



# WE STAND BY OUR STRIKERS

- 27 July RMT & TSSA rail strike**
- 29 July CWU BT Openreach strike**
- 30 July Aslef train drivers strike**
- 1 August CWU BT Openreach strike**
- 18 August RMT Rail strike**
- 20 August RMT rail strike**

▲ Britain's unions are changing the way workers take the fight to the bosses

With 115,000 workers, 1,500 workplaces, 2,400 members' meetings, and millions of video views the Communications Workers Union has mobilised a relentless mix of ground game and digital communications to prepare for its strike offensive

## Striking solidarity

The Communist Party has called for a special solidarity push to back workers taking industrial action.

Ruth Styles, chair of the party said: 'The communists urge all branches and districts, members, and supporters to visit their nearest rail worker picket line on the day of any action.'

It is vitally important that employers and government understand that they face not just isolated groups of workers but an increasing united and militant working class.

'Take cakes, biscuits, water, and copies of the Morning Star'.

### Nick Wright STRIKES

BRITAIN'S EMPLOYERS fear a hot summer and a hotter autumn as hundreds of thousands of workers plan strike action to win wage rises to match the profit-driven inflationary spiral in Britain's deepening capitalist crisis.

Inflation is running at a higher rate than at any time in the last four decades.

Presently at 9.1 per cent it is predicted to reach 11 per cent as gas, electricity, petrol and food prices spiral.

The TUC has demanded a 'decent pay rise for public sector workers' and a £15 minimum wage across the board.

TUC research reports that workers are £20,000 poorer since 2008 because price inflation has outpaced wages.

General secretary Frances O'Grady launched the TUC's campaign with the message that working people were saying 'enough is enough' after years of stagnant wages.

The falling value of wages is the main factor driving the strike wave but an employer offensive on terms and conditions and widespread threats of redundancy tied to a drive for higher profits is fuelling working class anger.

This is a key issue for the RMT in its disputes with Network Rail and the train operating companies.

The union wants guarantees on compulsory redundancy or degraded conditions.

The union's three very effective strikes in June shocked the rail barons with the

militancy and organisation of workers across a wide range of employers. While the massive public support for the strikers stymied the employers media offensive and left the monopoly press struggling for an anti-strike story to tell.

Thousands of British Telecom workers have voted to take strike action in two 24 hour periods on 29 July and 1 August.

A Royal Mail workers 'work to rule' has ramped up pressure on the employers in advance of strikes which are designed to compel Royal Mail to concede a 9.1 per cent pay increase to catch up with price inflation.

Train drivers in ASLEF are to strike on 30 July while Transport Salaried Staff Association members in the commuter belt Southeastern network have voted for strike action.

Teachers, barristers and NHS workers are lining up for more action.

Barrister strikes organised by the Criminal Bar Association in July closed courts in a strike for a 25 per cent pay increase.

GMB members at Heathrow Airport are balloting for industrial action.

The National Education Union is advising its members to prepare for action in the Autumn term if pay negotiations fail.

Nurses want a 12 per cent pay rise while NHS staff in Unison's south west region are gearing up for action. Medical doctors in the British Medical Association want a 30 per cent pay rise over the next five years to catch up with inflation.

This strike wave has been a long time in the making.

### Why strikes? Why now?

Wages have been falling behind for a generation or more. For thirty years after the defeat of fascism working class living standards in the developed capitalist economies rose.

For most of Europe the capitalist class – discredited and divided after much of it collaborated with the fascists – faced a resurgent working class while the existence of a growing socialist sixth of the world cramped capitalism's style and offered a social model which had to be countered with advancing living standards and a welfare state.

The dismantling of socialist states marked the point when pay rates began to fall – a trend that accelerated and over the last decade the value of wages has fallen dramatically.

See *UK pay and profits graphs* on page 2.

In Britain this coincided with a weakening of the trade unions as Thatcherite economics, a deregulated financial sector and the off-shoring of productive industry was backed up by draconian anti union laws.

Widespread illusions that the EU offered protection for wages and conditions vanished as its neoliberal foundations were strengthened with treaties which evacuated economic decision making and currency control away from member states and drove a wave of privatisation and marketisation of public services and utilities.

A series of anti-union judgments by the European Court of Justice served to further weaken union power and drive down pay rates as millions of workers from impoverished former socialist countries migrated westwards.

Brexit, the coronavirus crisis, war and the desperate drive to maintain profit levels at the expense of wages did the rest.

## 'Not enough'

Unity! News Team  
GOVERNMENT

THE RATS jumped the Johnson ship – but a change of Tory leaders will not alter the Tory government's pro-big business, anti-democratic, racist and war mongering agenda, Tony Conway told the Communist Party's political committee.

As the news of ministerial resignations broke, Britain's Communists called for a united response from unions and campaigners to the cost of living, housing, climate change and food crises.

Tony Conway urged the maximum local solidarity with striking workers, calling for 'generalised strike action' as communications and civil service staff prepare to join railway workers, baggage handlers, lecturers and barristers in the fight for jobs, services and a living wage.

'Building on the vibrant TUC demonstration on June 18, we need a programme of action including town hall meetings to promote the New Deal for Workers and renewed efforts to build the People's Assembly, Stop the War and CND in local communities.'

As convenor of the Communist Party's anti-racism anti-fascism commission, Tony Conway also emphasised the need to overturn British state policy to deport refugees to Rwanda, which he said 'rips up Britain's solemn commitments in international and humanitarian law'.

The Communist Party condemned the recent decision of the US Supreme Court to abolish the right to abortion established by the Roe v Wade ruling 50 years ago.

A woman's right to choose now faces a fresh offensive in Britain Tony Conway said, expressing solidarity with US Communists and pro-choice campaigners.

## Venezuela storm

SOLIDARITY

Early analytics by the Communist Party's social media team show a twitter storm organised by the party and Young Communists to raise £5000 for Venezuelan workers' organisations reached 92,017 people.

Of 43 tweets posted each one reached an average of 2140 people.

The party's director of communications Phil Katz said: 'Add in the many more people reached by retweets and we are confident that we will raise the cash.'

The Partido Comunista de Venezuela tweeted back: 'Que viva el Internacionalista Proletario!'



# YOUTH IN ACTION

‘What is genuine is proved in the fire, what is false we shall not miss in our ranks. The opponents must grant us that youth has never before flocked to our colours in such numbers, ... in the end, one will be found among us who will prove that the sword of enthusiasm is just as good as the sword of genius.’  
Engels, *Anti-Schelling* (1841)



Strikemap, the innovative online solidarity tool has launched a campaign to encourage as many people as possible to visit their local picket, using Strike Map.Go to <https://tinyurl.com/57s7c6us> to sign up. Strikemap will send you details of your nearest strike, according to its online map.

Up and down the country workers are under pressure. Too many unscrupulous bosses are turning the screws to sweep away gain in wages and terms and conditions that we've won through our unions over many years of struggle.

When workers take strike action it's powerful. It builds our capacity to negotiate and we win. But it can also be lonely and tough. That's why solidarity is such an important word in the labour movement.

Standing shoulder to shoulder with comrades is a simple act but it's the way we build belief that we can endure and that we can win.



## Straight Left Stewart McGill on energy

**The energy price cap did not need to be lifted: profits of energy companies are not sacrosanct. Even if you accept that action had to be taken to avoid catastrophic losses in the energy supply industry, the wider economy provides alternative solutions that do not entail the impoverishment of millions.**

In October the cap will rise by another £830 on top of the £693 announced in April. The combined cost of these two increases across 22 million households will be around £33.5 billion. The price increases will impoverish millions, lead to thousands of deaths and will have seriously damaging effects on many businesses that could provoke a recession. Prices should be cut back and frozen at pre-April price cap increase levels. The following shows how that freeze could be paid for without inflicting damage on the poorest in society.

Govt. figures suggest the north sea oil giants could make as much as £19.5 billion this year, £13.6 billion in excess of the £5.9 billion profit averaged in the last decade. Tax that excess at 80 per cent giving revenues of £10.9 billion.

End Sunak's capital-allowance 'Super Deduction' scheme; the OBR admits that this will be exploited by corporates looking to evade tax and currently forecast its basic cost to be £10.6 billion this tax year. Scrap it now and save around £9 billion

The big four banks are estimated to have paid out bonuses of around £4 billion this year. Introduce a special tax on the banks equal to that amount, the country rescued them in 2008 when their incompetent greed nearly destroyed the world economy, this is a small payback. Money raised: £4 billion.

Corporate Welfare Watch estimates the value of corporate grants, subsidies, tax breaks, procurement, wage subsidies and other forms of corporate welfare amount to over £90 billion per year. Their research reveals that the biggest companies make the largest claims. Cut this by 7.5 per cent with emphases on making it more difficult for the big firms to claim, this will raise £6.75 billion.

This comes to £30.65 billion. Tell the energy companies to take the hit on the remaining £2.85 billion to make the £33.5 billion needed. They have made enough money out of the British public over the last few decades. Government ministers will bleat about 'the impact on their share price.' The Big Six have given away 82 per cent of their profits to shareholders over the last five years, weep no tears.

These figures, like the profits of banks and energy companies, are not sacrosanct: other percentages and sources of income can be applied. They are to indicate that another way is possible, the poor do not have to pay nor does the wider economy have to suffer.

## Profits up

**BT profits £1.3b**  
Broadband 9 per cent up

**Royal Mail profits £758m**  
Stamp price rise 10p

**BP profits £6.3b**  
Fuel up 22p per litre

**British Gas profits £948m**  
Energy bills up £700

**UK biggest bank profits**  
£45.6bn last year

### Unity! new team PROFITS

**A** REPORT BY Unite the Union shows that over the last half year corporate profits are responsible for almost 60 per cent of the inflation rise. Just 8.3 per cent of inflation is down to increased pay bill costs.

The union's *Corporate Profiteering and the Cost of Living Crisis* analyses the the FTSE 350 to show that profit margins for Britain's biggest listed companies were 73 per cent higher in 2021 than pre-pandemic levels in 2019.

Even though sales were down in 2021, profits rocketed. Even removing energy company profits from the tally, average profit margins still jumped an astonishing 52 per cent.

Data from the government's Office for

## Wages down



National Statistics (ONS) shows that company profits jumped 11.74 per cent in the six months from October 2021 to March 2022. In the same period labour costs fell by 0.8 per cent. This rise in company profits is responsible for 58.7 per cent of inflation over the six months

The Unite rerort suggests that high inflation was initially sparked by supply chain shocks. But, it argues that there are strong signs that "price gouging" – where businesses hike their prices above supply costs – are now pushing a "second round" of inflation. So while the pandemic, energy demand and the invasion of Ukraine have undoubtedly caused ruptures in supply chains, any "inflation spiral" is being pushed by profits.

Unite's Sharon Graham said: "The Governor of the Bank of England and Boris Johnson want workers to think it's

irresponsible to demand better wages to pay for crippling food and energy prices. But Unite's report exposes the truth. It's not hard pressed workers who are driving inflation, it's whole swathes of corporate Britain. In the last six months company profits were responsible for almost 60 per cent of inflation."

Unite reveals that average executive pay increased to £2.59 million

The report also exposes how corporate executives have benefited from these rising profits. Between 2020 and 2021 average pay for the highest paid directors of the UK's biggest listed companies leapt a colossal 29 per cent from £2.01 million in 2020 to £2.59 million in 2021.

HAT TIP TO CWU'S DAVE WARD FOR THE BT, ROYAL MAIL, BP AND BRITISH GAS DATA ABOVE

# What is to be done? Pablo Catatumbo

In this guest piece for the Communist Party, former guerrilla commander of FARC-EP and current communist politician, Pablo Catatumbo, provides an update in the lead up to historic presidential election which resulted in the election of Gustavo Peto, the candidate his party supported.

Having laid down his rifle as part of the 2016 peace agreement, Catatumbo, now a leader of Partido Comunes, discusses communist strategy and responds to the question "What is to be done?"

### Pablo Catatumbo COLOMBIA

I am invited by the comrades of the Communist Party of Britain to write for their *International Bulletin*, a real honour I cannot refuse.

Trained in the principles of proletarian internationalism, during a lifetime of struggles we became accustomed to follow the deeds, triumphs, and setbacks of all those who – anywhere in the world – rose up in defence of the rights of the workers and the humble. Now that I am writing these words, it is inevitable to avoid my memories of the solemn moments in which we sang, among mountains and jungles, the beautiful lyrics of *The Internationale*, the immortal hymn that identifies the workers of the world... "Up with the poor of the world, stand up the slaves without bread..."

Besides asking me to refer to the current state of the Peace Agreements we signed with the Colombian State five years ago, the comrades ask me to

reflect on the elections and to end by answering the same question that at the dawn of the 20th century the great leader of the Bolshevik revolution, Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov, Lenin, asked himself: "What Is to Be Done?"

**So, let's get to work.**

The Peace Agreement that we built with so much effort during more than four years in Havana must be understood in a historical perspective that includes historical and cultural political aspects as a true peace treaty between two politically and militarily opposed parties that put an end to an internal war that lasted for almost 60 years.

Undoubtedly, the Peace Agreement, together with the Constituent Assembly of 1991, represents one of the most important political events in our country that seeks to overcome the conditions that originated and allowed the political, social, and armed conflict to continue for so long.

Our approach is that the Agreement should be interpreted in two



# EMPIRICISM AND LABOUR

‘As Trotsky points out, the same conditions which gave England priority make for backwardness in every sphere today. English capitalism was the pioneer in the past, empirically finding out a way. This fact has stamped a deeply empirical character on English thought, and a contempt for all non-English thought and methods. Today this traditional outlook has been inherited by the English labour leaders from the bourgeoisie.’

**Rajani Palme Dutt** *Trotsky and his English Critics* 1926 in *The Labour Monthly*



Briefing from  
the Communist Party  
Environment Commission  
on the Report  
of the July 2022  
Climate Change  
Committee

‘The UK government is failing to act to meet its net zero commitments, but even these commitments fail to grasp the point. Capitalist business as usual, with its drivers of accumulation and profit cannot deliver meaningful environmental action, the only alternatives are socialism or extinction.’

## Environment Commission CLIMATE CHANGE

IT HAS LONG been apparent that the current Tory administration has no vision for the country, nor, other than three-word sloganeering, any policies or strategies to address the many crises currently facing those in whose interests they are supposed to govern. With Johnson packing his bags, the signs from many of those seeking to replace him as prime minister are that environmental issues and specifically the UK’s net zero commitments are to be sacrificed on the high altar of Tory fundamentalism.

It is no surprise therefore, Britain’s Communists say, that the latest report of the UK’s Climate Change Committee (CCC) echoes for Britain what the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said about the world – that not enough is being done to meet commitments on reducing harmful emissions as part of the global effort to restrict and reverse the dangerous rise in the earth’s temperature.

The CCC is an independent statutory body established under the Climate Change Act 2008 to advise the UK and devolved governments on emissions and targets for their reduction. It reports to Parliament on progress in reducing greenhouse gases and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Its chair is Lord Deben – better known to many as former Tory minister John Selwyn Gummer.

The report credits the UK as a world leader in terms of ambition. Unlike in many countries, the UK governments does have a net zero strategy, having committed to a 68% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030, 78% by 2035 and net zero by 2050, but as Lord Deben said in his presentation of the report, those commitments must be turned into reality and, as both he and the report say, there are ‘serious gaps across the board’ where the government does not have the necessary or adequate strategies and policies to deliver the reductions in emissions needed to meet its climate commitments.

## Key points in the report

There are serious gaps in the implementation of the UK government’s net zero strategy

Tangible progress on the strategy ‘lags behind ambition’ – not all policies will deliver as planned Action to address the rising cost of living must be aligned to the net zero strategy. There is an urgent need for equivalent action both to reduce fossil fuel use and to limit energy bills

There is slow progress on ‘wider enablers’ – the wider structural and policy changes which will allow transition. The report says that there are ‘plenty of warm words, but little concrete progress’ The UK must build on the COP 26 pledges

The bull point of the report is that Britain’s net zero pledges lack credibility without a strategy to implement them. This absence of substance to back government announcements of policy will be familiar to even the most passing student of the Johnson administration. The gaps are many and serious;

- There is not enough to reduce consumer demand for high-carbon activities
- The current cost of living crisis is a golden opportunity to encourage de-carbonisation
- There is an urgent need for a public engagement strategy – there is public concern, but low awareness of how, individually and collectively to contribute
- Integration of net zero and climate adaptation is ‘largely missing’ from key government policies such as ‘levelling up’
- There is not enough accountability
- There is no DEFRA policy on agricultural emissions
- Too little action on new skills to meet the needs of new low carbon ‘markets’
- Reliance on aviation – no policy to mitigate its use
- Too little building adaptation – especially insulation. Newly built houses are having to be retro-fitted to become energy efficient

● Government proposals for market-based solutions – eg; obligations on manufacturers to sell a rising number of heat pumps and relying on the market to drive other deliveries are untested Some adaptation methods such as carbon sequestration in peatlands and woodlands are themselves at risk from climate change effects such as flooding, drought and fire.

Mentions of markets and ‘market-based solutions’ in the CCC report will not escape the notice of readers and will come perhaps as no surprise in a report from a body led by an ex-Tory government minister. Many of the issues on which the government is failing, for example aviation, house building and the training of workers in new skills are inextricably linked to the demands of big business and the low wage, high profit profile of the government economic model – in other words the capitalist view of environmental action is firstly to minimise the problem and then to shoehorn solutions into Business as Usual.

Communists say that proposing profit-friendly environmental action and expecting big business to adapt to climate-friendly practices is both to expect the impossible and to ignore the urgency of the problem. We have seen in recent days how quickly the government will abandon the pretence of acting decisively on reducing fossil fuel use in using world events to justify its decision to extend the working life of the coal power plant at West Burton and its on-going negotiation on two more. We see Tory back bench pressure from the Net Zero Scrutiny Group to (in the words of former Prime Minister David Cameron) ‘cut the Green Crap’.

The UK government is failing to act to meet its net zero commitments, but even these commitments fail to grasp the point. Capitalist business as usual, with its drivers of accumulation and profit cannot deliver meaningful environmental action, the only alternatives are socialism or extinction.

## o on the political process in Colombia



dimensions, the first has to do with the signing of the Peace Agreement as a political fact and the second, the lack of will to implement the agreement by the government in power because of the fear and pettiness of the class in power to comply with the agreement as a democratising element that allows changes in favour of the majorities of the country.

Apart from precariously attending to the needs of the former combatants of the FARC, the government of President Iván Duque has not taken steps to fully implement what was agreed, thus not only wasting a historic opportunity to establish a firm and lasting peace in the country but has once again demonstrated the deceitful and petty behaviour that characterises Colombia’s elites.

The comprehensive agrarian reform for which our landless peasants have been clamouring for centuries has been left in the dustbin; the political reform through which our country could have advanced in the broadening of its

democracy, making it more inclusive and universal, has been left in the freezer; point four of the Agreement, which offered a sensible and safe route for the substitution of coca crops, has been left on paper. All the above, within the framework of aggressive campaigns against our legal political party (Comunes) and its militants.

Since the signing of the Accords, 320 former combatants who signed the peace accords have been assassinated amid governmental indifference and the impunity of the judicial apparatus.

Against this backdrop, the country recently witnessed the first of three election days this year.

The legislative elections of March 2022 revealed the crisis of traditional institutionality and sounded a thunderous alarm bell announcing the irruption of progressive and leftist currents on the national political scene, which we not only celebrate but also strongly support.

New battles are looming at the polls on May 29 to define who will be the new

president of Colombia. I have no doubt that these are the most crucial elections in our history, and we are convinced that Gustavo Petro, candidate of a Pact of diverse forces – among which our party is included – will govern Colombia between 2022 and 2026. Petro has committed, among other urgent tasks, to implement the Havana agreements, which could lead to a complete and definitive peace

“What Is to Be Done?” the comrades of the *International Bulletin* ask me, perhaps paraphrasing Lenin.

My answer is simple: persevere.

We do not lay down our arms to sink into a nostalgic and comfortable retirement, but to continue – by other means – to fight for a better country and a better world.

The Comunes Party is young and vigorous; it carries an invaluable heritage of heroism and resistance that will allow us, sooner rather than later, to be great protagonists of the transformations that are looming on the horizon of Colombia.



# ON ORGANISATION

In an election fight it is absolutely essential to reach every elector. A working class organisation in Britain can only do this through canvassing. The Tories rely largely on their millionaire and millions circulation daily press. As elections near these become more and more openly Tory propaganda.

Councillor **Kay Beauchamp** *Canvassing* published by the London District Committee of the Communist Party 1951

▲ Kay Beauchamp was an outstanding political organiser, dedicated anti-racist and anti-imperialist and a powerful writer. She was sister of Joan Beauchamp, later Joan Thompson, who became a prominent suffragette and associate of Sylvia Pankhurst. Kay Beauchamp completed a degree in history at University College London in 1924 and joined the Communist Party. She was one of the eight party members who produced the first ever edition of the *Daily Worker* which appeared on 1 January 1930. As its managing director she was jailed for contempt of court when the paper described the conviction of unemployed workers' leader Wal Hannington, as a 'frame-up'. She worked as a teacher and in the Communist Party's Education Department. In the 30s and 40s, she worked closely with Harry Pollitt, organising hunger marches, solidarity work for the Spanish Civil War and the campaign for the Second Front. After the war, she was elected a local Councillor in Finsbury during her time as international secretary of the Communist Party. In this role she made several visits to Africa. She was involved in the Movement for Colonial Freedom (MCF), founded in 1954, and worked with Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta and other future leaders of emergent Africa. In 1970 the MCF was renamed as Liberation.

## Hot summer of action



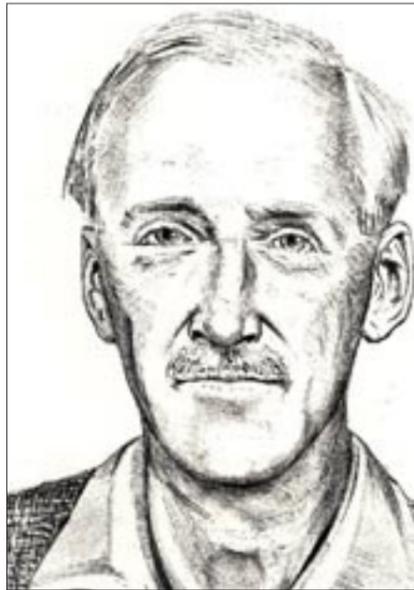
▲ **TOLPUDDLE FESTIVAL**  
Under blue skies and bright sunshine Communist Party Southern district secretary Sean Cannon staffs the party's book stall



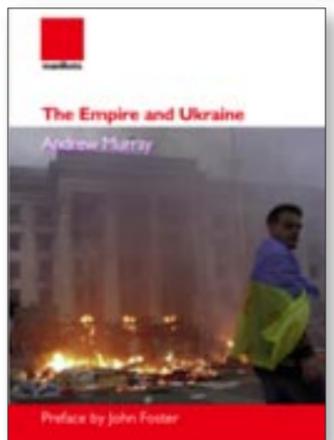
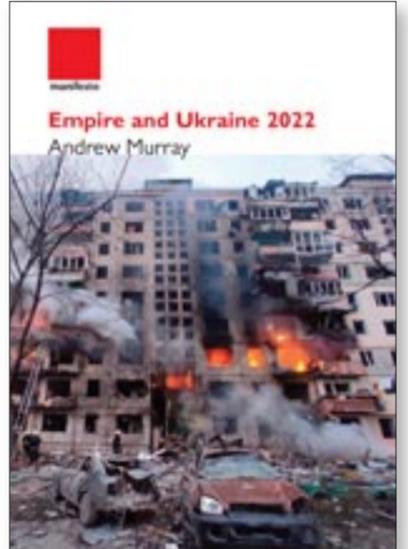
▲ **WORKING CLASS SOLIDARITY**  
As part of the YCL's national campaign Aylesbury Young Communists bagged 340.5kg of food from donors



▲ **WOMEN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE**  
Glasgow and Lanarkshire Young Communists joined hundreds of people gathered in Glasgow's George Square in support of abortion rights as attacks against the treatment intensifies.



**Paxton Chadwick commemorative lecture**  
The inaugural Paxton Chadwick memorial lecture takes place on 3 September. Hosted by the Communist Party's Eastern district, with the support of Paxton's family, the lecture will be given by Professor James Crossley on the 'Spectre of John Ball.'  
Paxton was a great lay leader of the Communist Party in Leiston, Suffolk, a talented artist, a communist councillor and chair of Leiston Council.  
He served as an anti-aircraft gunner and worked after the war as an illustrator for Penguin Books. Leiston in this period became known as the most southerly of the 'Little Moscovs.'  
James Crossley's new book *Spectres of John Ball* is now available.



The pamphlet is £2.50 from [www.manifestopress.coop](http://www.manifestopress.coop). Get it with the original book – now available for a knockdown price of £8

## ★ for Peace and Socialism Morning Star

Get your daily dose of the Morning Star delivered directly to your home or office

The Morning Star has teamed up with NewsTeam to bring a new and enhanced print subscription home/office delivery service to you

Use the QR code to check if NewsTeam are able to deliver to your address. By signing up to the home news delivery service six days a week, you will get **free access to our premium digital edition** (worth £199 per annum), which includes:

- a daily alert to your inbox
- full website access
- the PDF edition



Wherever you are, you never have to lose touch with the Morning Star – whether you are reading the print edition in the comfort of your home or catching up with the digital edition when you are on the move!

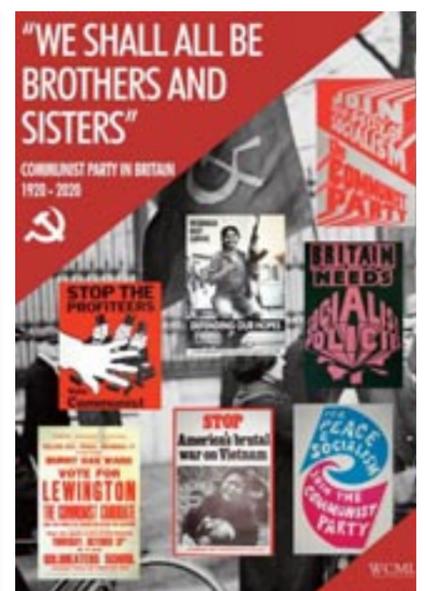


**COMMUNIST PARTY THEORY AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL**

New Series Number 104  
Summer 2022 £2.50

- ★ Editorial *Martin Levy*
- ★ Is Russia an imperialist power *Stewart McGill*
- ★ The real reason Russia invaded *Marc Vandepitte*
- ★ The peace question and imperialism *Greg Godels*
- ★ Challenges and problems in the construction of socialism *Patrick Köbele*
- ★ Debt *C Ritchie*
- ★ Ghana remembered *David Grove*
- ★ Poetry against the monarchy *Fran Lock*

<https://shop.comunistparty.org.uk>



**'We Shall All be Brothers and Sisters'**  
**The Communist Party in Britain 1920-2020**

Opens on Saturday 23 July and then every Friday afternoon 1pm - 4.30pm

This exhibition highlights key moments in party history and tells the story of individual members with links to Salford, Manchester and the library including WCML co-founder Ruth Frow, Tommy Jackson, Len Johnson, Bernard McKenna, Benny Rothman, Sylvia Pankhurst and Betty Tebbs.

# international bulletin

Published by the Communist Party  
International Commission Summer 2022

## INSIDE

- ★ Turkey benefits from Ukraine war
- ★ Middle East peace hangs on nuclear deal
- ★ Ukraine crisis an opportunity for Zionist settlements
- ★ Brazil refuses to take sides in the Ukraine conflict
- ★ Biden's summit flops
- ★ Africa feels the impact of the war
- ★ Filipino communists on the battle between elites



▲ NATO EXPANSION  
YEAR BY YEAR

## NATO's growth threatens new wars

Bob Oram  
NATO and BRICS

THE USA and its NATO partners do not want peace in Ukraine. Like Afghanistan it serves their purpose to prolong the conflict if for no other reason than to increase the turnover of the USA dominant arms industry. At its recent summit NATO agreed to increase troops from 40,000 to 300,000 and therefore not one word was uttered in a search for peace. NATO did however produce its new Strategic Concept 2022 document, which states "The Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area". It then goes on "China is a systemic challenge" and "The People's Republic of China's (PRC) stated ambitions and coercive policies challenge our interests, security and values" and concludes "The deepening strategic partnership between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation and their mutually reinforcing attempts to undercut the rules-based international order run counter to our values and interests". This is a sad but desperate attempt by the USA to return to the superpower struggles of the post-war period.

We must make sure that it does not succeed. Asia-Pacific countries with over half the world's population do not want to engage in a stupid geopolitical competition aimed at trying to save the USA's face. Another world war with a risk of

nuclear weapons? for what? They certainly do not want to be used as 'chess pieces' by the West.

The absolute opposite of the recent NATO meeting was the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) 24 June meeting where a joint statement of the five leaders was a 15 point call for a better world, with respect for UN charters, multilateralism, saving the planet, building prosperity and securing world peace.

Its final point says everything the USA and NATO never will:

"We have agreed upon steps to promote dialogue and cooperation among our countries in an incremental, proactive, pragmatic, open and transparent way. The dialogue and cooperation of the BRIC countries is conducive not only to serving common interests of emerging market economies and developing countries, but also to building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity".

Chinese state councillor and foreign minister Wang Li then summed it up at the Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) in Jakarta, Indonesia on 4 July when he said "At the moment many countries in the region, including the ASEAN region, are under pressure to take sides... the future of our region should be in our own hands."

However he went even further on 7 July in Bali at the G20 meeting with India's external affairs minister. During that exchange Wang expounded on China's "three concerns over the situation in Ukraine," which China's Foreign Min-



Source: Base Nation

istry released as a statement. First, Wang said, "China opposes exploiting the situation to incite Cold War mentality, hype up bloc confrontation, and create a 'new Cold War.' Second, Wang denounced "double standards" on sovereignty and territorial integrity. He accused unnamed countries of upholding Ukraine's sovereignty but refusing to recognize Beijing's claim to rule Taiwan.

"The Chinese side rejects any attempt to draw parallels between the Ukraine crisis and the Taiwan question, and will firmly defend its core interests," Wang declared. Finally, he said that "China opposes harming another country's legitimate rights to development." In practice, this boils down to an opposition to uni-

lateral sanctions, which he said are "neither justified nor legal."

"Such moves have undermined normal state-to-state exchanges, violated the prevailing rules of international trade, and also complicated and magnified the Ukraine crisis."

China's narrative to the world is that the West is attempting to force them to join sides in a "bloc confrontation," which runs counter to individual states own legitimate rights to determine their own development and future. It is a message that the majority of countries understand and support.

Bob Oram is convenor of the Communist Party's Asia Pacific group

▲ A chain of US military bases – part of global system – is positioned along China's borders and links with NATO's necklace of bases directed at intimidating Russia.



# ON LIVING

*Let's say we're in prison and close to fifty,  
and we have eighteen more years, say,  
before the iron doors will open.  
We'll still live with the outside,  
with its people and animals, struggle and wind—*

*I mean with the outside beyond the walls.  
I mean, however and wherever we are,  
we must live as if we will never die.  
We'll still live with the outside,  
Nazim Hikmet Turkish poet*

## ▲ NAZIM HIKMET

You know that I am a member of the Communist Party [Turkey] since 1923 and this is my only pride. I think that in the relations between states, the policy of neutrality can be useful and effective, but not for writers. You couldn't, really, tell me the name of one great writer, in world history, who remained neutral towards the big issues of his era. Maybe he believes that he is neutral and even proclaiming his neutrality, but in fact he is never! As for me, I prefer to be committed and with all my consciousness...".

## Turkey benefits from the war in Ukraine

Berkan Celebi  
**UKRAINE WAR**

AS A RESULT of the ongoing war in Ukraine, it is clear that the Turkish state is re-entering the fold – one it had to some degree vacated in recent years – as a valuable and strategic asset for NATO's designs in the region. Turkey's ruling class have sought to utilise leverage in this respect, flexing and manoeuvring aggressively abroad and fanning a populist nationalist fervour domestically so as to counterbalance growing discontent and foment amongst the population at large owing to the country's parlous economic situation and stifling political atmosphere. This bullish stance has been evidenced to varying degrees by its increase of arms exports to Western states; cementing its position as a pivotal NATO member-state and its leveraging of this position accordingly (e.g. in the recent process for the accession of Sweden and Finland to NATO); and its moves to realise its long-held ambitions for extra-territorial expansion and influence – right through to its reportedly ostentatious plans to mark the centenary next year, under Erdoğan, of the founding of the Turkish Republic, as well as its recent move at the UN to change the spelling of the country's name for all official purposes/references internationally (Türkiye).

Following on from the outbreak of the war in Ukraine on the 24 February, the Turkish state launched a military operation (named 'Claw Lock') on 18 April into Northern Iraq, ostensibly with the objective of driving out PKK militants from their encampments in the remote Qandil area where the borders of Iraq, Iraq, and Turkey meet. This incursion by the Turkish state, coupled with the presence of PKK forces, represents the most recent and unwelcome spill-over of the conflict from Anatolia across a frontier and into a neighbouring country. Essentially, the distraction provided by the war in Ukraine has afforded the Turkish state with an opportunity to carry out such incursions, violating the sovereignty of a neighbouring country (with protests coming from both the Iraqi government and the Kurdish Regional Government) with minimal attention and scrutiny from elsewhere.

Similarly, Turkey declared as its goal an expansion of its territory by 30km into the sovereign territory of neighbouring Syria, as well as the establishment of a 'Blue Homeland' encompassing Greek islands in the Aegean Sea, predicated on Ottoman-era claims. This particular 'initiative' clearly serves an economic purpose as the Aegean Sea is rich in oil which remains untapped owing to the ongoing territorial dispute with fellow NATO member, Greece. The settling of this dispute in Turkey's favour would thereby enable it to draw upon this natural resource unobstructed. This brand of aggression, whether in Eastern Anatolia or in the Aegean region, serves to drum-up nationalistic fervour and support as an antidote to the immediately pressing issues facing people in Turkey – not least the worsening economic crisis, with inflation

exceeding 70% in May and the Turkish lira having halved in value over the last year. The ruling class is afraid of a situation that could lead to a popular upsurge against the government and state. The nationalist MHP and ruling AKP – who are in an electoral alliance – are suffering historic losses in the public opinion polls, with the AKP having dipped below 30% for the first time in its history while the MHP is predicted to dip below the 10% minimum threshold required for parliamentary representation. The war in Ukraine has enabled the Turkish state to pursue these tactics, and as a result they are now being openly declared and executed.

Meanwhile, Turkey has increased its military arms exports to meet the needs of the West. Ukraine's defence minister, Oleksii Reznikov, has publicly stated that the Turkish TB2 drones, that Ukraine has been supplied with, have "shown themselves very successfully in the battle", adding that, "Ukraine's plans to buy Bayraktar are also large-scale [...] Almost all capacity of the Baykar Makina plant [in Turkey] will be focused on meeting the needs of the [Ukrainian] armed forces."

The Turkish government has also sought to bypass the 1932 Montreux Convention that established the demilitarisation of the Bosphorus Strait. This plan of the Turkish government was put into action in mid-2021 when the government announced the construction of the 'Istanbul canal'. Amidst the current war, the benefits of the Istanbul canal for NATO states would be immeasurable, as well as strategically important for Turkey – given that it would allow for the unrestricted passage of NATO warships, subject only to Turkey's permission, to the Black Sea and otherwise unimpeded under international law as it currently stands.

As a result of the growing strategic value of Turkey to the imperialist alliance, the Turkish state was able to win concessions following its initial vetoing of the accession of Sweden and Finland into NATO. The deal between the three nations includes the lifting of arms embargoes against Turkey, which were established during the 2019 Turkish invasion of Syria; the permanent cessation of any current and future relations between Sweden and Finland, and the Kurdish factions operating in North-Eastern Syria; and a pledge by Finland to enact tougher terrorism laws that proscribe the activities of certain Kurdish political organisations within their country.

Thus, the Turkish government is utilising the war in Ukraine in order to further cement its position as a state that is indispensable to the West. It has firmly asserted itself as a strategically valuable nation for NATO at the same time as moving to counter any threats that may be posed to Turkey by foreign organisations, while underhandedly engaging in a hawkish and imperialist foreign policy as a cynical ploy to stave off domestic instability.

BERKAN CELEBI WRITES FROM THE  
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION MIDDLE EAST

## Middle East peace hangs on nuclear deal

Middle East Group  
**NUCLEAR DEAL**

THE LATEST news headlines regarding Iran serve as an overview, neatly summarising the ever-worsening current situation in the country: arrest of protest leaders in the the Sun-gun copper mine in Iran's East Azarbaijan province; failure of the indirect Iran-US talks mediated by Qatar in Doha; skyrocketing inflation; increasing levels of police brutality against peaceful protesters on the streets; the arrest of leading pro-reform politician, Mostafa Tajzadeh, as well as two prominent filmmakers, Mohammad Rasoulof and Mostafa Al-Ahmad (for putting their signature to a public statement deploring police brutality against the protesters in Iran); and the re-dispatching once more of vicious 'morality' police onto the streets to enforce draconian fundamentalist norms on an already put-upon people. All of this gives a flavour of the chaos and instability in Iran at present, demonstrating that the situation inside the country is far from calm.

Economic sanctions continue to wreak havoc in the country, primarily affecting ordinary people in Iran – those who can least cope as it is. The currency is in free-fall, the prices of basic commodities and staples are skyrocketing, and the country's economy is grinding to a halt. The impact of the war in Ukraine has made the situation much worse. Iran relies on the import of grain, fertilisers, cooking oil, and meat from Russia, which have been abruptly halted. Meanwhile, conversely, the US and its European allies are attempting to leverage pressure on the theocratic regime in Iran to step-in and provide oil and gas to the West to fill the void in supply from Russia and thus facilitate those nations attempting to economically turn the screws on Moscow.

The regime in Iran desperately needs all sanctions applied by the US and its European allies to be lifted to afford it at least some degree of breathing space and respite. After a decade of economic and banking sanctions, Iran's economy is now on its knees and nearing total collapse. After a year of negotiations in Vienna (since April 2021), quickly following on from the accession to office of the Biden administration, the documentation in effect reviving the JCPOA was at the point of finalisation. However, the war in Ukraine and the subsequent repolarisation of the wider region meant that the conclusion of the agreement was put on ice indefinitely! The Iranian authorities complain that the US is trying to impose conditions that bear no relation to the ambit of the original JCPOA, while the US is adamant that the theocratic regime should immediately rein in its regional extraterritorial activities. Thus, it is clear that the Biden administration is essentially continuing with, or omitting to

fundamentally reverse, the foreign policy approach of his predecessor in office. It is evidently more interested in appeasing the Saudi and Israeli regimes than genuinely trying to restore the JCPOA.

The new round of negotiations facilitated by Qatar in late-June failed to resolve the differences between the US and the theocratic regime in Iran. Instead, new sanctions announced by the US treasury just a few days later (6 July) target "an international network of individuals and entities" suspected of facilitating the sale of Iranian petroleum and petrochemical products in East Asia, thereby bypassing the US sanctions regime already in place. This appears to dash any current hope of restoring the JCPOA reached after the marathon and painstaking negotiations that had officially begun in 2013, but were in fact predated by secret negotiations, mediated by Oman, between Iran and the Obama administration that had started back in 2009.

The US, sensing that the theocratic regime has its back to the wall, is now applying more crippling sanctions and critical pressure.

The deterioration of the economic and social situation in Iran is acute. Protests have spread across several of the country's provinces following weeks of sporadic unrest sparked by the increasingly unaffordable costs of basic living. Life for the Iranian working people is becoming increasingly harsh with widespread and growing malnourishment owing to increasing food prices. The regime response to these people's protests has been to mete out brutal punishment via its notorious security forces.

The regime is faced with two options: a) negotiate with the US to ease the financial sanctions and inject hard currency (mainly dollars) into the economy thereby temporarily reducing hardship; or b) go down the route of increasing oppression to control the protests – again another temporary measure.

Increasingly, the evidence suggests that the regime is opting for a hybridisation of the above two options in a vain attempt to guarantee its own survival.

Against this turbulent backdrop, the Tudeh Party of Iran, the country's Communist Party, held its 7th Congress in June – updating its programme and adopting a fresh slogan: "Together towards the formation of a united anti-dictatorship front; for freedom, peace, independence, social justice, and the establishment of a national democratic republic!" More than 50 communist parties from around the world – including from Portugal, Greece, the Russian Federation, Britain, France, Germany, Cyprus, Israel, Palestine, Turkey, and India, as well as many others – sent warm messages of greetings and solidarity to the 7th Congress, which were appreciated and very well-received.

PREPARED BY THE MIDDLE EAST GROUP-  
COMMUNIST PARTY INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

The Communist Party and Young Communist League have organised an appeal to British workers to raise cash to give material support for Venezuela's National Struggle Front (FNLCT) and the Unitary Workers' Centre (CUTV), two class-conscious revolutionary trade union confederations. The appeal looks to generate £5000 in order to supply a range of technological equipment to support workers' capacity to break the media blockade and take their revolutionary message to the people. It's time to Defend the Workers and Venezuela's Class Struggle! Please consider donating to support their struggle. Donations can be made through bank transfer or cheque to the Communist Party of Britain (Acc. No. 50725694, sort code. 608301) with the reference Viva 2022 For more information please contact [info@communistparty.org.uk](mailto:info@communistparty.org.uk) or call +447521 464 927





# KILLING US

*Perhaps this war will pass like the others which divided us leaving us dead, killing us along with the killers but the shame of this time puts its burning fingers to our faces. Who will erase the ruthlessness hidden in innocent blood?*

**Pablo Neruda** Chilean poet and communist

## ▲ PABLO NERUDA

Political poetry is more profoundly emotional than any other—at least as much as love poetry—and cannot be forced because it then becomes vulgar and unacceptable. It is necessary first to pass through all other poetry in order to become a political poet. The political poet must also be prepared to accept the censure which is thrown at him—betraying poetry, or betraying literature. Then, too, political poetry has to arm itself with such content and substance and intellectual and emotional richness that it is able to scorn everything else. This is rarely achieved.



## Biden Americas summit flops

**Alan Hobbett**

### THE OTHER SIDE OF THE POND

**T**HE 9TH SUMMIT of the Americas, Los Angeles took place in Los Angeles in early June.6th to 10th June 2022.

The first Summit of the Americas was held amidst considerable fanfare in Miami 1994. With the demise of the socialist bloc and the end of the Cold War it seemed that US hegemony of the continent would be complete..... well putting aside the significance of uninvented revolutionary Cuba and the plethora of progressive movements active throughout the continent. All Summit participants sent their most senior representatives.

Despite this there was disquiet about the absence of Cuba from the start. All States should be invited was the popular view. Across eight successive summits the dominance of the USA within the continent has declined, particularly in economic terms as trade with China has surpassed that with the US, and the left began to strengthen its position. The Clinton dream at the first event for a free trade alliance stretching from "Alaska to Argentina" was finally scrapped in 2005, the USA moving to bi-lateral arrangements as a tactic to pull all the states in line. It didn't all go the USA's way. By 2015 Cuba was at the Summit. The photo opportunity of Obama shaking hands with Raul Castro was not lost to the world.

Critically the significance of the Summit of the Americas has waned, alongside that of the US dominated Organisation of American States (OAS), as left forces within the continent combined with more centrist and eventually almost all southern states at alternative fora including the Community of Latin American and Caribbean Countries

(CELAC). As the US tactic of illegal sanctions was increased to cover a third of humanity, across 42 nations, impacting greatest on the poorest and most vulnerable in society, a second wave of pink and red has spread across the continent. The exclusion of Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela at this Summit has undoubtedly backfired on Biden. Leaders of key south, central and Caribbean countries followed the lead of President ALMO of Mexico in staying away in protest at the exclusions. From the platform and the floor the USA was heavily criticised and the greater part of world media attention focussed not on what was said but on who went and who didn't. Alternative Summits were held in Los Angeles, The Peoples Summit for Democracy, and in Tijuana Mexico, The Workers Summit, the first of an annual solidarity event bringing workers and social movements from across the Americas together to express "solidarity with the peoples of Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua and their revolutions and to repudiate unilateral coercive measures against sovereign governments."

Bidens Summit, which was to be his greatest success, was a flop. Even the supposedly ground breaking agreement on pan American immigration rings hollow given the absence of leaders from the source countries of the greatest number of migrants.

Donald Trump infamously referred to South America as a sleeping pet dog, well perhaps, as Cuban trade union leader Rosario Rodríguez Remos said in his summing up in Tijuana "The time has come for the dog to stop following the master."

ALAN HOBETT IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S AMERICAS GROUP

## Vietnam makes progress

**Kyril Whittaker**

### SOLIDARITY

**S**Ocialist Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union is active inside and outside the country in solidarity and environmental projects. One recent example is in Laos to help build two Vietnam-Laos youth friendship houses, assist with medical aid, provide gifts to low-income students, build playgrounds, teach electrical safety and exchange agricultural knowledge. This was done in part to celebrate the 55th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Laos and Vietnam.

In Vietnam, the youth union's 'Green Summer' campaign planted 505,316 trees, created 446 model gardens and nursery garden projects, and establishing 911 model plastic

waste projects. This mass effort by included 277,274 participants.

Prime Minister Ph m Minh Chinh, at a recent cabinet meeting, noted that despite global uncertainties Vietnam has made significant economic achievements dealing with rising fuel prices and the pandemic. A decision has been made by the national assembly to cut the environmental tax placed on fuel for the time being from 2,000 VND to 1000 VND per litre for petrol, with similar cuts to other fuels. The Ministry of Industry and Trade is also exploiting Vietnam's oil reserves.

The economy is predicted to have a higher-than average growth rate in the SE Asia region at 6.5% this year.

KYRIL WHITTAKER REPORTS FROM VIETNAM AND IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S ASIA

## Ukraine crisis has become an opportunity for Zionist settlements

**Robert Wilkinson**

### SETTLEMENTS

**O**N A RECENT visit, EU Commissioner Ursula von der Leyen praised Israel for welcoming 'tens of thousands of Ukrainian refugees to your land'.

In every crisis the Zionist movement has sought an opportunity to offer Israel as a safe haven for Jews in what can be seen as a 'never-ending demographic race with the Palestinians'. Zionist officials and NGOs appealed to the estimated 200,000 Ukrainian Jews remaining in the country to 'perform aliyah' and migrate to Israel.

The influx of nearly 824,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union in the 1990s gave rise to the movement 'Yisrael Beiteinu' (Israel Our Home) amongst Russian immigrants that could be decisive in forming a coalition government. The absorption of large numbers of immigrants from the former Soviet Union as a result of the conflict in Ukraine may lead to dissatisfaction with the government facing yet another finely balanced election.

In common with most capitalist societies, large parts of the Israeli population suffer the rising cost of living. This has led to protests over an acute housing shortage and escalating rental costs. The Netanyahu governments had failed to build sufficient housing for the expanding population except in the illegal settlements in the occupied territories

According to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics up to the end of 2021, a total of 1,128,283 Jews from the former Soviet Union had immigrated since the collapse of the USSR in 1990. Absorbing thousands more since the start of the Ukrainian war may not simply be seen as a humanitarian gesture but as part of a strategic policy of reinforcing Israel as the Jewish homeland, securing a 'demographic superiority' over the Palestinian Arab population. The new arrivals could be placed in Jewish settlements in the occupied Golan Heights, east Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley. The plan approved by Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked is dedicated to 'preserving the Jewish nature' of the State of Israel.

The vision of both Naftali Bennett and Benjamin Netanyahu of the annexation of the West Bank into a Greater Israel may well come to fruition regardless of any change of government.

There has already been some controversy over the status of the recent immigrants in that a number of the adherents of strict Jewish religious teaching question whether they are 'real' Jews in having pure matrilineal descent (a child born of a Jewish womb). Yet the Zionist 'Law of Return' required by Israel's immigration legislation specifies at least one Jewish grandparent and the old Soviet passport enabled a citizen to specify 'Jew' as their ethnic group.

The Russian and Ukrainian Jews, escaping war and increasing authoritarian governments, will be given sanctuary and food but may well be required to live on land taken from the Palestinians.

ROBERT WILKINSON IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S MIDDLE EAST GROUP

## BRICS bloc grows as Brazil refuses to take sides in the Ukraine conflict

**Abbie Rhodes**

### NEUTRALITY

**B**RAZIL HAS maintained a neutral stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Brazilian Foreign Minister Carlos Franca attended a meeting of BRICS nations, at which nations including Kazakhstan, Argentina, Egypt, Nigeria, and Senegal expressing a desire to join the bloc, marking the first time in over a decade that new member states have been added. Brazil's active involvement with BRICS, which promotes peace and development against NATO's warmongering and has condemned Western sanctions against Russia, reflects their desire to remain uninvolved in the conflict. Brazil also relies heavily on the import of Russian fertiliser to support agribusiness: on the subject, President Bolsonaro stated that "the fertiliser issue is sacred," and that "[Brazil is] not going to take sides, we are going to continue with neutrality and help in whatever way possible in search of a solution."

With the general election closing in on 2nd October, Brazil looks set to put an end to the Bolsonaro regime. Centrist 'third way' candidate Joao Doria pulled out of the race on 23rd May, with his "feelings hurt but a light heart", leaving the race even more dichotomised to the current far-right president and centre-left former president Lula. Polls give Lula between 46 and 50 percent of the vote, which would allow him to win the first round outright, storming ahead of Bolsonaro who remains between 32 and 35 percent.

Elsewhere, in Sergipe a black man was murdered by police after being violently detained, in a case which has been likened to the murder of George Floyd in the US in 2020 but with next to none of the subsequent media coverage. Genivaldo de Jesus Santos was filmed being forcibly held in a smoke-filled car boot, screaming and kicking whilst unmoved police officers looked on. Protests were held in Umbauba in the following days, but the outcry has not left Brazil and little to none of the attention of US police brutality cases has been granted to those coming out of the country. Online campaigns have been started by Brazilian anti-racism activists and journalists to bring attention to police violence in Brazil.

Earlier in May, more than 330 groups and organisations representing indigenous peoples of Brazil have in a letter called for the passing of the "Amazon 21" Bill in the US. The bill would see up to \$9 billion allocated to the protection of the rainforest and the people who live in it from the effects of deforestation, as well as finance conservation efforts.

Meanwhile, the proposed "PL 337" bill in Brazil proposes reducing the protected Amazon region by excluding an area the size of South Korea (25 million hectares) in the state of Mato Grosso from requirements to maintain Amazonian vegetation and the requirement for farmers to restore degraded areas of their properties. This will see even more of the rainforest open to destruction by agribusiness, and further encourage other states in Brazil to pursue similar legislation for themselves.

ABBIE RHODES IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S AMERICAS GROUP



# AGAINST IMPERIALISM

There are no boundaries in this struggle to the death. We cannot be indifferent to what happens anywhere in the world, for a victory by any country over imperialism is our victory; just as any country's defeat is a defeat for all of us."

**Ernesto Che Guevara**

After graduation, due to special circumstances and perhaps also to my character, I began to travel throughout America, and I became acquainted with all of it. Except for Haiti and Santo Domingo, I have visited, to some extent, all the other Latin American countries.

Because of the circumstances in which I traveled, first as a student and later as a doctor, I came into close contact with poverty, hunger and disease; with the inability to treat a child because of lack of money; with the stupefaction provoked by the continual hunger and punishment, to the point that a father can accept the loss of a son as an unimportant accident, as occurs often in the downtrodden classes of our American homeland.

And I began to realize at that time that there were things that were almost as important to me as becoming famous for making a significant contribution to medical science: I wanted to help those people."

**Ernesto "Che" Guevara**

## Africa feels the impact of the Ukraine war

By Liz Payne  
**IMPERIALISM**

**T**HE PEOPLE of Africa are facing a dire situation at present and the prospect of looming catastrophe if action is not taken to avert it. This results from the colossal impact of the Ukraine war following on from the devastation wrought by the pandemic and the global economic downturn gaining momentum pre-Covid. As always, it is the poor and destitute, their families and communities that are bearing the brunt.

The war in Europe has, with almost no warning, disrupted vital imports (including corn, sunflower oil for cooking, fertiliser, oil, and steel), created inflation on a massive scale, and thrown millions more Africans into absolute poverty. This in turn has contributed to the depletion of fiscal returns from trade and taxation for many governments and increased their indebtedness, while negatively affecting their credit ratings and the cost of borrowing. African governments are now seen as 'high risk' and forced to repay mega-debts at ever higher costs. This is compounded by the by the cutting of developmental aid funding from the West, including Britain, often with 'justification' that it is being diverted to humanitarian support for those affected by the Ukraine conflict. All this means that public projects for the eradication of corruption and investment in development, infrastructure, services, and equality of access are being delayed or curtailed.

Everywhere in Africa, recovery following the pandemic is compromised. In parts of the continent, the inherent impossibility for those in power to serve the profiteering interests of big business at home and the predatory multinationals and meet the needs of the impoverished masses of people being thrown into destitution is clearly exposed. The abandonment of vast sections of the population is leaving the way open for socio-economic chaos, escalating violent extremism, communalism and sectarianism, the reactionary undermining of democratic and political gains won at so great a cost in post-colonial decades and attacks on left and progressive voices and movements.

Salah Adly, general secretary of the Communist Party of Egypt, speaking in the early days of the war in Ukraine, pointed to the oncoming effects of disruption to world trade, already seen in the soaring prices of the staples corn and oil. The global situation would be especially detrimental in developing countries, he said. The secretary general of the UN, Antonio Guterres, drew particular attention to the plight of sub-Saharan Africa when he said that this year's issue will be one of access to food supplies intensifying food insecurity, but, if the war continues, next year's issue will be lack of food. "The war's impact on food security, energy and finance is systemic, severe and accelerating", he warned.

In Africa, first to be affected were corn and sunflower imports from Russia and Ukraine on which much of the continent has come to rely heavily. Wheat imports, destined for the north African countries, as well as Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Africa, increased by 68% in the fifteen years up to 2019 and were set to almost double again between 2019 and

2025. Kenya sourced 30% of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine in 2021.

Scarcity of this staple have sent the price of bread and other food products rocketing, as have rising fuel costs as the conflict and sanctions on Russia disrupt oil supplies from the world's third largest producer after the US and Saudi Arabia. In Tanzania, inflation increased by 34% between February and April 2022. In Cameroon, food prices were 26% higher in March than February and transport costs in Namibia went up by 20% from march to April. And all the time food sits rotting in Black Sea ports while crops remain unharvested across Ukraine.

Also vital for many African countries is fertiliser. Cameroon bought 44% of what it needed from Russia in 2021 - but not this year. For Kenya in April, as trade with Russia was suddenly blocked, vital fertilisers could not be procured in time to prepare the land for sowing ahead of the growing season. The abrupt halting of fertiliser supply will mean not only a drop in the quality and nutritional value of the crops but a plummeting of the size of the harvest, compounding food scarcity further down the line.

In is not an exaggeration to say that Africa, and particularly sub-Saharan Africa, faces an economic and humanitarian disaster of enormous proportions. But it can be averted. Most important, the situation in the continent underlines the imperative of ending the fighting in Ukraine immediately and negotiating a lasting peace, protected in the foreseeable future by the United Nations. Following cessation of hostilities, sanctions on Russia should be lifted and everything possible done to demine and open the Black Sea ports. Pressure on the government of Britain must continue. In the here and now, it should do nothing that perpetuates the Ukraine war. For the future it must cease its bellicose provocative stance and work for peace in Europe rather than expansion of NATO and war.

For Africa, the effects of the Ukraine war have shone a light on the worsening situation and urgent needs of millions of its people. These can be met if the resources of the continent are harnessed to this end. 60% of the arable land on the planet is in Africa and food can be grown for domestic, intra-Africa and world markets.

Before the war dealt its blow, huge possibilities for transformative change were being advanced for reducing dependency on imports, dramatically expanding food and energy production, and opening up inter-country trade across the continent. The world should support this transition and the move to greater democracy, justice, and freedom that it will entail. The US, Britain and NATO countries must not be allowed to continue to exploit the vast resources of Africa for profit. Nor must they get away with raking in £billions from interest on rising debts while people starve, manoeuvring Africa's governments into finance-draining military and security alliances or conducting regional proxy cold and hot wars against Russia and China anywhere in the continent.

LIZ PAYNE IS A FORMER CHAIR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

## Filipino Communists on the battle between elites

Kenny Coyle  
**PHIIPPINES**

**T**HE PARTIDO KOMUNISTA ng Pilipinas-1930, the CPB's sister party in the Philippines issued its assessment of May 9th's nationwide election campaign and results in recent issues of the party's newspaper *Sulong!* (Forward!).

The results were a landslide for presidential candidate Ferdinand Marcos Jr and his running mate for the vice presidential post Sara Duterte. There were also contests for national and provincial bodies, including governorship battles and mayoral contests.

The PKP-1930 had decided earlier in the year not to support either of the two major electoral blocs but to give support to a limited number of candidates, who were running on independent progressive platforms for seats in the country's senate and provincial bodies.

The first bloc, which won around 60% of the votes nationally, was represented by presidential victor Ferdinand Marcos Jr, and his vice-presidential winner Sara Duterte. Marcos is the son of the country's previous leader Ferdinand Marcos Sr and Duterte is the daughter of the previous incumbent Rodrigo Duterte.

The PKP-1930 not only criticised the political platform of this bloc, which offers nothing in the way of the radical changes needed by Philippine society, but also because their victory is the culmination of the capture of the country's political system by political dynasties.

The overthrow of Marcos Senior in 1986 saw the hijacking of the "People Power" movement by oligarchs and the military and church elites, spearheaded by the Aquino clan. Rodrigo Duterte's breakthrough in 2016, represented a shift away from the Aquino-aligned cliques toward the Duterte and Marcos networks, with substantial power bases in the south and north of the archipelago respectively. This elitist nepotism breeds corruption and kleptocracy from top to bottom.

"Many political dynasties and trapos [traditional politicians] who won this election spent hundreds of millions of pesos each for

their campaign materials, and especially on the distribution of bribes (fare, food and money) to voters. Surely they will immediately charge their expenses through corrupt projects, so that during their term they can reap several times their expenses. Overall, the loser in this election is the welfare of the people, especially the working classes who cannot hope that the elected politicians will carry out any serious programme for the continued eradication of the poverty of the working classes," the PKP-1930 argues.

The second bloc was led by outgoing vice-president Leni Robredo. She was generally seen as the heir of the Aquino clan's support. Despite her high profile, she won only 28% of the national vote. Her "pink" team spent huge amounts of money on advertising and she also received the endorsement of the Western media, which ran glowing features on her in the weeks running up to the poll.

Perhaps surprisingly, she was also backed by the Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). While the CPP maintains its New People's Army guerrilla forces in parts of the country, the CPP also has a history of opportunist electoral alliances, for example backing Rodrigo Duterte's presidential campaign in 2016, entering into negotiations with his administration only to denounce him as a "fascist" months later when touted cabinet seats were not forthcoming. This time round, candidates and party lists close to the CPP suffered losses.

The PKP-1930 concluded that: "The defeat of the people was also due to the lack of an alternative vision clearly presented to the voters, so the majority of the voters were still convinced of the populist promises, especially by prominent personalities from show-biz and talk-shows, as well as those that give the illusion that they will be handing out hidden gold.

"This situation requires greater action by all progressive organizations towards awakening and mobilizing the broad masses of the poor masses to overthrow the rotten electoral campaign system, and the whole rotten capitalist system," the party maintains.

KENNY COYLE IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S ASIA PACIFIC GROUP

## Japan right strengthened

Kevan Nelson  
**JAPAN**

**T**HE 8 JULY assassination of Japan's longest-serving former PM Shinzo Abe has strengthened reactionary forces in Japan with the ruling elite pressing for remilitarisation, an end to Japan's pacifist constitution and full participation in US imperialism's machinations against China in the Asia Pacific region.

Upper House elections (half of all seats) took place in the immediate aftermath and further strengthened the dominance of Abe's Liberal Democratic Party which won 63 of the 125 seats. The Japan Communist Party's (JCP) attempt to form a united coalition of opposition parties failed resulting in losses across the board with JCP holding only three of its five contested seats and the main opposition the Constitutional Party of Japan (CDPJ) losing six seats. On 15 July the 250,000plus strong JCP celebrated its

centenary and the CPB sent fraternal greetings. The JCP has spoken out strongly against the Russian invasion of Ukraine with Party leader Shii Kazuo condemning Russia's military action as a violation of the UN Charter, for indiscriminate killings of civilians and for threatening the use of nuclear weapons.

The JCP has opposed NATO's eastward expansion and deployment of NATO troops outside its territory but does not believe they justify the military response. The JCP uniquely in the international communist movement regards both Russia (and previously the USSR) and China as hegemonic powers.

The Party programme asserts that "the JCP will do all it can to build up international solidarity to help stop hegemonistic interventions, war, oppression and domination by any nation, and establish an international order for peace".

KEVAN NELSON IS THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY