

IMPERIALISTS MUST KEEP CLIMATE PROMISES

by our Arab Affairs correspondent

PRESIDENT Abdel Fattah el Sisi welcomed world leaders taking part in the UN's COP27 climate change conference at the seaside resort of Sharm el Sheikh on Sunday. As many as 120 leaders are attending the two-week summit, together with nearly 27,000 government representatives, about 14,000 observers and more than 3,000 media representatives. And along the Red Sea coast the voice of the leaders of the nations of the South is being heard loudly calling on the imperialists to honour their past promises, reduce polluting gases and supply the funds promised to the less developed countries to face this problem.

At the opening ceremony, the Egyptian leader said: "We trust the world will come together, yet again, to reaffirm its commitment to the global climate agenda despite the difficulties and uncertainties of our time. I am positive that all parties and stakeholders will be coming to Sharm El-Sheikh with a stronger will and a higher ambition on mitigation, adaptation and climate finance, demonstrating actual success stories on implementing commitments and fulfilling pledges.

"I deeply believe that COP27 is an opportunity to showcase unity against an existential threat that we can only overcome through concerted action and effective implementation. As incom-

ing Presidency Egypt will spare no effort to ensure that COP27 becomes the moment when the world moved from negotiation to implementation and where words were translated to actions, and where we collectively embarked on a path towards sustainability, a just transition and eventually a greener future for coming generations."

Biden

Joe Biden is there along with the NATO leaders who do his bidding, including Rishi Sunak who decided to go at the last minute, some say, only after he learned that Boris Johnson and Nicola Sturgeon were also going to be there. Sunak, of course, will be representing the UK. Johnson, however, now only represents his own constituency of Uxbridge & South Ruislip. and Nicola Sturgeon is attending a number of fringe events as leader of the Scottish regional government.

Although Sunak lost no opportunity to parade his newly discovered green credentials, he's also used this international platform as a pretext to attack Russia so as to publicly parade his loyalty



• Climate change devastation in the third world.

to his master in the White House.

It was "morally right" that Britain honours its commitments on global warming, Sunak said, whilst linking the drive towards renewable energy with the economic war on Russia.

"Climate and energy security go hand-in-hand," Sunak told the global community. "Putin's abhorrent war in Ukraine and rising energy prices across the world are not a reason to go slow on climate change. They are a reason to act faster.

"We can bequeath our children a greener planet and a more prosperous future... there really is room for hope."

But Putin wasn't there to hear him. The Russian leader didn't come. Nor did Chinese president Xi Jinping, India's Narendra Modi, and the leaders of Canada and Australia – although all sent high-ranking delegations to represent their countries at COP27.

In Sharm el Sheikh, China's Special Envoy for Cli-

mate Change Xie Zhenhua said that China has been actively creating a green and low-carbon atmosphere for years, encouraging the public to participate in carbon emissions reduction, and exploring to establish a pluralistic mechanism of social participation.

Under the principles of

openness and transparency, broad participation, consensus and party-driven, People's China will work with all parties to promote the success of COP27 and contribute its wisdom and strength to building a fair, reasonable and win-win global climate governance system, Xie said.

FUND

The November fighting fund has begun and with £541 in the bag the long road towards our £3,500 target begins. We need every penny and every pound you can spare to keep our electronic press going – especially now because we have just replaced our old press with a state-of-the-art new machine that we hope will serve us well in the years to come.

On the wages front rail and postal workers are continuing their industrial action and the nurses preparing to soon join them. We've got to be right behind them and all the others fighting for a living wage and an end to the austerity regime.

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INSIDE

**Williamson
bullying row**

...p2

**Britain is
broken!...p3**

THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Support the nurses!

NHS NURSES have voted to strike over pay for the first time in their union's 106-year history. The Royal College of Nurses (RCN) says it will take industrial action before Christmas following a ballot of its 300,000 strong members across the country. The Government offered an £1,400 pay rise – which after inflation, now around 12 per cent, would be a significant pay cut in real terms.

Real earnings amongst all private sector employees have fallen by 3.2 per cent over the last 10 years; but the average weekly pay for nurses has dropped by six per cent in real terms between 2011–2021. Many have been forced to use foodbanks to survive., others are simply jumping ship due to the soaring cost of living.

The nurses are campaigning for a five per cent above inflation catch-up rise that recognises the crucial role that they play in the health service by paying them a living wage.

RCN General Secretary Pat Cullen told her members this was a “once in a generation chance to improve your pay and combat staff shortages” that put patients at risk.

“I want to thank every member who took part in, or supported, this ballot. You can be very proud. The results are strong and clear,” she said.

“This is a defining moment in our history, and our fight will continue through strike action and beyond for as long as it takes to win justice for the nursing profession and our patients.

“Anger has become action – our members are saying enough is enough. The voice of nursing in the UK is strong and I will make sure it is heard. Our members will no longer tolerate a financial knife-edge at home and a raw deal at work.

“Ministers must look in the mirror and ask how long they will put nursing staff through this. While we plan our strike action, next week's budget is the UK government's opportunity to signal a new direction with serious investment. Across the country, politicians have the power to stop this now and at any point.

“This action will be as much for patients as it is for nurses. Standards are falling too low and we have strong public backing for our campaign to raise them. This winter, we are asking the public to show nursing staff you are with us.”

Support for the nurses is riding high in the opinion polls at the moment. We need to ensure that it becomes a massive solidarity movement in support of the just demands of the nurses and all the other workers who keep the NHS running.

So long Gavin Williamson

SO GAVIN WILLIAMSON is out of the Cabinet again following charges of bullying from fellow Tories that made for his inevitable departure. The man Keir Starmer calls a “pathetic bully” has fallen on his sword following charges of abusive behaviour from fellow Tories, including former premier Theresa May, which go back years. He lasted just under two years as defence minister before he was sacked by Mrs May for allegedly leaking confidential information to the media.

Williamson returned to high office under Boris Johnson and served as education secretary for just over two years before being dumped during the post-Covid reshuffle in September 2021. And he lasted just two weeks under Rishi Sunak, who says he now regrets appointing Williamson in the first place.

He now returns to the backbenches for the third time in his parliamentary career. No-one will miss him at the top table; there are plenty more queuing up to take his place.

Williamson in new bullying row

by Oleg Burunov

PRIME MINISTER Rishi Sunak is under fire for bringing Gavin Williamson back into the Cabinet despite the fact that the PM knew the former defence secretary was under investigation for allegedly bullying former chief whip Wendy Morton.

Now Williamson is facing more flak for allegedly telling one senior civil servant “slit your throat” when he was defence minister and on another occasion telling others they should “jump out of a window”, a British media outlet reported, citing an unnamed Ministry of Defence source.

Williamson, who was appointed cabinet office minister by PM Rishi Sunak last month, served as the defence secretary between 2017–2019.

The source told the outlet that the 46-year-old made the “slit your throat” remark in front of other civil servants during a Cabinet meeting. The outlet also quoted an unnamed Whitehall source as claiming that Williamson “deliberately demeaned and intimidated” them on a regular basis at the time.

Williamson has rejected bullying claims against him but he did not seem to deny that he used the specific words quoted in the media.

“I strongly reject this allegation and have enjoyed good working relationships with the many brilliant officials I have worked with across government. No specific allegations have ever been brought to my attention,” Williamson said in a statement.

This came after a female MP accused the former defence secretary of raising sensitive details about her private life in a bid to silence her in 2016, when she was campaigning on a difficult issue for the government. Williamson was chief whip at the time.

The accusations followed reports published late last week claiming that the cabinet office minister sent abusive and bullying messages to former Chief Whip Wendy Morton, in which he purportedly complained that he had not been invited to Queen Elizabeth's funeral in Sep-

tember for political reasons. The texts pertain to the period when Williamson was a backbencher.

In one message, he allegedly told Ms Morton that it was “very poor and sends a very clear message” that members of the Privy Council, including himself, who were not “favoured” by then-Prime Minister Liz Truss, were deliberately excluded from the list of those due to attend the Queen's funeral.

After Morton insisted that it was “not the case”, Williamson ostensibly noted that it looked “very shit”. In another message, he purportedly warned: “Well let's see how many more times you fuck us all over. There is a price for everything.”

The UK news outlet also reported that then-Tory chairman Jake Berry informed Sunak the day before he entered No 10 in October that Wendy Morton had submitted a formal complaint to the Conservative party about Williamson's conduct.

On Monday, the PM defied calls to sack Sir Gavin even though he admitted that the former defence secretary's messages to Ms Morton were inadmissible.

Sunak made it clear that he would not be “passing judgment” until after an “independent complaints investigation”, which is thought to be the internal investigation by the Conservative Party.

“I want to see the results of that, obviously, but I've been very clear that language is not right, it's not acceptable. And that's why I welcome the fact

that Gavin Williamson has expressed regret about that and now wait to see what the investigation says. There's an independent complaints process that's being conducted at the moment. It would be right to let that process conclude before making any decisions about the future,” he said.

Liberal Democrat deputy leader Daisy Cooper has, meanwhile, accused Sunak of ignoring Ms Morton's complaint, adding that Williamson should be fired.

Daisy Cooper was echoed by Labour deputy leader Angela Rayner, who pointed out that the PM's “pledge to restore integrity, professionalism, and accountability has been exposed as nothing more than hollow words”. According to Rayner, “far from stopping the rot in Downing Street, he's letting it fester”.

Sunak, who earlier vowed that his government would be characterised by “integrity, professionalism and accountability at every level,” officially succeeded Liz Truss as prime minister on 25th October.

Williamson resigned as defence minister in 2019 after the leaking of confidential information from the National Security Council. He was appointed education secretary by then PM Boris Johnson, but was fired from the government again in 2021 due to controversy regarding the grading of exams during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Sputnik

Williamson has now resigned under pressure.



• Gavin Williamson, looking a bit sh** himself.

Workers' Notes

Britain is broken!

by *New Worker* correspondent

NCPLEADER Andy Brooks and other London comrades joined thousands of demonstrators demanding an end to austerity in Trafalgar Square on Saturday.

Called by the People's Assembly and supported by a number of trade unions, the protest began with a march through central London that ended in a rally addressed by speakers including former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn and RMT general secretary Mick Lynch.

Corbyn said the government would be forced to listen to protesters calling for improved pay and workers' rights: "The government is of course eventually forced to listen, as are the rail companies, therefore they have reopened negotiations with the RMT. The people out here are very determined. They're not going to see people with disabilities discriminated against, they're not going to see growing impoverishment in our society."

NHS workers gear up

by *New Worker* correspondent

UP AND DOWN the country health service workers are preparing to strike over pay.

Members of the Royal College of Midwives in England and Wales are balloting for industrial action whilst their colleagues north of the border have already voted in favour of walk-outs.

Others may soon join the fray.

The 63,000-strong Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP) are balloting for industrial action in England and Wales, with those in



• The *New Worker* in Trafalgar Square.

Northern Ireland and Scotland having already done so. Physiotherapists are being urged by the union leadership to vote Yes to action. Mrs Alex MacKenzie, CSP chair of council, warned: "If the government do not come back with decent offers in line with inflation and that benefits all, then more physiotherapy staff will be forced to leave. We currently have a workforce crisis on our hands. If more physios leave due to such a low pay rise this will ultimately impact on patient care."

The CSP's Northern Ireland members earlier voted in favour of industrial action if they do not receive at least the same pay award as those in England and Wales, but the turnout was too low to trigger action.

first time

Scottish NHS physiotherapy staff voted last month for industrial action, the first time in history they had done so. On a 63 per cent turnout, 79 per cent were in favour of strike action and 90 per cent in favour of other industrial action short of a strike. Strike action could therefore take place anytime in the next six months.

Shortly before the close of the ballot the SNP Government made a slightly improved offer that was aimed at splitting unions. This made slight improvements for lower-paid staff but was still far below inflation.

The response of the leadership was not terribly energetic,

they want further consultation with members and with other NHS unions. Alex MacKenzie said: "It's incredible that instead of responding to those pressures with a constructive offer, the Scottish government came out last week with a new offer that not only still falls far short of our claim but also leaves some staff significantly worse off than under the original offer."

also on the march

Three mega-unions, Unison, Unite and the GMB, are also on the march. Unite has about 100,000 members in the NHS, including ambulance service workers, audiologists, blood testers, counsellors and psychotherapists, and optometrists, along with others such as building maintenance workers, electricians, administration and ICT geeks.

Pay is top of the list. NHS salaries have slumped in real terms as a result of high inflation and over a decade of low pay rises. But it's not just that. Front-line NHS workers face increasing levels of abuse from patients frustrated at the chronic deterioration in the service.

Colenzo Jarrett-Thorpe, Unite's National Officer for Health, warned that: "The strike wave across the NHS is widening because our members have had enough. They are watching the NHS that they have given their lives to fall apart in front of their eyes because of 12 years of Tory cuts. And the truth is that they cannot afford to do the job

anymore, yet this government wants to cut their pay further.

"The government is destroying our most precious asset. If our members walk out on strike, it will be the toughest thing they ever do but they have to protect our NHS."

In Scotland, the SNP government is offering a new flat-rate offer for NHS Scotland staff that is even less than a previously rejected five per cent offer for many workers. This has been rejected by 89 per cent.

James O'Connell, a Unite industrial officer, said: "The principle of a flat rate increase is right and fair to address imbalances in pay across grading structures. However, ultimately this new offer would still not see experienced NHS workers with any real improvements in their pay.

"Unite will begin balloting members this week, but NHS Scotland should be under no illusion that we will walk away from anything less than a decent pay rise across the board for all workers in the NHS."

take heart

Health workers can take heart, however, from the case of 29 outsourced linen and laundry at Barts Hospital in London who have won a 17 per cent increase. Whilst they will be transferred from Synergy to the NHS in May, they have already just secured NHS terms and conditions.

Tabusam Ahmed, regional officer at Unite, added: "Unite is successfully building on the

earlier victory to bring 1,800 workers who were employed by Serco into NHS employment. The union has now struck another blow against the race to the bottom in the NHS."

Ambulance workers are another group of NHS employees on the frontline. Those in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire and Oxfordshire are angry at a four per cent rise imposed in September that gave them a measly extra £100 per month. Pitiful when one thinks that it means much less than an extra pound per hour. They want more.

Unite general secretary Sharon Graham made the point that applies to many other workers when she said: "Over more than a decade, NHS workers' wages have been eroded, even as workloads became increasingly unmanageable. Now with soaring living costs, the situation is critical. The impact of this real-terms pay cut will result in the flood of overworked and underpaid workers leaving the NHS becoming a tsunami. The government must put forward a proper pay rise or else the NHS will go from being on its knees to being on life support."

anger

More particularly, Unite regional officer Jesika Parmer added that: "The anger amongst our South Central Ambulance Service members at rapidly diminishing living standards, increasingly threadbare services and ever more unsustainable workloads, is such that we are balloting for strike action. The government must put forward a better pay deal and one that does not come out of existing, soon to be horrifically squeezed, budgets."

The other union with many ambulance workers is also on the same path. It is balloting its 15,000 ambulance members in 11 English and Welsh trusts in the course of this month and is planning similar action in other trusts.

Rachel Harrison, a GMB National Officer, said of the imposed four per cent: "Ambulance workers have just had enough. They've not been on strike in decades, but they are at the end of what they can take."

In addition to low pay, she noted that: "Vacancies are at

continued on page 4...

...continued from page 3

record highs and we have the worst A&E delays ever – and it's not even the winter flu season yet.

“But this is about more than pay and conditions. Cuts and shortages mean GMB members feel they are unable to deliver safe standards of patient care.”

Hopefully they will follow the road of their Scottish colleagues who voted 89 per cent for action, as reported last week.

These stresses and strains were highlighted in a recent *ITV News* report into ambulance waiting times.

Glenn Carrington, a senior paramedic and Unison activist at the East of England Ambulance Service (EEAS), was quoted as saying: “We’re spending so much time sat outside the hospital. The record so far is 10 and a half hours. Literally 10 and a half hours with our patient in the back of our vehicle, unable to move into the hospital.”

When *ITV* health editor Emily Morgan asked a blindingly obvious question: “Did that patient deteriorate?” Mr Carrington replied by saying: “They always deteriorate. We’ve had a few people die in the back of our ambulances. And the guilt you feel, the anger, the frustration. I can’t put it into words, it’s heart-breaking.”

At present, one in ten ambulances wait more than an hour to admit patients to hospital, whilst in 2019 it was only one in 50.

That is, if you are allowed to get an ambulance. The same report described how West Midlands Ambulance Service Unison staff chair and call supervisor Reena Farrington said how she often leaves work for the day, only to find the same patients waiting the next morning when she comes back to work: “That’s if they make it through the night.”

National officer Alan Lofthouse said: “Because there’s no real response from government to solve the problem, it feels like the individual workers are taking that on.

“We hear of people who go to work who have to sit in their car in tears, or people in control centres who take calls and have to go and cry in the toilet because they feel so much pressure themselves.”

Off the rails and on the road

by *New Worker* correspondent

MAYBE the Sunak government, which pulls the strings of the rail companies on pay, is having second thoughts following the wave of solid strikes that have paralysed the entire network in recent weeks. RMT



thinks so. They suspended strike action this week having secured unconditional talks with Network Rail and a promise of an offer from train operating companies who hitherto have made no such offer.

Network Rail had earlier declared consultations closed. They were intent on imposing changes without agreement with RMT. Now they’ve now stepped back from this stance and will continue discussions assuming “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed”.

Mick Lynch, the RMT general secretary, said: “The threat of strike action and our strongly supported industrial campaign has made the rail

employers see sense. We have always wanted to secure a negotiated settlement and that is what we will continue to push for in this next phase of intensive talks.”

He also warned that: “Our re-ballot remains live and if we have to take strike action during the next six months to secure a deal, we will.” Indeed, the union is continuing to its re-ballot of members to secure a fresh mandate for action with the result due on Tuesday.

Now the union is waiting for a realistic response from London Underground (LUL). RMT has made it clear that the separate action on the London Tube network will continue. And it did, with a walk-out last week when Transport for London (TfL), which controls LUL, refused suspend the implementation of 600 station job cuts until the end of this year and make a clear statement that LUL would not agree to detrimental attacks on tube workers’ pensions arising over the current pension review that they are conducting with the government.

Mick Lynch said: “TfL have missed a golden opportunity to make progress in these negotiations and avoid strike action on Thursday. Our members are resolute in their determination to see a just settlement to this jobs and pensions dispute.”

He warned that his members “will continue their industrial campaign for as long as it takes”, and that: “TfL need to start making compromises and work with the union

to reach a deal that works for staff and avoids further disruption to the lives of passengers.”

Also in the transport industry, but on the roads, Unite has hailed an improved pay offer for about 80 HGV drivers employed by Wincanton to deliver food to Asda’s regional distribution centres. In the course of balloting for a much lower offer, Wincanton suddenly came up with a much-improved deal of a 9.5 per cent increase, giving a basic pay rate of £14.97 per hour.

Unite regional officer Kenny Rowe said: “The pay deal was a significant victory for our members on the Wincanton ASDA contract, Unite will be looking to build on this pay deal in future negotiations.”

A similar dispute involving Wincanton, this time involving north of England branches of rival supermarket Morrisons, is underway where drivers have rejected a 6.5 per cent pay offer. Bosses have also refused to discuss issues raised by workers including sickness, pensions and compassionate leave.

Unite regional officer Chris Rawlinson said: “Wincanton’s intransigence means there is a very real chance of empty Morrisons shelves through Christmas and the New Year. Wincanton PLC is a hugely wealthy company, and they have had a very good year. With inflation running at 12.6 per cent the company needs to get serious about putting a significantly better pay deal on the table.”

20 years ago this week in the New Worker

THE QUEEN’S speech delivered on Wednesday contained much to alarm ordinary people, to erode civil liberties and encompass our lives with a host of new petty rules and regulations, whilst failing to deliver much needed legal reforms to bring dangerous employers to book.

Most of the speech concerned the criminal justice system and dealing with “anti-social behaviour”.

To a certain extent this is playing to the tabloid gallery. Over the last couple of years there has been a deterioration in the quality of life for most working-class people and that includes problems arising from increased petty

crime, vandalism, graffiti, public drunkenness, hooliganism and so on.

There are faults in the criminal justice system that fail the victims of crime.

People are rightly concerned about this, but the tabloid papers have sensationalised these issues.

The Government’s answer, as spelled out in the Queen’s speech, appears to address these issues with Bills that will introduce many more offences and give powers to bodies such as local authorities to impose instant fines.

Police will also have a lot more powers to impose instant fines for anti-social behaviour.

Prime Minister Tony Blair calls this creating a “victim justice system”.

These measures will not deal with the problems, which are deep and complex and can only be solved with a lot of time and money – but they make it seem like the Government is doing

something.

Children commit a lot of the anti-social behaviour. Giving police or other authorities the powers to impose instant £50 fines will have no effect.

What would prevent this sort of crime is somewhere for children to play constructively, facilities for sports and hobbies – affordable and freely available.

Instead, over the last two decades we have seen a steady erosion of playing fields, youth clubs, after-school clubs and activities.

The Government is fast to jump on the small crimes of children but stays silent on the greater crime of the theft of their playgrounds and playing fields.

Local authority officers will not be happy at being conscripted into the ranks of police on the cheap and having to implement the new laws and restrictions.

The triumph of the City

by Prabhat Patnaik

THE TRIUMPH of the City of London, the ‘Square Mile’ which houses the citadel of British finance, is complete. Not only did it get rid of one British prime minister, whom it distrusted, in the space of just 44 days, but even got a new one of its choice installed forthwith. Rishi Sunak is being called many things: the first British Asian prime minister, the first Hindu prime minister, and so on.

These facts about him however are inconsequential; notwithstanding the hullabaloo in India over his appointment, these facts are mere trivia. What is central is that he is the City’s choice. A former employee of Goldman Sachs, a former Hedge Fund manager, he is from the world of finance; for the City he is indubitably “one of us”.

The Conservative Party, through its mysterious ways of working, provides the perfect instrument for the City to dictate British politics. When Margaret Thatcher was made to resign against her wishes as prime minister, at the behest of the City, she had famously lamented: “I never lost a general election; I never lost a confidence vote in the House of Commons; I never lost majority support within the Conservative Party; and yet I am out of office.”

Liz Truss could express a similar sentiment. In fact, one day she firmly declared “I am a fighter, not a quitter”, and the very next day she was out of office through some mysterious process. Within the Conservative Party, a dim, subterranean body called the 1922 Committee, has a decisive voice in the election and continuation in office of a leader. The City operates not only through the ministers and their staff who have City connections or post-retirement ambitions for City jobs, but also through backbenchers who make their presence felt through the 1922 Committee. Since the media are controlled by the financial oligarchy belonging to the City and can be relied upon to shape public opinion, there is in effect an invisible City-dictated polit-



• City workers on the way to the office.

ical process, parallel to and dominant over the visible formal popular political process, which it actually moulds.

The reason why this City-dictated process chose Rishi Sunak over Liz Truss has to do not just with his background, of being an investment banker, Hedge Fund manager and multi-millionaire, but above all with his agenda. Whereas Liz Truss

offered the capitalists tax-cuts, to be financed through a fiscal deficit, Rishi Sunak will offer tax-cuts (or other similar concessions) but match them with government expenditure cuts elsewhere (or taxes on workers though that is not a feasible option at the moment), keeping the fiscal deficit under control. But, one may ask, why should the City prefer tax cuts with a fiscal

deficit to tax-cuts without a fiscal deficit?

The immediate, and by no means invalid, answer to this question would be that finance capital has always been opposed to fiscal deficits, which after all is why in the era of financial globalisation most countries of the world, with the exception of the USA which enjoys a unique status, have legislations limiting the

share of fiscal deficit to the gross domestic product; and this opposition becomes particularly strong in a situation of inflation as Britain is experiencing at present. Put differently, increasing the fiscal deficit in a period of inflation increases aggregate demand and hence employment, which in capitalist conditions exacerbates inflation by strengthening workers’ resistance; this is why finance capital, worried about the decline in the real value of financial assets, is particularly strongly opposed to a fiscal deficit in inflationary times. But what of the fact that increasing the fiscal deficit is a pre-eminent means of enlarging post-tax profits? Shouldn’t that counteract this opposition?

We have already seen that, ignoring for simplicity foreign transactions and workers’ savings, post-tax profits in a capitalist economy must equal the sum of capitalists’ consumption, their investment, and the fiscal deficit. Since investment and capitalists’ consumption do not immediately respond to current profits (and can therefore be taken as given magnitudes in any particular period), post-tax profits will not increase in the period in question, no matter how large the tax concessions that are given to capitalists, unless these concessions are financed through a larger fiscal deficit. In other words, even if massive tax concessions are given to capitalists, if these tax concessions are matched by public expenditure cuts, there will be no increase in post-tax profits.

This proposition however, holds for total profits; the distribution of post-tax profits amongst capitalists can change depending on who is being given these tax concessions and whose pre-tax profits are shrinking because of the public expenditure cuts. Since typically the tax concessions are given to the big capitalists (it is the top tax-brackets where the rates are lowered), whilst public expenditure cuts lower the level of activity and hence profits more or less across the spectrum, the net effect of both these measures,



• Young City bankers celebrate in the good times.

continued on page 6...



...continued from page 5

• Armed City police protect the Mayors Parade.

if they together leave the fiscal deficit unchanged, is to shift the distribution of a given amount of total profits from the small to big capitalists. Tax concessions in short entail invariably a rise in the magnitude of profits of big capitalists irrespective of whether they are financed by public expenditure cuts or by a fiscal deficit (the rise of course is larger in the latter case).

There are therefore at least three distinct reasons why finance capital prefers a programme of tax concessions for capitalists financed by public expenditure cuts elsewhere, to one financed by a fiscal deficit.

First, unemployment necessarily increases in the former case, whilst it would fall in the latter case. This is because a public expenditure cut of £100 reduces aggregate demand immediately by £100, whilst tax-cuts for capitalists may raise aggregate demand by a much smaller amount, if at all, as the benefits of such cuts will add to savings. (In fact, if both capitalists' consumption and investment are given for the period in question then there is a zero increase in aggregate demand because of such tax-cuts.) There is therefore a net reduction in aggregate demand and hence output and employment. And since a capitalist economy invariably tackles inflation only by creating greater

unemployment, finance capital prefers tax concessions to capitalists financed by public expenditure cuts especially in inflationary times.

Second, tax concessions to capitalists, even when financed by public expenditure cuts, and hence even when leaving total post-tax profits unchanged, raise, as we have seen, the post-tax profits of the big capitalists or the financial oligarchy.

attracting

Third, both these considerations, viz larger unemployment and larger post-tax profits of the financial oligarchy, have the effect of attracting finance from other parts of the world, so that the total financial business occurring within the country increases.

Rishi Sunak of course has not yet unveiled his total policy package. He is certainly committed to fiscal rectitude, but how much tax concessions he is going to make is not yet clear; but he is bound to make some concessions to capitalists, for the mythology of the system holds that its growth depends upon such concessions. The Sunak programme therefore is likely to involve gains for the financial oligarchy together with greater unemployment, both of which are to the liking of the City. Sunak will be even worse for the British working class than Liz Truss; what

makes him attractive for the City is precisely what makes him even worse for the working class.

It may be thought that since Sunak's would be an anti-inflationary agenda, and since inflation hurts the working class, one could not call his agenda an anti-working class one. But this misses the point that his agenda is for controlling inflation at the expense of the working class. A price inflation can be controlled through a wage deflation; the workers suffer in either case, – but controlling inflation in this manner has the advantage from the point of view of finance of preventing any erosion of the real value of financial assets.

A cut in public expenditure will not only cause unemployment as we have been emphasising, it will cause havoc with the state of public services in Britain and substantially roll back the gains of the welfare state measures introduced in the post-war years. Public education and public healthcare systems in Britain are already reeling under the impact of inadequate funding. Any further cuts will push them into a state of terminal decline. But will the British working class allow the Sunak government to pursue such an agenda? *People's Democracy (India)*

New victory for Cuba at the UN

by María Josefina Arce

FOR THE 30th time, the UN General Assembly condemned the criminal economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed against Cuba, which threatens the human rights of an entire people and has caused losses to the country in 60 years amounting to more than 154 BILLION dollars.

At the United Nations headquarters in New York, a historic day was once again experienced when 185 countries voted in favour of the draft resolution presented by Cuba on the need to put an end to the genocidal siege, an act of war in times of peace.

In his speech, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez denounced that in 2019 the government of

then President Donald Trump escalated the economic siege to a more cruel and inhuman dimension.

The new Cuban victory once again evidenced the isolation of the USA, supported as is now traditional by its unconditional partner, Israel, whilst Ukraine and Brazil abstained.

Before the vote, the voices of numerous nations were heard on both days against a policy that has an impact on the daily life of every Cuban family, on every sector of the economy and impedes the country's progress.

Organisations such as CELAC, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Caribbean Community and the Association of South-east Asian Nations,

amongst others, also spoke out against the blockade.

All continents repudiated the unilateral measure, which was intensified even during the COVID 19 global health emergency and which the current US administration is maintaining, despite President Joe Biden's campaign promises to review this failed policy.

In this regard, the head of Cuban diplomacy pointed out that in just seven months, from August 2021 to February 2022, it caused losses of almost four BILLION dollars.

A blockade that is also maintained despite the fact that a majority of Americans and the Cuban community in the USA are in favour of its lifting and of the normalisation of bilateral relations, which can contribute so much to the benefit of the two peoples.

The speakers also repudiated the extra-territorial nature of this hostile policy, which hinders commercial ties with other nations and discourages foreign investment in Cuban territory.

In contrast to Washington's position, they highlighted



• A caravan marching for Cuba in the US.

Cuba's vocation of solidarity, which for decades has provided assistance in various spheres, mainly in health and education, to numerous peoples of the world, and which was once again demonstrated during the COVID 19 pandemic, with the dispatch of 57 medical brigades to 40 states.

They also expressed their opposition to the inclusion of Cuba in the unilateral US list of nations it considers to be sponsors of terrorism.

The condemnation at the UN was preceded by numerous demonstrations of support for Cuba around the world. The most recent one took place last weekend in New York, led by members of more than a hundred organisations that defend the right of the Cuban people to live without a blockade.

It has been a year of intense solidarity with Cuba. At the end of each month, caravans were held in various cities around the world, at the same time many other activities were carried out to sensitise the world to the damage caused by the blockade, both economic and human.

Since 1992, the world has said enough to the economic, commercial and financial siege, which constitutes a violation of international law and which, due to its purpose of starving the Cuban people and its political, legal and administrative scaffolding, qualifies as an act of genocide.

Radio Havana Cuba

by Joseph Tafra

THE AUSTRALIAN music scene from the 1970s to the early '90s was wildly different than today. Rock bands at most levels of success could play three or four nights a week at big pubs – sometimes called 'beer barns' – throughout urban, suburban and regional Australia, making a modest living simply through playing gigs.

Punters throughout Australia could wander down to the local and be treated to sweaty, rowdy rock'n'roll from the likes of The Church, AC/DC, Cold Chisel, Painters and Dockers, Goanna, Midnight Oil, and a host of lesser known but hard-working rock bands. These were the glory days of pub rock.

It wasn't a glamorous life for most of the bands and the pub rock scene had its issues – big agencies run by a handful of wealthy promoters had a stranglehold on who was in or out, and if you were a woman or not traditionally masculine enough, you were pretty much out by default. But it was a scene that supported working musicians playing for working people, drawn along by the love of the crowd and the hope of winning a record deal. During this pub rock heyday, there was a vibrant music scene by and for working class people in Australia.

By the mid-'90s, however, all that had changed. These days musos are lucky to get one paid gig per week and it'll probably be a door deal, a miniscule cut of bar takings, or a tiny amount that barely covers the fuel it took to get there. The scene is more diverse now and that's good, but the idea that bands playing original music could make a steady living seems like a pipe dream today.

Likewise, punters are worse served. There are still great gigs going on, especially in Melbourne, but music venues are much more centralised. People jam into tiny, overpriced city bars rather than the 'beer barns' of the '80s. In the suburbs,

Australia: how capitalism killed pub rock

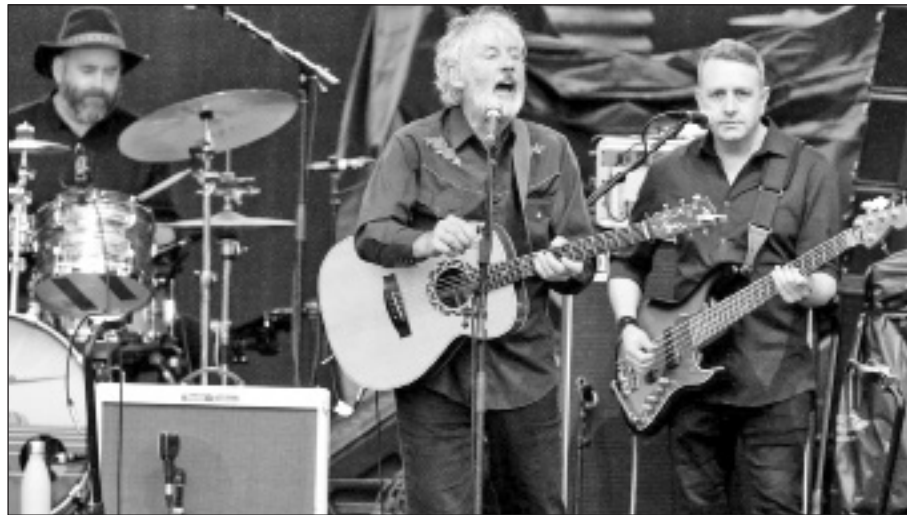
you'd be lucky to hear a bottom-shelf covers band at your local. Today most suburban pubs are filled with the endless dings of soul-sucking fruit machines where once the air was alive with music.

So, what happened – how did pub rock die? The main culprits were increased enforcement of drink driving laws, local councils boosting

ple in and get their money. Poker machines were a profitable solution and sealed the fate of the old pub rock scene.

Pokies had been in Australia since 1900 but they were only really played in casinos or specific clubs in New South Wales. Starting in the '90s pokies regulation started to loosen. By 2000, poker machines could be played

theft; the pokies first robbed working-class areas of a lively music scene, then simply robbed them. Poker machines ended up concentrated exactly where the pub rock scene had been – in working-class neighbourhoods where daily money struggles make the possibility of a jackpot very tempting, and gambling addiction a much bigger



regulations on pubs and clubs, and the rise of the 'pokies'.

Random breath tests heavily targeted working-class establishments perceived as rowdy and lawless. This helped with road casualties of course, but there's no denying it also carved a big dent in attendance at gigs where sinking some beers was as important as the music itself.

regulations

Increased regulations around noise pollution had an even bigger impact. Suburban and inner-city venues alike were suddenly faced with the prospect of having to fork out huge sums of money to soundproof their venues or else face fines. Many decided it wasn't worth the cost and looked for other ways to get peo-

ple outside casinos in every state and territory, and today Australia has 21 per cent of the world's high-intensity poker machines, allowing up to \$100 to be bet on each push of the button.

Once installed, poker machines print money for both venue owners and state governments. Profit rates over \$100,000 per machine are not uncommon. Why go through all the trouble of booking, advertising and paying for live entertainment when something so low-cost and lucrative was available?

It was too good for most to ignore. Today, the very room where Bon Scott made his last live appearance in Australia is packed wall-to-wall with pokies, and so are almost all the rooms where pub rock once thrived.

This was a double

problem. Lower-income areas with fewer college-educated residents have far more pokies and far greater losses per person.

losses

For example, in the Sydney suburb of Fairfield with an average weekly income of \$1,222 where 11 per cent of the people have a degree, there are five poker machines per household and an average household pokies loss of \$5,668 per year. In wealthy Ku-ring-gai, where weekly income is \$2,640 per week and 48 per cent have a degree, the picture is very different – less than one poker machine per household and average household losses of just \$23 per year.

This pattern repeats everywhere pokies are widespread. Considering

profits from pokies are shared between state governments and big businesses, the pokies are funnelling hard-earned money from the poor and powerless to the wealthy and powerful.

So, how would things be different under socialism? For one thing, the issues that doomed pub rock – and related issues that make it almost impossible to be a working musician today – mostly related to capitalist relations.

The social issue of balancing cultural events against noise complaints was pushed onto private business owners instead of being worked through collectively. Private business owners, caged by the profit motive, took the path that kept them in the black financially.

Likewise, despite the massive and obvious harms of pokies, private interests successfully pushed for their de-regulation. In the same way, venues that still host live music today will only do so if it doesn't affect their often-thin profit margins. So unpaid and low-paid gigs are the norm.

Eliminating capitalist social relations would allow fuller support for the arts. For dedicated musicians, regular pay according to work done. For hobbyists or developing artists, economic planning would yield much more free time to balance their creative and working lives. Not to mention free, well-resourced education for all, allowing far more people to develop their musical skills than under the restrictive conditions of capitalist education.

All of this will help realise Marx's goal – paraphrased a little – of a "communist society [in which] society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me ... to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, rock'n'roll after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or rocker".

Militant Monthly (Australia)

• The rock band Goanna.

LETTERS

Dear Comrades

Capitalism is always in crisis the real nature and cause of which is shrouded in impenetrable mysticism. Capitalist and social democratic ideology masks reality to ensure that the population is kept unaware of the profound nature and intensity of that crisis. They talk of an “energy crisis”, a “cost-of-living crisis” or an “inflationary crisis”. These phenomenon are real but they are all secondary resultant problems that stem from the main cause: the general crisis of capitalism itself.

It is important for the working class not to fall for clever propaganda intended to encourage the acceptance or elevation of one symptom by aggravating another. This approach has the result that workers suffer whilst profits are protected and the fundamental ills of capitalism remain unexposed. It is useless to tinker with this or that or simply to rearrange the deckchairs. Our ship requires a crew committed to Marxism and a course set towards reaching proper socialist objectives.

Permanent crisis is inherent within advanced capitalism and gives rise to irreconcilable problems. It stems from the basic contradictions between the social nature of production and the private capitalist forms of appropriation of products. In practice this means that workers are stripped of their surplus value in an arena of unplanned economic chaos dominated by boom and bust. As the general crisis develops, it not only affects individuals and companies

but also nations and even regional groupings such as the European Union, which is starting to fail and fall apart. So, what is to be done?

With its blind commitment to social democratic values, the Labour Party lacks the vision or any real understanding of the real problems. It remains unable and unwilling to act decisively as it becomes ever closer to the establishment. Whilst it is important to grit our teeth and vote Labour to remove the main bourgeois party of incompetent self-seekers, this should only be the first step. The New Communist Party calls for a number of important actions:

- We must hold our MPs accountable to their electors and not to represent some well-funded lobby group.
- Useless austerity that clobbers the poor should be abandoned.
- Proper pay rises are needed to restore buying power and especially for the brave nurses and all NHS staff.
- Slashing military spending and promoting peace, which means leaving NATO.
- Defending our precious NHS.
- Taking all utilities and transport into full public ownership.
- Reversal of all the cuts that have been made to public spending.

It is important to campaign to highlight the challenges and put forward the Communist alternative. Enough is enough. We are different. We are not the Labour Party. We are the New Communist Party.

**John Maryon
Suffolk**

Dear friends and comrades!

The 7th of November is the festival of the Great October Socialist Revolution. This is truly a great day in human history. The day when the working class gave battle to capitalism and won, eventually establishing the USSR for the whole world, throwing off the shackles of ignorance and the limitations of development.

The socialist revolution gave humanity a very powerful impetus to development and showed a real alternative to the destructive and dangerous capitalism for the planet. Thanks to the USSR, such theses as the following were implemented in practice:

- Creative development of personality;
- Equality;
- Social Justice.

The leadership of the Ukrainian socialist party ‘Derzhava’, banned by Zelensky, congratulates all supporters of socialism on the holiday!

We wish to all of you the strength and patience in implementing the ideas of creative development of humanity!

We stand in line until victory!

Ukraine will be free from the Nazi government! Fascism will be defeated, socialism will win!

**Dmytry Vasilets
Derzhava**

Dear Comrades!

Communists around the world have a very important duty in preserving the concepts and values of the October revolution. Especially in the dissemination of everything that the world’s first socialist state achieved.

Continue with this noble tradition and do not fall into the opportunism or demonisation of communism implanted in many countries, which among other issues seek to equate Nazism and communism.

This day is certainly full of symbolism and pride for all the communists in the world.

Without a doubt, every year that passes, the success of socialism becomes

more necessary in order to exist even as a human species.

We hope and wish great achievements for your party, as well as socialist progress for your entire country. We look forward to creating links between our communist parties.

Long live the 105 years of the Great October Revolution!

**Albert Santin
Secretary General
Communist Party
of the Catalan
Committees**

Dear Comrades!

Workers, peasants, teachers and doctors, representatives of the scientific and creative people’s intelligentsia, the self-employed, employees and military personnel, all sympathetic to the cause of socialism!

We cordially congratulate you on the next, 105th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution! The Republic of Belarus is one of the few countries where the day of the October Revolution has been preserved as a public and state holiday. The people remember all the great blessings that this revolution brought them.

And although, as a result of apostasy from the ideas and ideals of the Great October and the direct betrayal of scientific communism in the leading socialist country, the USSR, socialism was thrown far back by home-grown and foreign capital, and at the stage of the successful escalation of the October Revolution into a world socialist revolution and the formation of an entire world socialist system, the transition of mankind from capitalism to socialism continues, as does the widespread self-sacrificing struggle of the working people and their organisations for its ultimate success.

Today, the path to the victory of world socialism lies through the victory over the false ‘democratic’ neo-fascism of the alliance of the Anglo-Saxon and European world financial oligarchies and

the political elites of their home countries – the USA, Great Britain, the European Union, the alliance that followed the Nazi fascism of German imperialism to universal and undivided world domination with the continuation of inhuman fascist methods of boundless universal deception and genocide and threatening to mankind by annihilation as a result of the outbreak of the Third World War with the real danger of the use of weapons of mass destruction.

This expansionist alliance can be defeated only by united actions of the working people of the whole world and their organisations, all socialist and other peace-loving states, all fighters for peace and socialism, for genuine democracy and national liberation, for a healthy ecology and humanistic morality, united in a broad anti-fascist, anti-imperialist front, that is, the front of all peoples and states that are infringed upon, suppressed and destroyed by the fascist oligarchy.

Only under this condition will nuclear weapons remain in the arsenals without use and will be destroyed; the hybrid aggression against the Belarusian people and its republic and its escalation into the final, hot phase will be completely disrupted; the bloody rampant US-Bandera junta in Ukraine and military clashes on the territory of the USSR, designed to destroy the friendship of Soviet people of different nationalities and thus prevent the revival of the common state of the Soviet people – the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics – will be completely disrupted; the blockade of Cuba and the DPRK has been lifted and the danger of a new imperialist attack against them has been eliminated; the peaceful realisation of a united China; the return to Serbia of its ancestral territory, Kosovo; the just cause of the Palestinian people and the cause of the independence of the dependent developing peoples of Latin America, Asia and Africa have been ensured.

On the upcoming 100th anniversary of the USSR on 30th December 2022, it should be recalled that the national and international duty of the Soviet people, including its integral part – the people of the Republic of Belarus, to return what was taken away – to revive the USSR, which was at the forefront of the struggle against imperialism, stood

Diary

SAT 12 NOV

Palestine Solidarity Campaign: Trade Union Solidarity with Palestinian Workers. Conference. 9:45-17:15, London. Details TBA.

SAT 12 NOV

Free Julian Assange Campaign: Protests against his extradition to the USA: 12:0-14:00 HMP Belmarsh, Western Way London, SE28 and 16:00-18:00 Eros statue, Piccadilly Circus, London SW1

SAT 12 NOV

Keep NHS Public: SOS NHS Conference 10:00-17:00, hybrid. 50-52 Camden Square, London, NW1 1XB. Register on KNHSP website.

SAT 12 NOV

Supporters of the Communist Front (Italy) in the UK: Remember the Soviet sacrifice in the anti-fascist war 13:30, Soviet War Memorial, Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, Lambeth Road SE1 6HZ (Imperial War Museum)

TUES 15 NOV

Society for Cooperation in Russian and Soviet Studies: Geoffrey Roberts on Stalin’s Library. 19:00, SCRSS, 320 Brixton Road, London, SW9 6AB

THUR 16 NOV

Marx Memorial Library: Science as Health. Online seminar 19:00. Book on MML website.

FRI 18 NOV

Cuba Solidarity Campaign: Soy Cuba (I am Cuba) 1964 Soviet-Cuban film 19:00.

Ruskin House, 23 Coombe Road, Croydon, CR0 1BD £5.80

SAT 19 NOV

Merseyside Marxist Book Fair: 11:30-16:30, The Casa, Hope Street, Liverpool L1 9BP

SAT 19 NOV

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: Stop US nukes coming to Lakenheath. Demonstration 13:00, RAF Lakenheath, Brandon Road, Lakenheath IP27. See CND website for details of coach from London.

MON 21 NOV

Barry Amiel & Norman Melburn Trust: Vijay Prashad on Viewing decolonisation through a Marxist lens. 19:00. Hybrid meeting at Marx Memorial Library 37a Clerkenwell Green, Lon-

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at the head of social and political progress and was the guarantor of peace, as it is necessary for the Soviet people and all humanity.

Long live the Great October and its continuation into the world socialist revolution, which brings:

- Salvation to humanity from destruction in the nuclear apocalypse and artificial pandemics;

- Freedom without blockades and sabotage, globalisation as a progressive process of comprehensive unity of humanity in solving all its problems;

- Entry into a new, communist era – with the triumph of reason, without exploitation and wars, without poverty and lawlessness, with space for accelerated development on the basis of collective creativity with the unhindered use of scientific and technological achievements!

Good luck to all on this noble fateful path to ensure the vital interests of all the peoples of the world!

Belarusian Republican Organisation of the CPSU (BRO CPSU). Republican Public Association 'For the Union and the Communist Party of the Union' (RPO SKPS) Minsk.

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Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

THE GREAT and the good are in Egypt this week for the UN's COP27 climate change conference at the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh. Joe Biden and Rishi Sunak were there along with more than 120 other global leaders to discuss the next steps in curbing climate change. Greta Thunberg, the eco-warrior who rarely shuns the lime-light, says this is just "greenwashing" and she's boycotting the jamboree. But our First Lady, Nicola Sturgeon, isn't.

This has led to opposition cries of "rank hypocrisy" following cuts to the Scottish energy efficiency budget and vocal demands to know how much her visit is going to cost the Scottish tax-payer.

fringe

Although Scotland is still part of the UK and has no official status at this UN conference it was the host of last year's conference in Glasgow. And whilst the First Minister will be confined to the fringe of the two-week conference, she's going to use the opportunity to raise the Scottish banner in the world arena.

Sturgeon will meet representatives from the Third World to hear their experiences of the climate crisis and what they want to be delivered at the climate talks. She will also take part in an all-female panel discussion on financing de-carbonisation with government leaders, including the prime minister of Barbados.

Sturgeon is urging the world's leaders to deliver on the pledges made in Glasgow last year. "I think Glasgow was a success – we didn't get everything that had been hoped for but I think the feeling coming out of COP26 was that it was a good foundation to build on," she told the BBC. "But it will only count if it is implemented. This COP is all about implementation – what happens here

is absolutely crucial now to our chances of keeping 1.5 alive, and to be blunt about it, saving the planet for generations to come.

"Governments like Scotland and the state governments of United States, regions lined across Germany for example, hold a lot of power here so it's really important that we don't shy away from that and use that power and live up to our responsibilities.

boost

"Certainly the action the Scottish government took at the outset of COP26 has given a real momentum boost to the issue of loss and damage and you'll hear plenty people that are not associated with the Scottish government say that.

"It's arguable that it wouldn't be on the agenda this year had we not put such a focus on it in Glasgow. But that's a first step, it's really important we keep that momentum going."

But the Scottish government is under fire for cutting almost £133 million from its energy efficiency schemes. Scottish Labour said the decision was "shameful" and called for its reversal.

Labour's Colin Smyth urged the government to reverse the cuts amidst the cost-of-living crisis. "A year ago, Nicola Sturgeon promised to make Scotland a world leader in the green revolution, but these empty promises are in tatters," he said.

"The cost-of-living crisis and the climate emergency are two of the urgent challenges our country faces, but the SNP-Green government are gutting support schemes.

"Making these damaging cuts as COP27 gets under way lays bare the rank hypocrisy hiding behind this government's environmental rhetoric, as well as their failure to use the powers they have to help with the cost-of-living crisis."

But Scotland's finance secretary, John Swinney, defended his government's actions, saying: "I must balance the books, but I am committed to doing so in a way that prioritises funding to help families, to back business, to provide fair pay awards and to protect the delivery of public services."

The New Poor Law

Scottish Labour is also taking the SNP to task over another of their flagships that is predictably not living up to its promise. This is Social Security Scotland (SSS), a quango which has been set up at great expense to do what the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) does, supposedly dispensing benefits in a more humane and generous manner. But the cost is mounting up to no good effect.

In the last financial year of 2021–22, SSS cost £195 million to run compared with £130 million in the previous year. It 2014 the SNP claimed they could establish a whole new state for £250 million. At the same time the number of complaints against it are mounting – up 400 per cent since it first saw the light of day in 2018.

unfairly rejected

Glasgow Region Labour MSP Pam Duncan-Glancy said: "These social security powers were supposed to be a chance to build a fairer system that truly works for people, but now we learn hundreds of applications are being unfairly rejected. It shouldn't be an uphill battle for people to get the support they are entitled to. The SNP need to get a grip of this situation and make sure no-one is wrongly blocked from getting this lifeline support."

Her complaint was made following the news that hundreds of valid benefit claims have been rejected. The much-vaunted Scottish Child Payment for low-income families has seen half the appeals against refusal allowed or

partially allowed.

Early last month the SSS demonstrated just how different it was going to be when it advertised for a "covert operations team leader" who will undertake "static, foot and mobile surveillance" using "covert recording equipment to capture footage of subjects of surveillance". Then Duncan-Glancy wryly observed: "We were promised it would be different."

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Friendship through football

by Wu Yindan

WHEN PEOPLE walk into the Stoke-on-Trent Town Hall, the first thing they see is probably Stoke's Sporting Hall of Fame. Angela Smith, a pioneer of professional women's squash who led the British team to victory in the women's world team squash championships held in England in 1979, was the first woman to be inducted into that Hall of Fame.

Angela feels deeply that her mission as a professional athlete is not only to win championships but also to get more people to enjoy sports, because sports can give people healthy lifestyles and enhance international exchanges. After her retirement, she joined Stoke City Football Club in her home town and became the chair of the Stoke City FC Supporters Council. In 2012, the club announced that its first overseas football academy had been set up in Shanghai. Ms Smith helped to open a shining new chapter in Chinese sports, setting an example as a strong promoter of Sino-British football exchanges and pushing forward Sino-British friendship. But the friendly ties between Stoke and China go back a lot further. Almost 100 years in fact, as she told me last week.

Wu Yindan: *As a traditional English football club, why did the Stoke City choose Shanghai as the first city in which to establish its overseas football academy?*

Angela Smith: The relationship between Stoke City FC and China can be traced back to 1933.

Stoke City has a deep relationship with China because of the legendary player Frank Soo. Every Stoke supporter, particu-



• Angela Smith.

larly in China and Asia, knows about Frank Soo.

During the Second World War he played internationally for England and played for Stoke for many years. He was the first player of Chinese origin to play in the English Football League, and the first player of an ethnic minority background to represent England, although only in unofficial wartime matches.

Since the reform and opening up, China has made great efforts to develop sports and has begun to shine brilliantly in international events. In 2008, China presented a splendid Olympic Games to the world. As a traditional sport, football has a broad mass base. Therefore, we chose Shanghai as the first stop of our overseas football academy.

Do you remember your impression of Shanghai the first time you went there with your coaches? Were there any people or things that particularly impressed you?

It has been 10 years. When I first went to Shanghai, with the coaches, we got off the plane after a long journey of 17 hours, and we went straight to watch our first football match in China. And the first match we went to see was Shanghai Shenhua. We love Shanghai Shenhua. It was a really wonderful experience, and I just loved my time in China, and I hope it continues for

many, many more years. I was very impressed by the Chinese food and the professional ethics of the Chinese people. I like a wide variety of Chinese food, but what shocked me more was the seriousness of the Chinese people in their work. People always leave their jobs when their work is really finished. This kind of professionalism makes me feel really impressed.

We know that after the overseas football academy was established, many Chinese teenagers began training (both in Shanghai and Stoke-on-Trent) during normal or holiday periods, which also cultivated young talents for

Chinese football. What kind of collaboration do we have specifically?

In 2016, 68 coaches from across China arrived in the City to start a 12-week football coaching programme delivered by Staffordshire University and Stoke City FC. The coaches learned all aspects delivered by the university and the football club, including lessons in coaching, physiology, psychology, nutrition as well as practical classes in using GPS technology to monitor player work rates. They also undertook several coaching qualifications during their stay.

In my opinion, apart

from the young students, the exchanges and collaboration between coaches are particularly important and positive, signifying the sports exchanges between China and the UK could be long-term and sustainable, and such spirit should be passed down through generations.

As someone who has seen it up close in the last decade, how do you view the development of China's sports in recent years?

What made me most happy was that China had not only performed well in both the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games, but also over the years, I was able to witness the great progress of China's sports industry with delight, especially amongst smart and hard-working young people who have extremely high physical and psychological capacities.

It is precisely because of such great progress that I would like to continue to participate in other projects dedicated to helping young Chinese football players to improve their quality and pay attention to the Chinese youth development in sports.

In the last 50 years, China and the UK have had many exchanges in the sports industry. What

do you think of this kind of exchange and what are your expectations for the future?

I think the duration of this partnership, this relationship, attests to its success. I am proud of myself and also the Stoke City.

Younger people now like different sports than when I was young. It used to be football, cricket and tennis. Now there are so many more sports that you can do. I think the collaboration will get bigger and become better. I hope I will be around for a long time to see it blossom and flourish.

As you have mentioned, the spirit of sport will always guide generations of young people, and you have always encouraged them to choose their favourite sports and find a better self. What would you like to say to young Chinese sports enthusiasts?

No matter in the past collaboration with China in physical education, or in other world-wide sports exchanges I participated in, I will always hope that people will not just play sport to become good at it, but to be healthy and to enjoy it.

In my opinion, health issues impose a huge challenge to our world. Therefore, when people do more exercise and go out of their houses, life will become healthier. I hope to pass on this concept of healthy life to more people. I hope everyone can have a strong physique.

People's Daily (Beijing)



• Young footballers in Shanghai training hard.

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The 2022 US mid-term elections kicked off this week. US domestic politics are increasingly polarised and violent and different interest groups can barely compromise to push forward policies that truly benefit social development. Through the lens of her research focus, Deborah Venezia, an American journalist based in Italy, discusses with *Global Times* reporter Wang Wenwen the dangerous impulses of American political elites and the crumbling US democracy.

Wang Wenwen: *You once wrote that the so-called democratic institutions of checks and balances are completely incapable of restraining the belligerent policy toward China from spreading. Why? Has US democracy become a tool for oligarchs if decisions cannot be made in the interests of the American majority?*

Deborah Venezia: The USA is a country that was originally built on slavery and genocide. It has been an oligarchic republic masquerading as a democracy since its founding. So-called democratic checks and balances were originally instituted to prevent a democratic majority representing the poorer sectors of the population from coalescing and gaining control over the state.

To paraphrase Lenin, imperialist monopoly capital can buy off a large portion of the proletariat within its borders from the super profits extracted from the Global South. A significant section of the US population has benefited directly or indirectly from the expansion of US imperialist hegemony, but to different degrees.

The peaceful rise of China threatens the excess profits the USA has captured globally. The USA uses manipulative double-speak such as “rules-based international order” to continue its hegemonic control of the world economy by political, military and economic needs.

You once pointed out that the American political elite has the will, resources and power to launch two wars against China and Russia at the same time, and is not afraid to use

America: an oligarchy masquerading as a democracy



• Protest in the US against arming Ukraine and prolonging the conflict.

nuclear weapons. Their danger is not lessened by their stupidity and arrogance. The USA is currently mired in multiple crises. What can stop the dangerous impulses of the American political elite?

I work closely with many other comrades to jointly conduct theoretical research to understand the current conjunctural moment. But we are all drawn to the words of the famous German scholar Goethe who said: “All theory, dear friend, is grey, but the golden tree of actual life springs ever green.” We must not overestimate our ability to predict the specific aspects of the future.

The US political establishment will only be restrained if it thinks it may lose a struggle. I believe that three factors are needed to force the US elite to rethink and change its insane hegemonic expansionist behaviour.

First, the USA would have to suffer a serious defeat, such as the ones they suffered in Korea or Vietnam.

Second, a critical mass of countries of the Global South must be successful in seeking independent development and find a way to achieve real national sovereignty [for example]

the ability to stand up as China did in 1949.

Third, the consciousness of the working class as well as of the lower and middle strata of the petty bourgeoisie inside the USA must be raised significantly. This is not an easy task for those inside the USA fighting for peace and socialism.

Above all, the strengthening of China itself, with good relations between a strong China and Russia, and between China and the countries of the Global South, can stop the warlike impulses of the US political elite.

American liberals today are displaying a deep lust for war. The Democratic Party is misnamed. It is legally constructed and also behaves as a private corporation. It is no longer really defined by a sharp ideological project, and it is without any mooring. It is largely constrained by political campaign donors from the capitalist class despite its putative role of representing the working and lower middle classes.

We should not assume that a possible 2024 Republican President or even Trump 2.0 will be a repeat of 2016. The Republican elite is now dominated by the far right, it is jingoistic and very dangerous.

The American empire is entering a long, slow period of decline. US consensus, or the internal ‘subjective’ factor, however, is based on the idea of ‘American exceptionalism’ (that is, it is the USA’s destiny to dominate the world in perpetuity).

For the first time in 400 years, the world order will, hopefully, not be essentially based on the continuation of a ‘White’ monopoly. The rise of China is not just a short-term, economic, and tactical threat to White supremacy, but an existential threat that shakes its very foundation.

US domestic politics is increasingly polarised and violent. Different interest groups cannot make compromises to bridge divergences. What do you think of this ungovernable trend in US domestic politics? Will a civil war break out or even lead to the division of the country?

In my opinion, it is highly unlikely there will be a civil war or division of the country. Certainly not any time soon.

Yes, today’s US society is deeply fragmented, divided class-wise and racially. There is a serious breakdown in social trust and decline in social

morality. But it does not follow that the USA, as a nation, will be physically divided. Texas and California will not become independent. For one thing, the bourgeois elite will not allow it. Moreover, the so-called ‘Red states’ and ‘Blue states’ should not be imagined in an oversimplified way, as the differences between the states are not as great as they appear outside the USA.

The US economy remains strong, possesses the most powerful military in the world, and retains global strength in areas such as currency and soft power including media.

China is now a demon to a large swath of the American public. Anti-Russian/Slavic hysteria also flourishes. Despite animus bickering over domestic matters, the overwhelming majority of Americans are, sadly, quite united in their fundamental views on military and foreign policy. US mainstream media is now fully embedded in the functions of the state. Modern day McCarthyism is growing rapidly.

On Ukraine, for example, the large majority are in favour of striking at Russia. The brave anti-war forces who call for an end to the new Cold War and

accuse NATO of hegemonic expansion are only a small and very marginal group. They often receive anonymous death threats. Other reasonable voices such as Jerry Brown and Jeffery Sachs are outliers.

We should not be confused by the growing section of far-right Republicans who are complaining about the well over \$60 billion allocated to the US-led NATO war in Ukraine against Russia, as they can easily return to their normal war-like posture if they regain the presidency. Moreover, the Republicans are no less militant in relation to China.

But I am optimistic for the long term. I feel that comrade Mao Zedong is correct, and history will find that the USA is indeed a paper tiger!

The handling of COVID 19 directly reflects the different governance concepts of China and the USA: protecting people vs protecting capital. Judging from the results, not only did the USA rank first in the world in the number of deaths and infections, but the economic recovery also fell short of expectations. At present, there is no sign of the end of the pandemic. What long-term impact do you think the pandemic will have on the governance and economy of the USA?

The direct impact is minimal because, to put it bluntly, the American elite does not care if a large number of people die.

The USA is able to absorb all kinds of talent from all over the world, so the USA has a surplus of labour. The attitude towards COVID 19 today, sometimes called “let it rip” or “survival of the fittest”, is an offensive immoral stance. Allowing COVID 19 to run free allows the US elite to intentionally eliminate parts of the surplus labour force.

The difference in mortality rates between Blacks and Whites is enormous. Residents of low-income counties in the USA have mortality rates four times higher than those of high-income counties. The high-income Whites, those social elites, do you really think they’re looking at the death toll of over a million and reflecting on the failure to fight the epidemic? They’re celebrating. Because it’s cheaper to let Blacks die than to put them in jail.

Global Times

UK accused of building secret terror army in Ukraine

by Ed Newman

BRITISH intelligence is reportedly working to create and train a covert "terrorist force" in Ukraine assigned to attack Russian targets in Crimea on behalf of the Kiev regime. Citing leaked documents, the Grayzone news blog reported that UK intelligence operatives signed an agreement with Ukraine to build the so-called "partisan" terror army.

"Their plans called for the secret army to conduct sabotage and reconnaissance operations targeting Crimea ... precisely the kind of attacks witnessed in past weeks," the report said. Last week, Russia said it thwarted a massive drone attack on its Black Sea Fleet, which "were carried out under the guidance of British specialists located in the city of Ochakiv in Ukraine's Mykolaiv region".

Moscow said that London had been involved in "[the] training, preparation and execution of plans against Russian infrastructure and the Russian fleet in [the] Black Sea [near Crimea]." The UK was also accused of being implicated in the last month's terrorist bombing that targeted the strategically-important Crimean Bridge, which connects Russia to Crimea.

The *Grayzone* reported last month that UK intelligence officers commissioned a study in April examining ways to blow up the bridge. Also last month, Moscow accused London of orchestrating the terrorist attack that damaged the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. Crimea joined the Russian Federation in a referendum in 2014.

Russia launched its "special military operation" in Ukraine in late February, following Kiev's failure to implement the terms of the 2014 Minsk agreements and Moscow's

recognition of the break-away regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. Relations between Moscow and London, already strained due to a litany of issues, have deteriorated even further since Russia launched its military campaign on 24th February.

The UK has been a key ally of Ukraine in the war, committing £2.3 billion in military assistance to Kiev this year. It has recently supplied Ukraine with advanced air defence systems capable of shooting down cruise missiles. Russia has repeatedly warned that supplying Ukraine with weapons will prolong the war.

Radio Havana Cuba

The American 'war on terror' continues

by Inas Abdulkareem

TWENTY-ONE years have passed since the 9/11 attacks in the USA and the world is still under terrorist threat whilst in the throes of political crises and economic disasters. The current global crisis is largely the result of Washington's exploitation of the attacks on the Twin Towers to launch pre-emptive strikes on the flimsiest of pretexts on Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries.

Since the collapse of the World Trade Center towers in New York on that day, the world has entered a cycle of irreversible change through American wars that were based on Washington's exploitation of these attacks to widen the door to its blatant interference in the affairs of other countries.

The consequences of those attacks are still present in the turmoil that continues in many parts of the world in which Washington intervened militarily under the pretext of combating terrorism. This was embodied in the US invasion of Afghanistan and the

invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003 under the pretext of eliminating imaginary "weapons of mass destruction" (WMDs) in addition to the proxy wars that the USA fought in

other countries.

Two decades after the 9/11 attacks, the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan in August last year came without achieving any of the goals announced by the USA at the time, leaving hundreds of thousands of casualties and catastrophic economic losses, not to mention the deaths of thousands of US soldiers.

Despite the passage of 19 years since the US invasion of Iraq on flimsy pretexts such as the claims of "WMDs" that international reports and United Nations committees have shown to be false, the massacres and crimes committed by the US forces are still present in the memory of Iraqis and the world.

The USA used internationally prohibited weapons that led to the deaths of many Iraqi civilians. The damage to the Iraqi health service led to many deformed births; and cancer cases went up due to the effect of these weapons.

Over one-million Iraqis, including women, men and children, were victims of US aggression. About five-million children were orphaned – about five per cent of the total orphans in the world – according to the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights.

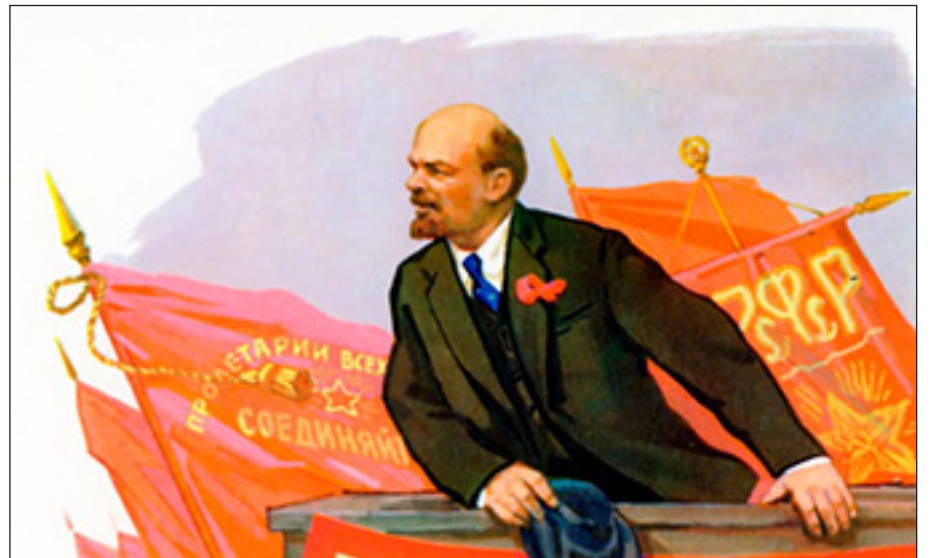
In those wars that America fought under the pretext of protecting its security after the attacks of 9/11, Washington did not neglect to empower terrorist organisations such as Al-Qaeda and later ISIS, which it entrusted with the destruction of Arab culture, antiquities and civilisation.

The *Guardian* newspaper revealed at the end of last year that nearly five-trillion dollars had been spent on those wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. There was only one winner – the US arms companies.

The American political scientist Francis Fukuyama says that the consequences of the exaggerated US response to the attacks of 9/11 were severe in the long-run, as the USA claimed thousands of lives and wasted billions of dollars under the pretext of protecting itself from exaggerated threats.

The term "war on terror", which was presented by the USA as a response to the attacks, opens the door for reflection and sheds light again on all the justifications that were issued for the invasion of Afghanistan

An event that changed the world



• Lenin, leader of the Bolsheviks.

by María Josefina Arce

IT IS NOT possible to talk about the history of humanity without mentioning a transcendental event that in the 20th Century changed the world. Some 105 years ago, the great October Socialist Revolution in Russia placed power in the hands of the workers and peasants and created the essential conditions for the victory of a new system: the socialist system.

This process constituted the radicalisation of the Russian Revolution of 1917, after the revolutionary movement of February and the abdication of Czar Nicholas II.

Internally, the revolution led by the Bolshevik Party, under the leadership of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, gave life to a new state, in which the people became the owners of the country's wealth. The foundations were laid for the transformation of an enslaved, backwards and socially

and then Iraq and for the military operations in many other countries of the world, especially in the Middle East. The US response to the attacks made everyone ask a very important question: What happened to the "democracy, equality and freedom" that the American tanks were supposedly heralding?

Syria Times

unequal Russia into an advanced country.

Five years later the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was officially constituted, which reached a great technological and industrial development, eradicated illiteracy, generalised schooling and achieved a high scientific level, amongst many other economic and social advances.

But the October Revolution went beyond Russian borders. Its triumph demonstrated that capitalism could be overthrown and gave rise to a worldwide movement of great magnitude, which had repercussions in Europe, Asia, Latin America and other parts of the planet.

The historic leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, summed up its undeniable influence when he stated that: "No event has ever had such an influence on the minds of men, the destiny of peoples and the progress of the world."

The October Revolution undermined the domination of imperialism, provoking the rise of the national liberation movement amongst the oppressed peoples. It made possible the process of de-colonisation and the realisation in other nations of the right of peoples to self-determination and independence.

Cuba was no stranger to such a great event. Its ideals bore fruit on our soil, until we became the first socialist state in the western hemisphere and an example and guide for the peoples of the so-called Third World.

Since the disappearance of the socialist system in Europe at the end of the last century, there have been attempts to make people believe that his ideas failed. As pointed out by General Raúl Castro, however: "The ideals that motivated workers, peasants and soldiers in the construction of the first socialist state, under the accurate leadership of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, remain fully valid."

The causes that originated the Russian revolutionary process linked to the concentration of wealth, exploitation, discrimination and inequality are present and with greater force in today's world, 105 years later – that is why socialism remains in force, as a fairer and more inclusive system.

Without any doubt, the October Socialist Revolution was a hope and a guide for millions of people in the world, proclaiming the elimination of the exploitation of man by man, and the construction of an era of abundance for humanity.

Radio Havana Cuba