



# Unity!

**Inside  
AUKUS condemned  
as new Cold War  
manoeuvre p2**

## Beware Santa Sunak's very temporary gifts

### BUDGET

ROBERT GRIFFITHS

**H**OT ON the heels of his speech at the Conservative Party conference, Chancellor Rishi Sunak's campaign for the party's leadership and 10 Downing Street continues. His Budget address was more like a hustings appeal, bigging himself up with bogus generosity based on highly selective guess-work.

He made much of the Office for Budget Responsibility's uprating of this year's economic growth rate in Britain to 6.5%. It's not difficult to achieve a much higher rate than last year's peak-Covid level. Cutting the grass in a graveyard will increase its level of economic activity by 100%.

The Chancellor had to admit that although the estimated growth in GDP remains high at 6% next year, these Chinese-style levels then vanish, falling to more traditional British-style levels of 2.1% in 2023, 1.3% in 2024 and 1.6% in 2025 – most of these lower than forecast in the Budget just seven months ago.

In the meantime, unemployment will peak at more than 5% as inflation stays above 4% next year.

Posing as the workers' friend, Sunak repeated the recent announcement that the public sector pay freeze will end next spring as the so-called Living Wage is increased by 6.6% for most low-paid workers. That will bring no comfort now, when millions of workers and their families face rocketing food, fuel and transport bills.

Furthermore, in the small print of its new 'Economic and Fiscal Outlook', the OBR points out that most of the National Insurance and Health and Social Care levy will be 'passed through entirely to lower real wages in the medium term'.

The Chancellor's 'Father Christmas' act also included a modest cut in the taper tax rate on Universal Credit when claimants find work, yet this will save them £2bn compared with the £6bn taken from UC claimants when the £20 weekly uplift was withdrawn.

Santa Sunak boasted about extra spending on the NHS, housing, transport and education – but much of this was already included in existing spending projections and in all cases falls far short of what is needed to produce a Green economy, 'levelling up' and 'world-class public services'.

In fact, public spending as a proportion of GDP is still set to fall next year and stay flat at least until 2026-27. Although the Spending Review pledged a major increase in capital spending for the next two years, the small print reveals cuts from 2024 onwards – when the bills for more nuclear warheads will arrive.

Noticeably, the Chancellor's temporary handouts included only a handful of peanuts in the Scottish and Welsh block grants, despite higher levels of poverty and lower wages and GDP of those two countries.

The delay in restoring Britain's overseas aid budget to 0.7% of GDP until 2024 is shameful, especially when the reduction saved £4bn a year and Sunak has an unexpected tax receipts windfall of £43bn this financial year and almost double that thereafter.

Retaining the biggest tax burden on workers and their families since the post-war years not only enables government borrowing to fall dramatically over the coming period. It would also leave Chancellor Sunak enough to dole out bribes to voters in the run-up to the next General Election.

A Chancellor genuinely committed to a Green economy, 'levelling up' and 'world-class public services' would have increased short-term current spending on public services, invested in medium-term Green infrastructure projects, reversed the long-term decline in Treasury support for local government and cancelled the expansion of Britain's nuclear weapons arsenal.

More specifically, he could have slashed VAT on energy bills, maintained the Universal Credit uplift, raised social benefits (not least for family carers), reinstated the state pension 'triple lock' and brought forward the Corporation Tax rise to next year with no cut in the banking surcharge.

As it is, the Budget and Spending Review could quickly be blown off course as the big monopolies in the financial, energy, transport, manufacturing, construction and retail sectors continue to put profiteering before Green and socially vital investment.

Workers and their unions have no option but to step up the fight for higher wages, pensions and benefits and to challenge profit-driven market forces with the demand for public ownership and economic planning.

ROBERT GRIFFITHS IS GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

## Unite to fightback!

### LABOUR

**NOBODY SHOULD** rely on the Labour Party leadership to give a lead in the fight against Conservative government policies', Andy Bain told the Communist Party's mid October executive committee.

'While trade unions, the People's Assembly, the peace movement and the Communist Party are taking action, Keir Starmer is desperate to make Labour wholly acceptable to big business and the pro-establishment mass media', the Communist Party's trade union organiser said.

Company 'fire and rehire' tactics, large rises in food, energy and transport costs, the government's withdrawal of the £20 a week Universal Credit uplift, and new anti-protest measures, are examples of the 'ruling class offensive' against working class living standards and democratic rights.

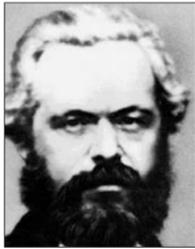
Andy Bain – a former transport union president – welcomed the determination of the Communications Workers Union and other unions to campaign for the 'New Deal for Workers' agreed again at September's TUC conference.

'Fine words must at last be turned into action, building up to an all-Britain day of action in alliance with other campaigning bodies, trades councils and regional and national TUCs', he urged.

Britain's Communists also expressed solidarity with socialists and progressives in the Labour Party who won votes at the Labour conference in favour of public ownership, a 'Green New Deal' and Palestinian rights and against the new US-UK-Australia military pact aimed at China, although these will be ignored by that party's leadership.

The Communist Party executive finalised plans for the 56th congress of the Communist Party in Britain on 6-7 November, when the guests will include delegates representing Ireland, Portugal, Palestine, Russia, China, Cuba and Vietnam plus video messages from Venezuela, Cyprus, India and South Africa.

Communist Party Congress reports in the December Unity!



# COMMUNISM

*Communism is for us not a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the premises now in existence.* **Karl Marx, German Ideology (1845)**

## Affordable housing and overcrowding feature in Luton election

### ELECTIONS

MARKUS KEARNEY

**D**UE TO The pandemic recently claiming the life of one of Luton's councillors, a by-election was subsequently called in South ward – the area encompassing the town-centre and several adjoining working-class districts.

One third of households in the ward are blighted by overcrowding, and the imminent redevelopment of Power Court – which will be the new home of Luton Town Football Club and 1200 flats that will help finance this, meant the timing was serendipitous for a Communist campaign to highlight the pressing need for genuinely-affordable, as well as social, housing on a site certainly big enough to accommodate both.

2020 Developments, the development-arm of LTFC, had committed – in a revised planning application to go before the Development Management Committee of Luton Borough Council the night before polls opened, to 20% of units being 'affordable housing'; However a 2020 report by the Affordable Housing Commission itself found that, in many cases, what is classified as 'affordable' housing by developers is not affordable to those on mid to low incomes.

2020 Developments have not publicly stated what their affordability criteria will be,

so we ran a campaign explicitly calling for this to be linked to average local wages, and not artificially-inflated by using London wages for their calculations.

This was a central focus on our leaflet, and an issue I raised during conversations at our street-stalls and on doorsteps throughout the campaign.

After one doorstep conversation, which covered ward issues like housing, but also wider local issues like airport expansion, and a proposed incinerator our former MP had supported, I was told by one retiree "Well, I'd never have considered voting for a Communist before, but on what you've said, you've got my vote".

As well as leafletting, and town-centre stalls, we held a public meeting on the theme of Socialism or Extinction? highlighting how the most pressing international issue of our age will impact at a local level, and where I was honoured to have Rob Griffiths come all the way from Wales to speak.

Inspired by the Luton campaign, Rob pledged that the party will now also stand local candidates in Cardiff.

Unfortunately, turnout on polling-day was disappointingly low, at 12%, and when the result was announced, Labour retained the seat; however, I was reassured that the Communist share of the vote had risen from the last local by-elections this May, and during a year that has seen us contesting seats where Communist candidates haven't stood for generations. As the saying goes, from small acorns, mighty oaks grow.

MARKUS KEARNEY WAS THE COMMUNIST CANDIDATE IN THE LUTON SOUTH BY ELECTION



▲ The Toothless in Suffolk campaign group took to the streets of Bury St Edmunds to demand better provision of NHS dentistry in the county. Steve Marsling (pictured above left), campaign co-ordinator and chairman of the East Suffolk Communist Party said, "How has it come to this? In 1948 the NHS provided dentists for everyone, free at the point of use. Now we don't have a dentist at all.

"The capitalists want a slimmed-down service, with private provision for the rest.

"People are reaching for the bottle to deaden the pain when they pull their own teeth or they're missing their rent or mortgage to fund a service they've already paid for.

## Fishy waters

### BREXIT

STEWART MCGILL

"Fishing as percentage of French GDP is 0.06%. As percentage of Britain's GDP it's about 0.1% and 0.2% for the EU as a whole." This puts in perspective the scale of the current 'crisis' in Anglo-French relations.

The Communist Party asserts that it's way "more important to talk about how we cooperate to ensure sustainability in fishing

practices rather than posture to impress the right wing xenophobe vote."

We were able to talk and plan collaboration before Britain joined the EU and it has to be possible now we are out and not coming back.

Both countries need to protect fish stocks, put quality food on the tables on both sides of the Channel that working class families can afford and protect jobs.

STEWART MCGILL IS CONVENOR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY POLITICAL ECONOMY COMMISSION

## Australian, US and British communists oppose AUKUS

### NEW COLD WAR

**The communist parties of Australia, Britain and the USA met on 1 October to discuss the implications of the formation of AUKUS, a trilateral Australian-British-US military alliance targeting China.**

The three parties issued the following statement:

The Communist Party of Australia, the Communist Party of Britain and the Communist Party of the USA unequivocally condemn AUKUS, a trilateral Australian-British-US military alliance and the plan for Australia to purchase or lease nuclear-powered attack submarines.

The Communist Party of Britain and the Communist Party USA declare their support and solidarity with the Communist Party of Australia which has called on its members and supporters and all peace loving men and women to actively oppose the Government's decision to join the AUKUS agreement; to buy nuclear-powered submarines; to purchase cruise missiles and other offensive weapons; and for Australia to host more US troops, warships, weapons, and planes.

AUKUS is a response to changes in the global economy which are promoting a direct challenge to neoliberal norms of government

across the globe. The US is determined to maintain its political and economic hegemony in the economically expanding Asia-Pacific region.

In the face of declining US economic power, AUKUS aims to tie Australia even more tightly to US imperialism's plans to contain and control the People's Republic of China and to consolidate Australia as a US launching pad for coercion and even war.

The US and UK feel the world slipping through their fingers, prompting ever greater aggressiveness, rather than face economic and geo-political reality. Instead of seeking to peacefully join a multilateral world as equal partners, they are turning to military alliances to try to hold onto their fading power."

AUKUS is an aggressive and destabilising military alliance which jettisons what vestiges of sovereignty Australia still retained. It is part of the US-led imperial system which prioritises the rights of private investors over the sovereignty of most states.

In post Brexit Britain AUKUS feeds Prime Minister Johnson's dream of aggressive expansionism for a "global Britain". Britain already has a strike group in the Pacific. This will not be welcome. British imperialism was particularly brutal in the Asia Pacific region. Historically it looted and de-industrialised India and China, inflicted near genocide on the Aboriginal owners of Australia and the Maori

of Aotearoa and laid the basis for ethnic conflict from Sri Lanka to Fiji. More recently it has led or joined wars of imperialist aggression in Korea, Malaysia, Borneo and Afghanistan.

The governments of our three countries rob jobs, education, the environment, the vital health budget, welfare and much more to pay for unnecessary war preparations that benefit only the armaments corporations.

Military spending does create some jobs but not nearly as many jobs as a comparable investment in productive industry. In the US one billion dollars of federal investment in the military creates 11,200 jobs whereas the same investment in clean energy technology would yield 16,800, in health care 17,200 and in education 26,700 jobs.

Working people need work that creates benefits for the people of the world, not work that produces more efficient people-killing machines. Rather than sinking resources into the creation of tools that further destroy resources, both people and goods, production that meets human needs is required.

Many Asia-Pacific nations have only recently emerged from a long period of oppressive European imperialism. Many view AUKUS as an attempt to re-impose imperialist dominated military and economic hegemony in the region. Inevitably, tensions will increase, as already suggested by the Indonesian and Malaysian responses to AUKUS.

The introduction of nuclear-powered submarines opens the way for the development of an Australian nuclear power industry and for a nuclear weapons capacity. All this weakens current non-proliferation agreements and threatens independence, security and the environment in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Communist Party of Australia, the Communist Party of Britain and the Communist Party of the USA join with peace and environmental movements, trade unions, churches, welfare and aid organisations and many other groups around the world to demand:

- No war on China. No new Cold War on China.
  - Australia, Britain and the USA must sign and implement the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.
  - An end to military alliances and their replacement with multilateralism, diplomacy, and cooperation with China to address the existential threats of the pandemic and the climate crisis.
  - Cuts to military budgets and an end to the economic drain of military spending and its replacement with profitable peace time economies creating useful consumer goods.
- Nothing less than the future of our planet depends on ending the new Cold War between the United States and China.

## OVERVIEW

The Summer Bulletin highlighted the increasing divergence between the core imperialist countries and most others – in terms of both covid incidence and economic recovery. Since then this divergence has increased. Today 84 percent of Britain's population is fully vaccinated. In France it is 72 percent and Germany 65 percent. In Africa it is 4 percent.

Estimates of economic growth for 2021 put the US and Britain on 7 percent and France 6 percent. In the developing world the record is patchy. India has rebounded strongly from last year's collapse with over 7 percent growth; South Africa is steady at around 4 percent. But some major economies are in serious difficulty. Brazil is in near negative territory – with inflation at 9 percent and the Central Bank base rate at 6.25. In Turkey inflation is at 19 percent and interest rates around 18. In Iran inflation is at 45 percent and interest rates at 18. In Argentina there is 38 percent inflation with interest rates up to 50 percent.

September 2021 has also seen a surge in inflationary pressures everywhere. Over the year the price of oil and gas has trebled. Coal has doubled. Prices of food stocks, corn and soya bean, have trebled. Basic materials, timber, aluminium and silicon, cost twice what they did a year ago.

Against this background Central Banks in the advanced capitalist countries have moved to cut back credit. Cash-for-debt-bond exchanges with commercial banks are being tapered. In mid-September Norway raised interest rates, the first OECD country, but unlikely to be the last. For working people everywhere this combination threatens significant hardship – but in many developing countries, still in the midst of a Covid pandemic, the consequences are likely to be devastating (and already are in Lebanon, South America's two biggest economies, parts of Africa and Iran).

There are, however, two additional factors that need to be taken into account. One is global corporate debt. The other ownership concentration. Research for the Bank of International Settlements (BIS Quarterly Review June 2021) puts global corporate debt

at double the level in 2009 for advanced capitalist economies (now 6.8 percent GDP against 3.9 then) and for 'emerging markets' at more than double. In US \$11 trillion. Globally \$21T. Any increase in Central Bank interest rates could trigger escalating corporate defaults – as could the reduction in Central Bank debt bond purchases. The October IMF report warns of the danger of a global economic crisis as the combined result of the scale of speculative share dealing and tightening monetary policy.

There is, however, another factor also: ownership concentration or monopolisation. The glut of cheap money pouring into the financial sector over the past period has seen its use, in part, to concentrate ownership. Take energy in Britain. Octopus Energy, largely funded by hedge funds, is currently buying up defaulting supply companies. General Investment Management (a fund run by the great US environmentalist Al Gore) has just bought 13 percent of Octopus. Valued at \$4.6 billion Octopus is now Britain's fifth biggest energy company. Another hedge fund investing in energy, Gresham Investments ACAR, has seen its value jump by 43 percent.

Meanwhile consumers will struggle to pay escalating fuel bills this winter.

In Marxist terms, the labour value of oil will not have changed. But prices have. This is how capitalist crises occur as 'fair' exchange between capitalists breaks down.

This is also the background to a) increasing inter-imperialist conflict b) the stoking up of the Cold War against China.

Both are well illustrated by the AUKUS pact between the US, Australia and Britain. This stripped France of a \$70B contract for nuclear-powered submarines – and handed it to the biggest defence contractors in the US (Lockheed Martin) and Britain (Rolls Royce, BAE and Babcock). State-financed defence contracts are the safest and most lucrative – especially in times of crisis. The pact signalled the determination of the US to enforce an economic blockade on China and to bring other Pacific economies (Japan, India) into line. For the US finance capital this is critical. Unless China's growth is halted, the ability of the US banks internationally to borrow cheap and lend dear, the basis of US global super-exploitation, will end within a decade. ★

EUROPE  
ELECTION RESULTS

FROM LEO IMPETT

COMMUNISTS OVER Europe celebrated the substantial victory of the Communist Party of Austria (KPÖ) in Graz, where their candidate Elke Kahr is expected to be the next mayor of Austria's second largest city. The KPÖ (above) have developed a grassroots movement in Graz built especially on the politics of housing, organising a referendum to successfully block the privatisation of the city's social housing in 2004. Victory was the result of tireless work over many decades: growing the share of the vote from 11% in 2008, to roughly 20% in both 2012 and 2017, to a victorious 29% this year.

Housing politics have also given rise to a remarkable referendum in Berlin, held on the same day. Co-organised by Die Linke, a member of the city government, the referendum asked voters whether to publicly expropriate over 200,000 privately-held apartments in the city – which voters backed with a 56% majority and an almost 75% turnover. The referendum was held in parallel

with Berlin state and German federal elections. These were held under extremely challenging political conditions, with substantial tactical voting: with many voters wanting to ensure the next chancellor comes from the SPD and not the CDU. Despite missing the 5 percent minimum hurdle Die Linke held on to 39 seats in the Bundestag, with 4.9% of the vote (-4.3% from 2017), and 14% of the vote in Berlin (-1.6%). As a result of the special provision in German electoral law a victory in three first past the post constituencies in the Bundestag. Die Linke won two constituencies in Berlin and one in Leipzig).

However, in the Czech republic where no such provision exists, the party lost all representation in parliament in the 8-9 October elections when its vote fell below 5 percent for the first time since 1946.

In Portugal, the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) faced a comparably antagonistic situation: the pandemic lowering turnout; intense anticommunist campaigning; attempts to pin false policies on the PCP; and the instrumentalisation of state forces to serve the governing party. As part of the Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU), an electoral coalition with the Portuguese Greens (outnumbered by the Communists by roughly

10 to 1), the PCP received over 9% of the vote in the Portuguese local elections. The CDU lost seven municipalities but gained two new ones. It now holds 19 in total including two provincial capitals.

In the Russian elections, the CPRF advanced sharply from 13 to just under 20 percent of the vote – despite massive ballot rigging by the governing party.

## Cyprus: Boris Johnson's deceitful and dangerous policy plays to Turkey

On 3 October AKEL, the party of the working people of Cyprus, organised a cross-community march and mass demonstration to demand the resumption of UN sponsored talks on the country's future.

Such talks, it is hoped, will carry forward the terms of agreement initially outlined at the UN brokered Crans Montana negotiations of 2017 for the creation of a Bi-cameral, Bi-zonal Federation. It would end 47 years of Turkish military occupation of the north of the Island. AKEL, which held the Presidency of Cyprus until 2015, has taken these new initiatives, involving mass mobilisations of progressive forces (both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot) in face of Turkey's actions over the summer – in defiance of UN positions – to

open the sealed section of Famagusta, the previously Greek populated township of Varosha, for commercial development.

Earlier in September AKEL put out a statement condemning remarks by the British High Commissioner in Cyprus that appeared to question the need for basing talks on earlier Crans Montana proposals. Britain is one of three guarantor powers, along with Greece and Turkey, under the 1960 UN agreement.

Britain's apparent questioning of its pre-existing commitments is in the context of the Johnson government's development of close diplomatic, trading and military cooperation with Turkey over recent years. In December 2020 Britain signed the UK-Turkey Free Trade Agreement for zero tariff trading. Britain is now Turkey's second biggest trading partner, a major supplier of weaponry, and appears to see the alliance with Turkey as a key avenue for maintaining its wider influence in the Middle East. Britain failed to join the recent EU condemnation of Turkish actions in Cyprus. This move by the EU was largely taken at the initiative of France that has close relations with Greece and backs a rival government in Libya to that supported by Turkey.

Behind this recent heightening of tension, and Turkish demands for two separate and independent states in Cyprus, is the discovery of major deposits of natural gas in the offshore waters of Cyprus which Turkey seeks to exploit. The creation of 'two states' would make this legally possible. The creation of a Federation would ensure that these resources were exploited to the benefit of the peoples of Cyprus, whether Greek or Turkish speakers, under the auspices of a democratic state.

At seminars held earlier this year with speakers from AKEL, jointly organised by the CPB and AKEL's organisation in Britain, calls were made for labour movement organisations to support the stand taken by AKEL calling for the implementation of a settlement in Cyprus on the terms calls for by US resolutions of a Bi-zonal, Bi-cameral Federation. These calls need to be reiterated now and incorporated in resolutions to conferences for the coming season. Johnson's dangerous manoeuvres are closely related to his government's wider New Cold War policies. >>>



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# MIDDLE EAST

## SYRIA: US POLICY

ON TUESDAY 28 September 2021, the *Times* newspaper correspondent, Richard Spencer, reported from Hasakeh (north-eastern Syria) on the visit by General Frank McKenzie, US Central Command, as personal envoy of President Biden, to the commander of the largely-Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), Mazloum Abdi.

McKenzie assured Abdi that US forces will remain in north-eastern Syria alongside British Special Forces and that there will be no "Afghanistan-style withdrawal".

Of the meeting, Abdi stated, "They reassured me that this is not Afghanistan. They said the policy was totally different." The object, according to the *Times* report, is to prevent a takeover by the Assad regime.

Despite assurances proffered by some Kurdish political currents in Syria – including the Syrian Democratic Council (SDC) – that the United States has no long term ambit there beyond the final defeat of ISIS, expressions to the contrary are increasing amidst a major campaign seeking official recognition of an "Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES)" and a more permanent US presence in the country. On Monday 27 September 2021, Ilham Ahmed, SDC co-chairperson, met with White House, Pentagon, and State Department officials on a visit to Washington. Of the discussions, Ahmed stated that the US had promised to continue to assist in the building of infrastructure in north-eastern Syria, would continue to support the SDC and would not withdraw its military backing of the SDF.

This is despite the formal request by the Syrian government in Damascus that the US withdraw its troops from the country.

Essentially, these moves seek to hive off that part of the sovereign territory of Syria that contains most of its oil, water and agricultural resources and in which Kurds represent only a minority of the population.

In a statement issued on 10 October, Faisal Mekdad, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Syrian government, urged caution and repeated his country's call for the US to leave. Mekdad stated, "If the US is set on an ethnic structure [reorganisation of the country along ethnic lines] then they should know this is a losing bet, because our Kurdish brothers are from the same origin in terms of the social, economic, and historical structure of our country, and they themselves cannot allow a minority to control them under any slogan." He warned that the occupiers would be expelled if they failed to leave of their own accord and told the Kurdish administration forces that they should "cease collaborating with the occupiers against their own country."

The *Morning Star* pamphlet, *Imperialism and the Middle East*, details the position of Middle East Communist Parties, as reflected in the seminar held in London in 2016, as supporting "the full linguistic, civil, cultural and economic rights of Kurdish populations but to assess issues of autonomy and independence concretely, in terms of a specific analysis of the strategies of the imperialist powers and regional circumstances."

The Party's International Commission has carefully reviewed the situation on a regular basis and has concluded each time that this analysis still holds – indeed that the developments since then have only served to reinforce this line. It supports the aforementioned rights of the Kurdish people – as one of the many peoples of the Middle East.

It does not concur with any position that advocates the unilateral dismemberment of not one but several sovereign nations, a Balkanisation of the Middle East will serve only imperialist interests. ★

# GOING RIGHT IS WRONG FOR ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

FROM ROBERT WILKINSON

THE ELECTIONS of 23 March 2021 may have removed Benjamin Netanyahu from the office of Prime Minister after the loss of over 285,000 votes and 6 seats in the Knesset parliament, but his Likud Party still received nearly 1,077,000 votes far exceeding the next highest of just over 614,000 that went to the Yesh Atid party of the new Foreign Minister Yair Lapid. The price of forming enough of a coalition to oust Netanyahu was paid in having to agree to Naftali Bennett becoming PM even though his Yamina (Rightwards) Party only received just under 274,000 votes in the elections.

The highest price however was paid by the Palestinians as the conservative Arab Ra'am party had withdrawn from the Joint List before the elections and joined the government coalition afterwards. Their betrayal had led to a reduction of nearly 202,000 votes when compared with the Joint List in the previous elections as it appears that a considerable number of Israeli Arabs boycotted the polls.

This loss of confidence in the political process amongst the Israeli Arab population was however counterbalanced by an increase of over 203,000 votes for the left Zionist parties of Meretz and Labor presumably as a consequence of the increasingly powerful campaigning before the elections to oust Netanyahu.

Nevertheless of increasing and urgent concern for the Communist Party of Israel (Maki) preparing for its 28th Party Congress in October is the rising crime wave amongst the Israeli Arab population that recently passed the 'landmark' of 100 deaths from gang warfare in the Arab neighbourhoods of Israeli towns.

"We continue losing our boys and the government is carrying on normally. No words. #Arab\_Lives\_Matter," tweeted Hadash MK Ayman Odeh, the head of the Joint List and a resident of Haifa, following the shooting. "Should have been obvious that ALL lives matter, including Arab lives, but apparently it is not," posted last week Mira Awad, singer, actress, songwriter and Hadash supporter, after three Arab citizens were killed in the previous 24 hours in shootings across the country. "And here we are, yet another murdered Arab citizen of Israel."

A notable victory for the Palestinians was the release of Palestinian legislator Khalida Jarrar, a senior member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), in September, after serving two years in Israeli prison. It was symptomatic of Israeli policy towards the Palestinians that when Jarrar's 31-year old daughter Suha died of cardiac arrest on July 12 of this year while her mother was in prison, leading many Palestinians and Israeli supporters to call for a furlough for the bereaved mother to allow her to attend Suha's funeral, that Israeli authorities refused this request.

The new Prime Minister of Israel made it abundantly clear in his address to the most recent meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations that the Palestinians no longer mattered or even existed as a nation. Naftali Bennett and his Yamina (Rightwards) Party are heading towards a single state of 'Greater Israel' that would include the West Bank and the Golan Heights and consign the Palestinian Arabs to permanent minority status denying them any aspirations to national sovereignty.

The website of the CPI reported that following Bennett's speech, Joint List MK Aida Touma-Sliman (Hadash) attacked it claiming that his address clearly demonstrates that the current government is continuing on the path of former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: "For years, former far-right Netanyahu's government, and now that of Bennett, have repeated the same phrases: concealing the occupation and the existence of the Palestinian people; claiming Israel's moral superiority; and warmongering against Iran. These were the principles that guided Netanyahu's right-wing government, and they are still guiding that of Bennett," Touma-Sliman said in a statement. "Only a change of direction from the path of the political right will bring peace and security to both nations." ★

# UPDATE: ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

FROM CAROL STAVRIS

THE POLITICAL instability in Israel continues. On 13 June, following its fourth legislative election in two years, the Knesset approved the formation of an eight-Party coalition government headed by Yair Lapid of Yesh Atid and Naftali Bennett of Yamina. Its formation was primarily to force Benjamin Netanyahu from power, yet he shrugs off corruption charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust to remain leader of the opposition in the Israeli Parliament and head of Likud as the largest party in the Knesset.

However, the continuation of Apartheid policies, including the discriminatory Nationality Law, forced evictions and house demolitions in Jerusalem and proposed new settlement building within the occupied West Bank expose the reactionary nature of the new government. Its tolerance of violence against Palestinians on the streets and in their communities by right-wing gangs is yet more evidence of the new government's shift rightwards.

International support has grown for the Palestinians as they resisted the violent onslaughts by the Israeli State in the summer of this year – against the police as they stormed the compound of the al-Aqsa Mosque using tear gas, rubber bullets and stun grenades and Israeli airstrikes targeting the Gaza Strip which caused immense destruction to Palestinian lives, homes and infrastructure.

US President Biden seeks to distance himself from the policies of his predecessor, but there is no significant change to any of the 'deals' that Trump cooked up.

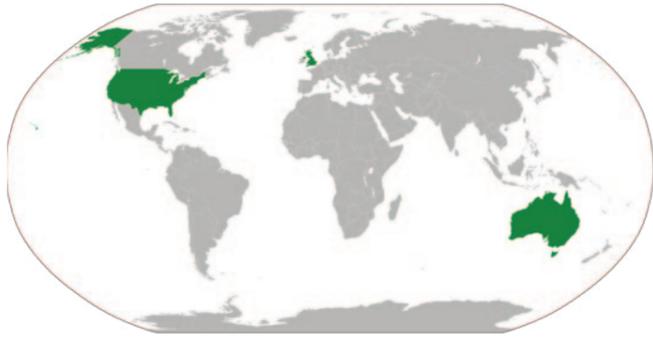
The resumption of funding to UNRWA (UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) after it was stopped by Trump, is money with strings. A two-year deal, The Framework of Cooperation, signed between UNRWA and the US in July commits UNRWA to police the distribution of the funds on behalf of the US, to prevent money going to any Palestinian resistance.

It's one year on from the signing of the 'Abraham Accords', normalisation agreements forming part of Trump's 'Deal of the Century' originally between the Israel, UAE and Bahrain, followed by Sudan and Morocco but freezing out the Palestinians. The US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken has welcomed a recent visit to Morocco by Israel's Foreign Minister, Yair Lapid, showing that the US Administration still wants the deal to succeed. For the US, the deal strengthens their hegemony in the Middle East, allowing trade of American-developed state-of-the-art weaponry between Israel and the regional signatories of the Accords.

These developments underline the need for a just and lasting peace for the Palestinians under International Law, which allows for the full attainment and exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return of Palestinian refugees and the right to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine within the framework of the United Nations, its Charter and its Resolutions. Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital in December 2017 was contrary to International Law, which says Jerusalem's status is to be negotiated as part of the peace settlement.

The struggle for a State of Palestine alongside that of Israel must continue. There is sound evidence that the effectiveness that the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement is growing (Ice cream manufacturers Ben and Jerry are now refusing to sell their products in the Occupied Territories). There is bilateral recognition of the State of Palestine by 139 States. These efforts and advances must not be undermined by defeatist and dangerous ideas that two states as envisaged by UN Resolutions, are not viable.

This can only legitimise illegal settlements, compromise the right of return of refugees and sideline the United Nations. ★



## THE EU: THE AUKUS PACT AND 'STRATEGIC AUTONOMY' – INTER-IMPERIALIST RIVALRY ?

September's announcement of the AUKUS pact, robbing France of a \$70 billion submarine deal with Australia, sparked new demands from President Macron for the EU to assert 'strategic autonomy' and to end its military dependence on the US. Following on from this, on 27 September, came the announcement of a deal for the supply of naval frigates by France to Greece. Macron commented: 'for a little more than ten years now the USA has put itself and its strategic interests first. We should be making a terrible mistake if we did not grasp the consequences'. A few weeks earlier, after the US evacuation from Afghanistan, Josep Borel, the EU Defence minister, had commented: 'the need for more European defence has never been more evident' (France24 2 September 2021). 2022 will see the completion of the EU Commission's 'Strategic Compass' process of consultation among all EU member states for the creation of concerted programme of military provisioning and planning across the EU and the creation of a 5,000 strong rapid reaction force.

This deepening of politico-economic tensions between the US and the EU may be expected to worsen if the current economic crisis becomes more marked – reflecting some elements of inter-imperialist rivalry. However, there are likely to be limits. The EU has its own internal tensions.

Germany's economy depends on civilian engineering exports, above all cars and machine tools. It wants to minimise costs, has low military spending and, unlike France, a small defence sector. Its export competitiveness depends in part on cheap energy imported from Russia and it has shown little enthusiasm for French demands. The outcome of the recent election is likely to strengthen this reluctance. Other EU states, particularly, Poland and the Baltics, all politically on the right, retain strong economic and diplomatic links with the US and have been long-standing proponents of strengthening EU-NATO integration and of eastward expansion. Another NATO enthusiast is the Netherlands – with the highest level of US investment in the EU. Additionally, France itself, currently battling to defend its neo-colonial sphere of influence in sub-Saharan Africa, is logistically dependent on US air cover and cyber-support, from US air bases in Spain, for its military operations.

There is also Britain's own role in Europe. At the end of September Boris Johnson and Mark Rutte, Netherlands prime minister, held talks on strengthening NATO and EU military cooperation. Under the Lisbon Treaty, Article 42.2, inserted at Britain's insistence, specifies that NATO shall be the main forum for the implementation of collective self-defence for EU member states that are also NATO members. It appears that the Johnson government is positioning itself to act on behalf of the US to ensure that this clause is maintained and given practical implementation. The Netherlands has the highest level of US investment in the EU.

See the separate 'Joint Statement' on AUKUS from the Australian, US and British Communist Parties in the November issue of the Communist party paper *Unity!* and at www.communistparty.org.uk ★

# IRAN REGIME IN EXISTENTIAL CRISIS

FROM NAVID SHOMALI

SINCE THE disastrous presidential elections in the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) on 18 June 2021, the ruling dictatorial regime has lurched ever deeper into a multifaceted crisis of epic, even existential, proportions.

At home, the regime's crisis of legitimacy has been set in stone with the confirming into presidential office of Ebrahim Raisi, a notorious figure centrally involved in the 1988 mass murder of thousands of political prisoners in Iran, after elections where even official figures placed the turnout at just 42% – the lowest by a long margin in Iran's contemporary history.

The widespread apathy (at best) and contempt towards the theocratic regime amongst the vast majority of the Iranian population has been further underscored by a significant wave of industrial unrest – with strikes by tens of thousands of project workers servicing the country's vital oil and gas fields in the south of Iran, as well as the withdrawal of labour by swathes of teachers and miners since late-September, despite the threats their participants face from the IRI's security, intelligence, and militia apparatuses. The Tudeh Party of Iran leads calls for a united front of left and progressive forces for peace and progress. Such opposition currents resolutely oppose any foreign intervention in

Iran and believe that the future of Iran can and should only be determined by the Iranian people themselves.

Meanwhile, the IRI desperately reaches out for some type of resurrection with the US of the JCPOA agreement through which they can obtain relief from the sanctions currently choking Iran's economy and finances – already devastated by years of endemic corruption, mismanagement, cow-towing to the prescriptions of the IMF its neoliberal shock economics since the late-1980s. This has precipitated a disastrous collapse in the value of the national currency and a sharp decline in living standards with most people there struggling to make even basic ends meet and an exodus of those able to leave.

To compound the grave situation facing the regime, its relation with its regional neighbours is also now in complete breakdown. Forty years of antagonism have come full circle. The IRI is confronted by major joint military exercises between Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Pakistan (stemming from Iran's ostensible support for Armenia), a continuing bad relationship with its Gulf Arab neighbours; continued restiveness amongst its Kurdish and Baluchi minority communities, the freefall of the situation in neighbouring Afghanistan, and the deepening unpopularity of its 'brotherly/fraternal' brand westwards from Iraq to the Eastern Mediterranean, and northwards and eastwards into the Caucasus and Central Asia respectively. These reflect the legitimate and growing grievances against years of malign interference and sectarian destabilisation. The Islamic Republic now faces the proverbial perfect storm. It is one of its own making. ★

# IRAQI COMMUNIST PARTY BOYCOTTS ELECTIONS

**IRAQ'S EARLY parliamentary elections on 10 October 2021 were characterised by a very low turnout, at about 20%, confirming the fact that Iraqi voters have no confidence in an electoral system designed to perpetuate the corrupt ethno-sectarian power-sharing system that was installed after the US war and occupation of the country in 2003.**

**The Iraqi Communist Party actively supported the popular October Uprising in 2019 and had stressed early elections as one of the principal demands of the Uprising aimed at ridding the country of the ethno-sectarian power-sharing system and opening up prospects for establishing a civil democratic state and social justice.**

**However, there was growing concern about various aspects of the electoral process, including a flawed Electoral Law as amended by parliament to serve the interests of the rulers and dominant blocs. The date for elections was postponed, at the request of the so-called "independent" Electoral Commission, from 6th June to 10 October 2021.**

**Vote buying started early, with corrupt politicians and their parties spending money lavishly in the absence**

**of any real controls. The Parties Law, which should prevent such practices and bans political parties with armed formations from participating in elections, has not been implemented.**

**No effective measures have been taken to prevent a repeat of the shameful rigging and manipulation of the voting process that marred previous elections. The real figure for the turnout in the last parliamentary elections in 2018 was about 20%, while official figures claimed it was 44.5%.**

**A very important demand by the protest movement, and also by Iraqi Communists, was that the perpetrators of the killings of more than 700 peaceful young protesters during the October Uprising must be brought to justice. But the transitional government of Mustafa al-Kadhemi, installed in May 2020 after the overthrow of his predecessor Adel Abdul-Mahdi by the protest movement, has failed to deliver on its promises.**

**In view of this situation, the Iraqi Communist Party, after conducting an internal referendum of all its party members and organisations, declared in July 2021 its decision to boycott the elections. It also warned that blocking the path to peaceful democratic change through free and fair elections will only deepen the political crisis and open the door to grave consequences, endangering civil peace. The rulers will then be held fully responsible for pushing the country toward the abyss. ★**



## ASIA PACIFIC

# OPERATION INDO-PACIFIC: BRITAIN 'BACK OUT THERE' AGAIN

FROM LIZ PAYNE

CARRIER STRIKE Group CSG21 (Above), with submarine-furnished cruise missile cover, sailed from Portsmouth under British command on 22 May bound for the Indian Ocean, South China Sea, and Western Pacific. Described as the "largest concentration of maritime and air power to leave Britain for a generation", it was led by the £3.5 billion aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth, in effect a mobile sovereign territory, complete with British and US F35-B Lightning jets and attack helicopters. The Strike Group of warships, submarines and planes from the US, Britain and other NATO countries, epitomised imperialism's intent to

demonstrate to friends and foes alike its formidable capacity to impose its will where and when it chooses. When completed in December, Operation Fortis, as it is known, will have taken in 40 countries, with direct combat and live-fire exercises in every arena between Britain and Japan. The primary purpose of the costly mission has been to re-assert hegemony in the Indo-Pacific region and turn the screw ever tighter on China in the intensifying western-imposed cold war.

For Britain, re-establishment as a neo-colonial power, reversing its 1968 'No troops east of Suez' strategy, and signalling its superior status as number-one-ally of the US have been key motivators for participation. As strike group commander, Commodore Steve Moorhouse told Reuters, the deployment demonstrated that Britain had a global navy and "wanted to be back out there." True to his words, the armada's progress resembled an itinerary of empire, with militias of former colonies lined up to play a part.

On route, in the eastern Mediterranean, the formation's flagship launched F35-B bombing raids on Syria and Iraq. This landmark development demonstrated the crucial role of floating military bases in the

mix of modern warfare. Defence secretary, Ben Wallace, described "the ability to operate from the sea with the most advanced fighter jets ever created" as "a significant moment" in Britain's history.

After crossing the Indian Ocean, manoeuvres with Modi's navy and air force in the Bay of Bengal menaced China's strategic oil routes through Myanmar's ports. Then, during progress through the Malacca Straits, one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, the strike group exercised with the militaries of Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore, before entering the South China Sea.

The deliberately provocative manoeuvring of such a fearsome assemblage in these disputed waters was little short of reckless. China, claiming "a high state of combat readiness," accused Britain of again operating in the image of its former colonial self. Understandably so. How would Britain react should the Chinese similarly exercise off Cornwall and challenge its sovereignty over small off-shore islands in the vicinity?

Passing into the Pacific, the group joined the US to practice a co-ordinated live-fire attack and invasion of a small tropical island. Exercises with South Korea included

protracted F35-B manoeuvres in the skies above the Korean Peninsula. This triggered an alarmed reaction from Pyongyang which fired missiles into the nearby ocean. Finally, 12 days of "warlike" interoperability exercises with Japan and the US brought the intervention across thousands of miles of Asian water to an end.

The project embodied Britain and the US's shift of focus from the Middle East to the Indo-Pacific. Now AUKUS-like pacts can be cemented, economies put on war footing, and jingoism promoted. China will be pushed to spend disproportionately on defence rather than prosperity and peaceful development. In imperialist countries, including Britain, war-preparedness already dominates and distorts the economy, while media-promoted xenophobia fosters division. Profits of the arms multi-nationals soar, as people's basic needs remain unmet. This is why Britain's new brand of imperialism and slavish commitment to the US, NATO, and war must be rejected outright, while there is still time.

First published in the Liberation Journal 2 October 2021. There is a longer version on Liberation website.

Afghan people struggle for real Peace, Progress and Security

From a former leading member of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan

The recent developments in Afghanistan, which have seen the Taliban retake power there, go way beyond any witnessed beforehand. They will have considerable impact in the region far beyond the country's frontiers. All indications are that the US has provided the conditions for these developments.

The US never made any effort, neither now nor before, to force the Taliban to respect human rights, women's rights, national and ethnic equality, and to build a political system based upon social justice. The US only sought to secure its own interests. Accordingly, the US has chosen the Taliban as the only force capable of executing its major policies in Central Asia. Judging by the initial groundwork, as well as the reactions of key regional powers – namely Russia, China, and Iran – these policies are geared towards the raising of regional tensions and precipitating some type of 'Central Asian Spring' albeit with new characteristics. Regional observers and analysts contend that the resurfacing and deployment of Daesh (ISIS-K) forces in Northern Afghanistan, in a column distinct from the Taliban, is one of the most obvious signs of these policies.

It is worth noting that the ISIS forces based in Northern Afghanistan are mainly citizens of Chechnya, other Caucasus nations, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan, as well as Uyghurs from Xinjiang in China.

Alongside these two formidable Islamist extremist movements, others are regrouping – from al-Qaida to Hizb ut-Tahrir – all with the common goal of overthrowing the secular regimes in Central Asia.

Thus, Afghanistan once more falls victim to the mal-designs of the Pentagon and CIA hawks, at the cost of its peace and prosperity.

Based on what has happened, it could be said that the first overt sign of this process was the US-policy makers gradual refashioning of the Taliban into a politically and diplomatically palatable entity via the Doha talks, and dispelling any taboos associated with such negotiations.

The hassle-free transfer of power to the Taliban, as well as a significant amount of still-intact state hardware and infrastructure, was a central point in this plan. All practical means have been utilised to redirect the Islamist insurgency and chaos towards Central Asia, and the final objective of disorder, violence, and civil war in the secular non-Western-aligned republics there.

It should be added that the peoples of Northern Afghanistan – with deep longstanding historical, ethnic, and cultural links with their neighbours in Central Asia – are not willing to participate in such plans.

Any coherent and real analysis of the situation in Afghanistan must acknowledge that the US has retained all the major leversages in relation to the country. Through this transfer of power to the Taliban, the US in effect now has a strategic and loyal ally. Those currents within the Taliban leadership who were based and cultivated in Qatar are now firm allies.

There should be no illusion to the contrary. Of course, there are other leversages that the US can exploit through the World Bank, IMF, and the global financial institutions. It is difficult to envisage the US freezing the assets of Afghanistan for a long time, though this will serve as a barometer of the US's genuine resolve to make the Taliban change their politics and how high that ranks in relation with their designs and intent for the wider region.

While the Taliban will row back from certain positions to relieve the immediate pressure they are under, it remains to be seen whether they are willing to move on key issues such as the genuine representation of all nationalities and ethnicities of Afghanistan in power, real women's freedom, religious equality, freedom of expression and politics, method of governance, type of the political system, as well as other core determining issues of the destiny and future of the Afghan people. The Taliban will have red lines, unpalatable to international public opinion and common standards of decency, which they will not cross owing to their frighteningly backwards disposition politically and socially. However, where those red lines are ultimately drawn, as the Taliban desperately try to consolidate their position as a cohesive entity, remains to be seen.

For as long as long as the internal differences remain in the Taliban – indeed the gulf between US-backed "pragmatists" and hardcore elements, like the ascendant Haqqani network, widens by the day – they will not be able to effectively assert the rule over a still restive country. In that scenario, the US designs for the wider region will rest on the Taliban's brutal re-imposition of its rule and elimination of all opposition... Though that remains a far from straightforward feat after twenty years in the wilderness!

Further, what of the fate of the remaining US bases in Afghanistan? (Five of the nine were to be dismantled pursuant to the deal reached in Doha.) And, what of the ten-year security pact signed between the Afghanistan and US in 2014? Much still remains at stake...

Ultimately, the question remains how far the US is prepared to go in pursuing its nefarious designs for Afghanistan as well as the violent destabilisation of the wider region. ★

## AFRICA

### SUDAN COUP CONDEMNED

**British Communists condemn the attempted military seizure of power in Sudan which took place overnight and the arrest of the civilian leaders of the power-sharing government. General secretary Robert Griffiths called for the immediate release of those arrested.**

**'The coup is an attempt to forestall the transfer of power to full civilian rule scheduled for the coming weeks along with the holding of elections. We express our solidarity with the Sudanese Communist Party and also the Sudanese Professionals Association, brave people who have led the struggle for democracy ever since the overthrow of Omar El-Bashir in 2019. We condemn any external interference by the US, Britain and their allies. We ask for the trade union and labour movement to show solidarity with those opposing military rule and defending democratic advance in Sudan'. 25 October 2021 ★**

## AMERICAS

### CUBA-VIETNAM VACCINE COOPERATION

During a visit to Cuba on 19 September the president of Vietnam, Nguyen Nuan Phuc signed an agreement for the supply of 10m doses of the Cuba Abdala vaccines – tested as 92 percent effective against all Covid variants including Delta.

Cuba currently has the highest level of vaccination in Latin America with 84 percent of the population with one dose and over 50 percent fully vaccinated. Venezuela has also purchased \$12m worth of Cuba's vaccines – as have a number of other countries.

Cuba has one of the most advanced pharmaceutical industries in the world – although gravely hindered in terms of mass production by the US blockade preventing the import of glass phials and other equipment required for transport and administration. ★

## CUBA: US DESTABILISATION ATTEMPTS

FROM BEN LUNN

Following the failure of the destabilisation attempts in the summer, Biden and his stooges have continued to try and bring Cuba into disrepute. Reports of an 'Havana Syndrome' began to circulate, with 'cases' being noted by American and Canadian citizens who had been stationed or visiting the island nation. The cases claimed to have identified a specialised 'weapon' which was causing brain damage and was a direct assault on American and Canadian citizens. The Cuban Academy of Sciences (ACC) were able to substantially refute these claims, and highlighted that it was feasibly impossible to manufacture such a 'weapon' or 'illness'.

On the 13 October, Granma (also reported by TeleSur) released a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which rejected attempts by foreign powers to try and destabilise the nation. The Director General

## TUNISIA

FROM LIZ PAYNE

THIS YEAR saw the tenth anniversary of the demonstrations in Tunisia that initiated what soon became known to the world as the Arab Spring. A little over a decade later, on 25 July 2021, Tunisia's independence day, president Kais Saied invoked the constitution to announce "exceptional measures" based on "an immanent threat of peril". Those measures included dismissal of the Islamist prime minister, Hichem Mechichi and the suspension of parliament, with new prerogatives for the president announced on 22 September. Does this signify a reversal of everything for which the Tunisian people had struggled since early 2011 and the overthrow of dictator, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali or is something different taking place?

Even sources from within the left in Tunisia talk of grey unclear areas within this complex situation, as financial crisis and COVID-hit Tunisia faces what are widely described as economic, social, and political challenges unprecedented in recent history. Kais Saied, elected president in October 2019, was known from constitutional debates of 2011 onwards to favour a presidential regime rather than a presidential/parliamentary hybrid. A conservative Muslim himself, he is nonetheless vehemently opposed to Political Islam as represented by the Ennahdha movement and to associated corruption and nepotism in government. The Ennahdha's manoeuvring into the ascendancy in parliament and taking

of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the US – Carlos Fernández de Cossío – said on social media that it is only a matter of time until a protest will overthrow the Cuban government 'with or without the support of the US government'. The gusano diplomat released these statements following the local authorities intervention which saw specific protests being disallowed – due to their efforts to overthrow the Cuban government. The responding editorial in Granma pointed out that the freedom of protest and demonstration is allowed in Cuba, but it cannot be used as a way to undermine or subvert the political system, create alliances with organisations or groups that receive funding from foreign sources, or clearly acting to promote the will of the US Government. Though Cuba has managed to ride past the summer's escalation, now that the 'grown-up' Biden has replaced the 'childish' Trump, American hopes of undermining the Socialist state of Cuba is only going to continue. The Cuban doctor María Guadalupe Guzmán has been invited to the Scientific Advisory Group of the World Health Organisation. Guzmán is one of twenty-five people invited to the group, and her reputation and work is not only a credit to herself, but to the continuing commitment of the Cuban people to fight for the betterment of humanity. Her talents and expertise are going to be a wonderful contribution to the World Health Organisation and an appointment friends of Cuba should celebrate greatly. ★

## NICARAGUA

With the lead-up to the general election in Nicaragua, the battle to defend the Sandinista project intensifies. In a poll in late September, it was revealed 62% of the voting population intend to re-elect Ortega; a similar opinion poll found 71% viewed the Ortega government favourably. However, this favourable opinion goes against the interest of American imperialism, so it is little surprise that meddling and other attempts to undermine the democratic process have only intensified in recent weeks.

On the 12 October, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nicaragua denounced the attempts of the American Ambassador Kevin Sullivan. In the statement they highlighted the continued attempts of the US government, via its Ambassador, aimed only to destabilise the Central American nation, and cared little for

over of key positions, in defiance of the Tunisia's "people's" programme, constituted the "immanent threat" to which he referred in July. In the weeks following the dissolution of parliament, former leaders were placed under house arrest and banned from travelling abroad while awaiting trial on corruption charges.

Within the country, some are firmly opposed to what has taken place, viewing the institution of exceptional measures as a coup; these include the Workers' Party of Tunisia, formerly part of the post 2011 Popular Front. But in the days following 25th July it soon became clear that the narrative of condemnation was not dominant, and a wide range of democratic trends saw the driving out of Islamism from power as providing some possibility of setting Tunisia again on the path of sound progressive governance.

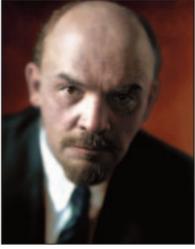
The General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) has been vociferously opposed to any return to the Islamist-dominated pre-25th July situation. It is calling, in unison with others, for a national dialogue that ensures that the process of reform promised by the president becomes the collective endeavour of all progressive forces rather than a personal project of the president. In this the people of Tunisia need our support and solidarity. Above all, we must do everything possible to prevent intervention in this strategically positioned country by imperialist powers, including Britain, on any pretext and consistently challenge the already-instigated binding of its future to the interests of the IMF and NATO. ★

the democratic will of the people living there. In its last paragraph, the communiqué demands the U.S. diplomat:

'Refrain, Mr. Sullivan, from continuing to violate our national harmony, and renounce trying to impose your vulgar, insolent, ignoble, abominable and decadent U.S. policy, which we declare, once again, unwelcome to Nicaraguans.'

The attempts to undermine the democratic process have not come solely from the US, but have also arrived via Nicaraguans too. Sergio Ramirez, a fierce critic and rival of Ortega, spoke to the Guardian and slung mud, falsehoods, and wild accusations in an attempt to undermine his former 'comrades'. In 1994 Ramirez attempted to remove Ortega from the FSLN leadership but failed to do so; leading him to form the Sandinista Renewal Party (MRS), a social democratic party which bemoans the FSLN for 'failing to keep to its true vision'. Though Ramirez slings the same accusations as the war-hawks in Washington, he is viewed more favourably by Centrists and soft-liberals as he was a former member of the revolutionary Sandinista movement in the 1980s. Despite being more palatable for Guardian readers, Ramirez's popularity in Nicaragua itself is very low and many in Nicaragua accuse him of betraying the cultural, political, and social legacy of the nation of Nicaragua and betraying the legacy of historic heroes like Ruben Dario and Augusto C. Sandino. Ultimately, Ramirez is a marginal figure in Nicaragua, but due to his cosying up to America has become a suitable mouthpiece to help undermine any progressive developments in Nicaragua.

On Sunday 10 October, Nicaragua approved the 64-page voting manuals, which help direct citizens in the process of voting in the general election in November. The completion of the document not only emphasises the openness and transparency of these elections, but also demonstrates the way in which they have been coordinated to make them as safe and democratic as possible. The combination of the US intervention attempts and the pandemic, could have led to mass confusion and panic with the elections, however the government and the people of Nicaragua have helped create a system which is democratic and open – and ultimately further reason to why progressive forces across the world should defend Nicaragua. ★



# UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

*From the standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e., the export of capital and the division of the world by the “advanced” and “civilised” colonial powers—a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary. On the Slogan for a United States of Europe VI Lenin 1915*

## PRE CONGRESS DISCUSSION

### A one-sided approach to Stalin

In a “confession”, an old-fashioned semi-jocular questionnaire, Marx stated his favourite motto: “De omnibus dubitandum” (Doubt everything) <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1865/04/01.htm>. None should be immune to principled criticism and exchange of views which consolidate our positions – Luxemburg opposed Lenin’s views on the “National Question” <https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1918/russian-revolution/ch03.htm>.

Nevertheless, CPB’s criticism on Stalin, merely resorts to Bourgeois/Trotskyite / Khrushchevite phraseology and clichés. Social media protocol for CPB members [https://issuu.com/communist\\_party/docs/september\\_2021\\_unity\\_](https://issuu.com/communist_party/docs/september_2021_unity_) reads: “adulation of Stalin and support for the substantial abuses of state power which occurred under his leadership is not compatible with our Party’s judgment of these matters as reflected in BRS”.

It is ironic that defending Stalin’s legacy is not considered compatible with the judgment of BRS, the first draft of which, was approved by... Stalin himself!

Superficial and one-side analyses such as those of the internet protocol, imply lack of retrospection. Research and debate on Stalin’s era are compulsory, especially now, 30 years after the subversion of Socialism in Europe. British communists should see the bigger picture and acknowledge Stalin’s immense achievements, in extremely hard times: Stalin inherited an agriculturally and industrially undeveloped country, crippled by territorial losses, and he passed on a fully collectivised, electrified, industrialised nuclear superpower, which regained its lost territories, played the protagonist role in the anti-nazi victory, and came up leader of a socialist world that spanned from Elbe River to Bering Strait. If a picture is worth a thousand words, the photograph of Meliton Kantaria, the Soviet soldier that raised the Soviet Flag on Reichstag <https://images.squarespace-cdn.com/content/v1/5b670534b98a78d5e84a7d19/1570810678882-V3UY49PCXUTU6Z9BWWVSX/Raising+a+Flag+over+the+Reichstag+Yevgeny+Khaldei+1945.png>, who was ethnic Georgian ie Stalin’s compatriot, is worth the whole book of WWII history.

Stalin predicted: “I know that after my death a heap of garbage will be put on my grave, but the wind of history will scatter it mercilessly!” <https://www.pseudology.org/Chuev/140/07.htm>. May this wind blow in our Congress!

**Dr Ioannis Michalopoulos**  
Yorkshire

### The political liberation of EU withdrawal

Cde John Tyrell’s contribution on ‘post Brexit Britain’ is correct to highlight the capitulation to pro-EU policies of the Labour leadership in the Corbyn era both during the EU referendum campaign and in the drawn out aftermath when Labour sought to overturn the June 2016 decision of the British people to leave the EU. Also he is right to raise the question of our party’s vision for Socialism post Brexit.

The inadequacy of the various UK-EU withdrawal agreements and the primacy they give to the interests of monopoly capital does not detract from the historic and strategic advance presented by British withdrawal from the EU.

Nor should the failure of a left-led Labour Party to be elected in the 2019 General Election in any way diminish our party’s support for the profound political liberation of exiting the EU’s treaties.

The process of European integration was

intended by its architects to be irreversible. For almost 50 years a pathway to socialism has been denied and British withdrawal opens up immense economic, political and social possibilities.

The reality is that the labour movement with few exceptions ended up on the wrong side of the EU debate. The self evidently kamikaze and unpopular commitment to a second EU referendum policy in Labour’s 2019 manifesto was rooted in the acquiescence of a majority of the left who adopted a delusional ‘remain and reform’ position in the preceding referendum campaign. The fact that so many refused to accept the strong socialist case against the EU raises big questions about the lack of anti-capitalist consciousness in sections of the movement we regard as key allies in the building of an anti monopoly alliance.

Britain’s involvement in EU-driven centralisation, deregulation, militarisation and the marketisation of public services is at an end. We can now shape a future based on socialist economic policies based on planning, public ownership, state aid and workers’ democratic control.

**Kevan Nelson**  
North West District

### Socialism or extinction: there is no alternative.

#### The Economy and the Environment

There have been many declarations that defeating the climate emergency is impossible under capitalism. We need to take this from the realms of general principle into concrete sectoral analysis of the forces driving the climate crisis. The time for abstract theorising and rarefied declarations has long since passed.

**The urgency of the problem** On 9 August 2021, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis*. This was Part I of its Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) written by its Working Group I, detailing the current state of climate change.

Under the report’s most optimistic scenario, extreme heat and heavy rainfall will be far more frequent. Sea level rise will be irreversible over centuries. Ocean acidification will increase. The best that can be hoped for at this point, therefore, is that the ultimate threat to humanity will be held off, and by the end of the century global average temperature could be reduced below 1.5°C again. Even then, some of the negative effects of climate change, posing dire threats to billions of people, will continue to play out over the 21st century. In the fifth scenario, resulting from the unhindered continuation of capitalist “business as usual,” global average temperature is projected to increase by the end of the century by 3.3–5.7°C, spelling absolute catastrophe for humanity and innumerable other species.

In June 2021, Part II of AR6 was leaked to the French news agency Agence-France Presse (AFP), which then published an article based on the leak “Crushing Climate Impacts to Hit Sooner than Feared.”

The leak warns that previous major climate shocks dramatically altered the environment and wiped out most species and questions whether humanity is sowing the seeds of its own demise. In the words of the report itself: “Life on Earth can recover from a drastic climate shift by evolving into new species and creating new ecosystems. Humans cannot.”

Part II concludes: “We need transformational change operating on processes and behaviours at all levels: individual, communities, business, institutions and governments. We must redefine our way of life and consumption.”

**Stewart McGill**  
London

## Central Committee of the Sudanese Communist Party

# Statement to the Masses of our Sudanese People



29 October 2021

**T**he Security Committee, led by its head, carried out a military coup on 25 October 2021 as a link in a series of military coups that began with the palace coup on 11 April 2019. The aim is the same, which is to block the path to the continuation of the mass movement to achieve the goals and slogans of the glorious December Revolution.

The attempts of the Security Committee and political forces from the remnants of the regime and some armed movements to raise the slogan of the Revolution, in freedom, peace and justice, do not deceive anyone, and a lie has no legs. What happened on 25 October is a miserable attempt to impose and implement the plan of the enemies of the revolution aimed at completely aborting the December Revolution and expanding the social base of a regime that adopts and implements the “Soft Landing” project.

The implementation of the coup on 25 October was preceded by the introduction of continuous amendments to the Constitutional Document, as its most important provisions were totally violated and torn up with the amendments proposed by the statement of the coup, the flawed Juba Agreement, and the establishment of the Council of Partners which paved the way for the onslaught on the revolution.

We, in the Communist Party, condemn the 25 October coup and the resulting arrests of civilians, usurping of political and democratic rights, and firing live bullets at the masses in their peaceful marches. We also condemn the declaration of a state of emergency and demand the release of the Prime Minister and all political detainees who were arrested after the coup, the abolition of all decisions and putting the coup plotters on trial. This coup paves the way for a sharp right-wing turn at the top of authority and contributes to reproducing the extremist dark regime and returning us to the era of ‘Ghost Houses’ (secret detention and torture centres) and the elimination of democracy and basic rights.

Our people and their patriotic and democratic forces have achieved many victories, and with their awareness and courage they defeated their enemies and protected their Revolution during the past two years. The epics of the mass demonstrations numbering in the millions on 30 June 2019 and 21 October 2021 were the most prominent features of the daring re-

sistance of our people in the face of the enemies of the Revolution.

Based on the experiences of our people and their record of struggle, we in the Communist Party are working with all the relevant forces to form the broadest front to resist and defeat the coup. In this context, we call upon the Resistance Committees, the Management Committees, the Demands Committees, all mass organizations, the Professionals Association and the civil forces to come together in defence of the revolution, defeat the coup and continue on the path of radical change to achieve the goals of the December Revolution.

The response to the coup, and to the attempts now underway to form a civilian government under the tutelage of the Security Committee and its allies, is through building and establishing a militant and persevering unity to bring the Revolution to its goals of freedom, peace and justice.

This is done with unity, mobilization, organisation and support for a revolutionary programme that requires the implementation of an economic policy aimed at solving the economic hardship by rejecting the dictates of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and transferring the companies controlled by the armed forces to the Ministry of Finance. It also requires speeding up the removal of the remnants of the former regime, dissolving all militias, restructuring the armed forces, building a comprehensive popular peace as an alternative to the quotas of the Juba Agreement, achieving justice and retribution for all the Revolution’s martyrs and handing over the deposed dictator to the International Criminal Court. In addition, a foreign policy must be adopted that expresses the goals of the December Revolution, puts the country’s interest in the forefront and protects national sovereignty, and brings Sudan out of the military, regional and global axes.

The Communist Party appreciates the positions of peoples, Communist and progressive parties, governments and regional and international organizations, in condemning the coup and supporting the desires and aspirations of the masses of our people.

To achieve these goals, the Communist Party emphasizes the importance of escalating mass activity in various forms, including peaceful processions, statements, protest strikes and vigils, and besieging the coup at home and abroad through the continuation of the widespread and persistent popular movement, and sharpening and using the weapons of the masses in the general political strike and civil disobedience. The processions on 30 October 2021 are the processions of the masses rising up to defeat the coup and establish a full democratic civil authority in the country.

Secretariat of the Central Committee  
Sudanese Communist Party



# EVENTS & IDEAS & ACTION

'... genuine Communist candidates are bound to enthuse the Labour and working-class voters and electors in a higher degree than by any policy of timidity or half-heartedness.' **Shapurji Saklatvala MP** writing following his election in *The Communist* 25 November 1922

## Contemporary capitalism and exploitation

**WORK**  
HUGH KIKBRIDE

MARXIST THEORY (historical, economic and philosophical) has at its core what happens at the point of production in any society. Marx explained that it is the social relations of production that largely determine the nature of a society.

So, in capitalism it is the relationship between the capitalist and the worker (the exploiter and the exploited) that tends to create the other social phenomena of society. In other words, change at work shapes developments in wider society.

Work under capitalism has changed rapidly in recent years, and the Covid pandemic has accelerated this. The Communist Party has therefore established a Work Commission to develop the Party's work in this area.

In December 2020 the party hosted a successful Zoom conference on the Future of Work, which was very well attended.

It was recognised that the content \_ although valuable and well researched, was not always sufficiently related to the Party's theoretical basis in Marxism-Leninism.

A 'Future of Work' group was therefore established and published three articles on current developments: 'AI: Alienating Intelligence', 'Does Capital Still Need Labour?' and 'Exploitation and Crisis'

The group became very aware that we were dealing with work now, rather than in the future, and it was then widened in both personnel and remit to become the 'Work Commission.'

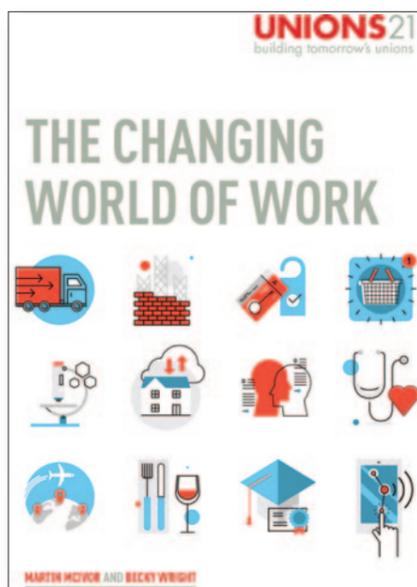
Remote working during Covid has shown that capitalists are capable of controlling workers and their output without them having to be in the same place. So capital's use of technology has forced workers and their unions to look at new strategies of organisation and resistance, and these are the next steps in the work of the Commission.

The shortage of lorry drivers and the possibility of a doctors' strike have also raised the issue of the quality of jobs, rather than just the number. Challenging control, and the quality of work are two sides of the same coin, and the Work Commission will be developing that argument in the coming months.

HUGH KIRKBRIDE IS SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S WORK COMMISSION

## Useful analysis of workforce changes

**WORKFORCE**  
KEVAN NELSON



THE ANTECEDENTS of Unions 21 can be traced back to the demise of the CPGB 30 years ago. Today this union coalition - with a self styled mission to 'develop practical projects and ideas to build tomorrow's unions' - consists mainly of right wing and non-Labour affiliated white collar unions. Unions 21 produces regular reports on the world of work which, while weak in terms of practical proposals, have some merit in informing union strategies. The latest publication is on 'the changing world of work' which is a useful analysis of workforce changes and trends including forecasts for the next decade. Four key sectors of projected growth are identified between now and 2027 - health and social care (+252k), hospitality (+131k), outsourcing-driven business support services (85k) and professional services (85k). These changes reflect how British capitalism and its so-called labour market is constantly evolving and reforming following the long term decline of manufacturing which had a devastating structural impact on union membership and bargaining power. Unions have been slow to reorient to new and growing economic sectors. The data within the report can inform union growth strategies in particular ensuring organising resources are deployed effectively to build workplace organisation, secure recognition and bargaining power.

KEVAN NELSON IS CHAIR OF THE NORTH WEST TUC PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE



**COMMUNIST REVIEW**  
THEORETICAL AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY  
Autumn 2021 Number 101

**Editorial** *Martin Levy*  
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## Political education

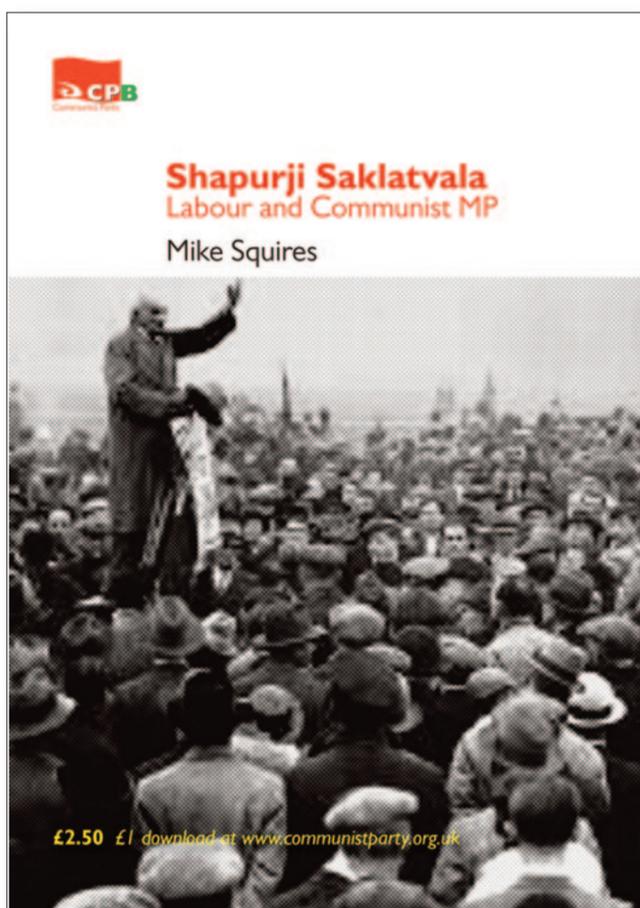
Available at [www.communistparty.org.uk](http://www.communistparty.org.uk)

**Britain's Road to Socialism** study guide for members and contacts includes study/discussion questions to integrate the party's political analysis with local activity.

The **Women and Class** course frames contemporary controversies in a rigorous materialist analysis.

**Introducing Marxism** includes three sessions: *The Marxist world outlook; Capitalist exploitation and crisis and Political struggle and revolution.*

**Taking the road to socialism** is an eight session accredited Stage 1 course in Marxism leninism rssential in new members' induction year and equally essential as a refresher for all members.



**Coming shortly** Dr Mike Squires, whose pioneering biography of Labour and Communist MP Shapurji Saklatvala *Saklatvala: A Political Biography* renewed interest in the fiery orator; has written a brief account of his life and work as part of the Communist Party's celebration of Black working class history.  
**Available shortly at [shop.communistparty.org.uk](http://shop.communistparty.org.uk)**



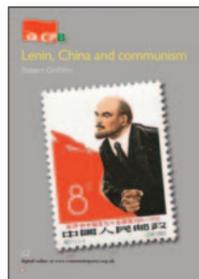
Three lectures with prominent commentators offer a Marxist perspective on the politics of food and agriculture: 7pm Thursdays November 4-18  
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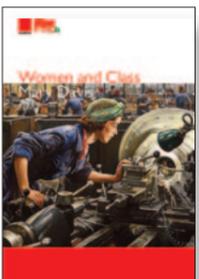
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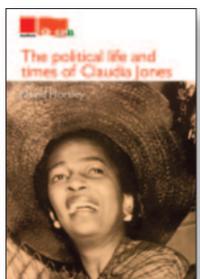
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