly affluent middle strata continues to create significant demand for high-quality goods and services from international markets.

Scotland is home to a number of universities that are global leaders in research and innovation, particularly in the fields of artificial intelligence, data science, life sciences and engineering. Scotland also has a long history and strong reputation in financial services, renewable energy development and high-value food and drink exports.

The two countries have already built strong eco-

nomic ties and China is one of Scotland's most important export markets. Scottish exports to China increased nearly 80 per cent in 2025.

Scottish universities have attracted Chinese students with their high-quality teaching and research environments, and universities on both sides have also established joint partnerships and programmes.

The joint programme between the University of Dundee and China's Central South University, both of which excel in engineering and science, offers courses in mathematics, civil engineering, mechanical engineering and computer science, Ross said, noting that education is an effective way to deepen cultural ties and co-operation.

He also expressed optimism about future co-operation between the two countries, noting that China can supply Scotland with high-quality electronics, telecommunications equipment, machinery, consumer goods and industrial components.

Bilateral collaboration is expected to expand into new areas and industries that will be pivotal to their long-term growth. Ross highlighted significant opportunities in energy and engineering, particularly in offshore wind, renewable energy, AI, big data and tourism.

In the renewable energy sector, China and Scotland can work together to build a leading global supply chain for turbine manufacturing, deepen offshore engineering partnerships and accelerate hydrogen production. Such efforts will not only deliver mutual benefits but also generate far-reaching global impact.

Meanwhile, Ross stressed the need for both sides to intensify efforts to advance joint research in AI, while also strengthening cooperation in fintech innovation, smart city technologies and healthcare analytics.

All at sea

Readers contemplating an Easter trip to the Western Isles had better forget it unless they have a private yacht or aeroplane. No less than 10 ships are presently laid-up, including the newest, MV *Glen Sannox*, which has frequently featured in these pages for all the wrong reasons.

The CEO of state-owned operator Caledonian MacBrayne said: "A combination of weather, sea swell and technical issues means services are below planned levels on Arran, Barra, Coll, Colonsay, Harris, Islay, North Uist, South Uist and Tiree." These ferries were specifically built to take Atlantic waves, but none of the successive SNP ministers, starting with Alex Salmond bothered to replace them and they did not manage well the construction of the two they ordered in a hurry in 2014.

Despite its short sailing life, the *Glen Sannox* already has had £3.2 million repairs, this being its second period of being laid-up. Its sister ship, the *Glen Rosa*, has been cannibalised for parts, and neither ship will be able to dock at its intended mainland port, Ardrossan, because they are too big. Rebuilding work at the harbour will not be completed until 2028 says the SNP, which means it will be around 2036.

The *Glen Sannox* was famously launched with painted windows. Its present lay-up is its third and came three weeks after the second. Claims by CalMac that the second lay-up was routine maintenance were dismissed by shipping experts who pointed out that it took far longer than routine maintenance would take.

In February, departing Deputy First Minister Kate Forbes warned that even more increases are possible in the budget for the incomplete ship.

On a more positive

note, this sorry saga has promoted the idea of proletarian internationalism as some Turkish shipbuilding workers have benefited by building another four ferries. One of these has arrived and went into service on Monday.

The fate of the nationalised shipbuilder, Ferguson Marine Engineering Ltd, remains uncertain. The Scottish government in February announced that it was slashing its annual subsidy by almost half, from £47.86 million in 2025–26 to just £23.9 million in the coming year. While unions have been pressurising the SNP to see the yard get uncontested orders from the Government, increasingly desperate islanders are less fussy where their ships come from, so long as the engines work.

On Monday, Labour leader Anas Sarwar heroically made it to Stornoway where he deplored the SNP's shipping record, saying: "Right across Scotland, the SNP's ferry fiasco is a symbol of their incompetence and waste – but in our islands it has wreaked havoc with people's day to day lives."

In the unlikely case of him becoming First Minister, he would merge the two parts of the state-owned harbour and ship companies into a single agency with representatives from the islands. He also made vague promises about a long-term plan for new ferry investment to safeguard skilled jobs and would have a new procurement process to replace ageing vessels were replaced promptly.

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...continued from page 8

condemned by Britain, France and Germany for daring to do so. There has been panic and the wringing of hands as fuel costs soar but no talk of peace or negotiations. The art of diplomacy is dead amongst the so-called Western leaders, who prefer instead to bully and dominate those whom they perceive to be weaker. While people in the war-zone pay with their lives and we pay higher prices, those who started it have seen their weapons industries' shares rise and interest in the Epstein files wane.

Ordinary people, with sincere values for justice and a recognition of the urgent need for peace, are taking to the streets to demand an immediate end to the war of aggression. The New Communist Party of Britain (NCP) stands

with them and urges everyone to join the protests. Not only for Iran but also for Venezuela, where the elected president and his wife have been kidnapped by the Trump regime. And also Ukraine, where an American-inspired coup overthrew the democratically elected government and imposed a neo-fascist regime. And not forgetting Cuba, where a US blockade is being imposed to starve its people. It is the USA that is the world's top rogue state. A state that all my long life has always been at war killing millions and destroying civilisations.

It's time to say enough is enough. Start your fight-back now by joining the NCP and supporting those organisations directly committed to the struggle.

**John Maryon
Suffolk**

Charting the future in China

New Communist Party leader Andy Brooks took part in a seminar on China's Two Sessions at the Chinese embassy in London in March.

This is his contribution to the discussion.

by
Andy Brooks

This has been a stormy month. While the millions upon millions of people in all five continents recoiled in shock and horror at the American–Israeli onslaught on Iraq plunging the Middle East into the flames of war that threatens the entire stability of the world, another event – in the heart of China – charted the future not only for the Chinese people but for the cause of peace and socialism throughout the world.

There, in Beijing the annual legislative sessions of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and the National People's Congress (NPC) were the focus of discussions on the way forward for the people's government and the 1.4 billion people it represents.

The 'Two Sessions' are always significant events in the Chinese people's political life, bringing together thousands of deputies and delegates from every corner of the country and all walks of life. Their proposals are aimed at solving everyday issues to build a better life for the people.

This year marks the commencement of China's 15th Five-Year Plan, a pivotal phase in the country's medium- to long-term development. In a turbulent world threatened by the grasping hand of American

imperialism the Plan and the discussions during the Two Sessions give momentum and certainty into global development, charting a steady course for the new journey ahead.

The Chinese revolution that established the people's government in 1949 has transformed the country that was then the poorest in the world. China has now risen from being a weak semi-feudal, semi-colonial country to become a force for peace in the global arena, with the second largest economy in the world. Productivity gains, innovation and consumption need have become the main drivers of growth. As a major industrial country, China's manufacturing, innovation and construction will continue to serve the world. As China transforms, it shares what it has learned with other developing coun-

tries facing similar challenges. And equally the communist party, which led and continues to lead the Chinese people's march to socialism, is always ready to share its knowledge and experience with the rest of the communist movement around the world.

Marxist-Leninist philosophy challenges the fatalism that is promoted by those who are afraid of change and believe that we can turn back the clock to a past socialist 'golden age' that only exists in their imagination. But we believe that we make our own history by our actions. The building of socialism is far more than raising production or economic indicators. It is concerned with the evolution of human thought as well as social and cultural progress. The failure of comrades in the past to recognise this fact has led to seri-

ous setbacks.

For many years communists in the imperialist heartlands of Europe and North America looked to what many of them called the "Soviet model". Others thought the experience of the people's democracies in Europe could simply be repeated in their own countries. They sent delegations to the USSR and Eastern Europe but they did not fully understand what they saw. In fact the Soviet Union was a unique state based on Soviet power that could not be replicated in other countries. People's democracy, on the other hand, in the immediate post-war period, was understood to be the way communists could build united front governments on the road to socialist advance. And in those early days most expected it to be a long road.

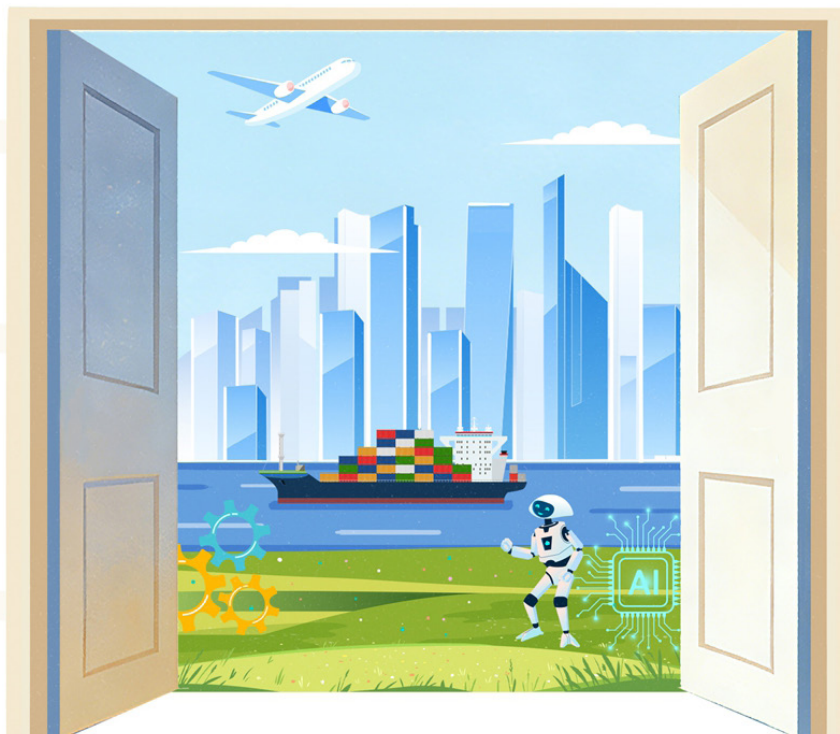
The Soviet commu-

nists from Khrushchev's day onwards however, used their influence to accelerate the process throughout Eastern Europe, sharpening the existing contradictions and social problems that contributed to their downfall – and indeed that of the USSR in the late 1980s.

This isn't the time or place to look at the Chinese experience except to note that the Communist Party of China took a number of differing roads ranging from the 'Soviet model' to the socialist emulation of the Great Leap Forward and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which all worked for a time but eventually failed. People's democracy or the people's democratic dictatorship as it is known in China has proved successful. Reform and opening-up has transformed China. Absolute poverty has been eradicated. Mea-

sured in terms of real GDP (the real value of goods and services without such American features as exorbitant medical fees, high rents and legal costs) China is on a par with the USA. Its mixed economy does have certain risks but the cardinal task of the Communist Party of China is to put people first and ensure that no one is left behind. Over one-third of China's major development targets for the 2026–2030 period will focus on resolving the pressing difficulties and problems that concern the people most.

Democracy is a shared value of humanity and a right of the people of all countries. In China, a prosperous society is being created for everyone to enjoy. And people's democracy is an instrument to solve problems for the people who are the masters of the country. We see it in the Two Sessions and in the words and deeds of the Communist Party of China.



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Iran War: Pause or Escalation?

Vladimir Vasiliev, the Chief Research Fellow at the Institute for US and Canadian Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, tells Lyuba Lulko why he thinks the USA delayed a strike on Iran's energy sector and whether negotiations remain possible. He analyses escalation risks, the scenario of a ground operation, and warns of the likelihood of a prolonged conflict with dangerous consequences.

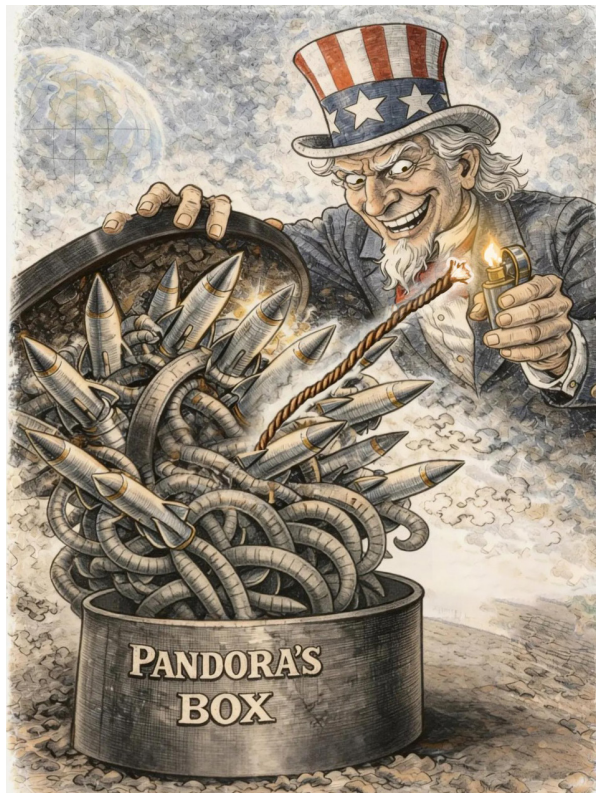
Trump stepped back from his 48-hour ultimatum to Iran and announced a five-day pause along with readiness for negotiations. Tehran rejected this. What could this lead to?

I will venture to offer my perspective based on Trump's psychology. He issued a 48-hour ultimatum but then effectively extended it to 120 hours. In my view, the US administration has reached a crossroads. If it follows military logic, a serious escalation begins – and it was precisely this prospect that prompted the retreat.

Escalation means raising the issue of a ground operation – potentially involving deployment and actions [by US troops] against Tehran. But the key factor is casualties. American public opinion eval-

uates such operations through the lens of body bags. The experience of Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria shows there will be no quick war, and holding territory proves far more difficult than capturing it.

If the operation begins, it will develop according to its own logic – and negotiations will lose meaning. The military has likely made it clear to Trump that control over the Strait of Hormuz would represent a major escalation with a high risk of failure and reputational losses. Unlike airstrikes, the outcome here would be immediate and visible: rising oil prices and panic in global markets. Trump now faces a decisive choice – cross the Rubicon or delay. For now, he has extended the American ultimatum.



He extended it by five days. What comes next? Another delay or a strike?

In my view, there are no negotiations in the classical sense. The USA is effectively presenting an ultimatum. The goal is Iran's capitulation – albeit in a 'dignified' form that would appear as a US victory.

Iran rejects this model. Iran openly states that after the damage inflicted, the USA must compensate its losses. This is a matter of principle – otherwise, Iranian society will not understand the sacrifices made. That is why Tehran refuses a 'dignified capitulation'. As a result, talks remain suspended: the sides are moving toward fundamentally incompatible outcomes.

face political ones.

For the USA, elections are the key factor. They act as the main constraint. This creates pressure on the military component: objectives must be achieved quickly. Hence the intensification of combat operations, increased bombing and the potential transition to a ground operation.

But here the logic of risk takes over. If you lose at the beginning, you double the stakes – thereby increasing the chance of losing everything. This is a classic pattern, confirmed for example by Vietnam: attempts to quickly reverse the situation through escalation tend to fail.

I assess the prospects of this conflict pessimistically. Trump has already spoken about regime change, and such wars are never quick or easy. They are always prolonged, costly and accompanied by losses.

The central conflict now is between Israel and Iran. This is no longer just geopolitics, but also a form of religious confrontation fought to the end.

There is another factor that is being cautiously discussed: according to some assessments, both sides possess nuclear weapons.

Are you being serious?

This is one of the viewpoints. It is important to understand that nuclear weapons are not only about large arsenals. Even a few warheads can serve as an instrument of last-resort – a 'doomsday weapon'. If the situation reaches that level, both sides may resort to extreme measures. All the scenarios are deeply alarming. I would describe them as pessimistic – but if I am wrong, that would only be for the better.

Pravda.ru



No Kings: Millions demonstrate against Trump

by
Martha Grevatt

The third No Kings Day was the biggest yet, with at least 3,300 separate actions involving some eight-million people reported by the organisers. On 28th March, an estimated 90,000–100,000 people demonstrated in a massive two-mile march through downtown Seattle, while in New York tens of thousands of people marched down Seventh Avenue from Central Park to Times Square.

Protests were by no means limited to large metropolitan areas; there were six protest sites in Pinellas County in Florida, each drawing on people in the immediate local area. The action in Largo, Florida, had a good-spirited turnout of several thousand people lining the sidewalk for several blocks. Similar scenarios were repeated in scores of small towns and suburbs, from the West Coast to the East Coast

and from Alaska down to Texas and Florida. This is a momentous development that challenges President Donald Trump's fascist, white supremacist agenda.

Unfortunately, as its theme makes clear, the official message of No Kings is focused on opposing Trump and getting out the vote for the Democratic Party in the November mid-term elections. However, grass-roots anti-imperialist, anti-war and pro-migrant voices were heard loud and clear at many demonstrations.



The Seattle march had many more anti-war signs and sentiment than previous No Kings marches. There were also more anti-racist and anti-sexist signs, and many slogans against Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) invasions of immigrant communities, along with a strong anti-imperialist contingent organised by Seattle Against War and supported by Freedom Road Socialist Organisation, Democratic Socialists of America, and the Workers World Party. People

in the contingent chanted: "From Iran to Jenin, Stop the US War Machine!" Many posters along the route called for a mass workers turnout for May Day.

In New York a contingent from the Workers World Party brought a sharp and powerful political message, carrying signs against the US/Israeli war on Iran, the blockade of Cuba, ICE's attacks on immigrants, the imprisonment of Venezuelan President Maduro and First Combatant Cilia Flores, and in support of Palestinian and Iranian resistance. One sign

proclaimed "ICE Is Our Enemy, Not Iran", which elicited thumbs up and fist bumps from the crowd.

Many people eagerly stopped to take photos of the signs as the contingent stood on a corner distributing the *Workers World* and a statement about the protest. The exuberant protesters included a union contingent with large banners stating "No Kings", "No War" and "No ICE". The dynamic Rude Mechanical Orchestra roused protesters, playing and chanting "No

ICE, No KKK, No Fascist USA" and "Free, Free Palestine"!

There was no hostility to the *Workers World* newspaper. People asked if the paper was communist; when party members said yes, they took it and thanked them. Overall the sentiment seemed to be about 99 per cent anti-ICE, 90 per cent against war on Iran.

In Atlanta, where many thousands protested at the Memorial Drive Greenway adjacent to the Capitol, members of the No War on Venezuela Coalition distributed a flyer opposing all US wars of aggression against Iran, Palestine, Cuba and Venezuela.

In Philadelphia there were fewer American flags than at previous events and more Palestinian flags. Lots of signs supported immigrants/migrants. One sign read "Billionaires are the only minority ruining this country"

Workers World
(USA)

The end of the American dream

In Greek mythology, Sisyphus was condemned to the eternal task of pushing a boulder uphill, only to watch it roll back down again and again.

This myth serves as a fitting metaphor for Washington's frustrated ambition in the Middle East: repeated interventionist adventures that have consistently failed to shape the region according to its design.

Clearly, the ongoing American-Israeli war on Iran is falling far short of Washington's initial expect-

tations – a swift operation with limited use of military power to topple the current Iranian government and in turn, tighten its grip on one of the world's richest oil reserves. Perhaps Washington's January campaign against Venezuela had misguidedly emboldened the decision-makers in the White House.

The Trump administration is clearly caught in a dilemma: pulling back now would amount to an unmistakable failure, while leaving itself grappling with the shock of soaring oil prices

triggered by an impasse in the Strait of Hormuz; yet pressing ahead with a ground offensive risks dragging the USA back into another Middle Eastern quagmire. With the mid-term elections just months away, the administration wants neither of the two scenarios.

And this is more than a policy failure; it is a symptom of a deeper identity crisis involving America's global hegemonic ambition. Since the end of the Cold War, Washington seems to have arrogated a

mandate to rule the world as it wishes, as well as a powerful force that can match its global domination.

Yet the history of the Middle East over the past decades is rich in examples where the more the USA resorts to unilateral use of pure force, the more it exposes the limits of its power.

And along with that paradox, America's myth of morality has gone bankrupt. Remember? There was a time when Washington still tried to cover its hegemonic undertakings with the narrative of delivering

so-called "freedom and democracy". Today, it is only interested in flexing muscles.

While the world community is getting increasingly fed up with Washington's reckless addiction to global domination, America's policy-makers are still being trapped inside a fantasy they have created for themselves. It seems that they have lost the ability to do serious reflection, not to mention coming to terms with the fact that the era of unipolarity has long gone.

Still, Washington must reckon with the fact that despite being the sole super-power of the world, it might have the power to destroy something or kill some people, but it will never succeed in putting the world under its thumb in this age of multipolarity, just as Sisyphus can never push the boulder right to the top of the hill. And in each attempt to reign supreme, the USA is actually facing a backlash of its own making and edging a bit closer to its final decline.

People's Daily (USA)