

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!



Gaza burning Assange languishing

Where are the trade unions?

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Galloway victory in Rochdale by-election reflects anger over Gaza genocide

In total opposition to what the media were assuring us last week (that residents of all backgrounds wanted the election to be fought on local issues *only*), the result in the Rochdale by-election, with a large majority to George Galloway and the Workers party, shows that a very large number of those who voted did indeed see the election as a *referendum on British complicity in the Gaza genocide – and on Labour party complicity in particular.*

As Galloway himself declared from the podium as results were announced: “Keir Starmer, this is for Gaza! You have paid and you will pay a high price for the role that you have played in enabling, encouraging and covering for the catastrophe currently going on in occupied Palestine in the Gaza Strip.”

We have written recently about the growing disgust and disillusionment amongst those who are paying attention to the horrors unfolding in Palestine – both toward the hypocrisy and servility of politicians of all the major parties, and toward the obviously lying and biased media coverage.

This in turn is putting pressure on the politicians and media to at least *look* as if they are ‘doing something’ to end the genocide. But this need is

in strong contradiction with the ruling class’s primary agenda of supporting Israel no matter what and facilitating its genocidal war, which is also a *struggle for the survival of imperialism’s settler-colonial project* in the middle east.

Hence the ongoing chaos in the Mother of all Parliaments when anything even slightly approaching a meaningful debate or vote looks likely to take place – and this despite the toothless natures of such a vote in practice.

It is very much to be hoped that George Galloway will use his new position to highlight these behind the scenes manoeuvrings, the hypocrisy and control built into arcane parliamentary procedures, and the multitude of other ways in which ‘British democracy’ works to *prevent* the will of the people being expressed.

We hope also that he will add his voice to those calling for an end to every aspect of complicity in Israeli war crimes, which are also British and US war crimes.

An election over issues that matter

Voters for all three main parties stayed away from the poll, as can be seen from the fact that the runner-up was a self-declared “non-political”

independent candidate whose campaign focused on the closure of the local maternity hospital and A&E department, the lack of local support services, the need for decent sports facilities for young people, and the dire financial position of the town’s ailing rugby and football clubs.

In general, while the issue of local services and facilities are what really matter to most workers, the conversation during general elections tends to be dominated by the narrative of Tory v Labour as painted in the corporate press, with very little space for local campaigners or small parties to break through, and all main parties issuing leaflets in which they promise to fix local problems if elected – and are not heard from again until another election cycle comes around.

It is worth noting that in the 2019 general election, 90 percent of Rochdale’s votes went to the three main parties, while in yesterday’s by-election, with anger and disgust at all three reaching all-time highs, Labour, Tories and LibDems together received *just 27 percent* of a low turnout vote.

By-elections are well known for being places where the electorate vents its frustration at the actions of unpopular governments or unpopular sitting parliamentarians. But to hit

an unpopular government *and* unpopular opposition at the same time is quite something. The fact that not a single one of the mainstream bourgeois parties was the beneficiary of Labour’s internal chaos over Gaza speaks volumes.

Workers’ alienation from electoral politics deepening

The very low turnout (just 39 percent) also indicates that the steady growth of disenfranchisement and cynicism amongst working-class people continues – a trend that is made up in equal parts of distrust of electoral politics in general and disgust with the Labour party in particular.

As the war drive accelerates and the economic crisis deepens, Keir Starmer will struggle to find ways to restabilise his base in the coming months, and will no doubt be hoping that in most of the country those who have come to hate and despise his party simply do not go to the polls at all.

We can expect a doubling down on anti-immigrant rhetoric across the corporate media and from politicians of all the major parties as they scramble for the votes of ‘middle England’ while working hard to keep workers blaming one another for the problems created by the monopoly capitalist system of production for profit.

Meanwhile, it is the job of socialists to help workers understand the true cause of their problems so that they can organise themselves on a revolutionary programme that will deliver not only election upsets but systemic change; to move on from protesting against one war to building the kind of movement that can put an end to the bloodthirsty warmongering system of imperialism in its entirety.

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Tick. Tock. What did you do to stop the genocide in Gaza, Daddy?

I waited as long as possible, and then helped to empty an already toothless resolution of all its meaning, my son.

On Wednesday 21 February, while British justice was in action figuring out how best to break all its own rules so as to accede to the wishes of US imperialism and extradite the persecuted journalist Julian Assange, the Mother of all Parliaments was making a mockery of another pillar of our hallowed British democracy by tying itself up in knots over the question of the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

This heinous crime, unfolding in front of the eyes of a horrified humanity, is one with which almost all our parliamentarians and parliamentary parties are complicit, but over which they are coming under increasing pressure from an irate and disgusted public.

As a result, and as a safely marginal section of the Commons, the Scottish National party (SNP) asked for a parliamentary debate on whether the British government should 'call for a ceasefire' in Gaza (whether British imperialism

should stop sending weapons is a whole other question, of course).

When the debate should have kicked off, a Labour party MP spent 10 minutes filibustering to delay the proceedings (just one of many time-honoured democratic practices on display in the chamber during that session) while the Labour leader negotiated behind the scenes to have the wording of the resolution changed.

Tick. Tock.

The nub of the matter stems from the fact that the great human rights lawyer Sir Keir Starmer won't allow his MPs to agree to the proposition that Israel's bombing campaign is "collective punishment", *although it clearly is*, since that has implications under international law that the law-fearing Zionist-faithful Labour party doesn't want to have to deal with.

And so Parliament descended into a ridiculous and chaotic

drama as the circus clowns ran around pretending that they really are the nation's decision-makers, expressing shock and outrage at the perversion of their hallowed 'procedures' – a set of arcane rituals whose collective effect is to ensure the total lack of any meaningful discussion and to close down the possibility of unexpected outcomes.

Tick. Tock.

What actually happened? The Speaker of the House broke with the rules he's supposed to be enforcing and allowed Labour to introduce its own amendment so that Labour MPs could vote in favour of a very watered down and meaningless 'demand'. Which they duly did. Box ticked. Look: we want peace; we support both sides; don't blame us.

Tory and SNP MPs stormed out at this blatant favouritism. The Speaker left, then came back and apologised. And his apology was duly accepted.

In the end, of course, all the outraged parties will be perfectly happy with the outcome, which has saved all concerned from difficult conversations

with their constituents, allowed all concerned to blame everyone else, and ensured nothing was actually done that might impede British imperialist support for Israel's genocidal war against the Palestinian people.

Tick. Tock.

Meanwhile facts on the ground continue to be made, and the hollow calls for a 'ceasefire' or 'temporary humanitarian pause', are ignored and even mocked by the Zionist forces, who know they can continue to act with the same impunity that has for 75 years fed the monumental arrogance and supremacism we see today.

Bombs are delivered from the USA and Britain. British and US special forces continue to covertly assist on the ground. Aid trucks are blockaded by rabid settler militia without consequence. Israeli politicians announce that any baby over the age of four is a legitimate target. Palestinians are rounded up and interned. Homes and land on the West Bank are seized.

Gazans freeze. And starve. And suffer continual bombardment. Every vestige of their culture and civilization is razed to the ground. Rabid politicians openly declare their intention of settling the land that has been 'cleared'.

And, as the author of a Times article pointed out, while the Palestinian representative at the ICJ still clings desperately to the 'internationally recognised' viability of the 'two-state solution' and expresses his faith in a future in which Palestinians and Israelis live side by side in two separate ethnostates ('democracies'), the Israeli Knesset has voted that *it will never recognise a Palestinian state*.

Tick. Tock.

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Rochdale 1 Sunak 0: decoding Rishi's meltdown

Ruling class in a panic over Gaza and gearing up for political policing as Rishi Sunak lashes out against 'extremism' and 'threats to democracy'.

The popular explosion of grief and anger against the genocide underway in Gaza is sending shock waves through British society. Many people who yesterday had the haziest notion of what is going on in the middle east are starting to challenge the received BBC wisdom.

Complete strangers stop you in the street, point at your Free Palestine badge and demand to be told what it means, or just give you a beaming thumbs up. The courageous struggle of the Palestinians to reclaim their homeland is sparking an unprecedented wave of popular support in Britain.

In just a few months, more militant solidarity with Palestine has been displayed on British streets than had previously been achieved over the course of many years of declining to buy oranges from Marks

and Spencer, sending imploring letters to MPs and passing pious resolutions in the trade unions.

Resistance shifts the needle once again

As had been the case with the original anti-apartheid movement, the one targeting apartheid South Africa, whilst the anti-apartheid movement may have helped shift British public opinion, what finally sank the apartheid state was not the moral triumph of ethical shopping choices in Britain but the revolutionary mobilisation in the townships and the armed struggle led by *uMkhonto we Sizwe*, the liberation army founded by Nelson Mandela after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960.

A comparable step-change in the anti-zionist movement in occupied Palestine is send-

ing ripples out across the world now. In Britain, there have been mass demonstrations in solidarity with Palestine in London, as well as in many other cities.

The zionists should not be surprised if, after being used as human punchbags ever since the fascist 'ethnic cleansing' of the 1948 *Nakba*, and having been largely abandoned to their fate by neighbouring Arab governments, the Palestinian masses should have learned never again to put their faith in promises made by imperialists (as was the case with the Oslo Accords of 1993, which in practice just accelerated the settlements in the West Bank), instead seeking and finding friends in the anti-imperialist movement with whom they could coordinate their fight, simultaneously raising the technical level to a qualitatively new plane.

It is this great leap forward, in confidence, in self-reliance, in military technique, in coordination and in ideology, which

so badly shakes the zionists and their imperialist backers. All the lies they told about decapitated babies and the rest, fictions which soon stood revealed as the authentic product of a diseased imperialist psyche, reflected the hysterical panic which has seized the colonial masters when confronted with the qualitatively new stage in the progress of the national resistance struggle.

Panic and disarray in the imperialist camp

Suella Braverman, in her brief stint as home secretary from 6 September to 19 October 2022, revealed the degree of fear and loathing felt by British imperialism as it saw Israel, the central plank of its domination in the middle east (as second fiddle to the USA), being openly questioned and challenged on the streets of Britain.

Braverman's hysterical rant, denouncing the entirely democratic exercise of free speech as "hate marches" and abusing the police for supposedly being too soft on demonstrators, probably accounts for her summary dismissal, cooler heads perhaps counselling that escalating repression of the protests in this way would only raise the stakes and deepen and widen the protests – which in fact is exactly what has happened anyway.

Braverman has gone, but her restless spirit now appears to be haunting Rishi Sunak, judging by the paranoid speech he made outside Number Ten the day after the astounding success of the Workers party in the Rochdale by-election.

The record-breaking poll, which delivered more votes to George Galloway than to Labour and Tory combined, could hardly have come at a worse time for Sunak. The economy is now officially in 'recession'

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(slump), the Tory party is divided, and the prime minister is thrashing around in search of a policy that will revive his electoral fortunes.

His speech, whilst making a virtue out of incoherence, was clear enough in its direction of travel: towards a police state.

Preparing the ground for widespread political policing

Sunak's long and rambling diatribe was full of unsupported and nonspecific hints, slurs and non sequiturs, too slippery to be challenged and stuffed with unattributed anecdote and oblique smears. Sunak, clearly spooked by the 24/7 coverage of the Gaza genocide on social media, sought to drown out the popular rage evoked by these terrible images in a veritable flood of crocodile tears.

He confided to his audience that "Since October seventh there have been those trying to take advantage of the very human angst that we all feel about the terrible suffering that war brings to the innocent, to women and children to advance a divisive, hateful ideological agenda."

And what might be this ideological agenda? Sunak was coy on this score, encouraging his viewers to make their own inferences. He asserted that "Islamist extremists and the far right feed off and embolden each other", that they are "two sides of the same coin".

But what does he intend by the phrase 'islamist extremists'? Was he referring to the mujahedin thugs whom Britain helped train up to burn down kindergartens and clinics in socialist Afghanistan? The same stable of rent-a-jihadi lackeys that Britain continued to fund and train against Iraq, Libya and Syria?

Or could it be that what Sunak really means by 'islamist extremists' is any muslim who dares to speak out against imperialist wars, and dares to go on demonstrations in support of Gaza?

Sunak waxed lyrical about what for him constitutes a good immigrant. "Immigrants who have come here have integrated and contributed. They have helped write the latest chapter in our island story. They have done this without being required to give up their identity. You can be a practising hindu and a proud Briton as I am.

"Or a devout muslim and a patriotic citizen as so many are. Or a committed jewish person and the heart of your local community and all underpinned by the tolerance of our established, christian church."

But if you want to spend your Saturday morning exercising your democratic right to protest against the complicity of the British government in the genocide being committed by Israel, then you are on a warning. "But we must draw a line. Yes, you can march and protest with passion. You can demand the protection of civilian life. But no, you cannot call for violent jihad."

Yet the United Nations has on multiple occasions affirmed the right of Palestinians to wage armed struggle against the occupation of their homeland by Israel. Whether this is expressed in secular language or in religious terms is immaterial: the content is the same.

Sunak continued: "And I want to speak directly to those who choose to continue to protest: Don't let the extremists hijack your marches. You have a chance in the coming weeks to show that you can protest decently, peacefully and with empathy for your fellow citizens. Let us prove these ex-

tremists wrong and show them that even when we disagree we will never be disunited from our common values of decency and respect."

So if anyone on the march deviates from this code of behaviour, the implication must be that it is up to the 'decent' protesters to expel them or hand them over to the police!

Warming to his theme, Sunak promised to "redouble our support for the Prevent programme to stop young minds being poisoned by extremism. We will demand that universities stop extremist activity on campus.

"We will also act to prevent people entering this country whose aim is to undermine its values. The Home Secretary has instructed that if those here on visas choose to spew hate on protests or seek to intimidate people, we will remove their right to be here."

And on the question of the role of the police in all this, Sunak assured us that he has met "with senior police officers and made clear it is the public's expectation that they will not merely manage these protests, but police them. And I say this to the police: We will back you when you take action."

These blatant threats to ban marches, or neuter them, along with the attacks on independent journalism, are signs that the ruling class is being driven to retreat by degrees from the bourgeois democratic high ground on which it best thrives.

The job of communists at this time is firstly, to organise resistance to the growing suppression of free speech, and secondly, to seize the opportunity to expose the true nature of bourgeois dictatorship and so strengthen the class-consciousness of workers.

Gaza vote

◀ **page 3** gradually making its way into the heads of more and more people is that only a complete defeat for zionist Israel, which means an end to its financial, military, political, media and diplomatic backing by the USA and Britain and the dissolution of the supremacist, apartheid occupation and zionist ethnostate, can lead to a lasting peace – not only for Palestinians but for all the peoples of the middle east.

This is what all the resistance forces of the region have worked out. This is why they are increasingly coordinated with one another, and why they all consider Palestine to be central to their own liberation struggle, which is in essence a struggle to remove the dead hand of US imperialist control from the middle east.

That is why the Yemeni army has been begging the Arab states to allow its forces to pass, so that it can send a contingent to join its Palestinian brothers and sisters and fight by their side in Gaza.

In making their demand, just as in carrying out their blockade of the Red Sea, the Yemeni people have exposed the treachery and complicity of every Arab regime that claims to be on the side of Palestine in words but which looks the other way and even cooperates and normalises with Israel and imperialism in deeds.

Meanwhile, the genocide is continuing every hour and in the broad glare of publicity. From every direction, the pressure is building.

The position of those in power looks stable until suddenly it doesn't. The status quo appears to be eternal until suddenly it isn't.

Tick. Tock.

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Assange extradition: where are the unions?

As an innocent man is tortured and persecuted for the crime of exposing the criminals, British workers should be organising meaningful action in defence of all our rights.

As what was supposed to have been the final hearing in Julian Assange's extradition proceeding took place on 21 February in London, CPGB-ML comrades hosted a rally and open mic session outside the Royal Courts of Justice. Our speakers made the following points to the demonstrators who were gathered there.

Where are the unions?

Julian Assange is being persecuted by the USA and its allied imperialist powers for having exposed their crimes. That being the case, it is shocking to see that there has been no mobilisation by the National Union of Journalists in his defence.

Where is the trade union movement? Where is the anti-war movement? Where is the

mass mobilisation of British working people to close down this travesty of a proceeding? The power of the British working class could end the persecution of Julian Assange tomorrow if it were properly harnessed and directed.

Protestors shouldn't be here merely as individuals 'expressing their opinions'. We should be here to use our collective strength to stop this charade in its tracks – a 'hearing' that has no connection with British law, with American law or with international law, and which is in violation of the very extradition treaty under which it is being held. Julian has committed no crime anywhere in the world, and the USA has no right to ask for his extradition. He is being hounded by the imperialists simply for telling the truth.

And since it is our country where Julian is being physically targeted, it's the responsibility of the British working class to mobilise in his defence; to make it clear to our rulers that we will not allow this crime to continue on our soil. Our trade union movement should be organising to blockade the city, to surround Belmarsh prison and the courts, to pull all media, prison and court workers out on strike. Our union leaders should be opposing the British state, but they are not.

Defending US imperialist interests

Another important insight we are gaining is into the relationship between the British and US ruling classes. We can see that when the interests of US imperialism are threatened, the British ruling class feels itself to be threatened too. Right now it is bending over backwards, breaking all its own rules, in order to conform to the wishes and preserve the interests of US imperialism.

Our rulers have shown that there is no crime they will not commit, no courtroom they will not lie in, no rule they will not break in this endeavour. This is the truth about our 'mother of all democracies' and our 'great British justice system'.

'Free speech' and imperialist lies

And we are also learning about the realities of 'free speech' in Britain. It turns out you can say anything you like as long as nobody is listening to you. That's the limit of free speech in practice. But if you have something to say that threatens the stability of imperialist looting around the world, and you say it in such a way that many people might hear you, on a platform that people are looking at, to an audience that is big and that is paying attention, the ruling class will be ruthless in its attempts to silence you.

What we are witnessing in Julian's persecution is a punishment beating; a message not only to journalists but to anybody who wants to face imperialist power. If you are effective in bringing your message about our crimes to the mass of the people, we will come after you.

In the end, this is about our right to access the truth, and our right to organise ourselves against imperialist war.

The ruling class uses its control of the media to warp reality and twist our perception. This is what enables them to get away with locking up Julian Assange and turning the justice system on its head; so that the criminals sit in judgement over an innocent man and the stenographers for power report that as if it's a meaningful process, repeating what they're told to repeat in the order of importance that they've been given by some government

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press office. This is how our minds are controlled.

The more our rulers and their system decay and become separate from the people, the more their words lose connection with reality. Increasingly, they say one thing but they mean the opposite.

Many of us have grown up with horror stories about communism and how awful it was and how we should put up with capitalism because the alternative would be too horrendous to contemplate. But now we can see that all the stories about Big Brother watching us that they scared us with were *projection*.

We accepted these lies because it's what we expect from a state; that it will abuse its people and lock them up, intimidate them and bombard them with lies – that all made sense to us because that's the reality of the world we live in. But it's not the truth about socialism and communism, it's the truth about capitalism and imperialism.

Because of the way that we live and the dystopia we are living in right now, the ruling class can scare us with the idea there's something worse around the corner. Don't agitate, don't organise, don't try and change the world, we are told: what you'll get will be worse.

But they are projecting on us their own crimes. When they told us horrific lies about the so-called crimes of the Libyan government, the so-called crimes of Colonel Gaddafi, it was in reality a projection of the way the imperialists behave around the world. Colonel Gaddafi was a hero in Africa and the middle east, and he was murdered for standing up to imperialism. Our rulers told horrendous disgusting lies about him and his people in order to prime us to accept their war of destruction.

And look at what happened to the world since they destroyed Libya. It turned out to be the most terrible calamity, not just for Libya but for the peoples of the world. And through it all our own 'antiwar movement' repeated all the lies that the bourgeoisie was telling about Colonel Gaddafi instead of challenging them. And many in our movement have done the same in Julian's case.

The imperialists have made all sorts of lurid and spurious allegations against him to try to keep us away from finding out the truth for ourselves. To make us feel that even asking a question makes us questionable. That's how they control the narrative. They make their propaganda so hysterical that to even start to question it makes you look as if you might sympathise with such awful crimes.

Remember what the media said on 8 October – what they said Hamas had done? They don't talk about Palestinian resistance, they talk about 'Hamas'. Why? Because they've labelled Hamas as 'terrorist' and they've banned it in Britain. So if you talk about Palestinian resistance now you're 'supporting Hamas', and since Hamas is banned, you're a terrorist.

Members of our organisation have been arrested under terrorism charges, their homes raided by armed police in the middle of the night. Why? Because we handed out a leaflet in support of the Palestinian people's right to resist – a right that is enshrined in international law and has been underlined by multiple United Nations resolutions.

Why are we being targeted now for saying what we've said for 20 years? Because the ruling class fears that at this moment, when people are looking at and thinking about Pales-

tine, there's a possibility that a message we were free to say when no one was listening might now actually be heard by a movement that's growing and becoming activate and aware.

The ruling class is desperate to stop the people who are waking up from connecting with the people who've got something to tell them. Because there is where the danger lies. And that's what this issue of free speech is all about. They don't mind our party saying all the things we've been saying for 30 years as long as no one can hear us. But they *do* mind if there's an audience that is growing and might decide to take action on the basis of our information.

Julian threatened the status quo not just because he revealed the crimes of imperialism; people have been doing that as long as imperialism has existed. But he did it on a platform that had a mass audience. He did it in such a way that many people found out and those crimes couldn't be denied. The proofs went around the world, and now the genie is out of the bottle and it can't be put back in.

Everybody knows now that when they lied us into war in Iraq, every single thing they told us to get us into that war was a lie.

Where is the antiwar movement?

And we also know that when they told those lies they knew they were lies. Twenty years ago, the ruling class felt very comfortable ignoring the antiwar movement. Why? Because the leadership could be relied upon to squander the energy of the two million people who took to the streets. And indeed, that is what they did. Their message to the protestors was the opposite of empowering.

They simply said: Well done for coming out, you've made history. This has been the biggest march ever. Well done, see you next time.

But two million people were ready to take their orders. Imagine if they'd have been prepared to use that power. What if they had said: Let's go down to the City and barricade the stock exchange. Let's go to Parliament and Whitehall and barricade the offices where all these decisions are being taken. Let's go to Northolt and stop the planes taking off.

Such action would have forced the ruling class to stop and think again about their war. Marching up and down is one thing, but we've got to work out what to do with that power once we've started to bring it onto the streets. And this is something that the misleaders of our movement are not prepared to tell us.

The punishment beating being meted out to Julian Assange shows that the ruling class understands what workers have not yet woken up to: *that the real power in this country is in our hands*.

The imperialist ruling class can't continue to commit its crimes without our cooperation. This is the message we need to take back to all our trade unions, to our schools, to our communities.

If we organise to refuse to cooperate, there is nothing our rulers can do; they don't fight the wars, they don't make the bombs, they don't even transmit the lies. They don't know how to do any of these jobs – they give the orders, and we follow them. If we refuse to follow their orders nothing can happen.

This is the understanding that needs to be brought to workers in Britain.

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The latest twist on Julian Assange's extradition: a cause for pessimism or optimism?

While an individualist view tends to despondence, there is a positive aspect to British imperialism's blatant complicity in persecuting free speech.

Reflecting on some of the discussion about Julian Assange's case on social and independent media, a few points occur to us which, while not interpreting Tuesday's high court ruling as a great victory, still can provide us with a more positive overview of the situation as things stand now.

'What they wanted anyway' – a defeat?

It is perfectly possible to deduce, as many are doing, that the outcome of Julian's most recent (supposedly final) hearing was *not* a stay of execution but actually what the US administration wanted to happen. After all, while British judges kicked the can of decision-making a little further down the road they at the

same time denied all avenues of future argument on the *real merits of the case* (Julian's persecution for journalism that revealed the crimes of British and US imperialism; the fact that this is a *political* extradition, etc).

Meanwhile, Julian remains incarcerated in isolation in a high-security facility, with his physical and mental health deteriorating, and US president Joe Biden doesn't have to deal with him arriving on US soil before what looks like being an extremely turbulent presidential election in November.

We have seen some commentators conclude from all this that the last decade of campaigning has been a mammoth waste of their time and

their effort, and that Julian's life has been needlessly sacrificed to an ungrateful and uninterested public.

While we disagree with this characterisation of the mass of workers, it is true that western media and politicians have been largely successful in hiding the facts around Julian Assange's case – or even the very existence of his case – from large swathes of the population.

It is also true that the British working-class and antiwar movements *have not been mobilised* – as it clearly should have been – in such a way as to force the politicians and judiciary here to release Julian and drop all their spurious lawfare proceedings against him.

The fact that even journalists, many of whom are well aware of the various undercover plots and legal manipulations that have been targeted at Julian over the last decade, *have not*

demanded that their union mobilise a spirited and public defence is most shocking of all. Can they be unaware that this is a precedent that has implications for every single one of them too?

Yet the obedient stenographers to power who make up the mainstream presstitute fraternity have dutifully reproduced every blatant lie and sophisticated legal argument produced by the British state, thus playing a vital role not in alerting the public to what is going on, but in *hiding the truth* from their readers; not only *allowing* but actively *enabling* the perpetration of this attack on their own profession and on free speech in general.

Vital lessons learned – the case for strategic optimism

But despite all this complicity from those who should be working to expose this issue, it is *not* true that the establishment in Britain and the USA feels under no pressure at all about Julian's case. There has been enough publicity to cause them serious embarrassment at home and abroad (hence the view that 'Genocide Joe' Biden would prefer *not* to have Julian land on his doorstep just at this moment).

Not only did WikiLeaks' work open the eyes of huge numbers of workers around the world to the truth about Anglo-American imperialism's barbaric and corrupt prosecution of the Iraq and Afghan wars, but Julian's case has brought further and continued attention to those crimes and others.

It is only a result of growing pressure and the difficulty of continuing to be associated in public with such criminal hypocrisy that the Australian parliament was pushed into declaring that Julian should be sent home, after years of turn-

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ing a deaf ear to all those who tried to bring the Australian government to a sense of its duty towards this most persecuted of its citizens.

And in recent years, Julian's case has highlighted the absolute hypocrisy of those who claim that Britain has a functioning and fair 'justice system'.

As Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova pointed out recently: "The entire justice system of the United Kingdom has become a farce – a laughing stock in front of the whole world. All this is a mockery of human dignity on the part of the monstrously ineffective, punitive British pseudo-justice ...

"On the dome of the Old Bailey, the central criminal court in London, there is a statue of Themis. With wide open eyes, she looks to the west – towards America."

Work to be done

Over the course of the last decade, the numbers of people who are aware of Julian and his plight have grown, and the education those people have received regarding the nature of the British state, its relationship to British and US imperialism, and the total subservience of Britain's judiciary to those interests, has been revelatory to a group of people many of whom had previously had great faith in the ultimate fairness of the system – or at least in the possibility of forcing it to do the right thing via judicious use of 'the rules'.

What a small but very significant part of the population is now coming to understand is that Julian's case is not an aberration, but merely a high-profile illustration of the fact that 'the rules' we have been taught to revere have been written to keep us, the masses, in order and policeable. Those

who rule over the system feel free to tear up, rewrite or simply ignore whatever 'rule' gets in the way of what they want to do.

This valuable education in the nature of the bourgeois state is a vital part of awakening the British people to the need for the socialist transformation of society.

Rather than sinking into despondence over the fact that this vital education has *not yet reached* the understanding of the majority, we can take heart from the fact that a newfound understanding is undoubtedly reshaping the consciousness of a significant minority of our fellow workers. Just as is the ongoing genocide in Gaza and the blatant complicity of Britain's media and political class.

Amongst the people who are being awakened by these events, we should be working to attract and train more Marxist cadres, who will be capable of using their own experiences, and the fresh opportunities constantly being created by a system descending into crisis and war, to spread revolutionary consciousness steadily deeper into the ranks of the working class.

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They're not like us though are they?!

by Lara Spurr

There are five thousand
of us here
Under a roof, in a warm
room
a spoon swirls in tea,
Biscuits taken from a
packet.

"They're not like us
though are they -
I mean, they think
there'll be, like,
72 virgins and all that
..."

This is the settee
conversation,
The topic for this
morning.
They are watching the
news.

"But do you condemn
..?!" the newsreader
is asking a perplexed
foreign man.

Meanwhile, under the
same sun
A team of exhausted
men
Are pulling broken-
limbed children
From rubble.

"But they're not though
are they, I mean
When they're not trying
to kill Israelis
They're just killing each
other!"

Meanwhile the same
wind,
Which blows around this
world,

Hears a woman's
screams
As a child is pulled from
a gaping wound in
her belly,
The only painkiller the
grip of the
Wrinkled but strong
hands
Of weeping
grandmothers.

"They're not like us
though are they -
I mean they say all that
mad religious stuff
With masks on, waving
guns in the air!
I mean how'd you like to
live next door
To that!"

And that night, under
the same moon,
In some other street
There lies a crumpled
old man

In a crumpled suit
In a crumpled town.
There is a bullet in his
head,
a crumpled photo in his
pocket.

A faded image of
another old man,
another grandfather,
His own,
Shot in a street
In another crumpled
town in 1948.

"But they're not like us
..."

"But do you condemn
..?!"

Industrial



No cooperation with genocide in Palestine!

Trade unions must mobilise the organised power of the working class to force an end to British complicity in the zionists' atrocities.

Note to trade unionists: The following text has been compiled to help those who want to submit a motion on this topic to their union branch or annual congress. Feel free to take as much or as little as you deem suitable, depending on the rules operating in your organisation, and to choose from or adapt the final demands depending on the sector in which you work. Remember that any points you leave out of the motion itself can always be brought into your speech in support of the motion.

This congress notes with horror the ongoing genocide being perpetrated against the Palestinian people by the state of Israel. This heinous crime came to the attention of the world when Israel drastically increased the tempo of its ethnic cleansing into open and flagrant genocide following the Palestinian resistance operation of 7 October 2023,

although it was a process that had been underway for more than a century.

Congress notes Britain's continued participation in this genocidal colonisation project, which includes giving diplomatic and propaganda cover to Israel, providing its army with intelligence and logistics, arming and supporting its military in a multitude of ways, including by the direct participation of British special forces.

Congress further notes Britain's particular responsibility in orchestrating the 100+ years of suffering and injustice endured by the Palestinian people. This was motivated by British imperialism's desire to create an armed outpost in the region, safeguarding control over its resources, in particular its oil. To this end, Britain was responsible for:

- sponsoring, creating and guiding zionism, which is a racist, supremacist ideology, as a tool for the colonisation of Palestine. This pernicious

ideology has spread confusion among jewish people and created a rabid and brainwashed population in Israel that has always aimed for total control of the entire territory of historic Palestine and even parts of neighbouring Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Egypt;

- creating the basis for a zionist settler-colonial state by first signing the 1917 Balfour declaration of intent and then by providing practical assistance to zionist immigration during the period of the British colonial occupation of Palestine after WW1. During this time, zionist footholds with military capability were established and Palestinians were systematically disarmed. These zionist militias were then used to carry out the ethnic cleansing and terror operations of the *Nakba* in 1947-8;

- pushing through the 1948 United Nations partition of Palestine without local consultation and dividing indigenous Palestinians so zionists could more easily persecute them;

- continuing to support Israel in its oppression and occupation of Palestine in every possible way in the interests of the

profits of Britain's oil, arms and banking monopolies.

This congress notes that the persecution and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from their land began in earnest in 1947, with the founding of the Israeli state. Palestinians were massacred in the *Nakba* and evicted from their homes, and they have endured continual attacks and land theft in the 76 years since then.

Congress notes that refugees who have spent seven and a half decades penned into a shrinking territory around the formerly prosperous and cosmopolitan city of Gaza have been under a brutal siege since 2014 (collectively punished for choosing the 'wrong' government in an election insisted on by the USA) that has turned the Gaza Strip into the world's largest concentration camp. The most recent attempt at non-violent resistance and protest during the Great March of Return resulted in massacres of unarmed protesters by the Israeli occupation forces.

This congress further notes that the Palestinian people have an *internationally-recognised right to resist* the illegal

Industrial

occupation of their land, as well as to resist the accompanying crimes of apartheid and genocide, and that the refugees have the right to return to their homes. The United Nations has many times stated that the Palestinian people are oppressed and occupied, that zionism is racist, that Israel is operating an apartheid system and that the Palestinians have the right of return and the right to fight to end their occupation by any means, including by armed force. As the illegally occupying power, meanwhile, Israel has no 'rights' other than the right to withdraw and pay reparations. Multiple UN resolutions (eg, Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949; Res. 2105 of 1965; Res. 2625 of 1970; 1974, resolution 3314 of the UNGA; resolution 37/43, dated December 3 1982) have set stated and re-stated this position over the last 75 years.

Congress notes with shame that our government and media have given their blessing and support for four long months as the Israeli zionist regime, with US and British-supplied weapons, has massacred over 30,000 civilians, 75 percent of whom were women and children, and almost all of whom were civilians, not combatants. Over 80,000 more Palestinians have been injured, many with life-changing injuries. Hundreds of thousands of homes have been demolished, the entire infrastructure of the Gaza Strip has been destroyed and every shred of Palestinian culture and heritage there has been targeted for obliteration.

This congress declares that none of these crimes can possibly be justified as the 'natural outcome' of warfare in the 21st century.

Congress notes in that regard the ruling by the International Court of Justice that there is good reason to believe Israel

is committing genocide in Palestine. Congress further notes that the ICJ has awarded provisional measures and ordered Israel to ensure that the commissioning of genocide should end and all incitement to genocide should be punished. Despite this, Israel has declared its intention to continue, clearly believing that with the USA (and Britain) at its back, it will always be able do as it pleases with impunity.

This congress condemns utterly the cowardly, monstrous and utterly inhuman actions of zionist Israel, and in particular the military, logistical, media, political and diplomatic support from the US and British governments, without which this obscene slaughter could not continue for even one more hour.

This congress believes that British workers have a duty to act not only as fellow human beings responsible under international law for the prevention of genocide, but as citizens of countries whose active participation is making us all complicit if we do nothing.

Congress notes that on 16 October 2023, Palestinian trade unions launched a worldwide appeal for help: 'End all complicity. Stop arming Israel.' The appeal came from the Workers in Palestine collective, which brings together more than 30 trade unions and professional associations from across the occupied territories.

This congress fully supports this appeal by our fellow workers in Palestine, confirming that collectively, workers have the power to stop British involvement in the genocide in Palestine. The government and corporations cannot support Israel without our participation. While we may be weak as individuals, we are mighty together.

Congress therefore resolves

that our members will:

1. Refuse to build weapons for Israel.
2. Refuse to transport weapons to Israel.
3. Take action against companies that are complicit in Israel's brutal and illegal siege of Gaza.
4. Mobilise our members to force an end to all weapons sales from Britain to Gaza.
5. Conference further resolves that our members will:
6. Refuse to make or move any supplies that are bound for Israel.
7. Actively block any such shipments that are known to be on British roads and rails or in British ports.
8. Refuse to write, print or assist in the broadcast of information that justifies or whitewashes zionist crimes or reinforces fake zionist narratives, remembering that journalism which justifies aggressive war crimes was classified at the Nuremburg tribunals as a war crime in itself.
9. Refuse to put Israeli products or zionist-promoting newspapers and magazines on the shelves of British shops.
10. Mobilise our members to force the British government to break diplomatic ties with Israel – there must be no normalisation of genocide.

This conference resolves:

11. That it is now official union policy to organise mass non-cooperation with every activity that in any way supports, directly or indirectly, the imperialist efforts of Britain, the USA or Nato to support Israel.
12. That the union will render every support to any members victimised for taking this principled stand.

Manifesto for the Crisis: Class Against Class



Workers in the west are faced with the biggest fall in their living standards since the second world war. But what is at the root of the energy and inflation crises that are fueling the cost of living crisis in Britain and elsewhere?

Why do British trade unions seem so unable to lead a victorious struggle despite overwhelming support for pay restitution and for the restoration of our decimated public services?

Why are we also seeing a rampant and seemingly insatiable drive to war by our rulers?

And what, in the midst of all this chaos, should we actually be *doing*?

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Industrial



Elbit 7 sentenced. Where is our 'Hands off Palestine' movement?

The leaders of the antiwar and trade union movements have refused to mobilise their members to prevent ongoing British complicity in a genocide.

The 'Elbit 7', a group of Palestine Action activists who forced their way into an Elbit Systems site – the self-professed “backbone” of the Israeli ‘Defence’ Force – were handed down suspended sentences in March for their courageous occupation of the building. The seven had already been held on remand for over a year and were required to pay damages amounting to approximately £100,000.

Members of the CPGB-ML hosted a rally outside the Bristol Crown Court on the day of sentencing.

Why aren't people mobilising en masse?

A young man in the crowd asked why it is that the horrible atrocities in Gaza haven't galvanised the British masses into meaningful action against our government's complicity in the genocide.

He illustrated the frustration and powerlessness felt by many Britons in the face of these horrific crimes – crimes happening in the full glare of global publicity. It seems incredible that people are going about their daily lives when the evidence of this horrific geno-

cide is reaching us in real time.

That frustration, that impotence, results from a situation in which the British working-class movement has been systematically dismantled and defanged. This has reached the point where many of us have forgotten that we're members of a class. We have lost touch with the knowledge that we have power. We have forgotten that it is workers who make everything and do every important job. Nothing can happen without our participation.

Even the bombers don't fly without working-class people. The newspapers aren't printed and TV shows aren't broadcast without working-class people. The munitions aren't made or transported. No part of the war machine works without the efforts of huge numbers of workers.

The travesty of the situation we're in is that both our trade union movement and our antiwar movement have been coopted by forces that don't want us to realise these things. They don't want us to experience the power that we have when we organise in a meaningful way.

One hundred years ago, the ruling class of Britain wanted to fight a war of intervention against Soviet Russia. As soon as the Russians had carried out their socialist revolution, 14 countries got together and did everything possible to crush the world's first socialist state in its cradle. Britain was one of these 14 countries.

What was the force that pulled Britain out of that war against the Russian people? It was the organised working class. A huge campaign was organised inside and outside the trade unions, calling for “Hands off Russia”. This campaign was so successful, and had such deep popular roots, that it resulted in dock workers refusing to load munitions and soldiers onto ships that were bound for Russia.

And the TUC, which even in those days was not keen on workers' action, had to reflect the anger of its members and threaten the government with a general strike if it continued its role in the war.

The government knew that the threat was real. It made our rulers so nervous that they didn't just back out of the war, a major victory in and of itself, but they also implemented a raft of concessions to working people to pacify their movement. They were scared of the power of the organised working class; of where that power could lead if it continued to be mobilised in the streets against the capitalist state.

The ruling class knows what the working class has forgotten: that we have power. Our demand today must be for another mass campaign of non-cooperation with imperialist war. It's not enough for us to declare as individuals that we won't be complicit. We may salve our individual consciences, but the war will continue on. As individuals we are es-

entially powerless, but as a collective we have the ability to change what is happening.

Palestine Action's activities have brought to our attention the complicity of many companies here in Britain with the ethnic cleansing and mass murder of Palestinians. Elbit Systems, one of the group's principal targets, is a subsidiary of Israel's largest arms manufacturer and is actively involved in supplying Israel with unmanned drones.

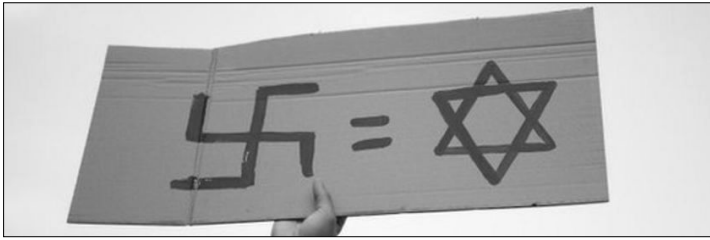
Our trade union and antiwar leaders should be doing everything possible to bring the concerted efforts of the working-class movement to the support of Palestine Action in its courageous efforts. PA members are taking upon themselves enormous personal risk in their just actions against a company complicit in genocide, but they should have to do so in such an isolated, exposed way.

Where is the modern day equivalent of the Hands off Russia campaign? There have been plenty of huge protests for Palestine, but where is the real antiwar work, organised by the unions, to make a real difference to the outcomes? If organised in the right way, British complicity in the Gaza genocide could be ended tomorrow, and this would make a huge hole in the Israeli and US efforts to maintain imperialist domination in the middle east.

Yet the vast majority of unions have opted to do nothing that might actually help save Palestinian lives or bring a lasting peace to the region.

No time is better than now to revive the movement and rejuvenate the confidence of the masses in themselves. Together, arm-in-arm, organised, we can make a real difference. Our forebears, who forced the government's hands in the Hands off Russia campaign, taught us that much.

Media



Zionism cannot be negotiated with – it must be defeated!

Police and media persecution are aimed at silencing our party and keeping the truth from British workers.

The following article is a response to scurrilous attacks on our party in the Daily Telegraph and Jewish Chronicle.

Dr Ranjeet Brar is a lifelong campaigner against racism, against fascism and against zionism.

He has been arrested four times as a direct result of his support for the anti-zionist, anti-imperialist struggle of the Palestinian people. In singling him out again, Britain's pro-zionist mainstream media are playing their part in a concerted attack on his professional status and medical practice – and therefore also upon the communities he serves.

The timing of these events is not accidental. Our rulers' support for zionist Israel is coming under the greatest pressure it has ever faced, and their ability to shore up the economic, diplomatic and PR holes in their project is rapidly declining.

The crisis of legitimacy for British politicians and media has been markedly exacerbated by their unashamedly pro-Israel stance in recent months. When 'democratic' means of diverting and confusing the public have failed, repression is the only means left for silencing inconvenient truths.

The United Nations' International Court of Justice recently

ruled that Israel is likely to be committing genocide in Palestine. It has awarded provisional measures and ordered Israel to ensure that it stops the commissioning of genocide.

Israeli 'defence' minister Yoav Gallant, who famously justified the genocide in Gaza by stating on television that "we are fighting against human animals", labelled the ICJ as "antisemitic". Presumably the Israeli judge was also guilty of 'antisemitism'?

Our party puts Israel's current crimes in historical context, and Ranjeet has openly and publicly defended Palestine, the Palestinians and their right to exist.

Therefore also – in accordance with UN resolutions (Additional Protocol I to the Geneva conventions of 1949; resolution 2105 of 1965; resolution 2625 of 1970; 1974, resolution 3314 of the UNGA; resolution 37/43, dated 3 December 1982) – he has defended Palestine's right to resist occupation and genocide. In so doing he is simply stating international law.

We note that zionism, as a genocidal ideology, cannot be accommodated. It must be challenged wherever it raises its head. It is given succour by our politicians and media precisely because it is a tool of Britain's imperialist ruling

class.

In the video above, Ranjeet outlines this position in a historical, factual and antiracist speech given recently at City University in London.

We note that the Daily Telegraph has launched a vicious attack upon Ranjeet and our party for having the temerity to continue speaking out against zionist genocide in a political climate that is increasingly repressive.

This attack on free speech is part of former home secretary Suella Braverman's pro-genocide campaign to label the millions of working-class Britons who support Palestine as "hate marchers" and "terrorists".

The Telegraph's distorted article plays into this narrative, claiming that our party's anti-zionist views are "racist".

Compare the doctored quotations in its headlines with the whole speech and decide for yourself whether these allegations stand up to scrutiny. *Speaking the truth is not a crime – yet!*

We note also the tired trope of 'vulnerable' students who must be protected from 'hurtful' and 'offensive' truths. Where is the Telegraph or City University's concern for the actual bodily harm being done to hundreds of Palestinian civilians every single day under zionist bombardment?

Why is the illegally occupying power (Israel) deemed to have all the rights and the occupied (the Palestinians) none? Why are those who stand with the oppressed demonised and silenced while those who stand with the oppressors are protected and promoted?

David Miller tribunal

We note in this context the landmark ruling in the case of

sacked history professor David Miller that anti-zionist beliefs are a protected characteristic under British discrimination law – further undermining the Telegraph's really racist (anti-Arab, anti-Palestinian and pro-genocide) and zionist campaign.

Prof Miller said: "I am extremely pleased that the tribunal has concluded that I was unfairly and wrongfully dismissed by the University of Bristol. I am also very proud that we have managed to establish that anti-zionist views qualify as a protected belief under the UK Equality Act.

"This was the most important reason for taking the case and I hope it will become a touchstone precedent in all the future battles that we face with the racist and genocidal ideology of zionism and the movement to which it is attached.

"The determination that I was sacked for my anti-zionist views is a huge vindication of my case all the way through this process. The University of Bristol maintained that I was sacked because zionist students were offended by my various remarks, but it was plain from the evidence of its own witnesses that this was untrue, and it was the anti-zionist nature of my comments which was the decisive factor.

"I also want to note that this verdict is a massive vindication of the approach I have taken throughout this period, which is to say that a genocidal and maximalist ideology like zionism can only be effectively confronted by a maximalist anti-zionism.

"Apologies, debate and defensiveness of the sort illustrated by many on the left, and even in the Palestine solidarity movement, will not work. The zionist movement cannot be negotiated with. It must be defeated."

Americas



Aaron Bushnell: The death of an honest man

‘What would I do if my country was committing genocide?’ The answer is, you’re doing it.

The tragic death of a US airman, who set himself on fire outside the Israeli embassy in Washington DC in what he described as an “extreme act of protest” against the genocide unfolding in Gaza, is testimony both to the personal courage of those who are prepared to sacrifice their own lives rather than be complicit in imperialist crimes, and to the disgraceful absence of any meaningful movement capable of harnessing and directing that spirit of resistance, sweeping it away from the counsels of despair and self-destruction and towards the growing groundswell of the global anti-imperialist movement.

Aaron Bushnell, speaking in clear, measured tones as he strode towards the spot outside the Israeli embassy where he had chosen to make his final stand, said: “I am about to engage in an extreme act of protest. But compared to what people have been experiencing in Palestine at the hands of their colonisers, it’s not ex-

treme at all. This is what our ruling class has decided will be normal.”

His words echoed the description given by Atlanta authorities of a similar act that went almost unnoticed last December. A female protestor carrying a Palestinian flag set herself alight outside the Israeli consulate as the temporary ceasefire in Gaza came to an end and the zionists renewed their extermination *blitzkrieg* over the strip.

Unlike in Aaron’s case, where the embassy’s security held a gun over him as he burned, a security guard came to the Atlanta protestor’s rescue and received very serious burns himself in the process.

Since the protestor didn’t take the precaution of recording her action, the world’s media buried her story, but it seems very likely that Aaron was aware of the event, which Atlanta’s police chief described as an “extreme act of protest”.

accounts shortly before his death:

“Many of us like to ask ourselves, ‘What would I do if I was alive during slavery? Or the Jim Crow South? Or apartheid? What would I do if my country was committing genocide?’

“The answer is, you’re doing it. Right now.”

The Palestinian response to his action was heartfelt and immediate: he was given the status of a martyr of their cause and artworks depicting his martyrdom appeared online and in the streets within hours.

In his final words, Aaron spoke nothing but the truth. When the BBC opens the airwaves to the likes of zionism’s new Goebbels, Mark Regev, giving them free rein to dress up the continuing fascist holocaust of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip as just some regrettable episode in a “war” caused by “extremists” and “antisemites”, our ruling class hopes we are all going to put our fingers in our ears and hum loudly until ‘normality’ has been restored (or a plausible new normality has been constructed).

But judging by the well-attended and angry mass protests presently convulsing Britain’s political life, protests which show no sign of retreating despite prime minister Rishi Sunak’s thinly veiled threats to usher in a police state and Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer’s continued obsession with finding ‘antisemites’ under every bed, the ruling class will be hard pressed to restore even the threadbare public confidence it had previously enjoyed.

And whilst the Labour party strives to patch up the cracks in imperialism, be sure that the communists will neglect no opportunity to widen them.

No doubt he was also aware that some 30,000 desertions from the US army during the course of the USA’s wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have been quietly brushed over by military authorities and media alike, who have been careful not to give a platform to those who might take the chance to use courts martial or other proceedings to put the system itself on trial.

The livestream of Aaron’s immolation made his sacrifice impossible to ignore, although western media did their best to present it as a senseless or deranged act, making a point of being especially vague in their headlines. But the video went viral all over the internet and spawned an outpouring of rage and grief from the western solidarity movement – especially striking a chord with those who have been feeling the same sense of frustrated impotence and the same lack of any meaningful movement into which they can channel their righteous anger.

They particularly resonated with the message that Aaron posted on his social media

Rest in peace, Aaron.

World



Nicaragua joins South Africa at the ICJ in support of Palestine

The way that different countries have responded to the ongoing genocide in Gaza says everything about which interests their governments really represent.

While Yemen has been the first state actor to deliver full practical solidarity with the Palestinian struggle, and South Africa was the first to have recourse to international law, the government of Nicaragua has been the first to file a formal application with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to join South Africa's genocide case against Israel.

In making its application, Nicaragua also asked the ICJ to declare that Israel "must perform the obligations of reparation in the interest of Palestinian victims, including but not limited to allowing the safe and dignified return of forcibly displaced and/or abducted Palestinians to their homes, respect for their full human rights and protection against further discrimination, persecution and other related acts, and provide for the reconstruction of what

it has destroyed in Gaza".

Representatives of the Nicaraguan government joining an international conference on Palestine in Tehran in February stated: "The Palestinian people are victims of unimaginable atrocities that move, dismay and outrage the people of this planet. The atrocities committed by Israel against the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank, against innocent children and defenceless women are condemnable, the government and people of Nicaragua denounce and strongly condemn them.

"The government of Israel is becoming a state incompatible with the community of states that make up the United Nations. Their supremacist criminality is unparalleled in the history of humanity. The international community rejects and condemns this atrocious

and despicable behaviour."

The case against Germany

Not resting there, the central American state has also filed charges against Germany for continuing to provide aid to Israel after the ICJ had ruled that special measures were needed to ensure the prevention of genocide in Gaza.

In its application, Nicaragua has charged Germany not only with continuing to give financial and military aid to Israel but also with defunding the UN Palestinian refugee agency (Unrwa), in violation of both the 1948 genocide convention and the 1949 Geneva conventions on the laws of war in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Reflecting once again the urgency of the situation in Gaza, where famine is now endemic amongst the population and Israel is threatening to launch an invasion of the southernmost Gaza town of Rafah (which has become a vast tent city housing the 1.5 million Palestinians who have been displaced from

the rest of the strip), the ICJ has scheduled a hearing for the case against Germany on 8 and 9 April.

Most of the imperialist camp will be watching this development nervously. If ever a day comes when ICJ rulings can be backed up by actions, governments and officials from across the Natosphere could find themselves in trouble.

Not only are they all backing Israel with weapons and other aid, but most of them have also joined the USA in pulling funding from Unrwa – which is responsible for delivering nutritional, educational and health services to Palestinian refugees across the occupied territories and in refugee camps across the region (Lebanon, Jordan and Syria). Other governments liable to find themselves in the dock are those of Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Finland and Australia. Canada and Sweden had initially joined this US-instigated group of Unrwa 'defunders', but reversed their decision earlier this month.

Germany is one of the largest arms exporters to Israel, after the United States, and its sales to the Zionist occupation forces ballooned massively in the last quarter of 2023, **page 17** ▶

Americas



Nicaragua, climate crisis and capitalism

In the final analysis, there aren't hundreds of problems in the world – there is just one.

This article is based on a recent webinar addressed by Ambassador Valdrack Jaentschke, who led the Nicaragua government delegation to the 2023 United Nations climate change conference in Dubai, more commonly known as Cop28.

During his presentation, the ambassador explained how Nicaragua is combating climate change, both at home through its renewable energy and other programmes, and in the international arena through cooperation and by the power of its example in implementing policies that demonstrate a *real* concern for the earth (in contrast to imperialist greenwashing).

Ambassador Jaentschke began by recalling the Paris climate conference of 2015. While Nicaragua upheld the position that the capitalist economic system is at the root of our environmental problems at that meeting, the majority of participants and all the meeting's outcomes simply reinforced the status quo.

The recent Cop28 conference, said the ambassador, was simply a continuation of that same old line. Whilst accepting the continued pollu-

tion problems created by the imperialist economic model, the western nations had the audacity to rub salt into the wound by blaming developing countries for the problems created by their own economic system!

The Paris agreement agreed targets that were aimed at setting a limit on the absolute rise in global temperatures. But Ambassador Jaentschke explained that technical conversations about points of degrees are moot for those who are suffering the real consequences today. The most important question in Nicaragua's view is: who is principally *being affected* by temperature increases?

Unequal effects and an unbearable burden

Today, the people who are already feeling the brunt of climate change include the populations of small island development countries (SIDS), and islands in the Pacific and the Caribbean. A mere 1.5C increase in temperature in the lowlands of central America, one of the most vulnerable areas of the world, will result in these islands' complete disappearance.

Ambassador Jaentschke

spoke passionately about the reality that lies behind the politicians' rhetoric about 'limiting global warming to 1.5C'. Western audiences may be reassured by such empty promises, but the reality is that, as temperatures rise, life is *literally disappearing* from under the feet of many people across Asia, Africa, the Pacific and the Caribbean.

More than that, the affected nations, already facing huge obstacles to their development as a result of imperialist looting and domination – including economic sanctions, debt, war, corruption and poverty – are now also having to contend with the recurring devastation caused by climate change. This in turn necessitates recurring costs in infrastructure and resilience capacity rebuilding.

Nicaragua did not and does not cause climate change, said the ambassador. Data show that a few rich countries with the highest carbon emissions in the world are responsible for more than 83 percent of global emissions, while Nicaragua emits less than 0.05 percent of the global total. Yet Nicaragua's economy suffers a yearly impact from climate change that is equivalent to 8 percent of its GDP – up to \$4bn annually.

This is adversely affecting not only its infrastructure but also production, the environment, health, education and energy. Floods and changing patterns of rainfall and temperature are depleting crop production and yields, making farming unpredictable at best and impossible at worst.

Having to replenish the regular devastation of public goods is a huge burden for a poor country to bear. The ambassador pointed out that for a developing society trying desperately to lift its people out of poverty, the endless struggle to create

vital infrastructure like roads, buildings, houses, schools and health centres, only to have them decimated by floods and hurricanes, doesn't just impact the country's finances but its psychology.

By undermining the country's capacity for development, this cycle is affecting every aspect of social life.

Imperialists refusing to pay what they owe

Climate reparations are a core demand of the Nicaraguan government. Ambassador Jaentschke explained that the capitalist rulers of the world always ensure reparations for damages to their own interests. He cited the example of Zimbabwean landowners, and we could add many more, one of the most notorious being the two centuries' worth of payments made by the government to former slaveowners for the 'losses' they suffered when slavery was officially abolished in Britain!

This system of compensation only ever works one way, however, *from the poor to the rich*. No restitution is ever made to those who are adversely affected by the actions of western imperialism, whether they be the victims of slavery, of colonial genocides or of climate change.

Since it was the western capitalist-imperialist system of production that caused the climate problems besetting so many developing countries today, said the ambassador, it is the beneficiaries of that system who need to pay the bill humanity now faces. Those who set up these unequal and damaging dynamics, and who have profited so mightily from their global plunder and despoliation, have ultimate responsibility for funding the measures that are now urgently needed to reverse and mitigate the effects on the poor communities

Americas

whose lives are being blighted and livelihoods destroyed.

The Paris agreement and subsequent Cop conferences agreed that the western imperialist countries would fund a mechanism to compensate poor countries, pledging to provide a replenishment fund of at least \$100bn annually to help towards replacing what is being lost every year.

In reality, however, *less than 10 percent* of the promised funds have been received since 2015. Instead of paying as promised, western nations are doing everything possible to circumvent their responsibilities, both in terms of paying the promised reparations and in terms of addressing the ongoing impact of their activities on the global climate.

As one of the countries most seriously affected, Nicaragua is at the forefront of the campaign to have this global injustice recognised and addressed. The ambassador pointed out that the imperialist nations are not emitting any less than they were when they made their commitments in 2015; and that they are emitting four times the target that was then agreed upon. Meanwhile, the western concept of 'carbon neutrality' is a cynical bit of greenwashing that manipulates public understanding, creates business opportunities and achieves nothing.

Greenwashing v real green measures

Cop28 ended with an agreement that "signalled the beginning of the end" of the fossil fuels era but which was itself unequal, said Ambassador Jaentschke. The western nations have reached a stage of technological advancement that the developing nations have not; using climate excuses to forbid the development of other countries is entirely

unacceptable.

Nicaragua itself is proactively seeking alternative sources of energy. On 27 November 2023, Latino Metrics highlighted the huge progress the country has made in the field of renewable energy. Not that we would know if from reading the western environmental columnists, but Nicaragua has surpassed Norway and Sweden to become a world leader in the production of clean energy, raising its production rate from 21 percent to 70 percent of energy consumed in the last two decades.

As a small, developing but revolutionary country, Nicaragua approaches the issue of climate from a perspective of social responsibility and with a real care for its people and their environment. The Sandinista government's decisions and actions, whether in the field of health, education, development or climate change, are underpinned by the socialist principles of their revolution.

The capitalist system of production is at the core of the climate crisis. The pursuit of maximum profit is the reason humanity faces these problems – and the reason it is unable to address them in any meaningful way. Capitalist-imperialism is the motivator for wars, genocide, poverty, injustice, inequality, as well as for social and environmental degradation.

In the final analysis, there aren't hundreds of problems in the world – there is just one. The perceptible and accelerating deterioration in the quality of our lives and of our environment is directly attributable to the outdated, parasitic, moribund system of capitalist production for profit, and will only be solved when that barrier to human progress has been removed.

Nicaragua ICJ

◀ **page 15** after 7 October.

Although the true extent of military support from Britain is not known, publicly available figures put it in third place, traditionally supplying around 15 percent of the components used in F-35 bombers. The UK is also home to Israeli arms companies such as Elbit, which has been consistently targeted by Palestine Action for its role in the Palestinian genocide.

Meanwhile, under pressure from their domestic populations, and with one eye to the persistence of ICJ prosecutions, Canada, Spain and Belgium have all halted arms exports to Israel, while the Netherlands is in the process of being forced by a legal order from its domestic courts to follow suit.

Nicaragua's history with the ICJ

Meanwhile, unknown to most workers in the west today is the fact that Nicaragua has been pursuing its own legal case against the United States since 1986.

When the case was heard, the ICJ found in Nicaragua's favour and decided that the USA had indeed violated international law by supporting the armed rebellion of the 'Contras' against the Sandinista government and by mining Nicaragua's harbours. Not only was a verdict pronounced against the United States, but *reparations were awarded* to Nicaragua.

Nicaragua then brought its case to the UN security council for enforcement, where the USA simply vetoed the resolution, thus demonstrating how much the imperialists really respect the international order they pretend to uphold.

When Nicaragua turned to

the general assembly, the resolution in favour of the Latin-American nation was passed by a majority of 94-3. Which had zero effect on the USA's refusal to admit guilt or pay what it owes.

In 2023, President Daniel Ortega sent a letter to UN secretary general António Guterres demanding that Washington be forced to pay up. "There exists a historical debt with the Nicaraguan people that 37 years later has not been settled by the United States ... It is an obligation clearly established in a final judgment of the highest international judicial authority, the International Court of Justice."

This earlier case highlights what the case against Gaza has brought into the centre of a global spotlight: the toothless charade of the supposed 'international UN system' and the impotence of most 'member states' to affect any real outcomes. At the UN, all are allowed to speak (on the floor of the general assembly) but only one nation has any meaningful executive power (via its veto at the UN, its physical control over).

Any branch of UN activity that acts with independence is liable to find its funding arbitrarily pulled – as was cruelly demonstrated by the barbaric cutting of funds to Unrwa just when its services are most desperately needed.

It has been said that the United Nations was long ago transformed into the colonial office of US imperialism.

The UN's inability to stop the US-backed genocide in Gaza, or even to bring effective relief to the Palestinian people, despite the overwhelming desire of the governments and peoples of the world, are providing us with ample proof for this assertion.

Americas



Cuban health workers vow to face down the genocidal US blockade

Solidarity must move on from the charitable aid mentality and work for the destruction of the imperialist system.

Much is presented in western corporate media regarding the parlous state of Cuba – its economy, food shortages, the flow of skilled, especially young workers overseas, shortages of every conceivable commodity – fuel, cement, medicines, educational materials etc – that is essential to the building of a civilised life.

Little is said of the cause of this economic genocide. The cause is simply the illegal, criminal and ongoing US embargo, which for over 65 years has attempted to suffocate socialism, independence and national aspirations in Cuba.

The economics of genocide are exactly what the USA applies to Cuba. There may not be overt military intervention at this moment, but the attempted destruction and extinction of the people is without question.

For one who has been a regular visitor to Cuba since the end of the ‘special period’ in the late 1990s to the present

day of Joe Biden’s presidency (which has built on every previous US regime’s attacks on the Caribbean nation), participation in ongoing blockade breaching, ensuring solidarity and support from British workers to Cuban workers and their trade unions has been the order of the day.

An honourable order of the day carried out not for plaudits, medals or kudos, but simply because *Cuba’s survival as a socialist beacon is essential to us all.* Much has been done worldwide by innumerable trade unions to support Cuba, but we need to go *beyond a mindset of providing aid.*

Cuba’s health union: fifty years of service to the people

Having been one of the foreign guests to the recent national conference of the National Union of Health Workers (SNTS – Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Salud), celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the union,

a union which represents over 500,000 health workers, it was a pleasure to see working-class democracy in action.

No factionalism. No pursuit of diversion or sectional pettiness. No elevation of a part over the whole. But frank and sharp debate and discussion over how to resolve the chronic shortages (brought about by the blockade).

How to enhance medical staffs’ wages to prevent either underemployment or migration overseas. How to strengthen the innovation and invention so essential to circumventing the blockade and keeping the full range of medical provision from polyclinics to world-class hospital provision functioning. How to ensure that the health workers continue being a cadre force within the wider community, keeping not only the community physically well but ideologically strong. How to learn the lessons of the Covid plague and its impact on health provision structures, both positive and negative.

Besides all this, there was discussion of the need to enhance Cuban medicinal (vaccines and medicines) and production innovation to circumvent critical shortages that have been brought about by the blockade and the actions of pharmaceutical monopolies worldwide. The need to strengthen political education was also highlighted – being the best doctor is commendable, but being the best doctor with political clarity is better still.

And the call to strengthen recruitment to the Cuban Communist party was reinforced, coupled with renewed emphasis on ensuring that the revolution’s historical legacy is guaranteed by unbreakable bonds with present and future generations of Cuban people.

The conference was themed

around unity and compromise in the service of the health of the people, and this was clearly demonstrated in the enthusiasm of the delegates (approximately 2,000 of them), the election of a new national executive (predominantly women), and the significant presence of younger workers throughout.

A British guest addressing the first day of the conference, attended by core workplace cadres and leaders from Cuba’s health sector, made the simple point that “All the expressions of solidarity and cheering from afar are really pious and patronising. If British workers really want to demonstrate solidarity with Cuba then delivering the British revolution has to be the only task.” A point well received by the audience.

A genocidal blockade

The evil and insidious nature of the blockade is demonstrated clearly by the shortages of vehicle fuel. A four-hour mile-long queue (orderly and polite) for fuel is the norm right now, as are rolling power cuts in homes around the country.

The sheer viciousness of the US mindset is evident in its blocking of the purchase of software for scanners used in the treatment of cancer and its buying and closing of companies that used to provide basic health materials such as syringes to Cuba.

Being blocked from the world capitalist banking system makes taking care of the Cuban people ever more difficult, circuitous and challenging, since the country has to purchase all such goods with hard foreign currency not credit. The resulting rationing of food has put the basic family shopping basket under siege.

Black marketeers and spivs have resurrected themselves as a result of this **page 20 ▶**

Europe



Europe: the peasants' revolt

What is at the root of the crisis in European farming?

The agricultural crisis that has driven European farmers back onto the war path was never supposed to happen. Back in the booming 1960s, when the common agricultural policy (CAP) was first adopted by the European Union, the promise of a managed, Europe-wide free trade area within which all members could flourish (meanwhile structuring relations with non-member nations to the permanent advantage of the EU) seemed like the dawning of a golden age for European farmers.

Whilst the postwar Keynesian social compact (aka the welfare state deal for social peace) served to distract workers from thoughts of revolution, the EU dream of a modernised countryside (with food sovereignty at home and economic relations with the rest of the world permanently skewed in favour of member states) like-

wise served to distract attention away from the contradictions that plagued this flawed utopia from the outset.

In a sense, the CAP was conceived as a kind of welfare state for the peasantry. The deal that was done to stabilise European agriculture after the last world war, helped by the establishment of the CAP system of subsidies, taxes and exemptions, was intended to regularise the agricultural sector, resolving any trade frictions between fellow EU member states and protecting the sector from competition from the world market.

In practice, however, there has never been equal status between EU members, either economically or politically, and the economies that have benefited most have always been those of the dominant imperialist economies (and of those who most obsequiously tag

along).

Now that global capitalist economic crisis is coming back full blast, it is the small and medium farming operations that are going to the wall and the vast agribusinesses that are surviving. The number of farms in the EU has shrunk by over a third since 2005, while even the surviving agribusiness giants are saddled with high levels of debt, demonstrating less the survival of the fittest than the survival of the most moribund.

Even the largest concerns, when exposed to global market forces, prove to be operating on very narrow profit margins.

One obvious contradiction arose from the mismatch in the EU between those economies in which agriculture played a key role and those in which it played a lesser one. Whilst under socialism such disparities can be (and in the Soviet Union, were) understood and planned for as a necessary phase in the long-term road to

overcoming the contradiction between town and country, this could never be the case under capitalism for any length of time, based as it is upon competition not cooperation.

The big imperialist member states of the EU regard the economies of the less industrialised as a handy sponge to mop up excess production when the crisis of overproduction threatens glut, and as easy prey for loan traps which further impoverish the unwary or desperate. On the other hand, farmers can draw some consolation from the fact that, thanks to the CAP and its complicated and ever-shifting pattern of subsidies, taxes, exemptions and quotas, the market has for decades been rigged in such a way as to protect members' economies from the full rigours of a global free market.

At least, that was the plan. But with the crisis of overproduction becoming really acute, exacerbated by blowback from the self-defeating sanctions war on Russia, the conflicting interests of rival nations rise to the surface, overturning all the high-minded intentions of cooperation and mutual aid signed up to in happier times.

With right-wing eurosceptic populism a growing challenge in the coming EU elections, thanks to the inability of anyone else on the bourgeois political spectrum to offer a really plausible way out of the crisis, west European leaders are busting a gut trying to contain or divert the outpouring of wrath from small and medium-sized agricultural producers lest the river should break its bounds.

French president Emmanuel Macron is currently trying to curry favour with farmers by posing as their champion in dragging his feet over signing up to a provisionally **page 20** ▶

Europe

EU farmers

◀ **page 19** agreed EU alliance with the Mercosur group of Latin American countries which, farmers fear, could flood the European market with cheap produce. Macron is trying to square the circle by promising to defend France's subsidised "food sovereignty" but without undermining CAP policy.

Naturally, he is couching this all in culture wars rhetoric, casting himself as a champion defending pure "European standards" against the import of dodgy chickens from Latinos. What he 'forgets' to mention is that monopoly capitalism would be sunk (and Macron would be out of a job tomorrow) if low-wage, substandard economies were no longer freely available for imperialism to superexploit.

Imperialism needs low-wage economies with disgusting working conditions to prey upon.

It is no accident that French peasants are particularly militant. France combines a fully developed industry with a still large and influential agricultural base, the latter being a crucial recipient of CAP largesse. But the pitchforks are not just out in France. Indeed, it was fiery German protests against cutting diesel fuel subsidies that kicked off the present tsunami of protests across Europe.

"Macron's comments come as farmers in France protest about rising costs, falling profits and new regulations as Brussels tries to cut carbon emissions and improve biodiversity. Similar protests are also starting in Belgium, where farmers on Tuesday moved to block a crucial port, while German farmers have also

blocked motorways and prevented a minister from disembarking a ferry.

"Among farmers' grievances are local and EU regulations, while in France, Poland, Slovakia and Romania, they have also objected to cheaper imports from Ukraine flooding their markets. After the Russian full-scale invasion in 2022, the EU agreed to lift tariffs on Ukrainian grain and produce, which have lower production costs and do not have to follow EU standards.

"On the issue of agricultural imports from Ukraine, another irritant for farmers, Macron said he would raise it at the summit as well because they were 'destabilising the European market' for chicken and eggs. The commission has bowed to demands to add quotas on eggs, poultry meat and sugar." (France turns

up heat on Brussels to address farmer protests by Leila Aboud, Andy Bounds and Alice Hancock, Financial Times, 30 January 2024)

The farmers' rage has been sparked by multiple provocations: rising energy bills, rampant inflation, soaring prices, green austerity measures, the tax-free import of Ukrainian grain and the boomerang effect of sanctions against Russia, to name but a few. All of these are secondary causes, driven on at base by the deepening crisis of overproduction and European farmers' increasing exposure to the untrammelled forces of the global marketplace.

There is no future for small farmers under capitalism. Their future lies in socialism.

Identity Politics or Class Politics?



This short pamphlet aims to provide a Marxist overview of identity politics – what they are, where they came from, and how they are affecting our movement.

It outlines the major branches (bourgeois feminism, black nationalism, LGBT+ liberation) and puts them in a historical and philosophical context that aims to help socialists steer clear of the lurking shoals that can shipwreck our movement and leave us stranded and helpless before the onslaught of the monopoly capitalist crisis and war.

It aims also to steer workers clear of culture wars narratives that offer much heat but little light.

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Cuban health

◀ **page 18** crisis. While they are challenged daily by the National Revolutionary Police, shortages of essential goods and the drip feed of remittances from Cuban exiles in the USA feed this canker. The blocking of tourist ships and the limiting of flights by the USA has similarly impacted on the resurrection of the economy.

The outrageous decision by former US president Donald Trump and maintained by the regime of Joe Biden to put and keep Cuba on the illegal USA list of alleged 'states sponsoring terrorism' has further crippled Cuba's commerce worldwide.

Cuba was placed on this 'list' after hosting peace talks between the combatants in Colombia, which it did at the request of the USA, the United Nations and other third-party peace brokers. Just one more example of US duplicity and treachery.

Likewise, the decision by Spain to welcome any Cuban (and effectively any Latin-American citizen from what was the 19th century Spanish empire) whose grandparents originated from Spain as a Spanish citizen has exacerbated migration. In effect, Spain has adopted a policy aimed at stealing the brightest young people from Cuba to fill the labour shortages it is experiencing as a result of internal migration within the European Union.

Meanwhile, all that is honourable, valiant, inspirational, decent and precious in the human condition is reflected in Cuba's internal building of socialism for the Cuban people, and by its international humanitarian mission of health and education provision to the world.

Europe



Uncle Sam heads for the exit in Ukraine leaving Europe in a panic

While Macron threatens boots on the ground to shore up a failing Ukraine, German generals' leaked audio proves that European forces are already there.

French president Emmanuel Macron's showy diplomatic efforts to whip the rest of Europe into line against Russia have so far only succeeded in emphasising the divisions within the western camp and by contrast the steady progress Russian forces are making towards their stated objectives in Ukraine.

The French president's complaints about other (non-specific) European Union members being "cowards" for being lukewarm in their support for the US-backed junta in Kiev, coupled with broad hints that French troops could end up with their boots on the ground in Ukraine, have succeeded only in annoying France's allies and revealing President Macron's vaunted policy of 'strategic ambiguity' to be so much hot air.

Macron went on French television to claim that France was a "force for peace" standing behind Ukraine, and to warn: "If we let Ukraine lose this war, then for sure Russia will threaten Moldova, Romania and Poland."

Invited by a French newspaper to explain his Ukraine policy, Macron wound up contradicting himself, by turns threatening and placating Russia and finally lapsing into complete incoherence. "Maybe at some point – I don't want it, I won't take the initiative – we will have to have operations on the ground, whatever they may be, to counter the Russian forces. France's strength is that we can do it."

So that's clear then: he doesn't want to send French troops into Ukraine, but there will have to be operations on

the ground at some point, but Macron won't take the initiative, but France is strong enough to send troops, or maybe not ...

Moscow's response to this tedious rigmorole is unambiguous: if French troops enter Ukraine, under whatever pretext, they will be recognised as invaders and destroyed.

German generals spill the beans

Meanwhile, whilst Germany's chancellor Olaf Scholz may bridle at the suggestion of French boots on the ground, fearing that this will bounce the rest of Europe into an unwelcome face-off with Russia, it turns out that his own generals are merrily chatting on an insecure line about how many missiles it would take to blow up the Kerch bridge to Crimea and how many British troops are already on the ground in Ukraine.

"Released on Friday by the editor of the Kremlin-controlled

news channel RT, Margarita Simonyan, the audio recording – confirmed as authentic by Germany – captures Luftwaffe officers discussing how Berlin's Taurus missiles could be used to try to blow up the Kerch Bridge connecting Russia with occupied Crimea.

"During the conversation, Lt Gen Ingo Gerhartz, the head of the Luftwaffe, describes how Britain works with Ukraine on deploying Storm Shadow missiles against targets up to 150 miles behind Russian lines.

"When it comes to mission planning,' the German commander says, 'I know how the English do it, they do it completely in reachback. They also have a few people on the ground, they do that, the French don't.'

"Reachback is a military term to describe how intelligence, equipment and support from the rear is brought forward to units deployed on the front, but Gerhartz suggests the British approach is deeper, involving support on site." (British soldiers 'on the ground' in Ukraine, says German military leak by Dan Sabbagh and Kate Connolly, The Guardian, 4 March 2024)

Chancellor Scholz has excused his reluctance to furnish Kiev with long-range German-made Taurus missiles by arguing that this cannot happen without German boots on the ground, which is a red line that cannot be breached. But the garrulous Luftwaffe know different: "the French don't" have people on the ground.

Europe in a panic as the USA heads for the exit

The EU accomplices in this American war were happy to swear allegiance to Ukraine so long as the USA had their backs and the dollars and the weapons kept on **page 26** ▶

Europe



Daily Mail doxes young people on their return from Russian festival

Why did Russia's hosting of an international youth festival provoke such a hysterical reaction from British media?

Nato's power, the USA's hegemony and what remains of the British empire are all in irreversible decline. A new world is coming into being and there is no room for imperialists in humanity's future. This is the context in which the World Youth Festival 2024 took place in Sochi – and why it provoked such a hysterical response from Guy Adams of the fascist-loving Daily Mail.

Origins of the World Youth Festival

The festival was originally named the World Festival of Youth and Students. The WFYS was founded in 1947, just after the second world war, at a time when it was becoming clear to many progressive people that the imperialists were taking over from Nazi Germany and continuing to wage a covert

war against the USSR.

Many declassified documents have since proved this irrevocably, with notable examples being Britain's 'Operation Unthinkable' and the US's 'Operation Cartel', later renamed 'Project Aerodynamic'.

That the desires of the imperialists manifested themselves in a so-called 'cold war' (characterised by low intensity operations and subterfuge) rather than an all-out open confrontation was a testament to the power of the Soviet Union – that it could win a war against Nazi Germany and still be strong enough to keep the Anglo-American imperialists at bay.

It was also a testament to the Soviet Union's aversion to war. Indeed, according to its last leader Michael Gorbachev, the

USSR was such a peace loving nation that it dissolved itself and handed itself over to the imperialists on a silver platter in order to avoid ever having to go to war again.

With the power of hindsight it is clear that the hot war could not be avoided by surrendering the Soviet Union. In fact, it was precisely the power of the Soviet Union that had prevented another hot war from engulfing Soviet territory. This correct understanding of imperialism had always been promoted by the Soviet Communist party under the leadership of VI Lenin and Josef Stalin, but was buried by the revisionists when Nikita Khrushchev came to power.

Indeed, Khrushchev was so sure there was a way to 'get along with' the west that he tried to join Nato in 1954 – the same year he transferred Crimea from the Russian to the Ukrainian SSR.

The legacy of the revisionist Soviet leaders who followed

Stalin, from Khrushchev to Gorbachev, was the weakness of a crippled post-Soviet Russia, the massive economic devastation of the 1990s, which has been called an "economic genocide", the stoking of fascistic and terroristic nationalisms surrounding and directed at Russia, the Nato expansion to encircle Russia ... and, of course, the current war in Ukraine.

It is no wonder that the pundits of the 'collective west' like to compare President Vladimir Putin with Josef Stalin now that Russia has finally stood up to imperialism.

The aim of the World Festival of Youth and Students was to bring together young adults from all over the world to promote solidarity and democracy and to oppose war and imperialism. Popular mottos from across the years included "For peace and friendship – Against the aggressive imperialist pacts", "For peace

Europe

and friendship and peaceful coexistence” and “For anti-imperialist solidarity, peace and friendship”.

The festival was held every few years and hosted by the following countries: Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany, Romania, Poland, the USSR, Austria and Finland. From 1962 to 1968, the festival was postponed owing to political turmoil in the designated host countries – ie, because Algeria and Ghana had to fight the French and the British respectively for their independence. After 1968, the previously biennial event was held roughly every five years, hosted by Bulgaria, East Germany, Cuba, the USSR and the DPRK.

The dissolution of the USSR at the hands of Gorbachev led to a longer break than usual, until the mantle was taken up by Cuba in 1997. Since then, the festival has been held in Algeria, Venezuela, South Africa, Ecuador and Russia. The largest iteration of the event in its history was the 2017 festival in Sochi, in which 30,000 participants from 185 countries took part.

The most recent festival of March 2024, again hosted in Sochi, happened for the first time under a new name – the World Youth Festival. The organisation and funding for the event were handled by the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs – Rosmolodezh – as well as by the federal territory of Sirius. It had the backing of numerous giant state enterprises such as Rosatom, Roscosmos, Rostelcom, Rosneft, Gazprom and Sberbank.

According to official sources, the event hosted 20,000 participants from 190 countries. Including all the local participants, volunteers and workers behind the scenes, it was temporary home to some 90,000 people.

World Youth Festival 2024 and its ideological significance

In the current climate, the imperialists are trying to rewrite history in order to hide their role in creating Nazi Germany, to hide the indispensable help their corporations gave to the Nazi Reich, and to hide the great sacrifice and glorious victories of the Soviet people who defeated them.

The current climate of anti-Russian hysteria, when even Russian tennis players have their flags replaced by white rectangles at international events, Russian athletes, musicians, dancers and others are banned from participating in global events, Russian culture is being banned, statues of Russians are being torn down, streets named after Russians are being renamed – and in Ukraine even Russian books are being burned ... has all been nurtured and promoted by imperialist politicians, media and secret services.

The global russophobic campaign being conducted by the imperialists is reminiscent of Nazi Germany, and western corporate media are fully complicit in promoting and prettifying it.

It was in this climate that Russia opened its arms to the world – including to citizens of the imperialist heartlands – and showed them its generous hospitality. In doing so, it provided an example to the world of standing by its values and applying them in practice.

The imperialists like to pretend to hold such ‘universal’ and ‘humanitarian’ values, but in practice they have ut-

ter contempt for the masses of humanity. This is just one of the reasons why Russia is gaining so many fans in the west, where growing numbers of people are seeing through the lies of the mainstream media.

Evidence of this could even be found in the comments section under a recent Daily Mail article by Guy Adams, under the snappy heading: ‘Putin’s British useful idiots: This week an adoring crowd of over 20,000 hand-picked young delegates hailed the Russian

despot at Nuremberg-style rally. Shockingly, several came from the UK. What are they thinking – and what poison might they spread?’

Interestingly, the most popular comments underneath this hit-piece included the following:

- It would be naive not to think of there being some UK citizens supporting Putin. – Hugofirst of Bournemouth, UK (46 likes, 3 dislikes).
- **The vast majority of the world’s nations and populations are NOT against or boycotting Russia.** – Luigi Peach from Brooklyn, UK (204 likes, 67 dislikes).
- **Disinformation – the sinister new term for information which deviates from the line our rulers want us to believe.** – Petrovicz from Manchester, UK (97 likes, 11 dislikes).
- **I’m more concerned about our politicians and billionaires conspiring at Davos.** – Bootie bear from Newcastle upon Tyne, UK (122 likes, 20 dislikes).
- **What kind of poison will they spread? Probably the**

antidote to the poison you spread. Why are people not allowed to have a different point of view without being ridiculed and insulted? – monimadness from No Limits City, South Korea (187 likes, 51 dislikes).

• **Because British society has been irreparably broken. Young people will look to stable cultures elsewhere where you can have an intelligent conversation without falling foul of wokery!** – TheSport from Mayfield, UK (86 likes, 10 dislikes).

This gulf between what Guy Adams writes and what his readers think is revealing. When one of the delegates asked Adams about this he responded by branding his dissenting readers “anonymous trolls”.

The plain truth is that, despite the concerted efforts of ‘journalists’ like Adams, and despite the vast resources at the disposal of the mainstream media corporations, all of which aim to keep workers’ minds safely trammelled by bourgeois newspeak, many Britons are beginning to wake up to the fact that they are being lied to.

Ironically (given zionism’s track record as the ideological inheritor of nazism), the Times of Israel has chronicled how the Daily Mail and other mainstream media in Britain supported the growth of fascism in Europe in the years leading up to WW2. That being so, one might suppose that if Russia were holding Nuremberg-style rallies, the Daily Mail would be all in favour ...

The neo-Nazi regime in Kiev, over which the Daily Mail waxes lyrical, has declared WW2 genocide perpetrators and Nazi collaborators like Stepan Bandera to be national heroes and is bringing up its children to revere them as such.

Europe

Youth festival

◀ **page 23** It takes a very special kind of ‘useful idiot’ to praise the Kiev regime as a democracy while condemning Russia as fascist – and to do so in the pages of the Daily Mail of all places. We can only assume Mr Adams is as unaware of this irony as he is of European history generally.

We note in this context that the imperialist countries do everything possible to prevent their citizens from accessing Russian media and culture. RT and Sputnik news have both been banned across the European Union and North America. Russian sources don’t appear in internet search results in the west, even if the information or event one is interested in took place in or involves Russia.

For this reason, it is very difficult for western workers to access the truth about the war in Ukraine, or to get any reliable information on any aspect of Russian contemporary or historical life. By contrast, Russia has imposed no such censorship: Russian citizens have free access to both local and western sources.

Economic significance

The economic warfare between the imperialist camp and Russia was initiated by the west back in 2014 – a punitive response to the decision by Crime’s people to return to Russia rather than remain subject to the puppet fascist proxy regime in Kiev after the Maidan coup. The EU ban on imports of Russian iron and steel is one of several measures that dates back to that time.

The 2024 youth festival took place at a time when Russia and the western powers had been embroiled in open warfare in Ukraine for two years. By this time the imperialists had done everything they could

to sanction, sabotage and economically isolate Russia.

They blew up the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, they nationalised Russian state enterprise subsidiaries in Europe, they threatened third countries to try to stop them doing business with Russia, they tried to impose an international price cap on oil to reduce Russia’s revenues, they banned Russia from using the Swift banking system, and they froze \$300bn worth of Russian state assets abroad.

But even after they had exhausted all the economic tools at their disposal in the hope of bringing the Russian economy to its knees, the successful hosting of 2024’s World Youth Festival merely showcased their failure.

The festival showed the world that Russia has the money and resources to host such an event. None of the participants had to pay for accommodation or food during their stay, meaning that there was no need for them to spend any money in Russia. Furthermore, thousands of participants even had their flights paid for from all parts of the world.

The food was delicious, the catering was superb, the rooms were spacious and comfortable, and the city was clean and beautiful. The huge cost of this festival shows on one hand how much Russia values the event and its noble aims, but on the other hand it shows how well the Russian economy is doing despite the imperialists’ crazed onslaught.

Diplomatic significance

Another objective of the imperialists was to diplomatically isolate Russia. The USA’s agents have long been pressuring the representatives of other countries to vote against Russia at the United Nations and to condemn ‘Russian aggression’. Nato countries have used all media dominance to create a synchronised echo chamber, drilling their Goebelsian lies into every worker’s head, and injecting a default russophobia into every sphere of political, economic and social life.

So many enterprises and institutions linked to western monopoly capital have gone out of their way to condemn Russia since

2022, to silence any voice that questions the imperialist narrative, to plaster Ukrainian flags all over their marketing and products, to raise money for Ukraine through public collections, and to help create a general atmosphere of fear in which there has been no room for individuals to support Russia or even to put forward any view short of the extremist pro-Ukrainian fanaticism demanded by the lords of finance capital.

But the festival proved that Russia is *not* isolated despite the relentless information war being waged by the west. It showed that, on the contrary, the world is full of friends of Russia. A competitive selection process chose 20,000 people from 190 countries (that’s 190 delegations with an average size of 105 people) but the number of applicants – ie, young people who wanted to

visit Russia – was vastly greater.

To give an idea of the scale, out of 160 British applicants only ten were chosen. The majority of countries, representing the vast majority of the global population, were happy to have their delegations attending the festival, and in many cases encouraged young leaders to attend.

Military significance

The hosting of the festival on the shores of the Black Sea while the war in Ukraine was ongoing demonstrated both that Russia is confident in its intelligence and defence capabilities and that the participants were confident in Russia. To boost this confidence even further, high officials such as President Vladimir Putin, former president Dmitry Medvedev, foreign minister Sergey Lavrov, foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova, and Kremlin press secretary Dmitry Peskov were all present at the festival.

The Ukrainian army released a video directly threatening all foreign participants in the festival, which ended with the words: “After Russia we will come for each of you.” During the last two years of war several incursions have taken place into Russian territory and several terrorist attacks have been carried out by Ukraine on Russian territory such as the Crimean Bridge attack and the assassinations of Daria Dugina and Vladlen Tatarsky. Despite this, the festival took place with no sign of tension or fear.

The World Youth Festival 2024 was a clear demonstration of the fact that *the imperialists have failed in their ideological, economic, diplomatic and military objectives*. There are telling signs that Russia is returning to a foreign policy

Comparing the Russian people and the festival to Nazis is not only a sign of total stupidity and ignorance, it also shows the shallow, disrespectful and primitively aggressive level of the official British narrative.

Europe

more akin to that of the Stalin era than of the post-Stalin era. Russia has reassured the world that it can play a leading role in the struggle against imperialism – a historical mission bestowed upon the Russian people that deserves the support of the workers of the world.

Impotent imperialists seek reprisals against those who tell the truth

On 15 February 2024, the American delegation to the festival held a press conference at the United Nations building in New York, which was sponsored by the Russian mission to the UN. The panel of speakers included Caleb Maupin of the Centre for Political Innovation, Chris Helali of the Party of Communists USA, and Elizabeth Pekin of the American Student Union.

The speakers made a strong case in support of Russia's just war in Ukraine, explaining why they felt it was important to attend the festival and why there should be no reprisals against any young American for attending. This was particularly important in light of the prosecution already being pursued against members of the Uhuru movement in the USA for the 'crime' of having visited Russia and spoken in its defence.

Attacks against free speech, dissenting opinion and independent journalism that isn't in line with the official narrative are now commonplace in the west. The case of Julian Assange is well known, but there are hundreds if not thousands of lesser known examples.

The Spanish journalist Pablo Gonzalez who was detained without trial in Poland for the 'crime' of reporting from the ground in Donbass, British journalist Graham Philips who has been sanctioned for the same 'crime', and the US com-

mentator Gonzalo Lira who died in Ukrainian custody after being detained for speaking out against the Kiev regime are just a few of many examples.

The intertwining of the bourgeois state and the corporate media makes it difficult to tell western journalists from spies. A recent case in Britain is that of Paul Mason, who embarked on a holy crusade with British 'intelligence' against anti-imperialist independent media the Grayzone. This type of collusion goes back a long time. The name George Orwell is well known, but few people know that he was a British intelligence asset working for Britain's anticommunist 'Information Research Department'.

Meanwhile, notwithstanding the Daily Mail's boundless hatred of everything that stands in the way of Anglo-American imperialism, hatchet-man Guy Adams was unable to find anything substantive to report against Russia, the festival or its participants.

In his frustration and impotence, he dedicated more than two-thirds of his article simply to doxing the members of the British delegation one by one, exposing as much personal information about them as he could, with the goal of causing them as many problems as possible in their personal and professional lives.

At time of writing, one member of the British delegation has lost their job as a result of Adams' article. This is an example of how repression operates via the corporate media, which have the power to ruin people's lives not as a result of their quest to get at the truth, but because of their monopoly over the *official narrative* and the pressure they bring to bear over employers and institutions as a result.

And yet despite all this ceaseless propaganda, the

comments under Adams' article demonstrate that many readers sympathise with the delegates. There is a growing consensus that the delegates

should have been free to attend the festival without being smeared and doxed by the press on their return.

Letter to the world from a British delegate

One British delegate responded to the Mail's hatchet piece in an open letter:

Dear people of the world and dear Britons

A certain tabloid news outlet has decided to menacingly dox every member of the British delegation to the World Youth Festival 2024 in Russia.

First of all, I would like to apologise to my fellow British friends, whose reputations have been unfairly damaged. Some of us have already experienced problems with work and study. So much for freedom of movement and speech, which were supposedly a core value of our country (as we can see – no longer).

The World Youth Festival was by far the greatest event for young people in the world. I know no other country capable of unifying such different cultures, races and traditions into one big and friendly multicultural family. The amount of handshakes with people from different countries of the world, the sheer emotions these few days brought me – are priceless.

But perhaps the most important point of the festival would be that it was absolutely non-political. We got together, nothing was forced upon us, no politicians forced their agenda on us, we were absolutely free to roam or go where we wanted to and enjoy our time in one of the saf-

est, nicest places in Russia (and, I dare say, the world).

The aforementioned article described the festival as a 'Nazi-like parade in the style of Hitler's Nuremberg rally' but kindly omits the fact that their own news outlet was proudly supportive of Hitler in the 1930s, as was the British royal family.

Comparing the Russian people and the festival to Nazis is not only a sign of total stupidity and ignorance, it also shows the shallow, disrespectful and primitively aggressive level that the official British narrative has fallen to.

I feel ashamed of my country and its way of dealing with its own young people, who dared to challenge the official narrative.

I pray that in Britain there are many people who will not trust this slimy evil propaganda reporting and I feel that it is important for them to know the truth: the British mainstream media lies to you and paints us in the worst possible colours. Their agenda is to pose Russia as our enemy: the Russian people – wild and uncivilised; the Britons coming to Russia – useful idiots.

This is complete calumny: we stand against this agenda and will do everything in our power to ensure that the British people will know the truth and will not be fed this pile of lies daily.

You do not deserve to be lied to.

Europe

Ukraine panic

◀ **page 21** flowing. Even when the sanctions war against Russia blew up in their faces, the gutless EU still kowtowed to Washington, preferring to empty their arsenals of weapons and deindustrialise their economies sooner than consult their own national interests.

But now that it becomes clear that the USA is racing ahead of Europe when it comes to disengaging from the Ukraine war, Europe is beginning to wake up to the catastrophic mess it has helped to create.

US president Joe Biden may still believe that Ukraine is winning the war and the moon is made of green cheese, but far better indices of the national mood in the USA are the blocking by Congress of the \$60bn US military aid package for Ukraine and the sacking of the foremost architect of the failed Ukraine war, Victoria Nuland.

Her last job was as acting deputy secretary of state covering the recently retired Wendy Sherman. Nuland looked set to take on the post permanently, but was pipped at the post by Kurt Campbell. Campbell, who was the architect of President Barack Obama's 'pivot to Asia' is still dining out on the book he wrote about the rationale for that shift back in 2016.

The message coming from Washington to its European allies is clear: you sort out the mess on your continent whilst we pursue our interests elsewhere.

Russia's plain-speaking foreign office spokeswoman Maria Zakharova was in no doubt as to the significance of Ms Nuland's departure.

"It is simple – the failure of the anti-Russian course of the Biden administration. Russophobia, proposed by Victoria Nuland as the main foreign

policy concept of the United States, is dragging the Democrats to the bottom like a stone."

And it is not only the russophobe administration of Joe Biden that is sinking like a stone, but the whole prestige of the USA is sinking with them, as the world looks on aghast at the barbarism of America's proxy war, fought indeed to the last drop of Ukrainian blood.

Desperation in Kiev

Reports coming out of Ukraine reveal the blind panic of the Kiev junta as the realisation dawns that they are simply running out of bodies and are reduced to sending press gangs on to the street to snatch reluctant recruits.

According to the Washington Post: "President Volodymyr Zelensky and his top military commanders have failed so far to come up with a clear plan to conscript or recruit many thousands of new soldiers critically needed to defend against Russia's continuing attacks.

"Zelensky's inability to forge a political consensus on a mobilisation strategy – despite months of warnings about a severe shortage of qualified troops on the front – has fuelled deep divisions in Ukraine's parliament and more broadly in Ukrainian society.

"It has left the military relying on a hodgepodge of recruiting efforts and sown panic among fighting-age men, some of whom have gone into hiding, worried that they will be drafted into an ill-equipped army and sent to certain death given that aid for Ukraine remains stalled in Washington.

"The quandary over how to fill the ranks has confronted Zelensky with perhaps the greatest challenge to his leadership since the start of the February 2022 invasion. The lack of a

clear mobilisation strategy – or even agreement on how many more troops Ukraine needs – factored into Zelensky's dismissal of his top general in February, but the new commander in chief, Oleksandr Syrskyi, so far has brought no new clarity.

"Syrskyi has been tasked with auditing the existing armed forces to find more combat-eligible troops, after Zelensky's office recently announced that of the one million people who have been mobilised, only about 300,000 have fought at the front lines.

"But nearly a month after his promotion, no one in the military leadership or the presidential administration has explained where those 700,000 are – or what they have been doing." (Zelensky in bind over how to draft more troops as Russian forces advance by Siobhán O'Grady and Serhii Korolchuk, 4 March 2024)

And while the Ukrainians count the cost in lives, German workers count the cost in redundancies and lay-offs. According to Bloomberg, Germany is in recession and the Bundesbank says Germany is in a six-month slump. (Germany is in recession due to first-quarter slump, survey shows, Bloomberg, 18 March 2024)

Other Bloomberg headlines are uncompromising: "German factory orders slump in new sign of economic slowdown" and "Germany's days as an industrial superpower are coming to an end".

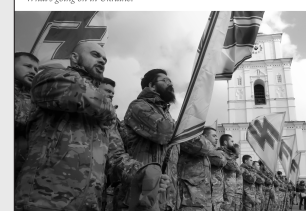
As Germany waves farewell to cheap gas from Russia and easy access to an expanding Chinese market, the full damage done to the economy by setting Germany's national interest in second place to her shield duty for Uncle Sam is becoming clear.

Neo-nazi Nato's Proxy War Against Russia



Neo-nazi Nato's Proxy War Against Russia

What's going on in Ukraine?



The conflict in Ukraine did not start with the launch of Russia's special military operation (SMO) in February 2022; it started with the fascist 'Maidan' coup of 2014, and its roots go back through a century of imperialist meddling.

This collection tells the true story of the war: the motive forces driving it, and the aims of each side – a continuation of the policies they were pursuing before the outbreak of war.

Written as events unfolded, these articles provide compelling evidence against the propaganda war now being waged by Britain's rulers against their people.

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Europe

Russia terror attack

◀ **page 28** west's overarching goal remains that of *regime change in Moscow*.

Certainly, hopes for achieving this via the battlefield are waning fast, as conditions on the field are turning decisively towards an outright Russian victory this year. In this context, the imperialists' desperation to somehow delay or reverse what even they can now see is an unstoppable trend is palpable.

Hence their increasing resort to terror tactics against the wider Russian population, of which the attack on the Crocus concert hall was not the first but was by far and away the bloodiest.

Hence also President Emmanuel Macron's desperate efforts to get some small French force officially on the ground in Ukraine, presumably in the mistaken belief that Russia would not dare to attack it, and other Nato soldiers could gradually be brought in to expand it, thus maintaining at least some part of a rump Ukrainian state that the Nato powers could continue to use as a battering ram against Russia.

Not only is Russia not going to allow France to establish an official military presence on the ground in Ukraine, but President Vladimir Putin made it clear in his recent address to the Russian people that the country will not allow the perpetrators of this latest attack to go unpunished either. The investigators will find out who was behind the attack and the country will take all necessary measures to bring the backers as well as their footsoldiers to justice.

As in the case of Palestine, the imperialists may yet live to regret their wanton and ill-disguised criminality, carried out

in the arrogant belief that they will always be able to behave as they like with impunity.

British solidarity

On 24 March, CPGB-ML comrades joined the line of mourners outside the Russian embassy in London, laying flowers and delivering this message:

We express our deepest condolences for the victims of the atrocities in Moscow on 22 March.

The twenty-fourth of March was a day of mourning in Russia and ordinary people in Britain came to pay their respects, to give sympathy both to the families who lost loved ones and to Russia as a whole. This was a horrific crime in which 150 were slaughtered and many more were injured by the enemies of Russia.

The purpose of the terrorists and their paymasters is to destroy Russia and the morale of its proud peoples, but we know that the legacy of Russian history is to resist and create.

Remembering the victims of this attack, we will continue to honour the countless sacrifices of the peoples of Russia in their fight against fascism.

We have faith in Russia's tremendous resilience in defending its sovereignty against the US-led Nato and its cowardly proxies. They shall not pass.

As members of the British working class and as communists of the CPGB-ML, we extend our sympathy and heartfelt solidarity to the peoples of Russia and their elected government in their valiant flight against the darkness of imperialism.

In Russia, as in Palestine, the enemy is one, but humanity's struggle towards light will prevail.

Join the communists

Not only do we need to campaign against the bad conditions and lack of prospects for working-class people in Britain today, but we need to work for a completely different type of society – one where people's needs decide everything.

So many problems face this world: environmental catastrophe, poverty, disease, racism and war. They'll never be solved while capitalism remains, but they could all be sorted if society was set up for the benefit of the majority rather than the private gain of a few billionaires.

The Communists 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 building a socialist society; it is our job to do it anyway!

Our aim is to revive revolutionary Marxism and popularise it amongst the broadest possible sections of our class. Combining knowledge with disciplined organisation is the key to success in the fight against capitalism.

Our membership is youthful, while our leadership is experienced. We may be small, but we are growing. We welcome anyone who is serious and committed to working for a socialist future.

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Proletarian



Communists send solidarity to a Russian nation in mourning after terror attack

Nobody who retains a shred of critical thinking capacity is buying into the western narrative about 'jihadi terrorists' having planned this heinous operation.

The peace-loving peoples of the world woke up last Saturday to the shocking news that, on Friday night, a terrorist attack had killed 150 young concertgoers in Moscow and injured hundreds more, many of whom are in critical condition and fighting for their lives.

With all eyes inevitably looking toward the Nato-backed fascists in Ukraine, the US imperialists were quick – too quick, in fact – to declare that they *knew for a fact* that the Ukrainians had not been involved. Within an hour of the attack, during which four gunmen opened fire on the audience at the Crocus city hall and then set fire to the building before leaving the scene, the White House made its statement – and imperialist media went into overdrive to amplify the US narrative, which claims that the attack was carried

out by an Islamist terror group called 'Isis K' that has no connection whatsoever to the Ukrainian government.

Leaving aside the fact that Isis is a proxy army created, trained and armed by US and British imperialism, several facts failed to stack up regarding this assertion.

First is that the gunmen did not seek martyrdom in the traditional jihadi manner, but jumped in their car and fled like any hired mercenaries on completion of their mission. Indeed, Scott Ritter has pointed out that in the video in which they recorded their intention to commit this 'divine' act 'for Allah', the supposed 'jihadists' held up the wrong hand as they swore – a change that may not mean much to the uninitiated, but which according to Islam is the difference between God

and the Devil.

Next, having been allowed to flee by Russian security forces, which quietly followed them, the supposed 'jihadis' headed for the Ukrainian border. All four gunmen were taken into custody once their object had been clearly ascertained by the Russians, who picked them up in a rural location where no bystanders could be hurt during the course of their capture.

No doubt more information will be discovered by investigators over the coming days. A few facts are already clear, however.

The first is that the USA undoubtedly had advance warning of the attack. This is either because it directly ordered it, or because its security agents picked up information which they failed to pass on.

The US embassy in Russia had been carrying a notice on its website warning US citizens to avoid mass gatherings such as concerts.

The likelihood of US involve-

ment is also underlined by the fact that Ukraine's (now demoted) puppetmaster-in-chief Victoria Nuland, blurted out in an unscheduled street interview the last time she was in Kiev that Russia was in for some "nice surprises".

Meanwhile, Oleksiy Danilov, until recently the head of Ukraine's national security and defence council, gloated on television the day after the attack on the concert: "Is it fun in Moscow today? I think a lot of fun for you. I think we ought to do this sort of fun more often, You are after all 'brotherly people', and maybe we should visit you more regularly."

In fact, it is quite possible that west-backed mercenaries posing as 'Islamist' may have been involved in some way, answering to western and/or Ukrainian handlers. It has long been known to military observers that Ukraine is the new focus of operations for British and US-trained gangsters who have been evacuated from the imperialists' failed regime-change war in Syria. Meanwhile, some Russian analysts believe the trigger-pullers were recent additions to such forces, with signs that they may have been recruited through Ukraine's embassy in Tajikistan.

Whoever pulled the trigger, there can be no doubt this action was ultimately carried out on the orders of some part of the Nato alliance, acting alone or together, in the hope of creating unrest and dissatisfaction in Russia. Whatever occurs on the battlefield of the war in Ukraine, the **page 27** ▶