

Proletarian



Workers must refuse to be intimidated by the barrage of lying propaganda that fills Britain's corporate media. It is the capitalists' job to try to stop us from taking power and building a socialist society; it is our job to do it anyway!



British ruling class backing Gaza genocide, criminalising dissent

Palestine



Anti-zionism is not racism!

Communists arrested for telling the truth about zionism and imperialism. Free speech is dying in Britain today.

The following statement was published on our website on Sunday 26 November.

Four members of the CPGB-ML were arrested in London yesterday (see video on our website). They were manning a party stall at a demonstration in support of Palestine and against the genocide in Gaza.

They have been held in a south London police station since their arrest. While we are still not sure of the exact charge, video footage of their arrest makes it clear that the excuse used was 'incitement to racial hatred', based on the cover design of our party's pamphlet on zionism.

The police have long been aware of this pamphlet, having taken copies of it from our stalls numerous times over the years. Therefore, the decision to move against us yesterday was a *political* and not a legal one.

So far, in all media coverage, the arrests have been referred to as being on grounds of 'inciting racial hatred'. The name

of our party and the details of the pamphlet in question have been carefully omitted from all reported details.

It is our belief that the arrest of our comrades, the 3.00am raids on their homes, and the confiscation of our literature is aimed at fueling the ruling class's present narrative around the growing pro-Palestine and anti-zionism protest movement. They want to try to stop the anti-genocide movement in its tracks by scaring away ordinary workers on the basis that they are mixing with racists and promoting hate.

They want to keep the wider population from joining this growing movement against Israeli zionism by conflating it with racism.

What does our pamphlet say?

We are happy to defend both the contents and the cover of this pamphlet in court, since they reflect long-established truths about the origins, purpose and history of zionism. This is a history all workers need to understand if they are

to make sense of the present genocidal Israeli regime.

- Where does the ideology of zionism come from in the first place?
- Does zionism really represent jewish people? Does Israel?
- How have the WW2 holocaust of European jews and charges of 'antisemitism' been weaponised by western states, via their laws, politicians and media?
- Why does zionism have the unequivocal and unconditional support of regimes in London, Washington, Berlin and Paris, despite its many and blatant crimes?
- Why do Israelis consider themselves justified in setting up a racist, apartheid regime in which Palestinians are third-class citizens (at best), suspected, hounded and criminalised even if they do nothing at all?
- Why has Israel been getting away with its steady ethnic cleansing of Palestinians since 1948?
- Why is Israel so important to the western imperialist powers?
- How is it possible that protesting against war crimes and

genocide is now being labelled as 'hate speech'?

These are questions that our pamphlet raises and answers. As our party has done in our work on Palestine consistently since our founding 20 years ago, and as our founding comrades have been doing since the 1960s.

We stand ready to defend our analysis, our organisation and the cause of Palestine, which is the cause of anti-imperialism and anti-racism. The cause of truth and justice. The cause of self-determination, national liberation, freedom and equality. The cause of all progressive humanity.

Meanwhile, every servant of the state who cooperates in the persecution of our comrades is guilty of collusion with Israeli war crimes. They should consider carefully their position on this, since the verdicts at Nuremberg after WW2 made it clear that 'following orders' is no defence.

We are asking as many people as possible to join us this afternoon for a protest outside Sutton police station, where our comrades are being held.

If you can't join us in person, please circulate this information as widely as you can. If you are an independent journalist, please get in touch for an interview or use our video footage on your channels.

If you can send us a brief solidarity message, please record it on video and send by email to info@cpgb-ml.org.

Our demands: Anti-zionism is not racism!!

1. Drop all charges; we are doing nothing wrong!
2. Defend free speech and stand up for the truth! Criticism of zionism is not antisemitic; zionism is a racist ideology, and, by claiming to **page 27** ▶

Palestine



Mass movement of non-cooperation urgently needed to help end Gaza blitzkrieg

Workers have power to prevent Britain's continued military, propaganda and logistical support for zionist massacres.

According to organisers, around 500,000 took to the streets of London on Saturday to demand a ceasefire as the Israeli onslaught in Gaza continues to escalate.

In a post on Facebook aimed at the British press, Stop the War Coalition officer John Rees argued that the figures reported by the media – most gave the police estimate of 100,000, some even lower – were incorrect.

He compared it to the mass demonstration against the Iraq war in February 2003 which saw at least one million march in the capital, for which Rees was one of the organisers.

"I can tell you with certainty that yesterday's Palestine demo, which I also helped organise, was half a million strong, not a figure one fifth of that," he wrote.

It was certainly one of the biggest demonstrations in London for some time. I have been on and helped organise a number of them over the years and

you get an instinctive feel for the numbers.

But arguments over the figures aside, this feels like another moment that is set to be squandered by the timidity of those placed at the head of the movement, most of whom one way or another are in hock to the Labour party.

Labour stalwarts going through the motions

Not for the first time, the demands of the protesters were in advance of the demands that came from the platform. While some of those on the streets called for *victory to the resistance*, speaker after speaker told us how bad things are and the necessity for a *ceasefire*.

But those on the demonstration are acutely aware of this. Many have lost friends and family in the Israeli bombardment of Gaza, others wait anxiously for news as Tel Aviv's killing spree continues with the internet blocked and electricity cut off.

What was noticeably missing from the top table were any *calls to action* and how such demands can be realised. Unison's president proudly declared support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign.

But she said nothing about how the union might *harness the power of its 1.3 million members* to force the British government to change its position and stop the Israeli war machine in its tracks.

Similarly, Mick Lynch of the RMT gave a rousing speech, but after the platitudes he made no concrete proposals about how the ceasefire he and others were rightly demanding could be achieved.

At the very least, as a transport union, strike action or a refusal to ship armaments bound for Israel would be a good starting point and set an example for others to follow.

Labour MP Richard Burgon took to the stage and announced that he had laid down an early day motion in Parliament demanding a ceasefire, which had cross party support from more than 90 lawmakers.

That might sound impressive, but in reality an EDM is the parliamentary equivalent of asking people to sign a petition. And let's not forget Burgon was one of the cowardly so-called 'left' MPs who backed down without even a whimper when party leader Keir Starmer threatened to remove the whip from those that had signed an open letter from Stop the War criticising Nato soon after Russia launched its intervention in Ukraine.

Similarly, Labour MP Diane Abbott spoke of the need for a ceasefire, but she will remain a Labour MP and will undoubtedly call on the British public to vote for the party at the next election.

Given that Labour 2023 is even more bloodthirsty than Labour 2003, this means calling for more imperialist war and more austerity attacks on working-class people.

What would real solidarity look like?

Organisers of the demonstration urged people to go home, join the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Stop the War – and to come back again next week and every week until a ceasefire is called. But by then, many thousands more Palestinians will have been killed, Gaza will be in ruins, and the British government will have been left free to continue its 'business as usual' approach.

It is clear that a walk in London on a weekend is simply not enough. It doesn't pose any serious threat to those in power and will have a minimal impact on whether the government, or indeed the Labour party, backs a ceasefire.

It's like none of the lessons of the mass march against the Iraq war have been learned. Repeating the same formula, with the same platform of speakers seen at every single demonstration, is symbolic of the paucity of the official left and progressive movement in Britain.

But it doesn't need to be this way. We, and more importantly the people of Gaza, simply cannot afford to squander the situation again. Our demands must be radical.

It is now essential that every trade union, especially those in the arms and transport industries, takes immediate steps toward coordinated strike action.

The movement must be prepared for mass action at the armaments companies that are responsible for arms sales to Israel, including **page 13 ►**

Palestine



Victory to the Palestinian people in their just war for liberation!

The Palestinians are fighting a just war against imperialist-backed genocidal zionism. They will surely prevail.

In today's world no one is innocent, no one a neutral. A man is either with the oppressed or he is with the oppressors. He who takes no interest in politics gives his blessing to the prevailing order, that of the ruling classes and exploiting forces.

– George Habash, Founder of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)

As the Palestinian resistance launches its Al-Aqsa Flood battle, the CPGB-ML reaffirms its unconditional and wholehearted support and solidarity for the Palestinian struggle, which is once more breaking out into serious, coordinated armed resistance. As it was bound to do.

We communists join together with all progressive humanity in congratulating the Palestinian people and their chosen leadership on the audacious, daring and effective military action they are now taking against the last settler-colonial apartheid state, that

monstrous proxy for Anglo-American imperialism, usurper of the Palestinian lands, rights and nationhood, zionist Israel.

Whatever the outcome of this battle, communists need to explain to those who are susceptible to hysterical bourgeois propaganda, full of fake outrage and crocodile tears over the fate of 'Israeli women and children', that this situation was not created by the Palestinians but by the imperialists and their proxies, in particular by British and US imperialism.

The fascistic Israeli zionists are their puppets, but they chose this role. They chose to take imperialist bribes, to live by dominating the local population on behalf of imperialism, to turn their children into the brutal, racist attack-dogs and armed guards of the British and American oil monopolies. They had a choice in all this.

The Palestinian and wider Arab masses had no choice. Their lands were invaded and occupied. Their families were brutalised and massacred.

Their resistance leaders were assassinated. Puppets and proxies were placed over them. Their sovereignty was stolen. Their riches were looted. Their development was held back. Their humanity has been persistently denied.

Not to resist all this would be to deny that very humanity. Resistance is inevitable *and it is just*.

Even the United Nations was long ago forced to accept that the Palestinian people have the right to resist occupation and obliteration by whatever means they choose.

Much as we abhor violence as humans; much as we long for peace and security, we are not pacifists because we know that violence comes with class society and will not disappear until class society is done away with for good.

Socialist science makes it clear that in our present conditions, there are such things as *just wars* that must be supported by the working class. One category of these is wars of national liberation waged by the oppressed and colonised peoples.

That is why we greet with

joy the risen Palestinian resistance, which is expressing the humanity of the entire Palestinian people and their determination to win freedom.

We are sure, if not today then tomorrow, our Palestinian brothers and sisters will be successful in achieving their freedom, and all humanity will benefit from the defeat they will inflict on the imperialists, whose position in the middle east has been fatally weakened by the course of the US-led aggressive wars in the region over the last 30 years.

The imperialists sent their armies into the region to assert their total dominance over middle-eastern oil, which remains the most vital of all commodities in the global economy – fuel for their industry and their war machines. But the combined efforts of the Iraqi resistance, the Syrian resistance, the Lebanese resistance, the Yemeni resistance and the Palestinian resistance, mass movements that were supported in various ways by the fraternal assistance of Iran and Russia, between them created a new reality in the region that was the reverse of what had been intended.

These changed realities, brought about by mass resistance and exacerbated by the deep and deepening economic crisis of the global capitalist economy, underpin the success of the Chinese diplomacy that brought about the recent rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Israel may have many weapons, but it has never looked so weak and exposed. The USA's ability to back it up with unlimited firepower and funding has been heavily eroded by the course of Nato's failing war in Ukraine.

The Palestinians have chosen their moment well. They deserve the full **page 13** ▶

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Palestine Solidarity Campaign punishes Manchester branch

The PSC wants to keep pro-Palestine activism within the bounds considered acceptable by the pro-zionist establishment.

This article by Asa Winstanley is reproduced from Electronic Intifada, with thanks.

Britain's Palestine Solidarity Campaign has suspended four officers from one of its most active branches, Manchester PSC.

The Electronic Intifada has obtained the suspension email.

The neutralisation by the PSC's national leadership of one of its biggest branches appears to have been an attempt to quash its support for Palestinian resistance.

"Manchester Supports Palestinian Resistance," the branch's banner read, as activists took to the streets early in October.

Nearly two weeks later, the national PSC office suspended Manchester PSC's chair, treasurer, secretary and campaigns officer without warning.

As well as the banner, the branch had also posted on its website on 7 October that "Palestinian freedom fighters from besieged Gaza broke zionist

wcolonial barriers and entered settlements built on stolen Palestinian land inside '48 Palestine."

Following Israel's complete military defeat in the south on 7 October, the entity lashed out at the civilian population of Gaza, in a genocidal war that has, at the time of this writing, claimed the lives of more than 9,000 Palestinians, 3,760 of whom are children.

With Britain's anti-Palestinian home secretary Suella Braverman leading an incitement campaign against the Palestine solidarity movement, it wasn't long before right-wing and pro-Israel media began attacking Manchester PSC for its stance.

But instead of defending its Manchester branch officers, the office of the national Palestine Solidarity Campaign decided to neutralise them.

The PSC distanced itself from the Manchester branch in a statement released on its website.

National PSC wrote that Manchester PSC's support for Palestinian resistance was "unac-

ceptable".

The statement appeared to be partly a response to a hit piece by anti-Palestinian newspaper the Jewish Chronicle, which had earlier cited a speech at a Manchester PSC rally supporting Palestinian resistance as part of an article claiming that PSC has "links to Hamas".

But despite the branch complying with a PSC demand to delete the website post along with a related Twitter post, the national office decided to suspend Manchester PSC's officers anyway.

PSC's national secretary Ben Soffa wrote to Manchester PSC's treasurer on 27 October, saying that, "following a preliminary consideration by PSC's standing investigative committee", the officer's membership of PSC had been suspended.

Soffa's email, seen by the Electronic Intifada, specifically cited Manchester PSC's 7 October post and an accompanying Twitter post as justification for the suspensions.

"This is not a punitive suspension and is intended only to last until the matter can be investigated and a report considered by the [PSC's] executive committee," Soffa claimed. "I will be writing to you in the coming days regarding this investigation and how you may submit evidence to it."

PSC's national secretary Ben Soffa told Manchester PSC's officers they were suspended.

Soffa explained that Manchester PSC's posts supporting the Palestinian resistance were being formally investigated by the PSC, as they may "exhibit hateful or discriminatory behaviour, or significantly undermine PSC's ability to function as a welcoming and inclusive organisation".

Soffa then demanded that

Manchester PSC officers "must therefore cease from taking actions in the name of your PSC branch whilst your membership remains suspended". He gave no indication of how long that would take.

He said the officers must stop "organising events in the name of the branch, publishing statements on behalf of your branch, accessing data on PSC members made available to you in your capacity as a branch officer or taking any other actions in the name of a branch of PSC".

Soffa concluded saying that although "this will not come as welcome news, especially at this time", the suspensions were "necessary to safeguard the ability of PSC to build the most impactful movement at this critical juncture".

But if the PSC was worried about drawing media attention to the suspensions, it had a funny way of showing it.

The day after the suspensions, the PSC released a statement on its website implying that unspecified "social media postings in the name of Manchester PSC" may have endorsed "deliberate killing of [Israeli] civilians" and what it described as "hostage taking".

But what really happened on 7 October is hotly contested. Hamas itself has denied targeting civilians, and some Israeli survivors of that day have insisted that many of the civilians died at the hands of Israeli forces.

Until Israel allows an independent international investigation, we are unlikely to learn the full truth. But it may already be too late for that – Israel appears to be literally burying the evidence.

Physicians for Human Rights Israel on Monday warned that the remains of bodies from 7 October were being

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The resistance fighters of Gaza have signalled the end of the zionist project

Cast about as it may, there is no way for Israel to free itself from a hook that it baited itself.

Operation Al-Aqsa Flood has delivered a body blow to the fascist Israeli state, humiliating the Israeli army (IDF) and throwing down a challenge to Tel Aviv's imperialist backers.

The operation has sent shock waves throughout and beyond the middle east, uniting millions of the oppressed around the world, who have come onto the streets to denounce the genocidal Israeli regime and pour forth their passionate support for the heroic and self-sacrificing resistance forces of Palestine.

Let traitors in the UAE, Jordan, Egypt and beyond who flirted with "normalisation" of relations with Israel now hide their faces from their own countrymen in shame, as their weasel words are drowned out by the anti-imperialist voice of the masses.

The liberation fighters were indeed a human flood that poured unstopably across the Gaza border, brushing aside all obstacles in their way. They

came in by land, sea and air, wave after wave, some even on foot.

In the streets and squares of Iran, Lebanon Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Pakistan, thousands upon thousands are pledging support for the resistance forces and denouncing the war criminals of the zionist criminals. Be they from Hamas, Hezbollah, the PFLP or other fraternal forces that have united to serve the people, these fighters are fighting for the future, sacrificing their own lives for the sake of generations to come.

The IDF has failed to make any headway getting to grips with the resistance fighters. Like their US counterparts a half-century ago in Vietnam, they were outfoxed by an enemy who knew how to fight guerrilla-style, and how to profit from constructing a deep network of tunnels for defence, storage, communication and flexibility of engagement.

Targeting civilians, commit-

ting war crimes

In the words of one resident, as posted by Nur Alsalibi on the @voenkorkotenok Telegram channel: "The situation in the city is very difficult. The intensity of the strikes is growing every day. Rockets can fly anywhere at any time. Even if they don't hit your house, but the neighbouring one, blast fragments will fly into your house ...

"Israel says Hamas was there, but that's a lie – they weren't there. Hamas fighters have gone into the tunnels under the city; Israeli missiles cannot even reach them. More than 90 percent of the dead were civilians. The figure of 4,385 dead is only those who could be found under the rubble."

Thwarted by their inability to engage the resistance on the ground, the IDF, doubtless acting under Pentagon orders, resorted to the carpet-bombing Gaza's civilian population, including schools, medical facilities and housing blocks. Just like the Italian and German fascists before them, the Israeli fascists administered col-

lective punishment in retaliation for the heroic deeds of the partisans, hoping that by this means that they would drive a wedge between the partisans and the people.

But this policy is failing. The claim that "the population is allegedly leaving Gaza is an Israeli lie. Most remained in their homes. People are not leaving even under the threat of death. At the same time, phones are constantly receiving threatening messages from Israeli numbers. You may also receive a notification that 'your house will be bombed' so that people feel in danger every minute."

But Palestinians will not tolerate a second Nakba and are refusing to budge. In this resolve, they are backed up by Russia: "We know that Russia opposes the west and does not support Israeli crimes. In Gaza they love Russia and the Russian people very much.

"Among the Arab countries, there is a very good attitude towards Qatar, Algeria and Yemen. Among non-Arab ones – towards Iran. We believe that Iran and Hezbollah will intervene and prevent the genocide of Gaza."

According to the Jerusalem Post there is "growing concern that Hezbollah is waiting for the moment that most IDF ground forces are committed to Gaza to open a full front with the IDF in the north".

Lie machine in overdrive but failing to convince

On the propaganda front, the mainstream press has been the faithful servant of the Tel Aviv lie machine, churning out demonic and outlandish headlines about decapitated babies and barbaric "terrorists", but enforcing silence over any story that tells the truth about what the real terrorists and their imperialist backers are up to.

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But enforcing that silence is proving difficult when the facts on the ground run so obviously counter to Tel Aviv's desperate fabrications. The Israeli missile attack on the Al Ahli Baptist hospital in Gaza, murdering and maiming hundreds of patients and staff, is one such fact.

At first, the IDF brazenly asserted that the hospital was a legitimate target because it was occupied by Hamas. When the surviving hospital workers denied the occupation story, the IDF changed tack, claiming that the culprit was a misfiring Hamas rocket, later deciding it was in fact an Islamic Jihad rocket.

With IDF lying its head off and constantly changing its story, even the BBC had in the end to distance itself from Tel Aviv's transparent mendacity, admitting that the Al-Ahli hospital bombing was in fact carried out by none other than (US-supplied) Israeli missiles.

To invade or not to invade? Either way Israel is damned

Rumours and statements abound about the Israelis' intentions at this time. On the one hand, the most demented section of the Zionist body politic is desperate to raze Gaza from the map, expel all its two million citizens into the Sinai desert for Egypt to worry about and fill the resistance tunnels with poison gas – and is expressing all these heinous desires quite openly before the eyes of an incredulous world.

On the other hand, cooler heads are aware that the IDF, made up in the main by part-time soldiers whose only real military experience has been in harassing civilians in the occupied territories, is no match for the professionalism and self-sacrificing dedication of the resistance, even with all

its supposedly insurmountable technological wizardry – a paraphernalia of gadgetry that the resistance forces have shown themselves to be remarkably adept at finding the weaknesses in and getting around by various means.

As the delay continues, laughably justified by a vacillating government as owing to 'bad weather', the strident calls to ethnically cleanse two million civilians from the tiny stamp of land that remains recognised by Israelis as 'Palestine' is not winning Israel or its backers any friends. Quite the reverse.

Across the region and across the world, the demonstrations in support of Palestine are huge and growing. In the West Bank and across the 1948 Palestinian territories, *intifada* is spreading. And in the wide middle east, the determination to evict the hated imperialists and their stooges for good is growing too, inspired by the heroic feats of a few thousand Palestinian fighters, who have already inflicted huge damage on the structures of the occupation, on the confidence of the enemy, and on the fighting strength of the IDF.

The longer the Zionist maniacs pursue their genocidal plans, the more united will become the forces of the resistance, and the entire Arab and progressive world will be lined up behind them. Already, steeled anti-imperialist warriors from Yemen to Afghanistan have stated their intention to come to the aid of their Palestinian brothers-in-arms.

In the end, it is going to take more than a couple of American aircraft carriers to face down the growing wrath of half a billion citizens in the middle east, backed up as they are by all of progressive humanity.

Victory to the *intifada*!

PSC Manchester

◀ page 5 buried before identification.

Labour witch hunt lives on

Soffa's talk of suspensions, "investigative" committees, members being forced to submit evidence in their own defence and murky hints about possible antisemitism will sound depressingly familiar to many former Labour party members, purged in the Israel-lobby-driven witch hunt during the years when Jeremy Corbyn was the party's leader.

The similarity is no coincidence: Soffa remains Labour's head of 'digital organising', despite a massive exodus of the pro-Palestinian left from Labour, amounting to a purge of some 200,000 members since Corbyn was kicked out.

Contacted by phone, Ben Soffa declined to answer questions on the record, insisting we email PSC's media address instead. Asked if he thinks Palestinians have the right to defend themselves using armed force, Soffa refused to answer.

He also refused to answer when asked what PSC's position is on the Palestinian use of armed defence.

Asked if he, as a senior Labour staffer, has ever worked with Israeli spy Assaf Kaplan – who was hired to monitor Labour members' social media activities – Soffa refused to answer. "That is something that I'm not going to comment on," he said, when asked if he works with Kaplan currently.

PSC said: "International law makes clear that the targeting and killing of civilians is prohibited."

They said that they "took action in relation to officers of Manchester PSC after social media postings which violated

these principles, did not reflect the position of PSC and do not serve the legitimate cause of the Palestinian people and their struggle for justice and liberation".

They conceded, however, that "PSC fully recognises the rights of oppressed and occupied people to resist, including through the use of armed resistance within the framework of international law."

But they did not comment on whether PSC accepts the Israeli version of events regarding 7 October, that Israeli eyewitnesses have said that at least some of the Israeli civilians were killed by Israel's own forces, or whether PSC will call for an independent international investigation into what really happened.

Finally, they did not comment on their national secretary Ben Soffa declining to clarify whether or not he works with the Israeli spy Assaf Kaplan.

The PSC has been part of a coalition of left-wing, Palestinian and Muslim groups that have been organising weekly national demonstrations in London since Israel's genocidal war began on 7 October.

The most recent demonstration in London last Saturday was estimated by organisers to be half a million strong.

But this coming weekend, there is no big national march being organised in the capital city. The coalition is instead encouraging a day of local actions, while building for another demonstration the following Saturday, 11 November.

The PSC's list of local actions for this Saturday conspicuously omits any mention of Manchester. Manchester PSC and other local groups are organising another big protest in their city on Saturday, their fifth since 7 October, organisers say.

Palestine



Mutiny at the BBC: 'gravest possible concerns' over Palestine coverage

The BBC's own reporters are beginning to speak out about the corporation's complicity in Israeli war crimes.

This article by Vanessa Beeley is reproduced from The Wall Will Fall, with thanks.

In Israel's current genocidal war on Gaza, with almost 10,000 Palestinians dead and counting, it is no surprise that truth has also been a casualty. The violence in Palestine, perpetrated by Israel with increasing ferocity since Hamas attacks on Israeli targets on 7 October 2023, has been accompanied by an equally fierce war of narratives in western media, powered on one side by government mouthpieces and mainstream outlets, and on the other by the transnational networks of social media, amplifying the voices and testimonies of Palestinians on the ground.

The British Broadcasting Corporation, the world-leading news organisation, has been in turmoil, as its coverage of events comes under severe criticism from both ends of the political spectrum.

Most recently, the BBC has also confronted detailed and outraged criticism from its own members of staff. On 25 October 2023, British newspaper the Times published an article entitled BBC staff crying at work over Israel-Gaza coverage, which led with accusations leveled at the BBC "by its journalists of being too lenient on Israel and 'dehumanising' Palestinian civilians, allegedly leaving staff crying in lavatories and taking time off work".

The article quoted extensively from an email that was

sent on 24 October by a BBC correspondent based in Beirut, Rami Ruhayem, to BBC director general Tim Davie, voicing "the gravest possible concerns" about BBC coverage of unfolding events in Gaza.

On 27 October, London-based weekly the Jewish Chronicle published excerpts of the same email in an article entitled BBC correspondent advocates using 'settler-colonialism' to describe Israel, and used it to portray BBC coverage as biased against the Israeli state.

We have obtained the full text of that email and share it below to clarify all the points it makes.

Staff raise serious concerns to BBC DG

24 October 2023

URGENT: Israel/Palestine Coverage

Dear Tim,

I am writing to raise the gravest possible concerns about the coverage of the BBC, especially on English outlets, of the current fighting between Israel and Palestinian factions.

It appears to me that information that is highly significant and relevant is either entirely missing or not being given due prominence in coverage.

This includes expert opinion that Israel's actions could amount to genocide, evidence in support of that opinion, and historical context without which the public cannot form a basic understanding of the unfolding events.

There are also indications that the BBC is – implicitly at least – treating Israeli lives as more worthy than Palestinian lives, and reinforcing Israeli war propaganda.

What follows is a brief explanation of why I think so. I hope you consider it carefully and urgently.

1. Genocide

Even before the current round of fighting, experts have noted that the siege of Gaza may amount to "a prelude to genocide" or "a slow-motion genocide". [1]

Key here is the fact that the Genocide Convention of 1948 lists, among the elements of the crime of genocide, the act of "Deliberately inflicting on the (national, ethnical, racial or religious) group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part." [2]

Also key is the fact that as early as 2014, UN officials who advise the UN secretary-general on the prevention of genocide have warned of "the flagrant use of hate speech in the social media, particularly against the Palestinian population". [3]

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The nature of the Israeli response to the attack by Hamas on 7 October has prompted “over 800 scholars and practitioners of international law, conflict studies and genocide studies” to warn of “the possibility of genocide being perpetrated by Israeli forces against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip”. [4]

They cited the “incessant and indiscriminate bombardment” obliterating “huge swathes of neighborhoods and entire families”, and the order, by the Israeli defense minister of a “complete siege” of Gaza, terminology which, according to the experts, “indicates an intensification of an already illegal, potentially genocidal siege to an outright destructive assault”.

They also cited the order issued for more than 1.1 million Palestinians in Gaza city and the northern Gaza Strip to flee to the south. [5] This order has also been said by Jan Ege-land, secretary general of the Norwegian Refugee Council to “amount to the war crime of forcible transfer” if unaccompanied by guarantees of safety or return. [6]

Furthermore, the scholars noted the statements of incitement by Israeli leaders against Palestinians. [7] They wrote of “evidence of incitement to genocide” and a “wider Israeli discourse showcasing the intent for elimination and genocide against the Palestinian people”.

They also noted the “escalation of violence, arrests, expulsions, and destruction of whole Palestinian communities in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem”.

They said:

As scholars and practitioners of international law, conflict studies and genocide studies, we are compelled to sound the

alarm about the possibility of the crime of genocide being perpetrated by Israeli forces against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. We do not do so lightly, recognising the weight of this crime, but the gravity of the current situation demands it.

I invite you to sift through our coverage, past and present, for any trace of the above; whether in explainers, or interviews, or features, or news analysis. Is it there at all, and if so, is it given the prominence it deserves?

2. Selective use of language

Words like ‘massacre’, ‘slaughter’ and ‘atrocities’ are being used – prominently – in reference to actions by Hamas, but hardly, if at all, in reference to actions by Israel.

When the BBC uses such language selectively, with the standard of selection being the identity of the perpetrators/victims, the BBC is making a statement – albeit implicit. *It implies that the lives of one group of people are more valuable than the lives of another.* (Our emphasis – Proletarian)

This would be scandalous under any conditions. How much more so in light of the fact that hate speech and incitement against Palestinians have been flooding the airwaves, the internet and social media, coming from the top (Israeli officials and their western backers) and echoing all over the information ecosystem, in the context of what experts believe could be a prelude to genocide?

The power of emotive coverage and repetition is well understood. The selective application of emotive repetition is sure to have an impact on audiences, and it is exactly the kind of impact Israeli propagandists are aiming for as they dehumanise Palestinians and

set the stage for the mass murder they have pledged – and begun – to carry out.

Does this not raise the question of the possible complicity of the BBC in incitement, dehumanisation and war propaganda? How would the BBC respond to this?

3. Interviewing officials

In light of all the above, interviews with Israeli officials and their western backers – as well as with Israeli propagandists – cannot possibly be friendly affairs, with presenters not only refraining from presenting them with evidence of the above, but also giving them comfortable airtime as they justify it.

This is happening all too often, and as far as I know, the expert opinion above and the evidence that backs it have not been presented to Israeli or western officials on air.

The question of finding exceptions (if there are any) is not enough. Rigorous and challenging interviews should not be the exception, they should be the rule.

4. Disinformation unit

The BBC has taken upon itself in recent years the task of fighting fake news, disinformation, hate speech and such things, a trend in western media.

Where is the content analysing the flood of incitement against Palestinians and tracking its impact?

As I mentioned above, as early as 2014, UN officials who advised the UN secretary-general on the prevention of genocide warned of “the flagrant use of hate speech in the social media, particularly against the Palestinian population”. [8]

This has escalated over the past years and, increasingly, has come from the top. Just

a few months ago, the Israeli finance minister called on the state to “erase” an entire Palestinian town. [9]

Since the 7 October attack by Hamas, there have been many statements by Israeli officials declaring the intent to murder Palestinian civilians en masse, or otherwise dehumanising them in preparation for such actions.

The Israeli minister of defence said: “We are fighting human animals and we act accordingly.” A high-ranking officer said: “Human animals must be treated as such. There will be no electricity and no water, there will only be destruction.” An army spokesperson said: “The emphasis is on damage and not on accuracy.”

The Israeli president held all Palestinians in Gaza responsible for the actions of Hamas. One MP said the goal should be “Nakba! A Nakba that will overshadow the Nakba of 1948.” [10]

Irrespective of whether or not the BBC has a high-profile unit that has given considerable attention to hate speech and incitement, the above should be prominently reflected in coverage, features, explainers and news analysis.

The presence of such a unit, however, and the kind of work it has undertaken over the past few years, implies an additional responsibility to explore what other media are doing to amplify the dehumanisation effect and facilitate the Israeli government’s efforts to normalise the mass murder of Palestinians.

Such a unit should be delving deep into this, and exploring the vicious cycle of incitement and its impact on political reality in Israel, and consequently on the lives of Palestinians.

Also notable is the fact that hate speech and **page 10 ►**

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BBC staff mutiny

◀ **page 9** incitement have spilled over into the west. One example is US senator Lindsey Graham's call for Israel to "level the place". He also said the conflict is a "religious war".

Such rhetoric has sparked fear among Arab and muslim communities in the USA. It may well have contributed to the stabbing to death of a six-year-old Palestinian American child in a hate crime in Chicago. [11]

5. Historical context

Our current coverage kicked off following the Hamas attack. Doubtless, it is major news. But that doesn't mean history started on 7 October. We should incorporate into our coverage an accurate, balanced, fair and truthful representation of the reality leading up to that moment.

I won't go into detail, but simply remind you of three terms: apartheid, ethnic cleansing, and settler-colonialism.

These are terms used by many experts and highly respected organisations to which the BBC usually defers. They are used to describe the nature of Israeli rule over Palestinians as well as the methods used by Israel to oppress generation after generation of Palestinians. They are based on extensive evidence.

To what extent is this reflected in our coverage? Without such context, can we claim to have adequately informed the public? Or are we withholding highly relevant and significant information without which the basics of the conflict cannot possibly be understood?

Just a few days ago, Francesca Albanese, the UN's special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, had this to say:

"There is a grave danger that what we are witnessing may be a repeat of the 1948 Nakba and the 1967 Naksa, yet on a larger scale ... Israel has already carried out mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians under the fog of war ... Again, in the name of self-defence, Israel is seeking to justify what would amount to ethnic cleansing." [12]

Once again, I invite you to sift through our coverage, past and present, for any trace of the above; whether in explainers, or interviews, or features, or news analysis. Is it there at all, and if so, is it given the prominence it is due?

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, it appears that the BBC is keeping a lot of highly significant and relevant information, including extensive evidence, expert opinion, and historical context, from the public. Members of the public cannot possibly form an informed opinion or a basic understanding of the unfolding events without access to such information.

It also appears the BBC could be reinforcing Israeli propaganda meant to dehumanise the Palestinians.

There is a lot more to be said, but these are the broad headlines. This is not about mistakes here and there, or even about systemic bias in favor of Israel. *The question now is a question of complicity.* (Our emphasis)

It is a matter of public interest to rectify this with the utmost urgency.

Best,

Rami Ruhayem

[This email was copied to many other BBC staff, and represents – in its specific criticisms and its direct challenge to the BBC's highest authority

– a deepening of the internal rejection of BBC coverage, and a reflection of the same among its audiences. If shared widely, it has the potential to increase the pressure on the institution significantly, exposing as it does the contradictions between its claims of accuracy and rigour and its differential treatment of Palestinian and Israeli lives and deaths.

The question remains how, and indeed whether, the BBC will respond, and if there will be any meaningful investigations, or change, both of BBC editorial guidelines on this issue, and of its relations with its staff. – VB]

Notes

[1] Israel's policies in Gaza are genocidal by Haidar Eid, Mondoweiss, 3 August 2018.

Genocide in Palestine: Gaza as a case study by Mohammed Nijim, International Journal of Human Rights, 21 April 2022.

[2] Genocide information by United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect.

[3] "We are equally disturbed by the flagrant use of hate speech in social media, particularly against the Palestinian population," stated the special advisers. According to reliable reports, individuals have disseminated messages that could be dehumanising to the Palestinians and have called for the killing of members of this group. The special advisers remind all that incitement to commit atrocity crimes is prohibited under international law.

See Statement on the situation in Israel and in the Palestinian occupied territory of Gaza Strip by the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide, July 2014.

[4] Public statement: Scholars warn of potential genocide in

Gaza signed by 880 academics from around the world, 15 October 2023.

[5] Late on 12 October, the Israeli authorities issued an order for more than 1.1 million Palestinians in Gaza city and the northern Gaza Strip to leave their homes and flee to the south of Gaza within 24 hours, knowing that this would be practically impossible for many. Palestinians who did start to evacuate south reported that civilians and ambulances were targeted and hit by Israeli airstrikes on the designated 'safe route', killing at least 70 Palestinians who were fleeing to seek refuge.

The ICRC stated that "the evacuation orders, coupled with the complete siege" are incompatible with international humanitarian law. Almost half a million Palestinians have already been displaced, and Israeli forces have bombed the only possible exit route that Israel does not control, the Rafah crossing to Egypt multiple times. The World Health Organisation published a warning that "Forcing more than 2,000 patients to relocate to southern Gaza, where health facilities are already running at maximum capacity and unable to absorb a dramatic rise in the number of patients, could be tantamount to a death sentence."

[6] Jan Egeland twitter post, 13 October 2023.

[7] Israeli defense minister Yoav Gallant declared on 9 October that "we are fighting human animals and we act accordingly". He subsequently announced that Israel was moving to "a full-scale response" and that he had "removed every restriction" on Israeli forces, as well as stating: "Gaza won't return to what it was before. We will eliminate everything."

On 10 October, the head of the Israeli army's Coordinator of

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Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), Maj Gen Ghassan Alian, addressed a message directly to Gaza residents: “Human animals must be treated as such. There will be no electricity and no water, there will only be destruction. You wanted hell, you will get hell.”

The same day, Israeli army spokesperson Daniel Hagari acknowledged the wanton and intentionally destructive nature of Israel’s bombing campaign in Gaza: “The emphasis is on damage and not on accuracy.”

Israel’s president emphasised that the Israeli authorities view the entire Palestinian population of Gaza as responsible for the actions of militant groups, and subject accordingly to collective punishment and unrestricted use of force: “It is an entire nation out there that is responsible. It is not true this rhetoric about civilians not being aware, not involved. It’s absolutely not true.”

Israeli minister of energy and Infrastructure Israel Katz added: “All the civilian population in Gaza is ordered to leave immediately. We will win. They will not receive a drop of water or a single battery until they leave the world.”

Evidence of incitement to genocide has also been present in Israeli public discourse. This ranges from statements by elected officials – such as Knesset member Ariel Kallner’s call on 7 October for “one goal: Nakba! [catastrophe for Palestinians] A Nakba that will overshadow the Nakba of 1948” – to public banners displayed in Israeli cities calling for a “victory” signified by “zero population in Gaza” and the “annihilation of Gaza”.

On national television, security correspondent Alon Ben David relayed the Israeli military’s plan to destroy Gaza city, Jabaliyya, Beit Lahiya and Beit Ha-

nun. Such statements are not new and resonate with a wider Israeli discourse showcasing the intent for elimination and genocide against the Palestinian people.

Earlier in the year, for example, Israeli minister of finance Bezalel Smotrich called Palestinians “repugnant”, “disgusting” and called for “wiping out” the entire Palestinian village of Huwwara in the West Bank.

[8] “We are equally disturbed by the flagrant use of hate speech in the social media, particularly against the Palestinian population,” stated the special advisers. According to reliable reports, individuals have disseminated messages that could be dehumanising to the Palestinians and have called for the killing of members of this group. The special advisers remind all that incitement to commit atrocity crimes is prohibited under international law.

See Statement on the situation in Israel and in the Palestinian occupied territory of Gaza Strip by the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide, July 2014.

[9] Tel Aviv – A senior Israeli official on Wednesday called for the state to “erase” the Palestinian town of Hawara, which was rampaged by Jewish settlers over the weekend.

“I think the village of Hawara needs to be erased. I think that the state of Israel needs to do it. God forbid that regular people should do it,” Israel finance minister Bezalel Smotrich said.

His comments came after he liked a tweet that called for Hawara to be “wiped out” in the wake of a Palestinian gunman’s attack that killed two brothers, Hillel Menachem Yaniv, 21, and Yagel Yaakov Yaniv, 19, who lived in the Israeli settlement of Har Bracha, around 5 miles away.

Israel should ‘erase’ Palestinian village, minister says after settler rampage by Paul Goldman and Aina J Khan, NBC News, 1 March 2023.

[10] Public statement: Scholars warn of potential genocide in Gaza signed by 880 academics from around the world, 15 October 2023.

Israel’s recent call for mass evacuation echoes catastrophic 1948 Palestinian exodus by Joseph Krauss, PBS, 13 October 2023.

Israeli president suggests that civilians in Gaza are legitimate targets by Paul Blumenthal, HuffPost, 13 October 2023.

Israeli army official admits Gaza bombing campaign is focused on ‘damage and not on accuracy’ by Jake Johnson, Common Dreams, 10 October 2023.

Cogat chief addresses Gazans: ‘You wanted hell, you will get hell’ by Gianluca Pacchiani, The Times of Israel, 10 October 2023.

Israeli defence minister announces siege on Gaza to fight ‘human animals’ by Sanjana Karanth, HuffPost, 9 October 2023.

[11] Washington, DC – Civil rights advocates in the United States have been warning that dehumanising rhetoric about the Israel-Hamas war could translate into attacks on Palestinian, Arab and Muslim American communities at home. Those fears appear to have materialised in the ugliest way when a six-year-old Palestinian American child was stabbed to death in a suspected hate crime near Chicago on Saturday ...

Another senator, South Carolina’s Lindsey Graham, described the conflict as a “religious war” – one in which he sided with Israel. “Do whatever the hell you have to do to de-

fend yourself,” he said of Israel’s attacks on Gaza. “Level the place.” (Frustration, concern rise among Arab Americans over Israel’s war on Gaza by Ali Harb, Al Jazeera, 19 October 2023.

[12] “There is a grave danger that what we are witnessing may be a repeat of the 1948 Nakba, and the 1967 Naksa, yet on a larger scale. The international community must do everything to stop this from happening again,” the UN expert said.

She noted that Israeli public officials have openly advocated for another Nakba, the term for the events of 1947-49 when over 750,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes and lands during the hostilities that led to the establishment of the state of Israel. The Naksa, which led to Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, displaced 350,000 Palestinians.

“Israel has already carried out mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians under the fog of war,” the expert said. “Again, in the name of self-defence, Israel is seeking to justify what would amount to ethnic cleansing. “Any continued military operations by Israel have gone well beyond the limits of international law.

“The international community must stop these egregious violations of international law now, before tragic history is repeated. Time is of the essence. Palestinians and Israelis both deserve to live in peace, equality of rights, dignity, and freedom,” Albanese said.

UN expert warns of new instance of mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, calls for immediate ceasefire, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 14 October 2023.

Palestine

British government stifles school debate on Gaza

As the imperialists continue their support for the ongoing genocide in Gaza, schools are urged to play their part in complying with the murderous narrative.

This article by Roddy Keenan is reproduced from Electronic Intifada, with thanks.

On 17 October, education secretary Gillian Keegan sent a letter to schools across Britain urging them to ensure student activity should not create “an atmosphere of intimidation and fear”. Responding to what she described as “the barbaric terrorist attacks in Israel”, she declared that the UK “unequivocally condemns these terrorist attacks and stands in solidarity with Israel in its hour of need”.

Unsurprisingly, there was no mention of Israel’s genocidal bombing campaign in Gaza. In fact, there was no mention of Gaza at all. Nor Palestine.

Keegan did ensure that she referred to Prevent, the programme overwhelmingly used to target the muslim community and criminalise muslim children, in a transparent attempt to conflate expressions of sympathy towards Palestinians with ‘extremism’ or ‘radicalisation’.

Keegan also announced more than \$3.5m of extra funding to “protect schools, colleges, nurseries and synagogues and other jewish community buildings”, another blatant effort to create the perception that Palestine solidarity activists are dangerous.

Consequently, schools have been directed to ensure that “political expression is conducted sensitively”. They also

had a responsibility to prevent behaviour that “appears to celebrate or glorify violence” and any “expression of views that feels targeted against specific groups or stigmatises others”.

Meanwhile, the letter points out that any support for Hamas is “illegal”, as well as being “contrary to British values”.

It apparently falls within the purview of the British government to decide which organisations comply with upholding its noble values and are worthy of support.

However, in the past, this has proven problematic as Britain often changes its characterisation of various ‘terror groups’ from friend to foe, depending on the geopolitical necessities at that particular time.

Shutting down discussion

The overriding message to take from Keegan’s letter is that ultimately there can be no form of student ‘political expression’, particularly of a pro-Palestinian nature. This is complemented by the government’s conflation of support for the people being slaughtered in Gaza with that of supporting terrorists.

Britain’s home secretary Suella Braverman has even suggested that flying the Palestinian flag and various chants could be construed as “glorifying terrorism”.

And we had the BBC, Britain’s state broadcaster, characterising attendees at a recent Lon-

don demonstration as supporting Hamas, which by extension, as it is a proscribed organisation, constituted backing “terrorists”. This was followed by Braverman describing these peaceful demonstrations as “hate marches”.

School leaders and teachers are in effect being encouraged to shut down discussion as far as possible or simply ignore the ongoing genocide and hope nobody mentions it. And rather than take this as an opportunity to help widen understanding of the situation in Palestine, encourage discussion and avail of this ‘teachable moment’, the opposite has been the case.

But then, the government does not want students to know the background. For if students were exposed to the realities of history, to 75 years of occupation, violence and ethnic cleansing, they would know who the real victim is. And our government cannot have that.

Of course, it was all a very different story in February 2022, when Russia launched its special military operation in Ukraine.

Local authorities flew the Ukrainian flag. Discussion on the Ukrainian situation, political or otherwise, was now acceptable, indeed encouraged.

There were no ‘two sides to the story’ then, no calls for schools to ‘ensure that any political expression is conducted sensitively’. Far from it. It was charity fundraising, cake sales and flag days.

So, what makes that different to discussing the bombing of Gaza?

In the first place, it’s different because Britain’s imperialist government had informed the British public that Ukrainians were the good guys and Russians were evil.

But there is an even more obvious reason. The best example of this was provided by that bastion of state propaganda, the BBC.

In an interview with the BBC’s Ros Atkins, at the outset of Russia’s operation, one of the contributors to the discussion on the conflict, a former prosecutor in Ukraine, David Sakvarelidze, explained: “It’s very emotional for me, because I see European people with blue eyes and blonde hair being killed.”

“I understand and respect the emotion,” replied Atkins.

And there we have it. Palestinians are the wrong colour, their eyes and hair are too dark, and they (most of them) have the wrong religion.

Unlike Ukrainians, Palestinians are *not* “very similar to us”. Hence, they are irrelevant.

But worse than that, after decades of western propaganda, Palestinians have been dehumanised, and consequently it’s not unreasonable to describe them as “human animals”; as “children of darkness” who live by the “laws of the jungle”.

They are unpeople, dispensable and, consequently as we are seeing, easy to exterminate.

No excuse

And so, in 2023, as we witness a genocide, encouraged, supported and greenlit by western imperialist governments and their acquiescent media, our institutions of education, those charged with expanding the knowledge and understanding of our young people, want to bury their heads, and indeed their students’ heads, in the sand.

Yet just at this time, schools across Britain are also holding their annual series of activities, events and assemblies to

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mark Remembrance Sunday. And as always, they are being reminded of the barbarism of war, of the need to learn from history, and urged never to repeat the failings of the past.

The grotesque juxtaposition of such moral sermonising with a genocide unfolding in front of our eyes – a genocide backed by those who govern us – betrays the hypocrisy, the perfidy and mendacity of our education system. A theatre of the absurd, but with murderous consequences.

Moreover, lest we forget, a large section of the British population are wearing a red poppy to demonstrate, in the words of the British Legion, “a show of support for the armed forces community” and to “honour those who serve to defend our democratic freedoms and way of life”.

Considering Britain’s recent deployment of naval vessels, surveillance aircraft and a detachment of Royal Marines “to deliver practical support to Israel and partners in the region”, wearing a poppy is evidently a clear demonstration of support for those currently assisting the perpetrators of an ongoing genocide in Gaza.

Following the warnings of Suella Braverman not to “glorify acts of terrorism” by waving a flag, would she agree that poppy wearing constitutes such an act?

Then again, it’s not a Palestine flag. It’s not a *keffiyeh* – as the Palestinian chequered scarf is known.

Moreover, the massacres are being perpetrated by, as US president Joe Biden might say, our “team”. So maybe not.

In the McCarthyite and islamophobic environment that successive British governments have fostered, it is understandable that many teachers may be reluctant, if not afraid, to

discuss the war. Some may fear accusations of antisemitism.

Others may be simply uninformed and ignorant. As the American writer Upton Sinclair once observed: “It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends upon his not understanding it.”

Yet however they rationalise it to themselves, there is no excuse. The very presence of such pervasive self-censorship is striking and extremely disquieting.

Evidently, our government and media’s persistent propaganda has proven successful beyond their wildest dreams, and Bentham’s panopticon has been well and truly internalised amongst the populace.

“To glorify democracy and to silence the people is a farce; to discourse on humanism and to negate people is a lie,” wrote the educationist and philosopher Paolo Freire.

Yet this is precisely what our schools are guilty of. Consequently, they should drop the pretence of ethical values, compassion and empathy, and embrace the fact that they are simply exam factories.

It is not their unicorns-and-rainbows ‘vision statements’, ‘mission statements’ or any other statements they issue by which schools and colleges will be judged. It is by their actions.

And hiding behind the contemptible diktats of a mediocre minister in a murderous government is no excuse.

Everyone has a choice.

Remaining silent as a genocide unfolds before our eyes is an unforgivable act of cowardice, of collaboration and of complicity.

Non-cooperation

◀ **page 3** blockades of their sites to prevent weapons and parts from leaving, following the lead of such groups as Palestine Action.

We can take inspiration from history. From the stevedores and dockers who refused to load the Jolly George with munitions bound for Poland to wage war against revolutionary Russia to the heroic workers at Rolls Royce who said “Nae Pasaran” to stop engine parts being used against Allende’s Chile.

In 2006, activists shut down the Derry offices of Raytheon, the fifth-biggest arms manufacturer in the world, and destroyed its computer systems to prevent the Israeli army from continuing to carry out war crimes in Lebanon.

The action was taken in the wake of the second Israeli massacre at Qana, in which 28 civilians, 16 of whom were children, were killed in an airstrike on a three-story apartment block. The Raytheon Nine, as they were known, won their court case, acquitted of charges of criminal damage in a unanimous decision.

And moving beyond calls for a ceasefire, we must call for a *victory for the Palestinian resistance*, and ensure it has the moral and material ability to do so – as is its right even under international law.

In Britain, we must resist efforts to criminalise solidarity with the Palestinian people, as our government seeks to impose bans on waving a flag and tries to ban support for BDS as “antisemitic” – or even as support for ‘terrorism’.

There are only two sides: the oppressor and the oppressed.

Resistance is not only essential, it is our duty.

Victory Palestine!

◀ **page 4** support of workers and oppressed peoples everywhere. Whatever we can do to strengthen the forces of resistance we must do. Their victory will resound around the world, will enhance the prospects for further defeats of imperialism and further victories for the workers and oppressed peoples.

Expose the lies of the corporate imperialist media!

No cooperation with the criminal zionist state and its war machine!

Victory to the resistance!

The Arab people are vigorously fighting in arms against US imperialism and the Israeli aggressors. It is quite natural that the gallant Arab people resist the armed aggressors with arms. As long as the imperialists plunder and oppress the people by violence, the oppressed peoples can win freedom and independence and regain their deprived rights only when they fight with arms in their hands against the aggressors. This is a plain truth of the anti-imperialist liberation struggle proved by history.

The armed struggle of the Arab people against US imperialism and the Israeli aggressors is a just struggle to defend national independence and dignity, restore the occupied Arab territories and accomplish the cause of liberation of the Palestinian people. This revolutionary struggle of the Arab people enlists the active support and encouragement of the progressive peoples the world over.

– Comrade Kim Il Sung, founder of the DPRK

Ukraine war

It's been nearly two years.
Russia still controls a fifth of Ukraine's territory.
Tens of thousands have been killed.
Global support for the war is shrinking.

The Lonely Fight of Volodymyr Zelensky

by
SIMON SHUSTER



Imperialists getting ready to ditch Zelensky

As they reach the bottom of the barrel of funds, weapons and manpower, the imperialists need a frontman who is capable of suing for peace.

Imperialism wanted Ukraine to fight a proxy war against Russia – a war whose ultimate aim was to balkanise the country. This was to be an American war, fought out primarily on Ukrainian soil, led by neo-nazis and sacrificing Ukrainian lives.

That was the reality. But to obscure this reality, the stooge showman president Volodymyr Zelensky had to present in its place a make-believe war, a war of supposed 'national resistance' against a bullying oppressor; a war which pitched a supposedly 'democratic' Ukrainian David (don't laugh) against an evil and oppressive Russian Goliath. A war that could be sold to US public opin-

ion (and to the US Congress in particular).

False narratives shifting under pressure of battlefield realities

It was always a struggle to maintain this fiction when the facts on the ground so roundly asserted themselves to the contrary, but, with the help of a compliant media, public opinion in the west for some time remained largely credulous, drip-fed on a diet of fabricated tales of Russian atrocities and Ukrainian derring-do.

What has really started to shift perceptions in a big way is the hopeless collapse of the much-touted Ukrainian spring/

summer "counteroffensive". And after being pent up for so long behind a wall of propaganda lies, when reality now comes bursting through, it is unstoppable.

Suddenly everything is spilling out: the corruption infecting every corner of government (with its epicentre in the presidential office itself), the dominance of neo-nazis in public life (with the Waffen SS veteran cheered to the rafters in the Canadian parliament) and the police state reality that underlies the pretty lies about Ukrainian 'freedom and democracy'.

Most of these unsavoury truths have long been available to anyone prepared to dig a little. But there is nothing like defeat in war to bring them all to the surface.

A recent interview in the Economist with Ukrainian commander-in-chief General Valery Zaluzhny gave a damning assessment of Ukraine's conduct of the war, concluding that the current military situation is one of 'stalemate'.

Zaluzhny maintains that an army of Ukraine's standard ought to have been able to move at a speed of 30km a day as it breached Russian lines, pointing out: "If you look at Nato's textbooks and at the maths which we did, four months should have been enough time for us to have reached Crimea, to have fought in Crimea, to return from Crimea and to have gone back in and out again."

Instead of which, his troops got stuck in minefields on the approaches to Bakhmut in the east, where his western-supplied equipment got pummeled by Russian artillery and drones. He says that the same thing happened on the offensive's main thrust in the south, where inexperienced brigades immediately ran into trouble. (Ukraine's commander-in-chief on the breakthrough he needs to beat Russia, Economist, 1 November 2023)

Zaluzhny wants to save his own skin – and perhaps even to carve out a political future for himself – by ascribing Kiev's military disaster to causes beyond his control or somehow down to political interference. But in so doing, he has opened the door a crack, revealing the massive incompetence and waste of lives and money the war has incurred.

US leaders preparing to ditch their failed project

Since February 2022, the USA has spent \$43.9bn on what it calls 'security assistance' (ie, weapons) for Ukraine. The total that has been spent in propping up the

Ukraine war

Ukrainian state and national economy as well as its war machine runs to \$75bn from the USA alone (supplemented by further billions from Britain and the European Union states). But now NBC News cites one US official as saying there is only about \$5bn left in the kitty before the money runs out. Less than Ukraine gets through in a month. (US, European officials broach topic of peace negotiations with Ukraine, sources say, NBC News, 3 November 2023)

A Gallup poll three months ago found that 24 percent of US citizens thought the USA was giving Kiev too much aid. Now the malcontent percentage has risen to 41 percent (in a poll that is bound to be rigged to find in favour of government policy).

This growing mood of public disaffection with the war is reflected in the reluctance of some in Congress, especially on the Republican side, to go on funding Ukraine. In a bid to circumvent resistance to further funding, President Joe Biden is trying to sneak aid for Kiev in on the back of funding for Israel, but this is also facing opposition.

Meanwhile, as a delusional Zelensky continues to insist that there will be “no talks” with Russia until Crimea and all the other liberated Russian territories revert to rule by Kiev, NBC News has reported that “US and European officials have begun quietly talking to the Ukrainian government about what possible peace negotiations with Russia might entail to end the war, according to one current senior US official and one former senior US official familiar with the discussions.

“The conversations have included very broad outlines of what Ukraine might need to give up to reach a deal, the of-

ficials said. Some of the talks, which officials described as delicate, took place last month during a meeting of representatives from more than 50 nations supporting Ukraine, including Nato members, known as the Ukraine Defence Contact Group, the officials said.”

Imperialism has no permanent friends ...

Ukraine’s illegitimate actor-president Volodymyr Zelensky is finding out what happens when a puppet of imperialism fails to comply with the instructions he has been given by his masters. If, instead of slavishly following orders, he had taken a little time to consider the cruel fate that had awaited other puppets and collaborators when they failed to deliver the results their masters had demanded of them, this former comedian might have been less enthusiastically compliant.

Had he not seen those television images of disappointed collaborators fighting to get aboard the helicopter before it lifted off the roof of the US embassy in Saigon (as was)? Or those more recent images of collaborators fleeing Kabul as the occupation regime abruptly folded?

If imperialism is ruthless against its enemies, it is as much if not more so against its ‘friends’ when they fail to deliver the outcome for which they have been paid. Zelensky has not only failed to deliver on plan, but is now imprudent enough to blame his masters for the failure and obstinate enough to resist all suggestions of talks with Russia.

It was not so long ago that Time magazine showcased Zelensky as Person of the Year for 2022 and had him on the front cover in heroic pose. But a more recent edition of the magazine this month featured a lengthy article by Simon Shuster. Its tone was a million miles away from that earlier fawning coverage – a grim reminder of how fast the imperialists and their pet media will raise you up or bring you low.

Under the mocking headline, ‘Nobody believes in our victory like I do’, Shuster comprehensively tore the Ukrainian leader apart.

“Volodymyr Zelensky was running late ...

“The invitation to his speech at the National Archives in Washington had gone out to several hundred guests, including congressional leaders and top officials from the Biden administration. Billed as the main event of his visit in late September, it would give him a chance to inspire US support against Russia with the kind of oratory the world has come to expect from Ukraine’s wartime president. It did not go as planned.

“That afternoon, Zelensky’s meetings at the White House and the Pentagon delayed him by more than an hour, and when he finally arrived to begin his speech at 6:41pm, he looked distant and agitated. He relied on his wife, first lady Olena Zelenska, to carry his message of resilience on the stage beside him, while his own delivery felt stilted, as though he wanted to get it over with. At one point, while handing out medals after the speech, he urged the organiser to hurry things along ...

“After his visit to Washington, Time followed the president and his team back to Kiev, hoping to understand how they would react to the signals they

had received, especially the insistent calls for Zelensky to fight corruption inside his own government, and the fading enthusiasm for a war with no end in sight. On my first day in Kiev, I asked one member of his circle how the president was feeling. The response came without a second’s hesitation: ‘Angry.’

“The usual sparkle of his optimism, his sense of humour, his tendency to liven up a meeting in the war room with a bit of banter or a bawdy joke, none of that has survived into the second year of all-out war. ‘Now he walks in, gets the updates, gives the orders, and walks out,’ says one long-time member of his team. Another tells me that, most of all, Zelensky feels betrayed by his western allies. They have left him without the means to win the war, only the means to survive it.

“But his convictions haven’t changed. Despite the recent setbacks on the battlefield, he does not intend to give up fighting or to sue for any kind of peace. On the contrary, his belief in Ukraine’s ultimate victory over Russia has hardened into a form that worries some of his advisers. It is immovable, verging on the messianic.

“‘He deludes himself,’ one of his closest aides tells me in frustration. ‘We’re out of options. We’re not winning. But try telling him that.’” (‘Nobody believes in our victory like I do.’ Inside Volodymyr Zelensky’s struggle to keep Ukraine in the fight, 1 November 2023)

Ukraine war

'Sieg heil' in the parliament of Canada

How did my country suddenly end up in the global headlines? What is the dirty secret that has been hidden in plain sight for so long?

By Vince Bowler in Canada

The world was shocked by recent events in Canada. Normally nothing of note happens here.

But then, lo and behold, in the Canadian legislature, there's a fist-pumping President Zelensky, saluting a Ukrainian SS veteran of the second world war!

The speaker of Parliament, with heartfelt praise, hails the noble hero – a fighter against Russia in the second world war! All the glistening eyes in the chamber look up to the balcony to pay homage to the freedom fighter. The speaker thanks the SS man for his selfless service!

The old man seems confused at his sudden elevation to sainthood, as he receives not one, but two standing ovations from the assembled 'dignitaries'. There is no sign of dissent among the well-heeled MPs. Everyone is in fine festive form!

What the heck? Wasn't Russia the ally of Canada in the fight against nazism? Are Canadians all crazy?

Perhaps ... but the background and meaning of this fiasco really lie in the two separate, contradictory waves of Ukrainian immigration into Canada.

Red Ruthenians

The first and largest wave of immigration occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. By and large, it con-

sisted of downtrodden masses escaping social degradation in the semi-feudal Russian empire. Canadian capitalists, coincidentally, required pools of labour-power for their industrial expansion and profit-making.

Many people, such as my immigrant grandparents from Ukraine and Belarus, saw in these circumstances a chance for a better life.

Landless farmers, day labourers, petty-bourgeois, the immigrants were mainly poor, but not powerless. In fact, many of them were politically advanced, through adherence to the Marxist social-democracy of the early Second International.

Across their newly adopted homeland, Ukrainian families pitched in to build many sturdy and beautiful labour-farmer temples (which offered a range of cultural and educational activities). They also formed cooperatives and trade unions and became a key constituency in the founding of the multinational Communist Party of Canada in 1921.

Needless to say, the bourgeois Canadian governments of that era got more than they bargained for by importing 'cheap' Ukrainian labour. The immigrants had a stubborn, proletarian mindset, and a social cohesion that threatened the unlimited dictatorship of Canadian capital.

So it was that during the first world war, for example, the Canadian state took the oppor-

tunity to deport hundreds of Ukrainians who were involved in union struggles. They were labelled as "enemy aliens and anarchists". Later, in the 1930s and 1940s, leading Ukrainian-Canadian communists were persecuted and imprisoned.

Black fascists

The second, much smaller, but heinous wave of immigration occurred after the second world war.

At that time, the western powers managed to 'save' many fleeing Nazis from Soviet retribution. Among them were anti-Soviet Ukrainians from the Waffen-SS Galicia division, supporters of Stepan Bandera, who settled in Canada. (It is noteworthy that Canada's current deputy prime minister descends from these same émigré circles.)

The motivation for importing these ultranationalists was the fervent anticommunism that prevailed in Canada during the cold war. Even Nazis could be rehabilitated and used for the 'just cause' of capitalist imperialism.

In the postwar period, Canadian Banderists, allied with western intelligence agencies, helped sustain an anti-Soviet insurgency in Belarus and Ukraine. This dirty campaign lasted until 1956, claiming several hundred thousand lives.

Banderist backing of the fascist underground continued right up until the dissolution of the USSR in 1991; and, after the Nato-inspired Maidan putsch in 2014, the Banderist brand of nationalist venom was injected mainline into the Ukrainian state, bursting it asunder along ethnic lines and sparking the current fratricidal war.

Cognitive dissonance

The progressive, heroic character of the first wave of Ukrainian immigration has been all but erased in today's Canadian milieu. All postwar governments in Ottawa supported and intrigued with the fascist diaspora.

Multitudes of dark secrets were buried like stinking corpses. Hideous crimes were whitewashed or concealed. The Banderists steadily gained leverage in Canadian politics, schools and universities, clerical circles, and society at large. They established a strong degree of ideological hegemony – favourable to western imperialism – within the minds of beguiled Ukrainian-Canadians.

The Canadian public has so far been willing to pay homage to Bandera with blue and yellow flags, to squander untold billions for the anti-democratic Zelensky regime that idolises many mass murderers. We appear to be stupid enough to give nazism and its current enablers a thunderous applause that shows the depths of our ignorance.

Canadians are now shocked and embarrassed. But that is encouraging. I, for one, was happy to see the twisted character of our ruling class so starkly exposed. They like to portray themselves as paragons of virtue, white knights, humanists even, but now we plainly perceive them as bad actors with farcical scripts, warmongers and hypocrites.

It's time to end the incessant war propaganda in our country. The simplistic 'good versus evil' paradigm is a lie. We must condemn the awful slaughter of the tens of thousands of young men on both sides of this terrible war, a slaughter instigated and fuelled by the imperialist west of young men who will never experience the fullness of life.

Ukraine war



'The lessons of history ...'

No matter how carefully our environment is manipulated, in the end, truth will out.

(Last period on a Friday afternoon, at a high school somewhere in England, a Year 11 History lesson is coming to an end.)

Teacher: That's the end of that module on the Nazis and the Holocaust. Any questions?

Liam: Sir, I saw on the internet there are loads of Nazis in Ukraine.

Teacher: Well, we hear stories like that, but it's not really true.

Tommy: Actually, I saw pictures of them where they all had Nazi badges and signs on their uniforms and loads of them had Nazi tattoos. There's even a Nazi part of the army – Azov battalion, they're called.

Molly: I saw something on TikTok about the tattoos – the Russians were getting captured Ukrainians to strip so they could see if they had tattoos and were Nazis.

Tommy: Is that why you were watching it, Molly?

Molly: Shut up, Tommy!

Teacher: Excuse me! Hang

on a minute, let's stop there ...

Rab: They're right, Sir – I've seen them too, and they always seem to be doing Nazi salutes.

Lisa: I saw on Instagram a torchlight procession like we saw on that Nazi video you showed us, Sir, and they were making salutes and singing Nazi songs.

Teacher: Can we stop shouting out please? You know very well you can't believe all you see on the internet and social media. You have to be careful.

Liam: But, Sir, isn't it true they have statues in the streets over there of Ukrainians who fought with the Nazis during World War 2? There's one famous one, can't remember his name though ...

Tommy: Bandera! He was the leader. They have statues and streets named after him.

Molly: And stamps!

Teacher: Listen up ...

Rab: Sir, did you see where a reporter interviewed a Ukrainian soldier and he had a type

of codename, can't remember the proper word for it, but guess what it was? Adolf! Adolf!!!! Can you believe that?

Teacher: Right ... quiet! Firstly, believe it or not, Adolf is a name ... not a very common one, admittedly, and it's unfortunate that he uses it and that he was the person they interviewed. But just because we see a few examples of something, we shouldn't generalise. And even if they do have Nazi insignia and tattoos, they are different to the Nazis in World War 2.

Liam: What was that documentary we watched, Sir, the one on the Nazis. What was it called again?

Teacher: Ah yeah, 'The Nazis – a warning from history'.

Liam: Right, Sir. A warning from history. Well shouldn't we be a bit worried about this lot today – isn't it like the warning?

Teacher: No, it's totally different. What we are talking about here is a few misguided patriots with, I suppose, what we could describe as ... a few ideological quirks.

Molly: But, Sir, what is it you

always say when we ask why we are learning about people from hundreds of years ago? You're always telling us that history often repeats itself and that the more we are aware of things from the past, the less chance we have of making similar mistakes in the future. How is this different?

Teacher: Firstly, while we study history and the past, it doesn't mean we must apply what we learn to everything going on today.

Molly: But surely ...

Tommy: What's a quirk?

Teacher: Stop, listen up. Can we have a bit of quiet for a minute? Just think back to when we discussed the thirty-year rule. Anyone remember what that is?

Tommy: It's where the government releases documents from thirty years ago so we can see what they were up to back then.

Teacher: Right, well, yeah ... more or less. And just because governments were doing things that we might not have approved of at that time, it doesn't mean the same thing is happening today. I mean, we now know from sources that the British government supported the likes of Osama bin Laden way back, people who eventually became enemies of ours.

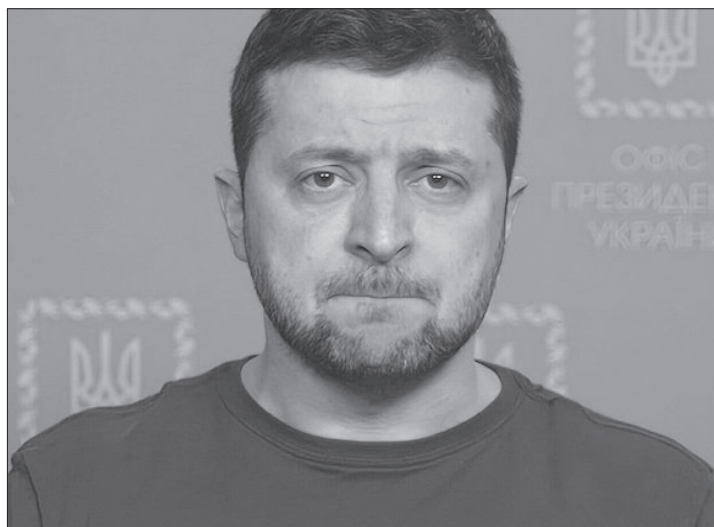
Rab: My old man's Scottish and he said that al-Qaeda were trained in Glencoe by the SAS because it was similar to the mountains in their own country.

Teacher: Well, not al-Qaeda ... they were called the mujahadeen.

Rab: But they were bin Laden's mob weren't they, Sir? That's what my old man said anyway ...

Teacher: Yes, **page 18** ▶

Ukraine war



How the west bullied Zelensky into prolonging the war

Now that their plans have gone awry, the thieves are falling out and accusations abound.

As the true scale of the disaster that has overtaken the USA's proxy war against Russia penetrates even the thickest bourgeois skulls, some of the bitterest mutual recriminations now being vented concern allegations that, were it not for interference by Nato, Washington, the European Union and Boris Johnson, the whole bloody affair could have been wrapped up in the first weeks of the war on terms far better for Kiev than anything remotely on offer now.

Instead, Ukrainian actor-stooge president Volodymyr Zelensky's apparent softening of stance, renouncing Nato and embracing neutrality, was unceremoniously dumped by the so-called 'friends of Ukraine'.

The authors of a damning report released in October provide a blow-by-blow account of just how it was that early talks between Kiev and Moscow, talks which arguably could have formed the basis of a workable peace treaty, saving thousands of lives and billions

of dollars, were instead *deliberately sabotaged* by the USA and its Nato sidekicks.

The report concludes: "Based on the publicly available reports and documents, it is not only plain that there was a serious willingness to negotiate on the part of both Ukraine and Russia in March 2022. Apparently, the negotiating parties even agreed on a draft treaty and referendum.

"Zelensky and [Russian president Vladimir] Putin were ready for a bilateral meeting to finalise the outcome of the negotiations.

"Fact is that the main results of the negotiations were based on a proposal by Ukraine, and Zelensky courageously supported them in an interview with Russian journalists on 27 March 2022, even after Nato decided against these peace negotiations. Zelensky had already expressed similar support beforehand in a sign that proves that the intended outcome of the Istanbul negotiations certainly corresponded to Ukrainian interests.

"This makes the western intervention, which prevented an early end to the war, even more disastrous for Ukraine." (How the chance was lost for a peace settlement of the Ukraine war by Michael von der Schulenburg, November 2023)

And, need one add, this prolongation has likewise been catastrophic for the collective west and its thwarted dreams of regime change in Moscow.

The co-author of the report, retired General Harald Kujat, had been the highest-ranking German officer of the Bundeswehr and at Nato, so let nobody accuse him of being a peacenik or soft on Russia. But his intervention gives us a valuable insight into the vicious in-fighting now besetting global ruling circles, and is worth reading in full.

We can take it as read that such voices as Kujat's are no less hostile to Russia than are those of anyone else in the establishment. Such critics of *the way the war was conducted* have no fundamental quarrel with the goal of the proxy war: to balkanise and weaken Russia, making her easy prey to oppression and exploitation by imperialism.

What sows division in the imperialist camp is disagreements over the best way to achieve this. Had the war gone well for the west, all disagreements over ways and means could have been smoothed over, and the criminal stupidity of US president Joe Biden, UK prime ministers Boris Johnson and Liz Truss, Nato chief Jens Stoltenberg and the rest of that sorry crew would soon be relegated to history and nobody would have bothered to read Kujat's report.

But the war did not go well for the west.

Lessons of history

◀ **page 17** they were linked to bin Laden. But getting back to what I was saying. We know that happened back then, but it doesn't mean that the government is doing stuff like that today.

Tommy: What about Syria, Sir?

Teacher: What about it, Tommy?

Tommy: I saw on the internet how we are supporting al-Qaeda and Isis over there?

Lisa: Isis?!

Teacher: Here we go again, believing everything you see on the internet. I thought you all knew better than that by now!

Lisa: So, we aren't supporting anyone there then, Sir?

Teacher: Well, we're providing support to democratic forces who are against the government there ... moderate rebels.

Molly: What's a 'moderate rebel', Sir?

Teacher: Well, it's fairly self-explanatory – they are people rebelling against the government, but they're not extremists. They're ... moderate.

Rab: Oh thanks sir, that's cleared it up ...

Teacher: Anyway, just think for a minute. Who did the Nazis perpetrate the Holocaust against?

Liam and Rab: The jews

Teacher: That's right. And what religion is President Zelensky?

Liam: He's jewish isn't he, Sir?

Teacher: Precisely. He's jewish. And not only that, when he ran for the presidency, he did so on a peace platform, calling for peace in eastern Ukraine where the fighting was going on. If the country was riddled

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with neo-nazis, why would they vote for him to be president?

Rab: But they didn't, Sir?

Teacher: What? What are you talking about, Rab?

Rab: They didn't. I saw a programme on him and it said that the west of the Ukraine, where they said most of the Nazis live, voted for his opponent. It was actually the votes from the rest of the country, the Russian parts, that helped him win!

Tommy: That's mental!

Rab: Straight up. Bloke said it, showed the map and everything!

Teacher: If that's the case, why did Zelensky go to Poland recently, and commemorate the anniversary of the killing of 70,000 Poles, or maybe even more, by Ukrainian nationalists during World War 2?

Liam: I saw that, Sir. But the same day didn't he meet all those Azov Nazi prisoners of war who had just been released and gave them a heroes' welcome?

Rab: No wonder, he's probably shit scared of them. Sorry, Sir ... I mean, he's very scared of them.

Teacher: Appropriate language please, Rab! Anyway, what were we saying? Oh yeah, that's different – they were prisoners of war he was welcoming back. And let's not forget we're talking about events nearly eighty years ago. German Nazis were unique, a one-off, and you can't compare today's Ukrainian nationalists with them.

(Bell rings)

Teacher: Anyway, there's the bell. As I said, that's the end of the module. Next week we start a new topic ... 'Imperialism – the good and the bad?' Enjoy your weekend!



Scottish Water workers vote to strike

Bosses are trying to force the 'modernisation' of pay structures – ie, to enforce ever more draconian pay cuts on workers.

Workers employed by Scottish Water have voted 89 percent to go on strike for decent pay.

They plan to strike for a total of 48 days strung out over November, December and January. Five hundred front-line workers will be taking action, including wastewater operatives, water treatment and burst repair operatives, maintenance engineers, electricians and sewage tank drivers.

The size of the majority voting for industrial action gives some indication of just how fed up workers are with Scottish Water's repeated attempts to bypass and undermine long-standing collective bargaining agreements, bouncing employees into accepting some divisive 'reward system' instead.

It is all the more galling that the directors who are so keen to drive down the workers' wages are so generous when it comes to their own remuneration.

Unite leader Sharon Graham raised an interesting question with her remark that "Scottish Water has created this mess through their own arrogance and insatiable greed in the boardroom, despite it being a public body."

For all that Scottish Water may be 'public' (having dodged Margaret Thatcher's privatising broom in 1989), it still quacks like a corporate duck. And in fact, in 2005, the non-household market was opened up to private-sector competition, allowing private companies to bid for public water services.

On this basis, Anglian Water was able to secure government contracts to manage services for Scotland's public bodies, further confusing matters.

The new CEO at Scottish Water, Alex Plant, took over in May this year, walking into an annual salary just shy of £300,000, £22,500 more than his predecessor, Douglas Millican.

Millican had left just in time to dodge the flak from the revelation that sewage had been dumped in Scottish waterways over 14,000 times in the last year of his tenure. Forty-seven million cubic metres of sewage got dumped in Scottish waters in 12 months, equal to the contents of nearly 19,000 Olympic swimming pools.

It is only now, now that the workers have been driven to strike in defence of their standard of living, that the company has suddenly woken up

to the vital importance of the work its employees do, and the serious consequences that must follow any interruption in that work.

Scottish Water chief operating officer Peter Farrer said: "We will do all we can to ensure customers do not experience any disruption to their water supplies and that treatment of the country's wastewater continues as usual, despite the industrial action. A reliable water source is vital for everyone. Maintaining public health and protecting the environment are our priorities [!] and it is the responsible course of action for us to have contingency plans ready."

Rather than lecture strikers on their social responsibilities, let Scottish Water's directors shoulder their own. Rather than plotting clever new ways of depressing workers' pay and conditions and turbocharging their own, let them do the job they are paid for.

And rather than muddle on with this queasy mix of public and private, let the immediate demand be: a national plan for all of Britain's waterworks, under public ownership.

History



British delegate in Athens: We must learn the lessons of our history

What lessons can the Greek revolutionary experience teach those of us struggling against imperialism and for socialism today?

The following speech was delivered by Comrade George on behalf of our party at the recent World Anti-imperialist Platform conference in Athens on 18 November 2023.

Comrades, since last we met, we cannot but feel the sea change in the conditions in which our struggles against imperialism and for socialism are being waged. We cannot but be aware that the imperialists of the US-led Nato block and their allies and stooges around the world are looking increasingly weak and vulnerable, even as they beat the drums for war and menace the people of the world.

The foundations for this turning in the tide of class struggle

have been in the process of being laid for some time.

They were laid by the heroic resistance to imperialist wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

They were laid by the steadfast refusal to submit to economic brigandage by the DPRK, China, Cuba, Vietnam, Laos, Iran, Syria, Venezuela and Russia.

They were laid by eight years of antifascist resistance in Donbass and by 75 years of anti-zionist resistance in the middle east.

They were laid by the rapid advance in development levels in the People's Republic of China, which has set itself the target of becoming technologi-

cally independent by 2025.

And they were laid by the deep crisis of the global capitalist economy, which has been inflicting wave after wave of austerity and war on the masses, particularly since the banking collapse of 2008. As we meet, a new downward lurch of this crisis is expected to break out into the open at any moment – and to bring with it consequences that will make the problems of 2008 look like a walk in the park.

At such a time, comrades, it is vital that we are doing everything we can to prepare our movement to overcome the obstacles that lie between us and a successful conclusion to our struggles against imperialism and for socialism.

Meeting in Athens gives us the opportunity to reflect on the experience of comrades here in Greece during the last great wave of revolutionary struggle – a wave that was unleashed by another crisis of overproduction and another global war drive. And as we examine afresh the great victories and defeats of our Greek comrades in the 1940s, we can see that this history contains many vital lessons for our movement today.

The KKE was founded, as were communist parties around the world, out of the upheaval and crisis of the first world war and following the triumph of the Bolshevik party in the Great October Socialist Revolution.

That earth-shaking event proved decisively the necessity of *Bolshevising our movement* – of building in every country

History

a party of the Leninist type. Parties founded firmly on the principles of scientific socialism and experienced in the art of popularising this Marxist understanding amongst the masses. Parties capable of attracting the best elements of the working class and training them. Parties able to navigate the complex waters of class struggle and hold firmly to the main objective at any particular moment, pointing out a clear line of march to the wider masses. Parties organised so that their cadres can carry out party decisions with the flexible manoeuvrability and iron discipline of a highly-motivated army.

Comrades, a movement and parties of this type are still what the working class needs if it is to succeed in freeing itself from exploitation once and for all. We must study seriously and in detail the experience of the Bolsheviks in building such a party, as well as the experience of doing the same in our own countries. Where did they succeed? Where did they fail? How can this understanding help our movement to develop today?

In the early days of the new Communist International, most of the parties that made it up were small. In many parts of the world, no meaningful socialist movement had existed before the October Revolution electrified the nascent national movements against colonialism, catapulting a new awareness of Marxism into their midst.

In Europe, new communist organisations were formed from the revolutionary wings of the old, rotten social-democratic parties that had failed the workers so badly during the interimperialist carnage and revolutionary crisis of World War One.

And here is another impor-

tant lesson for us today: it is not the size or the age of an organisation that determines its success, but its ability to find and stick to a correct line; its ability to withstand the constant pressures of bourgeois ideology and bourgeois political and social life; its sincerity in striving for a really revolutionary outcome; its success in training cadres who study deeply and who learn to put theory into practice, doing everything possible to raise the level of the collective's wisdom even as it learns to act in a united and disciplined way.

In every country, these new, small parties took strength from the success of the October Revolution in overthrowing Russian tsarism and imperialism, from the solving of the national question by the young USSR, from the liberation of Soviet women, and from the immense successes of the world's first planned economy – which unleashed the latent power and creativity of the working masses even as the global capitalist economy was sinking into its worst ever crisis of overproduction.

And, of course, Soviet socialism wasn't merely a distant example. It was a base for the world revolution in a very practical sense. From all over the oppressed world, young revolutionaries came to train – in Marxist philosophy, history and economics, in party-building and in the techniques and logistics of underground organisation and liberation warfare.

The great Greek communist leader Nikos Zachariadis is a case in point. As a young man he travelled to the Soviet Union and studied at both the International Lenin School and the Communist University of the Toilers of the East. He returned to Greece with the knowledge and experience necessary to help his party overcome its theoretical confusion and internal

divisions, leading the KKE in a phase of rapid growth and development.

Looking at this period, we see how our movement was able to grow rapidly in a situation where the communist forces were united and working together across international boundaries. Small communist parties were able to grow with the Soviet example and support at their back, and with a meaningful analysis and programme to offer to the workers at a time when the economic crisis was exposing the inescapable and obscene contradictions of the capitalist system.

This combination of the rise of an effective communist movement and the deepening crisis of the capitalist system forced the imperialists to resort to fascism, for fascism is the ideology of the imperialist bourgeoisie facing a deep economic crisis and the threat of its revolutionary overthrow. The imposition of fascist regimes in so many countries created an extremely difficult situation for the workers, who had to learn to wage the struggle in illegal ways.

Here again, the Bolshevik example was of great help, for they had been the first to really successfully combine legal and illegal forms of work, and had a great store of experience and knowledge to share.

In Greece, the KKE was banned and its leaders imprisoned by a pro-fascist regime that had the backing of British imperialism. The party was disorganised and had to adjust to illegal methods of work. But even from a prison cell, Comrade Zachariadis was one of the first leaders in Europe to call for a national front against fascism, galvanising the workers to action by writing his legendary letters from jail, in which he set out a com-

munist approach to waging the antifascist and anti-imperialist struggle.

Communist leadership of the Greek national-liberation war, waged first against Italian and then against German fascist occupation, has many parallels with the anti-Japanese war waged by Mao Zedong and his comrades in China – a war in which the communists had to overcome their own internal divisions and also to force the unreliable and anticommunist nationalist forces into cooperation.

Much can be learned about communist strategy and tactics in an oppressed country from studying these two examples.

In Greece, the communists made their first important advance in the battle against hunger, which had struck with a vengeance in the wake of the Nazi invasion of May 1941. The German occupiers, commandeering food and other resources for themselves, left the masses so bereft that a full one-third of the Greek people starved to death. The communist-organised National Liberation Front (EAM), recognising that this was its first duty, organised public dining rooms to ensure the physical survival of the people.

The communists also founded the Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS) – the only anti-Nazi resistance movement not supported by the British, which actually helped it to gain the loyalty of the masses. The revolutionaries soon established liberated areas in the countryside and grew strong enough not only to mount guerrilla attacks but to wage full-scale warfare against the German and Italian occupiers.

In the liberated areas, a new form of government was established. Not only was the population saved from **page 22** ▶

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Greek lessons

◀ **page 21** hunger, but for the first time ordinary Greek people, including women, were involved in determining their everyday lives, and for the first time they could be involved in political life under the leadership of the Communist party. This was the first time that women had been given the right to vote in Greece.

As in China, such activities immensely enhanced the reputation of the communists and won for them a huge and loyal following. The National Liberation Front grew to include two million members, one-third of the population – the biggest organisation ever to have existed in Greece.

Many lessons are encapsulated for communists in this history. We can see how, by mobilising the broadest possible section of the masses behind the immediate slogans of antifascism, anti-imperialism, liberation and self-determination, but without subordinating their communist programme and outlook, the best possible conditions were created for connecting Marxism with the masses.

Within such a movement, it was possible for all those involved to learn quickly and from experience that the most steadfast, the most dependable friends of the people were the communists, since they worked with selfless discipline and were seeking nothing for themselves, only wishing to share the lot of the workers and to help them come to the understanding that the only permanent solution to their problems lay in replacing capitalist anarchy with planned socialist production.

Of course, the Greek revolutionaries were helped enormously in these efforts by the example of Soviet social-

ism, whose light shone like a beacon across a world that seemed otherwise consumed by the darkness of imperialist fascism and war.

The question of how the Greek revolution came ultimately to fail even when victory seemed firmly within its grasp is one that is still debated today. Undoubtedly the absence of the party's most experienced practical and theoretical leader in Dachau concentration camp for four years played its part. So, too, did the complex geopolitical situation, in which the Greek partisans had essentially won their war against Nazi Germany before the war as a whole was over.

The compromises reached with British imperialism, which was *officially* on the same side of the global antifascist alliance as the Greek partisans, but in *practice* had been a long-term sponsor of fascist and monarchic forces in the country, also proved catastrophic. The perfidious British took full advantage of the terms of the peace deal to instal a government of their own choosing while breaking every one of the promises they had made to the revolutionary forces during negotiations.

Forty thousand English soldiers entered Athens, and they had no hesitation in using fascist security organisations that had been set up by the Nazis to establish the authority of the new regime. Britain's role in attempting to crush the Greek revolution was ruthless and bloody: it armed and directed the old monarcho-fascist organisations that were loyal to its interests, while bombing and starving working-class

populations without hesitation – in particular during the 37-day Battle of Athens in December 1944.

The release of Zachariadis from Dachau in 1945 returned him to Greece and restored him as general secretary of the party. The armed struggle was organised once again and elections organised by the British occupiers were boycotted, since it was clear they could be neither free nor fair under such circumstances.

The British Labour government that had come to power in 1945 was fully committed to the same path that Britain's wartime leader Winston Churchill had taken in Greece. Despite all the brutalities inflicted on the Greek people,

Thus we see that the ravages of revisionism within our own movement can be said to have claimed their first victims even before the death of Stalin.

however, British imperialism was unable to sustain the military and economic effort required to suppress the revolution, and

this role had to be handed over to the increasingly dominant power of US imperialism.

Under the 'Truman doctrine', the USA had committed itself to intervene anywhere in the world to protect any regime that was faced with imminent socialist revolution. In 1947-8, US forces launched a series of major offences in the mountains of Greece against the partisans. It was here that the US army used napalm bombs for the first time. This weapon has become synonymous with imperialist brutality since the Vietnam war, but the truth is that such weapons have been used by the imperialists in almost every war they have waged from 1948 until today, when the latest iteration of na-

palms – white phosphorous – is being dropped on civilians in Gaza.

During this vicious anti-insurgency campaign, partisans were beheaded, young men were driven out of the countryside en masse in order to deprive the democratic forces of recruits, and a network of prisons and concentration camps was established housing nearly 30,000 leftists, militants and their families. Every form of torture and degradation was inflicted on those unfortunate enough to be sent to such notorious dungeons as Makronisos and Yaros.

Meanwhile, the American soldiers acted as an army of occupation. As in Korea and elsewhere, they lived as a privileged caste, able to commit crimes against the local population with total impunity. From that day forward, the US embassy acted as a behind-the-scenes shadow government in Greece.

The last straw for the Greek partisans was the betrayal of Yugoslavia's leader Josip Broz Tito. Navigating a difficult international situation, in which the Soviets were working night and day to effect the recovery of their war-torn homeland, and in which the USA had an atom bomb but the Soviet Union did not, Josef Stalin's USSR *officially* gave no military assistance to Greek forces. Clearly an *unofficial agreement* existed in the socialist camp, however. The USSR in reality sent much support through back channels. It even sent tanks through Yugoslavia, but these were confiscated by Tito.

When Tito made the first rupture in the world socialist ranks, breaking with the Soviet Union and insisting on a 'third way' towards socialism, to the great delight of the imperialists, one of his many hostile acts was to close the Yugoslav

History

border to Greek partisans in July 1949, the KKE leadership having taken the principled position of supporting the CPSU's correct position regarding the socialist line of advance.

Trapped between the closed border and the US bombardment, the Democratic Army of Greece was finally defeated. As the vicious campaign of suppression and retribution unfolded, 60,000 Greek partisans, communists and family members were forced into exile in the socialist countries.

Thus we see that the ravages of revisionism within our own movement can be said to have claimed their first victims even before the death of Stalin.

The next great challenge for our movement was the change of political and economic line in the USSR that accompanied the change of leadership after Stalin's death in 1953. This was an ideological onslaught that very few parties proved able to withstand.

The theoretical gutting of many communist parties was a process already beginning to get underway in the imperialist countries, where welfare provision to the masses under the threat of socialist revolution had persuaded the communists of Britain, France and the USA to believe that there was now a peaceful road open to socialism. And this process was given a decisive and worldwide impetus by the ascent of Nikita Khrushchev to the position of CPSU and Soviet leader.

Very few parties had the kind of leadership that was able to see the danger in the new lines adopted by Khrushchev during this period. One of the great tragedies for both Greece and the world

is that one of the first and most principled of those who did see and did speak out against the problems he saw developing was KKE leader Nikos Zachariadis.

In many ways, Zachariadis was uniquely positioned to understand what was happening, both because of his former experience and training in the USSR and the Comintern, and also because of his first-hand experience of the changes that began to take place inside the Soviet Union after 1953. But given a situation in which he and his comrades were entirely dependent upon Soviet hospitality, Zachariadis needed both principle and bravery to speak up.

The reward for his courageous stand was to find himself effectively excommunicated from the movement. The Khrushchev clique had him removed as leader and then expelled entirely from his party. He was exiled to Siberia and his ability to influence the debate and strengthen the forces of anti-revisionism was cut off.

In this way, Nikos Zachariadis's legacy was also buried. So effectively was information about his life and work hidden away that very few communists outside of Greece today remember his name. This must be reversed and the true nature of his revolutionary legacy brought to light, for his example in standing up against opportunism and revisionism, no matter what the cost to himself, is one that must be followed by all those who sincerely work towards the defeat of capitalist-imperialism.

Let us take good note of this, the most important lesson of all. The strongest blows that have brought the most devas-

tation to our movement have not come from outside, but from within our midst.

The troubles brought upon us by Khrushchevite revisionism and the steady descent into bourgeois parliamentarism and 'Eurocommunism', the fratricidal warfare resulting from the Sino-Soviet split, the gutting and degeneration of parties that gave up a serious and independent study of Marxism ... these have done more damage than have the combined military assaults of German, Japanese, British and US imperialism.

Let us learn from the example of Comrade Kim Il Sung in Korea, who almost alone amongst communist leaders was able to navigate the turbulent ideological waters of this most difficult period. Not only facing the unremitting hostility of US imperialism but managing to maintain respectful and fraternal relationships with the USSR and China.

The key? Comrade Kim Il Sung and the leaders of the Workers Party of Korea did not give up their independent study of Marxism; did not give up their right to question the decisions or proposals of the leaders even of the biggest communist parties in the world.

This is a lesson to communists everywhere. Not one of us should hand over the entire burden of thinking to our leaders, no matter how well they have proved themselves in the past. Our movement is one that relies on deep knowledge and collective decision-making, and our discipline must be based on this knowledge.

Without this basic requisite of Bolshevik organising, we are left with only blind obedience and unquestioning loyalty, which is a perverse mockery of the communist unity we are striving to build. Indeed, blind

obedience and unquestioning loyalty are the hallmarks not of communist but of fascist organisations.

The better educated each one of our members becomes, the more they strive as individuals to master the science of Marxism, the more effective and capable will be the collective of which they are a part – the better able their parties will be to reach correct decisions, the more confident will the members be in carrying out the party's programme, and the more quickly will our parties discover and rectify their mistakes.

As this new period of revolutionary upsurge develops, this is the task that is urgently put before communists everywhere, whose firm presence is desperately needed to give theoretical clarity and organisational discipline to the workers' movements against imperialist war and exploitation. The stakes could not be higher.

Let us rise to this challenge, comrades, and take this message back to our comrades all over the world:

Now is the time to master Marxism!

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British politics



Open letter to CPB: Give up the Labour party and take the revolutionary path

Sincere communists must make a serious appraisal of their work at this time of deepening crisis and renewed struggle.

The following open letter was handed out to delegates arriving at the 2023 congress of the Communist Party of Britain (CPB) on 4 November. A longer version is available on our website.

Dear comrades, we congratulate you on the occasion of your 2023 congress and send greetings to delegates, who are tasked with navigating the way forward for your organisation in these turbulent times. As Mao Zedong said: “Everything under heaven is in utter chaos – the situation is excellent.”

Nato’s failing war on Russia fought with its Banderite fascist proxies in Ukraine; the conflagration in the middle east sparked by the heroic Palestinian resistance; the wave of revolutions across the Sahel; the strong and ongoing resistance of popular socialist Bolivarian and progressive governments in Latin America; and the steadfast struggle of socialist China, DPRK and Cuba, Laos and Vietnam, as well as the steady rise of the Brics nations and China’s Belt and Road, are shaking the foundations of US-led imperialist hegemony.

The global capitalist economic crisis and the deepening im-

poverishment of British workers herald a period of renewed struggle, and communists must make themselves fit to provide robust, far-sighted and historically-rooted leadership.

After reactionary years when apparently ‘nothing happened’, we are entering months, weeks and days in which those years are embodied.

The future belongs to communism

Today, Saturday 4 November, at 1.00pm, we will be holding a solemn meeting to commemorate the 106th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Bolivar Hall, Grafton Way. As communists, we don’t need to tell you the importance we attach to this event, which shattered the “iron ring of imperialist ties”, as Lenin put it, and ushered in a new era, the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the era of working-class power and the overthrow of the despotic dictatorship of the finance capitalists whose rule is despoiling the earth.

We believe that despite the temporary reverses suffered by the working class – consequent upon the victory of revisionism in the USSR, the Sino-Soviet split, the demise of the

once glorious USSR and eastern European people’s democracies, and the 33 years of renewed imperialist wars against the workers and oppressed peoples that we have lived through – the inherent contradictions and perennial anarchy of imperialist economic and political relations are still driving the world in the direction of communism.

It is our job to hasten that journey, with Marxist-Leninist understanding, education and leadership.

Unity is strength

This slogan of the trade union movement we take to be axiomatic. But it is axiomatic also that the bourgeoisie goes to great lengths to divide, weaken and suborn the working class and its political movement.

The split in socialism

Our characterisation of the Labour party is strikingly different from that of the CPB leadership. *It is this principal difference that separates our comrades from yours* – not any personal, historic or other petty individual or allegedly ‘sectarian’ concern.

When we appraise Labour’s history (and please see our pamphlet Britain’s Perfidious Labour Party to examine our arguments and evidence in detail), it is clear that it remains what Lenin described more than a century ago as a “bourgeois labour party”.

Labour is *not* a part – let alone the core – of the working class’s struggle for social emancipation. Rather, it is the principal means of limiting, controlling, corrupting and frustrating all and every attempt to bring socialism to Britain.

Starmers’ Labour

It is therefore particularly disappointing to see CPB leader Robert Griffiths write in his

notes to this congress that “A Labour victory at the next general election would be a better outcome than a Conservative victory, raising working-class morale and demands.” (Morning Star, 11 September 2023)

This Wednesday, at Chatham House, Sir Keir called for *ongoing support for Israeli genocide in Gaza* – “with humanitarian [!] pauses”, if you please. He has supported the mass punishment and siege of 2.3 million Gazans, including cutting off their food, water, fuel and medicine. He has justified the bombing of hospitals, while saying it is not his job to “judge who is or isn’t committing war crimes” – unless, of course, they are Russians!

It would seem that neither 70 years of the decline of British communism (owing to the post-WW2 CPGB’s having trailed in the wake of an unheeding Labour party, following the edicts of its – and now your – British Road to Socialism programme) nor the rise and fall of the Corbyn project have taught your leaders anything about Labour’s true nature.

Comrades, you have a historic opportunity this weekend to discard your support for the Labour party and take the revolutionary road. We urge you to seize it with both hands.

Labour aristocracy

Britain, as the oldest imperialist country, having developed a monopoly on manufacture and conquered colonies all over the world, was able to bribe its own working-class leadership. This was noted by Marx and Engels, who referred to the tame labour leaders and the upper stratum of privileged workers as the “labour aristocracy”. As a result, Lenin urged communists to go “lower and deeper” to the mass of poorest, most disenfranchised, most revolutionary workers, in order to find the real support-

British politics

ers of socialism.

From its origin, Labour was the vehicle of the most privileged section of the British working class, and has bound itself hand and foot to British Imperialism. Through all the key struggles of the working class, it has stood with the monopoly capitalists.

At its very formation, Labour rejected class struggle, opting for 'parliamentary representation' – begging the ruling class for crumbs. During WW1, it tried to suspend all class struggle – against opposition from John Maclean and the Clydeside shop stewards, amongst others. Arthur Henderson's Labour party stood with the warmongering colonial imperialist class, dripping in blood from head to foot, and recruited workers to the slaughter to defend the profits and colonies of British capital.

Loyalty to ruling class

Labour supported the continued colonisation of Ireland. When Easter Rising leader James Connolly, wounded and bleeding and propped on a chair, was executed in 1916, news of his death was greeted by Labour MPs with a standing ovation in Parliament.

Ramsay MacDonald's first Labour government supported the continued enslavement of India, the suppression of the revolutionary Ghadar party and the strangling of the Indian Communist party, as well as the hanging of Bhagat Singh, India's foremost revolutionary youth leader.

MacDonald's government defended colonial possession of the Suez Canal, helped to establish Zionist settlement in Palestine, ordered the wholesale bombing and suppression of the Iraqi people in 1924 and conducted a naval bombardment against China.

Labour and the Fabians pro-

moted the concept of the *inferiority of the working poor*, and of *European racial superiority* in general. They wanted it understood that they were the guardians of empire – with all its attendant horrors, racism and superexploitation of the colonial slaves.

In 1917, Labour stood against the Bolsheviks and ever since has been the greatest bastion of anticommunism in Britain.

In 1926, the TUC and Labour leadership collaborated to break the general strike – just as they would again in 1984 to break the heroic miners' strike. Throughout the great depression, Labour leaders joined governments of 'national unity', sending troops against strikes using the emergency powers legislation to force the most brutal austerity measures onto British workers.

It was no accident that the Labour party rejected all the advances of the young CPGB to affiliate – this refusal was vital to the ruling-class policy of wiping out independent action and leadership for the British working class. This policy has never changed.

Labour launched a war upon every communist-led mass movement – the tenants' and unemployed workers' movements, the Anti-Imperialist League, Friends of Soviet Russia, the Minority Movement in the trade unions, and even the CPGB-led antifascist recruitment drive for the International Brigades, formed to defend republican Spain and fight Franco's fascist forces.

Attlee's Labour

After WW2, the Attlee government formed the imperialist warmongering and anti-Soviet Nato 'alliance' (of which Keir Starmer is so proud), initiated a decade-long brutal colonial war in Malaya, and was ac-

tive in its attempts to reinstall Dutch colonialism to Indonesia and the anticommunist pogroms that later resulted.

Labour suppressed the 'Mau Mau' national-liberation struggle in Kenya, defending apartheid and placing Kenyan revolutionaries in concentration camps.

Attlee's government helped to preserve Japanese fascist forces for use in controlling southeast Asia, facilitating with the USA the reinstallation of its colonial police in south Korea, and actively participating in the genocidal Korean war, in which four million Koreans died, as well as reinstalling French colonialism in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Blair's 'new' Labour

Tony Blair and Gordon Brown simply continued this long tradition when their governments crushed workers' rights, facilitated the transfer of wealth to the capitalists in the City of London, clamped down on the 'anti-social' working class, and accelerated the demolition of the NHS through privatisation measures.

In the same proud tradition, they prosecuted their genocidal wars in Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq.

In 1997, Brown famously gave over control of macroeconomic policy to the capitalists (Bank of England if you prefer), and in 2008, as prime minister, he bailed out the banks to the tune of £850bn, ushering in another era of brutal austerity in Britain and laying the foundations for the current cost of living crisis.

Tony Blair is now 'back' and helping to install a very Blairite Keir Starmer, who has, like Blair, signed his pact with the Devil – in the form of Rupert Murdoch and the other representatives of Anglo-American imperialism. He will be our next

prime minister, because the *political crisis* instituted by the corrupt and self-seeking Tories needs new window-dressing if the capitalist class is to remain in power. Not because Starmer's Labour offers any substantial change, and certainly no challenge to British monopoly capital.

If the best a 'communist strategy for the left' can offer is to support Labour as being "better than the Tories", then you may as well issue a certificate of the CPB's bankruptcy here and now. Shut up shop, disband and join Labour if this is really what you believe.

But there is another choice!

Subservience to the trade union aristocracy

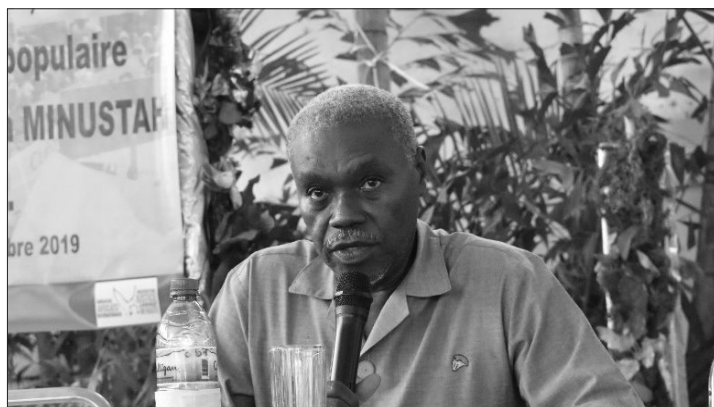
Vote against your central committee's 'political resolution', which is a shamefaced vote of support for Labour, and overturn the historically-discredited BRS programme. If you carry on down this road, you will consign yourselves and your comrades to years of futile activity and hold back your ability to contribute to the rapidly escalating struggles of the revolutionary movement in Britain and the wider world.

Lenin long ago wrote that "Social democracy has become a stinking corpse!" He was not playing with words, but giving a real political characterisation of the rotteness of this ideology, which has at every turn betrayed the workers and kept them languishing in wage-slavery and servitude to the capitalist class.

If the CPB proves unable to rise to this challenge, then others will most assuredly rise to the task. For those comrades who do not want to follow this futile trajectory, we welcome your help in building a true communist party in Britain.

Join us!

Americas



Kick the Kenyan police thugs out of Haiti

Imperialists are assembling yet another proxy force to do their dirty work for them in the oppressed world.

Ever since the small Caribbean island of Haiti shook off its chains in the successful slave revolt of 1791, it has had to fight tooth and nail to cling onto every shred of its independence.

In order to pay ‘compensation’ to the former slaveowners for the loss of their ‘possessions’, the new republic was saddled with enormous debt, held by French banks – a start which set a pattern of indebtedness for the new republic that would later serve as the foundation of classic colonial and neocolonial domination.

Indigenous industry and agriculture were undermined by the dumping of cheaper imported products, thereby wrecking the home market, and the political leadership of the country fell to an unstable comprador section of the bourgeoisie bribed to serve the interests of French or US imperialism in exchange for a few crumbs from the table.

Direct and indirect colonial control

This combination of economic instability and political venal-

ity has condemned the Haitian masses to a precarious existence for two centuries, punctuated every once in a while by the arrival of one or another ‘saviour’, come to ‘rescue’ the country from chaos. This is the purest colonial arrogance and an insult to Haiti’s dignity and independence.

Every new intervention to ‘assist’ the Haitian people has ended up by further weakening the authority of its government, increasing its debt dependency, multiplying imperialist-backed NGOs and further demoralising its people.

This was the case in the periods of direct occupation by the USA, such as those which occurred from 1915 to 1934 and again from 1994 to 2004. Such was also the case between 2005 and 2017, when Brazil led another consortium, the UN-sponsored Minustah mission (United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti) whose effects on the country were catastrophic for the people.

One of the commanders running Minustah, General Augusto Heleno, later showed his

true colours when he popped up as a minister in Jair Bolsonaro’s ultra-right-wing government. Most recently, Heleno stands accused of involvement in the 8 January abortive coup that was staged by Bolsonaro’s supporters when he lost the election. And this reactionary anti-democrat was supposedly helping Haiti ‘secure democracy’!

Minustah certainly left its mark on Haiti, though not in the way intended: Brazilian soldiers left behind them a trail of women they had raped and children they had fathered and abandoned, while some 800,000 Haitians were infected and 40,000 died during a cholera epidemic that was allowed to rage unchecked during the mission’s watch.

The disease had been carried into the country by Nepalese soldiers who formed a part of Minustah’s forces – soldiers whose health status was unchecked when they landed in Haiti despite the fact that a virulent cholera epidemic was raging in Nepal at the time. Besides the terrible toll in human lives, the epidemic had huge consequences for the economy, leading to a catastrophic drop in rice production and in exports.

As Haitian economist and professor Camille Chalmers has pointed out: “If they send a stabilisation force that produces this, they can’t continue to talk about the United Nations as a space for fighting for human rights.”

Kenyan proxies prepare to continue imperialists’ dirty work

Now as the country reels from a succession of natural disasters (earthquakes, mudslides), economic collapse (half of all Haitians don’t get enough to eat, with a quarter of its children chronically mal-

nourished) and social chaos (the country’s previous leader was assassinated and rival armed gangs terrorise the people at will), the latest ‘saviours’ (ie, imperialist proxy forces) now packing their bags for the Caribbean are members of the Kenyan police force.

This armed contingent of the Nairobi constabulary – in practical effect soldiers – is to be sent to Haiti to head up an ‘international team’ tasked with ‘neutralising’ the armed gangs, ‘protecting’ civilians and bringing peace, security and order to Haiti’s streets.

The competence of the Kenyan police to restore said peace and harmony anywhere may be determined by the recent findings of Amnesty International. “In an open letter to the United Nations security council in August, Amnesty International said it was concerned about the plan due to the Kenyan police’s record of responding using excessive and unnecessary force.

“The organisation said it had documented more than 30 cases of Kenyan police officers killing protesters through shootings and tear-gas suffocation during various protests this year. Amnesty has also accused the police of beating protesters, as well as unlawfully arresting and detaining them.”

It is interesting to see how the former British colony of Kenya is now functioning as a security hub for Anglo-American armed interventions. Britain has recently beefed up its own armed presence in Kenya, in 2020 opening a £70m facility, said to be a vital hub where British soldiers prepare for operations around the globe. Britain currently has around 230 (acknowledged) military personnel based permanently in the African country, with thousands more visiting every year

Americas

to take part in joint exercises.

The USA has already promised £82m towards the Haiti adventure, relieved that it has managed to persuade Kenya to act as a proxy in the affair, so malodorous is the memory of earlier direct US meddling.

But the hand of the USA rests heavy on the shoulder. US defence secretary Lloyd Austin has signed a five-year deal with Kenyan defence minister, Aden Duale, under which Washington will supply money, weapons and training to enable Kenya to work as a US proxy in Africa and Latin America.

The Communist Party of Kenya has responded to the proposed expedition to Haiti: "The Communist Party of Kenya demands that the Kenya Kwanza government rescind their proposal to send 1,000 police to Haiti, while calling on

the Kenyan people to join the Haitian masses and popular progressive forces worldwide in opposing the intervention, continued occupation and neo-colonial governance of Haiti by the Core Group and the UN."

The USA doesn't give a damn about the welfare or security of the Haitian masses, just so long as it can go on looting the country's resources and preserving US hegemony. What bothers Washington is that if things get beyond a certain point, the Haitian masses may enter the fray, with incalculable consequences.

The USA should not forget that Haiti was born out of a heroic revolt against slavery, and that such origins cannot but leave an indelible imprint. Since 1998, Haiti has cooperated with its socialist neighbour Cuba on a programme

of public health – something which the Haitians seized upon, overcoming resistance from the government. The country has also benefited from Venezuela's Petrocaribe oil programme.

Professor Chalmers has this reminder of how closely the historical anticolonial experience binds together the peoples of the Caribbean: "You know the story of Bolívar, who came to Haiti and stayed here for three months, at a time when he was completely defeated militarily. He left here with weapons, ammunition, ships and soldiers, and wrote in his memoirs that without the presence of the 350 Haitian soldiers, it would have been impossible to defeat Spain."

Where imperial Spain went long ago, may the Yankees soon follow.

Athens statement

◀ **page 28** onist criminals push to achieve their genocidal aims, the more surely do they create the conditions in which a united middle-eastern response will emerge and prove decisive. Not only the rabid government of Netanyahu and co, but the entire settler-colonial population of Israel are waking up to the fact that their days as a supremacist outpost of western imperialism are coming to an end.

In each case, the sympathy and increasingly active support of all progressive humanity is on the side of the anti-imperialist forces.

In each case, the unconditional support of the imperialist and stooge politicians and media for the forces of reaction is exacerbating the crisis of legitimacy that their governments are already facing.

As we stand here today, com-

memorating the anniversary of the heroic antifascist uprising of students at the Athens Polytechnic 50 years ago, we note that the student rebellion was expressing the sentiments of the wider working class, many of whom flocked to join it once the standard had been raised.

The call of the risen workers and peasants for 'Bread, education and liberty' echoed the demand of the poverty-stricken, war-torn masses of Russia who demanded 'Peace, land and bread' in 1917. These demands are so simple, yet the self-styled 'masters of the universe' cannot fulfil them. They can only answer with more violence, more repression, more hunger and more misery.

Understanding this simple truth was what impelled the Russian people to carry out the October Revolution. And it is what has driven every national-liberation and socialist struggle that followed in the footsteps of October.

This is the understanding we must once again bring to workers everywhere. Imperialism cannot be reasoned with, and it cannot solve the most basic problems of the masses.

It can only loot, pillage and burn. And it is willing to drown the world in blood in order to hang on to its ill-gotten gains and maintain the lords of finance capital in their position of dominance over all.

This lesson has been taught to the working masses over and over again in blood.

Let us learn from our history and throw all our weight behind the forces of resistance in the titanic battles to come. Let the next wave of struggle be as earth-shaking as was the first!

**Death to the warmongering
Nato imperialist bloc and
all its fascist proxies!**

Victory to the resistance!

Onward to socialism!

Party arrests

◀ **page 2** speak for all Jewish people, is itself antisemitic.

3. Defend Palestine! Refuse to let the British government continue its drive to criminalise support for Palestine.

4. Defend civil liberties and oppose collusion! By arresting our comrades, who are criticising Zionism and British imperialist support for Zionism, the Met police are making themselves an accessory to the war crimes currently being committed in Gaza.

5. No cooperation with Zionist war crimes and the Nato war machine!

The comrades arrested were released after 24 hours in police custody, but only on bail, and with conditions that they refrain from handing out or selling leaflets or literature until February of next year.

They are also required not to 'deviate from the main route' of any demonstration and not to 'carry swastikas'.

The police in the meantime will 'gather evidence' and decide whether or not to pursue prosecution.

If a case is brought, it is our intention to refute the charges and defend our comrades.

We categorically reject the accusation that to oppose Zionism is to be racist.

On the contrary, it is the supremacist settler-colonial project of Israel that is racist, and we will continue to oppose its racism, no matter how much pressure the ruling class tries to bring to stop us spreading awareness of the truth.

Proletarian



Athens Polytechnic commemoration: 'Our lessons have been learned in blood'

A seismic shift is taking place in the global balance of class forces. Anti-imperialists everywhere must play their part.

The following joint statement was read by Comrade Joti Brar on behalf of World Anti-imperialist Platform delegates at a demonstration in Athens on Friday 17 November.

The demonstration marked the 50th anniversary of the Polytechnic uprising, in which radical students defied the repressive military-fascistic Greek regime that had controlled the country on behalf of US imperialism since 1967.

The three-day uprising attracted wide popular support from workers and peasants but was eventually put down by force, as a tank smashed the gates of the Polytechnic building and military forces entered the campus.

Around a hundred were killed and many more were disappeared into the regime's prisons. The anti-imperialist, anti-Nato, popular demands of the people were a continu-

ation of the traditions of the Greek revolution of the 1940s and marked the beginning of the end for the military junta, which fell in 1974.

It cannot have escaped the attention of those gathered here today that a seismic shift is taking place in the global balance of class forces.

Particularly significant events have transpired in the last year and a half – events that were triggered by the deepening of the global capitalist crisis and by the accelerating drive to war and domination that is the imperialists' response to this crisis.

The launch of Russia's special military operation on 24 February 2022 was the first and most crucial of these events. This was the date on which the Russian government and people declared 'no more' to the war of aggression being

waged against them all along their borders, and most especially in Ukraine.

The installation of a new, popular government in Niger on 26 July 2023 was the next big event to shake the imperialists' complacency. This was a clarion call to the superexploited people and its effects are being felt all over the African continent.

And then on 7 October 2023 news reached us of the launch of the Al-Aqsa Flood battle by the united forces of the Palestinian resistance. With the onset of this operation, another line in the sand has been drawn, another call sounded whose echoes are reverberating around the world.

Each of these events has been long in the making. Each represents a decisive turning point in the development of these three separate but related struggles against imperialist domination of the globe.

Each one has struck a mighty blow at the imperialist system and revealed an essential impotence at the heart of the

seemingly all-powerful US-led Nato war machine – an impotence which has left their vicious fascistic proxies glaringly exposed.

For all their firepower, for all their economic might, for all their undoubted ability to inflict horrendous suffering on a targeted people, the imperialists are unable to beat down the forces of resistance, and the more those forces work together, as they are increasingly doing, the more impossible the task of defeating them becomes.

In Ukraine, it is clear that, however long the war continues to be fuelled by western money and weapons, the days of the fascistic stooge regime of Zelensky and co are numbered.

In Niger, too, the imperialists have been unable to muster a reliable proxy force capable of reimposing their diktat. Compradors across the region are starting to worry that their days, too, might be numbered.

And in Palestine, we see that the harder the zi- **page 27** ▶