

UKRAINIANS TO FREEZE FOR NATO AND THE FASCISTS?

by our Eastern European Affairs correspondent

RUSSIAN ROCKETS and drones continue to pound Ukraine's power network as temperatures drop below freezing and millions of Ukrainians struggle to heat their homes amidst power cuts and blackouts caused by a relentless assault on their national grid, which the Zelensky regime now calls another Russian "war-crime". The puppet regime is calling on the Americans to give them Patriot anti-missile batteries to stave off the onslaught and on the front the Russians have launched a new offensive that has broken through the Ukrainian lines in central Donbas.

Supplying Patriot systems would be a major escalation. Former Russian president Dmitri Medvedev, now deputy head of Moscow's security council, warned that if deployed they would become a legitimate Russian target. And although the Pentagon stresses that there are no current plans to supply Patriots from the USA to Ukraine, the Zelensky regime is lobbying the Germans to hand over their own Patriot batteries to the Ukraine armed forces.

Meanwhile the head of Russia's foreign intelligence service, Sergei Naryshkin, has confirmed that he discussed Ukraine and nuclear issues in a meeting with CIA Director

William Burns in Ankara, the Turkish capital, in November.

Elizabeth Rood, the chargé d'affaires at the US embassy in Moscow, told the Russian media that Burns "did not negotiate anything, and he did not discuss a settlement of the conflict in Ukraine" at the meeting that was called at the request of the USA.

Naryshkin says: "For my part, I confirm Ms Rood's statement. Additionally, I can note that the most frequently used words at this meeting were 'strategic stability', 'nuclear security', 'Ukraine' and 'Kiev regime'."

Back in Moscow, Communist MP Yuri Afonin says that according to the Polish media some 1,200 Polish mercenaries have been killed fighting for the Ukrainians since February 2022. Speaking on Russian television, the Russian communist said this would suggest that thousands more had been wounded in the fighting.

"If there are 1,200 dead, then, therefore, there are still four to five thousand wounded, and how many Polish mercenaries are there in Ukraine? It turns out that at least 10,000, and, possibly, several tens of thousands," Afonin said.

"Ukraine and Poland today are the main reserves of West-



• Power stations pounded.

ern imperialism in the struggle against Russia. But their potential is also being depleted: the waves of mobilisation in Ukraine have already exhausted almost all the more or less suitable male population, and in Poland, in the end, a pragmatic approach will inevitably prevail. Ordinary Poles will ask themselves: why are our children dying for Zelensky and company?"

Afonin, the First Deputy Chair of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) noted that the struggle that Russia is waging today will be go on for a long time. When the hostilities in Ukraine end, this struggle will not end.

"The West will try to destroy us for many more years, or rather many decades: to destroy our economy with sanctions, to provoke separatist movements and the territorial disintegration of Russia. In order for us to survive in this long and hard struggle, we must change a lot in our country," he said.

Yuri Afonin said that this situation must be changed.

"To sustain a long struggle, our society needs to become much more socially just and cohesive.

"The state should get its

hands on much larger resources. In this regard, it is necessary to refer to the provisions of the programme of the communists."

FUND

This week's postbag brought in £353 which means we hit our November target with a little to spare thanks to a Cornish reader who sent in £20, a dedicated supporter in Essex who gave us £40 and a number of bankers' orders from old friends that pay in at the end of the month. All in all the November appeal raised £3,567 for the *New Worker*.

The fighting fund for the festive season begins now so let's join in the spirit of giving to the needy by boosting the coffers of our communist paper. We need all the help we can get to see us through the winter break and prepare for another year of struggle.

The stakes are high. Workers are fighting for higher pay. Imperialist sanctions on Russia have backfired. NATO's proxy war in Ukraine threatens to plunge the whole of Europe into chaos as we face a winter of food shortages and colossal energy bills.

But there is an answer to the crisis and you can make sure it gets out on the street by guaranteeing the survival of the *New Worker*.

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THE NEW WORKER

Weekly paper of the New Communist Party

Useless and Dangerous

IN A DESPERATE attempt at sounding radical Sir Keir Starmer has made reform of the House of Lords his latest project. He says he wants to replace it with an elected second chamber, telling Labour peers that the public's faith in politics had been undermined by successive Tory leaders handing out peerages to "lackeys and donors" and that this is all going to end when he's in charge.

We have, of course, heard this all before. In opposition Labour leaders talk about the reform or abolition of the House of Lords. They've done this for years – but once in power they find that they cannot afford to give up the Prime Minister's patronage of the Upper House, which does indeed enable them to reward the "lackeys and donors" Starmer claims to despise.

During the Blair era New Labour promised to remove all the hereditary peers from the House of Lords and replace it with some sort of elected Senate. In the end, however, all that happened was another minor reform that abolished the automatic right of hereditary peers to sit in the House of Lords but allowed 92 of their number to remain to uphold the hereditary principle, along with the 26 bishops who sit as "Lords Spiritual" as representatives of the Church of England.

Whilst rewarding your followers is an essential part and parcel of bourgeois politics, the House of Lords isn't. Bourgeois republics such as the USA and France manage quite well without an appointed Upper House. Others operate without any Second House to oversee the actions of their parliaments.

Some think the Lords exists to uphold the rights of inheritance. But these 'rights' are actually upheld by the bourgeois 'right to private property' that goes far beyond the old feudal concepts of inheritance by claiming people must be allowed to use what they own as they see fit, and leave it to whom they see fit.

The real purpose of the House of Lords is, essentially, to justify and maintain the hereditary principle that justifies the Monarchy and the Anglican church, which the monarch heads. Its abolition would mean that the only hereditary post left would be that of the Monarch, which would inevitably then face demands for reform that could easily evolve into the sort of republicanism the bourgeoisie turned their backs on when they got rid of the Stuarts and put William of Orange on the throne during the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688.

Just a generation before these momentous events the House of Lords had been abolished by the 'Rump' parliament of the fledgling Republic of England that had already abolished the monarchy and the Church of England with the deposition, trial and execution of Charles I in 1649. The House of Lords that was said to be "useless and dangerous to the people of England" remained closed until the Stuart restoration in 1660 and we've been lumbered with the Lords ever since. But it's still useless – and the sooner it goes the better.

Sunak, 'pragmatism' and China

by Xu Yelu

THE LONG-TERM pragmatic foreign policy desired by the government of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak may reduce the negative impact of the uncertainty on the British side in previous China-UK relations. If it cannot value China's role comprehensively and objectively, however, such a plan may exacerbate tensions between China and Britain, experts warned, ahead of Sunak's upcoming speech on British foreign policy on Monday.

According to the *Guardian*, Sunak will pledge an "evolutionary approach" to British foreign policy, arguing that states such as Russia and China plan for the long-term and the UK needs to follow suit, as he attempts to set out his vision for the country's place on the global stage.

In his first major foreign policy speech since becoming PM, the *Guardian* says Sunak will draw on his years running the Treasury to say that the UK's strength abroad must be underpinned by a strong economy at home as it stands up to competitors with "robust pragmatism".

The so-called long-term plan, experts say, is likely to

be a more specific version of the *Integrated Review* put forward by the Boris Johnson government in 2021.

Observers say that if the UK can actually develop a detailed long-term foreign policy, it could help the country rid itself of the speculative and arbitrary nature of its current policies.

One of the biggest problems in British foreign policy in recent years is that it lacks systematic planning and long-term strategy, says Cui Hongjian, director of the Department of European Studies at the China Institute of International Studies.

confusion

The UK has been suffering a period of confusion after Brexit and has been caught up in some huge changes in the international situation, so its overall foreign policy is still in a state of crisis management, Cui said.

This so-called long-term policy should first solve the problem of how to value China's role in its foreign policy, he added.

Before taking office, Sunak had labelled China as the "biggest long-term threat to Britain". Speaking to reporters during the G20 summit in Bali, the British PM softened

his tone on Beijing however, referring to China as "a systemic challenge".

This indicates that under the Sunak government's plan, relations with China are more likely to develop in the basic direction of "competitive when they should be, collaborative when they can be".

According to the *Guardian*, Sunak will also talk about deepening partnerships in other parts of the world, such as the "Indo-Pacific region", and preparing for the sharpening of inter-state competition with countries such as Russia, China and Iran.

During his first month in office, Sunak has met international partners including US President Joe Biden and French President Emmanuel Macron, and has also travelled to Ukraine.

The Sunak government would be better off, however, focusing on its diplomatic strategy on Europe or transatlantic relations, says Li Guanjie, a research fellow from the Shanghai Academy of Global Governance and Area Studies, under the Shanghai International Studies University.

In dealing with great power relations and the Indo-Pacific region, the best goal Britain can aim for is to maintain a balance, experts noted. It is not suitable for Britain to invest too much in the Indo-Pacific region, as it has neither sufficient ability nor influence to play the role of a third party in the region as smoothly as it used to.

If the Sunak government really wants to achieve "robust pragmatism" it must stick to economic co-operation with China, Li said. The UK imported £63.6 billion of goods from China in 2021, making up 13.3 per cent of all its imports, and exported £18.8 billion of goods, 5.8 per cent of all its exports. Increasing economic co-operation with China is in the interests of both sides and the Sunak government should be well aware of that.

If Britain wants to appear to have a foreign policy of its own, it should focus more on its own interests rather than being held hostage to some countries' strategic goals, Cui said.



• Sunak in Bali.

Workers' Notes

Charity begins at home...

by New Worker correspondent

...BUT NOT for some working in the burgeoning charity sector such as the staff at Shelter, which was founded way back in December 1966. It emerged from the efforts of Bruce Kenrick, the Church of Scotland Minister who was doing missionary work in west London's Notting Hill, then the stamping ground of notorious slum landlord Perec 'Peter' Rachman who had a violent way of dealing with those behind with the rent for one of his empire of grotty overcrowded properties.

The Notting Hill Housing Trust, also founded by Kendrick in 1963, continues today as a major housing association owning thousands of properties.

Shelter had the good fortune to be launched 10 days after the BBC first broadcast *Cathy Come Home* by Jeremy Sandford and Ken Loach, which exposed effects of homelessness in Britain.

It soon became the leading body for advice with housing problems and it campaigns for tenant rights, spending much time lobbying local and central governments.

It spends about 21 per cent of its revenue on fund-raising, a figure which might raise a few eyebrows, but the charity world is a cut-throat business. Shelter faces brutal competition from Children in Need and fluffy polar bears seeking the nation's conscience money. In comparison, bedraggled homeless people and people sitting in mouldy rooms do not look very cute.

Shelter's latest Annual Report shows it has an overall income of £59,699,000, of which £41 million came from donations and legacies, with £10 million from grants and contracts, and £7 million from its shops. Its expenditure was £59,720,000, which

suggests they are doing their job, spending rather than saving. It has assets worth £31 million, which is not unreasonable given that it needs a London base and a network of offices to do its job.

The highest paid member of staff was the CEO, on £132,625. Shelter claims it is very ethical as its median salary was £28,104, a ratio against the highest salary of 4.72:1. Salaries for van drivers and assistants in their shops however, start at £19,000.

Shelter had 1,335 employees, 118 on fund-raising, with about 800 giving direct support, both in person and remotely. The CEO gets £99.34 for each staff member, chicken-feed to bankers.

Such is the institutional background of the current strike that starts on Monday until the Sunday before Christmas. The issue, unsurprisingly, is pay. In early November 85 per cent of the charity's Unite branch voted to reject a three per cent pay offer, which Unite describes as a huge real-terms pay cut.

At the time of the vote, General Secretary Sharon Graham said that: "Rather than sit on ever expanding reserves, Shelter should be paying its workers a fair pay rise."

She has a point. Its last reported reserves were £14.5 million, comfortably above their target of £8.9 million.

One of the strikers added: "The work we undertake, particularly in frontline services, is so valuable and clients depend on our teams. But that shouldn't mean they have to sacrifice a decent and dignified living because the work they are drawn to is in this sector. At the very base level, absolute bare minimum, those working for a housing charity shouldn't be experiencing housing insecurity as a result of being unable to pay rent."

disruption

Regional Officer Peter Storey warned that: "Strike action will inevitably cause substantial disruption to the services that Shelter provides. However, the organisation has created this dispute through the arrogant and high-handed manner in which it has treated its loyal workers."

This is not the first time Shelter workers have been involved in a pay battle in which strike action was at least threatened. In 2008 strike action took place whilst in both 2014 and 2018 industrial ac-

tion was called off at the very last minute. In the latter case a four per cent deal composed of 2.25 per cent consolidated, plus 1.75 per cent unconsolidated paid at a flat rate, worth about £500 for each worker, was secured after management offered a paltry one per cent. That dispute also saw 100 Shelter workers join Unite.

This time round, in March, Shelter made a three per cent offer alongside a one-off £250

eran, told *Tribune* that in the 2008 dispute: "They tried to impose contractual changes on us. Historically, there's been disputes around Shelter actively going after our pay and pension contributions," and: "I've never had an inflation-based increase in pay in the 20 years I've been here."

The result of this pattern is a charity set up to tackle issues such as housing insecurity is now exacerbating housing in-

many charities management takes advantage of dedicated workers "where committed and passionate workers are made to feel that they should put up with attacks on pay and conditions out of misguided notion of philanthropic instinct".

The anonymous Sarah added that management: "Know that most people that come to work for Shelter are very committed to Shelter's cause.



payment. Since then the one-off payment has been increased to £1,500. This was still rejected, partly because it would actually make things worse for some workers. This came about because it would push the lowest paid over thresholds that would prevent them claiming working tax credits and Universal Credit to top up their low earnings.

The wishy-washy left magazine *Tribune* recently interviewed three Shelter workers about the dispute. One staff member, Mark, who was formerly homeless himself, reported he relies on a foodbank twice a month and his general quality of life has rapidly deteriorated in the last year.

He also noted that when Shelter workers suggested flat-rate consolidated increases to benefit the lowest paid, Management responded that this would weaken the pay structure within Shelter, meaning the pay rise of those promoted wouldn't be worth as much.

Another staff member, Sarah, herself a 20-year vet-

security among its own staff. "A lot of our staff are young private renters based in London," says Sarah. "They're caught up in the very housing emergency that they themselves are campaigning on."

consolidated

She concluded by pointing out that Shelter workers urgently need a consolidated increase instead to get them through the coming winter months and beyond. Unless this is done, condition will worsen after next April when it becomes harder to claim means-tested benefits.

Lucy, a London-based Shelter worker, told *Tribune* that: "It's commonplace for staff to have no money left at the end of the month. I have colleagues who have fallen into arrears with bills, are eating less to cut down on the cost of food, and we hear constant accounts of staff suffering with stress and anxiety."

All three complained that Shelter spends too much on external contracts and consultants and that in common with

And I think they play on it. They expect charity workers just to put up low pay really and not complain." Winning this dispute, she concluded, would "send a message to charity sector workers that they can organise for union recognition and fair pay".

Internet age strikes

by New Worker correspondent

THE Communication Workers Union (CWU) has not just been battling for postal workers whose strike action seems set to be continued for some time to come. They have also been taking strike action in the more technologically advanced British Telecommunications companies BT plc, EE Ltd and Openreach Ltd.

After securing a fully con-

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• CWU take on BT.

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solidated and pensionable £1,500 flat-rate (pro-rata for part-time workers), CWU and Prospect members will be balloting on the offer. It ensures that pay-related allowances that are automatically linked to pay will also increase by the amount of the award. The next pay review date for 2023 will ensure the resolution of long-standing unresolved issues.

The union states that in all this will equal a permanent increase of £3000, including the £1500 received from 1st April 2022. This means over 10 per cent for Openreach service delivery engineers while the lower-paid will get 13 and 15 per cent.

sacrifice

The result of the ballot is expected just before Christmas. The CWU noted that the battle was not an easy one and that a "significant sacrifice in taking strike action, making a stand against BT and objecting to their original imposed pay rise in April ultimately forced BT back around the negotiating table" won the day. Consolidation was important as it means it is paid again and again, unlike a one-off payment that does not increase your actual pay.

Dave Ward, general secretary of the CWU, said: "The bravery these workers displayed caught the sympathy of the country, and shocked the company out of its complacency." The earlier strikes

were the first in the industry since 1987 and included action by 999 call handlers.

The pay rises covers all frontline staff and 51 per cent of managers, meaning about 85 per cent of the workforce are covered.

While gritting his teeth and welcoming the deal, however, BT Group chief executive Philip Jansen said BT was working towards making "£3 billion cost savings" by the end of the 2025 financial year. This could lead to further disputes if jobs and salaries are affected.

Transport victories

by New Worker correspondent

TRANSPORT union RMT is claiming victory for their members on ScotRail who have won pay rises of between 7-9 per cent backdated to April, along with an extension of the no compulsory redundancies guarantee for six years and a series of payments to enhance the wage packet on a yearly basis. There are also improved Sunday working and maternity payments.

The details are that along with a five per cent rise in basic pay, broken down as a 2.2 per cent increase to recognise the cost-of-living crisis (funded by Transport Scotland) paid to all general grades from last April, and another 2.8 per cent

increase (funded by ScotRail) to reward the flexibility of post-pandemic rostering arrangements. £750 is consolidated into pay for all general grade staff in recognition for accepting use of technology and a £390 excess revenue share. Minimum flat-rate pay has been increased to £10.50 per hour. ScotRail claim that wages will rise by 7.5 per cent for staff such as conductors and ticket examiners with the low-paid getting 8.5 per cent.

This came after the SNP Government suddenly found some extra money down the back of the proverbial sofa. Strikes in the long-running dispute that had been planned until Christmas were suspended to allow for the ballot.

After 67.7 per cent of his members voted to accept, General Secretary Mick Lynch said: "This is a fantastic victory for our members in ScotRail and I congratulate them on their strong strike actions, without which there would have been no deal reached. The pay rise on top of further payments and improvements to working conditions will help with the cost-of-living crisis and ensure that the travelling public are not inconvenienced further."

ongoing

This does not mean that all is sweetness and light on the railways in Scotland. There is still an ongoing pay dispute and industrial action being taken by RMT staff employed by Network Rail in Scotland.

RMT's overtime and rest-day work ban has caused many cancellations. The next round of industrial action will be held across four 48-hour periods on 13-14 and 16-17 December, and 3-4 and 6-7 January.

Drivers' union ASLEF is taking strike action next Saturday at 12 rail companies including Avanti West Coast, which runs the west coast Glasgow to London route.

another

Another victory for transport workers has recently been secured in Shakespeare's Warwickshire. Here Unite won a 13.3 per cent pay rise for 450 bus drivers at the county's Stagecoach subsidiary at Nuneaton, Rugby, Leamington and Stratford-Upon-Avon depots. The deal means that drivers will be on £14 per hour and receive back-pay from January of more than £1,000. As a bonus, the previous two-year period in which new drivers have to wait to receive the full hourly rate has been reduced to just six months.

Sharon Graham said this was a success for the union's strategy of establishing a new bus combine that brought together Unite reps together from across the industry to co-ordinate their fight to raise pay and conditions.

She noted that in the whole of 2019 there were 11 Unite bus strikes, but since the new Combine was formed in August 2019 there have been 102 passenger transport disputes with tens of thousands of workers. Perhaps it would have been better to have one big national strike that would have better focussed the minds of ministers and shareholders alike.

Unite claims considerable success in the sector, citing 250 Stagecoach workers in Hull getting a 20 per cent pay rise, 2,000 Arriva North West members earning £2,900 extra per year and Kent Arriva workers winning a 13.92 per cent rise.

With the pandemic trend for home deliveries from supermarkets only slightly less than during lockdown days, however, bus companies lost many drivers to supermarkets. Apart from the lure of higher wages, the hours are more of a nine-to-five routine and do not require contact with too many drunks uncertain of their destination. Securing respectable wage increases therefore, has not been rocket science.

Just in time for Christmas...

by New Worker correspondent

READERS with cars within easy reach of Wiltshire should head in that direction to do their Christmas shopping between Saturdays 10th and 17th December. On those days Britain's favourite workers, parking wardens, will be on strike. The exception is Swindon, so be warned.

This is part of a long-running action in opposition to pay cuts in the form of ending unsocial hours payments, which also affects the council's social workers.

They have already taken two days of strike action in May, which forced a rethink, but the plans were revived.

lose out

Their union GMB says that traffic wardens would lose around £2,000 per year, and social workers up to 20 per cent of their pay or £3500 annually.

Keith Roberts, GMB Regional Organiser, said: "In the current cost-of-living crisis, actually taking money away from staff is crazy, and even the suggestion of a future pay cut has caused a crisis of retention and recruitment."

He also accused Wiltshire's Chief Clerk of over-riding "the deal his own staff had reached with us".

"During our previous strike days absolutely no parking fines were issued. So many Christmas shoppers will choose to park for free, knowing there will be little or no parking enforcement during strike days."

20 years ago this week in the New Worker

ISRAELI Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has won the Likud primary with a 15 per cent lead over his nearest rival, Benjamin Netanyahu. General Sharon will now lead his hard-line Zionist bloc again in the January elections and says his aim will be to double Likud's seats in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament.

Sharon and Netanyahu, who is currently foreign minister in the Likud caretaker government, campaigned on who could outbid the other in anti-Arab rhetoric. In the

end Sharon won over 55 per cent of his party's vote against Netanyahu's 40.

A third challenger trailed well behind, with little more than three per cent. The Likud turnout was low, however. Only 46 per cent of its registered party members turned out, indicating that only 140,000 out of a total membership of 300,500 had taken part in the leadership choice.

Likud will be challenged in January by another retired general, Amram Mitzna, who is campaigning on a 'dovish' peace with the Palestinians' platform. Although Mitzna easily won his own primary, he's in for a fight.

The latest Tel Aviv opinion polls give Likud a clear lead over Labour and its allies, and they predict that Likud together with its religious and settler parties will take 64 seats in the 120-strong Knesset.

All Sharon can promise is business as usual, which

consists of collective punishments and assassinations. It's a policy dear to the hearts of the settlers and Zionist fanatics who are oblivious to the fact that this policy has failed for over 30 years.

Labour hopeful Amram Mitzna, the mayor of Haifa, has launched its campaign by trying to revive the Israeli peace movement and holding talks with the Egyptians. He's promised an immediate pull-out from the Gaza Strip and talks with the Palestinians.

His campaign has already put the question of peace instead of war on the election agenda. Israeli's UN envoy, Yehuda Lancry, said that his government supported the vision of "two states living side by side in security" as the ultimate goal of future talks. This comment was immediately repudiated by his government in Tel Aviv.

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forms are increasingly censored, which is narrowing public debate.

This lack of democracy is dangerous as it increases the possibility that the USA will pursue unpopular, brutal wars abroad as the views of the people are not listened to.

The American people are not completely powerless, however. Through big mobilisations of social movements, it is possible for the people to influence the public debate. The Black Lives Matter [BLM] movement, for example, has had a tremendous impact on public consciousness in the USA. This movement played a key role in stopping Trump from being re-elected in 2020. The growing movement against climate change in the USA has also had an impact but has not yet succeeded in winning the concessions necessary for the USA to seriously tackle climate change.

The USA is deeply engulfed in multiple crises at home, yet it is still extremely bellicose externally. The US democratic system seems to have been reduced to a tool for a few elites to maintain hegemonic rule and reap profits. What do you think?

The USA is engulfed in many severe crises. Mass shootings take place regularly, including in schools; over one-million people in the USA have died from COVID 19 over the last three years; half of US adults say they have difficulty affording the cost of health care; living standards are falling as inflation soars; and over 2.3 million people are incarcerated in the USA, the highest prison population in the entire world. Yet the US political establishment is holding up the USA as a 'model' for the world and is attempting to portray China as an enemy of the US population.

US mainstream politicians should be focused on tackling the



crises they have caused at home but instead they are attempting to impose their will on the majority of humanity in order to maintain the USA's global dominance. This includes spending trillions of dollars on the military and pursuing an increasingly aggressive foreign policy.

Following its withdrawal from Afghanistan, ending the 20-year "War on Terror" has not made the USA more 'peace loving' but instead made the USA focus on new targets. The USA is currently pouring tens of billions of dollars' worth of military aid into Ukraine in order to prolong NATO's proxy war against Russia. At the same time,

there are many hawks in US foreign policy circles who are talking up the possibility of a hot war with China. To push the USA towards hot wars with other nuclear-armed states is a truly terrifying prospect that could lead humanity to a total catastrophe. It is clear that the main enemy of humanity is these warmongers in Washington.

During COP27, you tweeted: "The greatest obstacle to solving the climate crisis is the US ruling class and its desire to maintain hegemony through colossal military spending to bully most of the world." What do you think of the swings in

policies in the USA?

Of course, having a US president who acknowledges the existence of climate change and the need for action is welcome. As well as re-joining the Paris Agreement, his presidency has passed a law this year, the Inflation Reduction Act, legislating the biggest investment in clean energy solutions in US history: \$369 billion over 10 years, or \$36.9 billion per year. Estimates suggest this will cut US emissions by 40 per cent by 2030, which is a step forwards but completely insufficient to achieve the UN target of limiting global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Unfortunately, whichever president is in power, the USA continues to prioritise its aggressive geopolitical agenda over solving the climate crisis. The USA's military budget of \$722 billion for 2022 is 20 times higher than the spending on climate in the Inflation Reduction Act.

What's interesting, though, is that the US population is largely behind measures to tackle climate change. Because of the new climate spending law, the Republicans' right-wing predicted that the Democrats would have disastrous results in the recent mid-term elections. This did not happen, and polling shows 65 per cent

of the population agrees with the bill's measures to support renewable energy.

As the organiser of No Cold War Britain you have repeatedly criticised the attacking of China by some Western countries led by the USA. What are the main ways for you to arouse public consciousness? To what extent can it change the public's perception of China?

There is a relentless propaganda campaign in the West that aims to portray China as our enemy. This campaign is so extreme that there are even attempts to smear China's historic achievement of bringing 850 million people out of poverty in 40 years as somehow sinister.

Britain is suffering from a serious cost-of-living crisis. The trend is set to continue, with annual inflation at 11 per cent. The government is making cuts to public services at the same time as maintaining high military spending.

China is the world's most dynamic economy, but instead of pursuing mutually beneficial relations the British government's anti-China policy is damaging Britain's economy further by threatening trade, investment, jobs, access to more efficient technology, and educational opportunities, and therefore making the British people even worse off.

No Cold War's message is that instead of pursuing a costly, wasteful and extremely dangerous Cold War policy against China, Britain should seek friendly relations with China to tackle the real problems we are facing, such as climate change and economic hardship. Why spend billions of pounds sending an aircraft carrier to the South China Sea and on military spending when we could collaborate with China to promote a global renewables revolution to combat climate change and create millions of green jobs?

Global Times



• Mass shootings in the US remembered.

Massacre at Tantura:

The lies upon which Israel was founded

by Michael Berkowitz

Every year Palestinians mark the Nakba – “the catastrophe” in English – when in 1948 around 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly expelled from their homes during the creation of the state of Israel. Five-hundred villages were destroyed in a pre-mediated campaign and their inhabitants never allowed to return. Zionist militias committed massacres in Deir Yassin, Lydda, Tantura and dozens of other Palestinian communities. A new documentary by Israeli director Alon Schwartz now challenges Israel’s narrative about 1948 and the forced displacement of Palestinians. It was screened at the Palestinian film festival in Leeds last weekend.

WRITER/DIRECTOR Alon Schwartz’s documentary film *Tantura* is a brilliant, painful look at the massacre of a small Palestinian town in the path of invading forces claiming and cleansing the area for the new state of Israel in 1948. With new testimony, old film footage and copious documentation, the film reconstructs what actually happened when the Alexandroni Brigade of the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) seized Tantura.

Schwartz also structures his work around a second tragedy. Although smaller in scale, what happened to graduate student Teddy Katz when he tried to bring the massacre to light is a tragedy in itself. The first casualty of war is always the truth.

Tantura was an old, modestly wealthy town at a strategic location on the Mediterranean coast. When the United



• Alon Schwartz.

Nations voted in 1948 to partition Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, Israeli forces invaded historically established Palestinian lands.

The story of Tantura sheds light on what occurred as the basis for the foundation of Israel. Hundreds of Palestinian towns were invaded, looted, raped and pillaged to make way for the new state. Israelis called this a “war of independence”. Arabs experienced it as Al Nakba (The Catastrophe). Over 750,000 Arabs were forced to move out their homes, from their lands.

History graduate student Teddy Katz had been interested in the events around the formation of the State of Israel. He spent over two years collecting data and interviewing 135 survivors of Tantura 1948, half Jews and half Arabs. He wrote up his findings and submitted it for his Master’s thesis. Katz’s work was quite good – the paper was awarded a grade of 97.

As word of the paper spread amongst war veterans, the thesis was not as warmly received. It sparked an intense

backlash. Veterans of the Alexandroni Brigade that had seized the territory and dealt with the local Indigenous population were livid. They organised, retained a

team of lawyers and sued Katz for defamation. The judge, Drora Pilpel of the Tel Aviv District Court, refused to listen to the testimony or consider the evidence Katz had collected.

Katz was overwhelmed. He received constant threats and hostility. He panicked under pressure, withdrawing and disclaiming his thesis. Within a few days, he realised his mistake and tried to have it reinstated, but he was not permitted. The bullying had worked. He suffered two strokes and a breakdown.

Yet the overwhelming truths remained. The interviews and data revealed a massacre where 270 Arab men were rounded-up after they failed in their attempts to protect themselves from the better armed and or-

ganised Israelis. Platoon Leader Tovia Heller, head of the Alexandroni Veterans Association, and many other veterans maintained their superiority, explaining how they suffered few battle casualties. They maintained that almost all the Palestinians were killed during battle, with few casualties after battle’s end. They blamed the Arabs for being an evil, cruel, vindictive enemy that brought on their gruesome fate by trying to defend their homeland.

These contentions did not stand up. Interview after interview of both Jews and Palestinians revealed how the Arabs were killed well after the battles ended. Men were separated from women and children. Then these prisoners were executed in

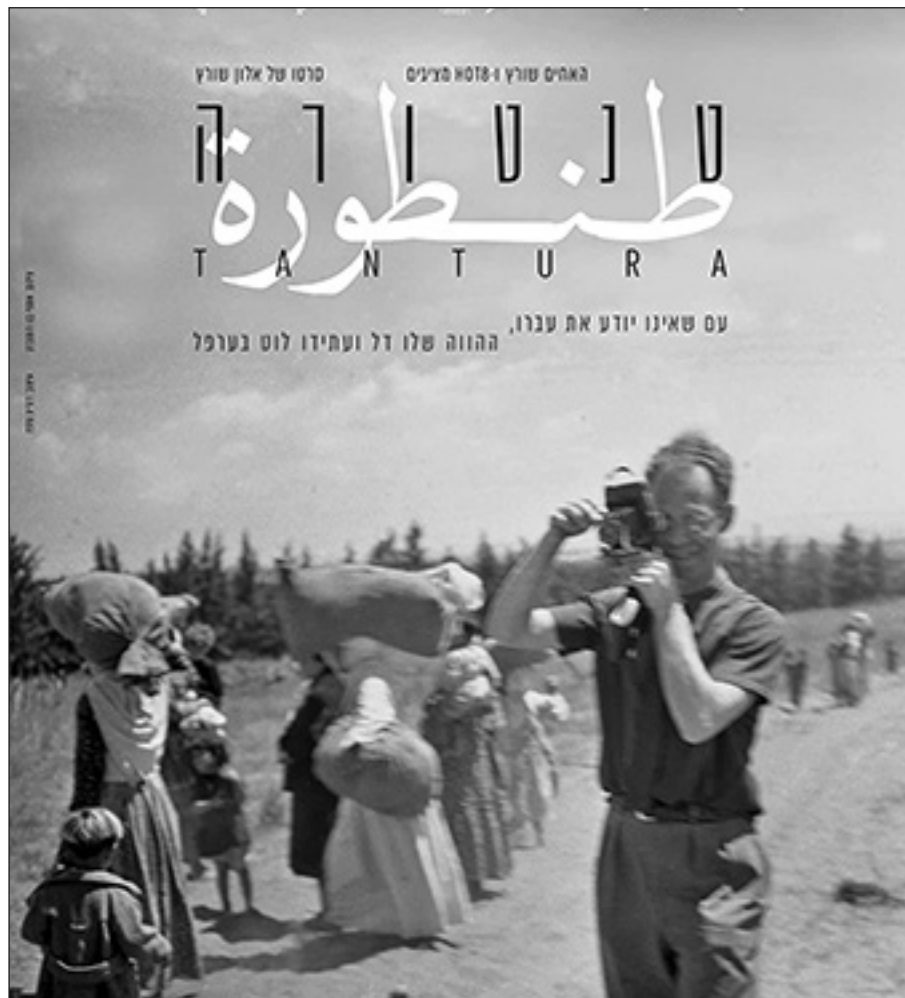
groups, against walls or in pens or in front of the grave sites that swelled to over 270 bodies. At first these bodies were left unburied, scattered on the ground where they died, in their village in front of the remnants of their families who were forced to scrounge for scraps of food, living out this nightmare.

The descriptions of the killings were graphic. But perhaps none so chilling as the veteran who described how laughing soldiers raped young girls, shot prisoners in barrels and even brandished pistols, serially shooting random Arabs in the head. Another veteran tried to stop the interview, realising how it sounded. His confessional was brutally telling: “This is just what the Nazis did to us.” Mustafa Masri, born in 1935 and raised in the village, describes happening on one of the donkey carts that were used to stack and haul dead bodies. There on the stack were the bodies of his father and brother.

The ongoing Middle East conflict is rooted in Tantura and the hundreds of such towns where the oppressed of Europe, the concentration camp survivors, came after the Second World War to show what lessons the war had taught them about humanity and homeland, power and justice. It explains how Israel has risen as a right-wing apartheid state.

Director Alon Schwartz has revisited the work of Teddy Katz so that it shouldn’t be in vain, in a film that cries out not so much for revenge as for education and change. It was a critical and popular success as an Official Selection of *Sundance 2022* and was quite controversial in Israel.

People’s World (USA)



• Tantura.

LETTERS

Dear Comrades

Capitalism has been having economic crises for almost 200 years. Its first was recorded in 1825 and they have occurred frequently ever since.

Marx wrote: "In these crises, there broke out an epidemic that in all earlier epochs would have seemed an absurdity – the epidemic of over-production."

The root cause of every economic crisis is the chronic lack of sufficient purchasing power of the masses. Currently it is called a cost-of-living crisis, but all capitalist economic crises can be described as such.

When Marx developed his theory of surplus value, he laid bare the scientific secret of capitalist exploitation and that the extraction of surplus value from the power of wage labour was the sole motive for its production.

Marx then discovered the Law of the Falling Tendency of the Rate of Profit. Capital consists of fixed and variable costs. Fixed costs such as machinery and materials are not the source of surplus value. It is only variable

costs, wages, from which surplus value can be extracted. Yet increasingly, the percentage of fixed costs rises to the detriment of variable.

But the historic task of Capital is the development of the productive forces. Yet the rate of profit, the sole stimulation for capitalist production, becomes endangered by the development of production itself!

This insoluble contradiction proves that capitalism is but a transient mode of production – and that its collapse is economically and historically inevitable.

'Scientific Socialist' Walsall

Dear Comrades

Our epoch is one in which the world is in the evolutionary process of transition from capitalism to socialism. The strategy of the New Communist Party is to accelerate that advance whilst working to consolidate both world peace and defending the revolutionary gains so far achieved. We are up against the global strategy of Imperialism, which is based upon naked aggression. A strategy that stems from a corrupt social system that breeds anxiety and despair and leads to the ruin of human lives and ethical values.

The world is changing. Direct colonial rule collapsed under pressure from national liberation movements aided and supported by the former Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. A crippling legacy of neo-colonialism still

remains in many poor countries however.

As the capitalist crisis has worsened more peoples are starting to question the existing world order, especially US hegemony. Socialist countries, emergent nations and non-aligned states are finding an identity of intent as they seek a peaceful multipolar world. The processes of transition to socialism, opposition to US diktat and the creation of independent development all suggest that the desire for change is gaining momentum.

We cannot be complacent. The international situation is critical. US Imperialism, enthusiastically backed by Britain and the other usual grovelling Western nations, have turned their backs on detente and peaceful co-existence. Apart from fostering its geopolitical ambitions the other imperialist aim is to attack people's living standards in order to boost profits. Imperialism cannot accept the fact that the world is changing. No longer are they able to break nations with threats, embargoes, sanctions and proxy wars. The international community will not buy it. It is the USA itself that will find its self increasingly isolated.

US Imperialism is becoming weaker. The notorious petro-dollar is starting to be replaced by local currencies for honest trading. Its role as the main international reserve currency is also weakening. It has been unable to conquer the heroic peoples of Donbas or destroy the brave and united Democratic, People's Republic of Korea. In re-

lation to People's China, despite illegal sanctions, obscene slander and blatant lies, the calm dignity of China's statesmen has been commendable. China does not threaten or intimidate; through the Belt and Road Initiative it offers the developing world sustainable development that can turn their dreams into reality.

John Maryon Suffolk

Dear Comrades

On the 18th November the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) successfully tested a new type of ballistic missile, the Hwasongpho-17 ICBM, in the presence of Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his wife and daughter.

The new Hwasongpho-17 ICBM launched at Pyongyang International Airport, travelled up to a maximum altitude of 6,040.9 km and flew a distance of 999.2 km for 4,135s before accurately landing on the pre-set area in open waters of the East Sea of Korea.

The successful test fire of the Hwasongpho-17 ICBM greatly bolsters the self-defence capability of the DPRK. Bolstering the DPRK's self-defensive capability is an important requirement of the times as the US imperialists, south Korean puppet and other vassal states of the US imperialists are threatening the DPRK both militarily and by increasing sanctions. Moreover, the international situation is becoming more unstable every day due to the US imperialist moves for aggression in many parts of the world.

As respected Kim Jong Un pointed out: "If the enemies continue to pose threats to the DPRK, frequently introducing nuclear strike means, our Party and government will resolutely react to nukes with nuclear weapons and to total confrontation with all-out confrontation." This shows the DPRK's resolute stance and its will to defend itself.

Congratulations to People's Korea on its successful ICBM test! Another great victory for Songun and Juche! It is also a great victory for the world proletariat and world anti-imperialist independent forces!

Dermot Hudson South London

Dear Comrades

You cover things you can't access in any other publication. The regular Bulletin you send through on the Ukraine is excellent. There is no acceptance here or across Europe that there is another side to the conflict. This is just part of the huge problem of censorship across the media. Keep up the good work!

Rowena Harrison Dunstable

Dear Comrades

Prince Andrew has visited Bahrain in secret amidst claims he is eyeing an unofficial role as intermediary between the West and Gulf states in the energy crisis.

The Duke flew out last week on the private jet of a billionaire Swiss contact to be pampered in all-expenses-paid luxury provided by friends in the Bahrain Royal Family, according to the *Sun*.

Sayed Ahmed Al Wadaei, Director Of Advocacy at Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), said the prince's relationship with the ruling family was "toxic and shameful". He said: "For several years, he visited the country and met with Bahrain's police force, despite their record of violence, extreme interrogation tactics, and use of torture."

John Hughes Bahrain Freedom Movement London

Diary

SAT 3 DEC

Campaign for Trade Union Freedom: From Pentonville to P&O: union rights and Tory wrongs. National Conference. 11:00-16:00, Mander Hall, Mabledon Place London WC1H 9BD. Register on www.tradeunionfreedom.co.uk

MON 5 DEC

Barry Amiel & Norman Melburn Trust: Peter Nolan and Jenny Clegg on Understanding China in the new world order 19:00. Hybrid meeting at Marx Memorial Library and Online. Book on MML website.

FRI 9- SUN 11 DEC

Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp: Paices Hill, Aldermaston, RG7 4PW.

SAT 10 DEC

Arise: Solidarity, struggle, socialism: Rally. 10:00 Conway Hall 25 Red Lion Square, London, WC1R 4RL. Register at www.mstar.link/arise22.

FRI 12 JAN

Marx Memorial Library: Screening of Barry Gardiner's film on fire and re-hire. Details TBA.

SAT 13 DEC

Korean Friendship Association: Online meeting remember Chairman Kim Jong Il and the 105th anniversary of the birth of Madame Kim Jong Suk. Details TBA.

FRI 19 JAN

Marx Memorial Library: Alexander Buzgalin and guests on his new book on Marx's Capital in the 21st Century. Details TBA.

FRI 27 JAN

Soviet War Memorial Trust: Holocaust Memorial Day, Act of Remembrance 10:45 for 11:00 Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park (Imperial War Museum), London SE1 6HZ

FRI 27 JAN

Haringey Education Aid for Cuba: fundraiser with live Cuban music 19:30, £12:00 boo on Cuba Solidarity Campaign website.

SAT 28 JAN

Latin America Conference 2023: 10:00-17:00, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BD Tickets £10/ £8 at <https://bit.ly/LA23ticket>

The editor welcomes letters from our readers. If you have a contribution to make please make sure it reaches us before Wednesday. You can send your letters to: PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ, or email party@NCP.clara.net

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Scottish Political News

by our Scottish political affairs correspondent

LAST WEEK the Supreme Court ruled that the semi-autonomous government of Scotland cannot hold a vote on independence without the consent of the national government in London. The body's president, Lord Reed, said its five judges had unanimously ruled that the Edinburgh parliament "does not have the power to legislate for a referendum on Scottish independence".

As one might expect, the public reaction from Nicola Sturgeon, who took the case to the Supreme Court to clarify what is obvious to anyone who has read the Scotland Act 1998, was one of anger.

The SNP leader told a protest outside the Scottish parliament when the news broke that the result of the case she chose to bring demonstrated the "contempt the Westminster establishment shows for Scottish democracy".

That night there were a number of pre-planned protests by nationalists across Scotland, including the one attended by the First Minister Sturgeon outside Holyrood. This was a considerably smaller event than a rally by striking teachers the next day. All Under One Banner held a march and rally on Saturday in Glasgow, which seemed to consist of just the usual regulars who travel around Scotland for these events.

grumbles

One significant aspect of the reaction has been the amount of grumbles about the incumbent First Minister. Some of these come from the usual suspects such as Alex Salmond, who understandably pounces on any shortcomings by his former protégé. Alex Neil, the former health secretary, warned that Sturgeon's plan to turn the next general election into a "de facto referendum is unnecessarily high-risk". Perhaps more telling was the normally Sturgeon loyalist MP Mhairi Black who denounced her for saying Scottish democracy is a "prisoner of Westminster", adding: "That's not to say there aren't abuses in Scotland's history but the dynamic is just not comparable in any sense."

Many of Sturgeon's critics deplore that the fact that she has done nothing to increase support for the SNP's cause – unlike Alex Salmond who doubled support up for independence when he was at the helm.

Public opinion is more or less evenly divided on the question of independence. Even at their best, opinion polls have come nowhere near the 60 per cent Nicola Sturgeon once said would be a solid mandate for another referendum. If one poll reports a 50.1 per cent level of support when they divide up the "Don't Knows", another poll soon comes along refuting it. Nobody wagers the house on such odds.

A poll just after the Supreme Court ruling said 50 per cent would vote SNP in a General Election focused solely on independence, but only a quarter said it was a pressing issue.

Scottish Labour, on the other hand, remains in the shadow of the national leadership led by Keir Starmer – who has nothing to say about independence

apart from opposing it. Fearful of breaching the bourgeois consensus in the Westminster parliament, the Blairites even shy-away from the "devo-max" proposals floated by Gordon Brown as a "third way" solution to the Scottish issue.

Although the nationalists pose as social democrats when talking to workers, they are actually bourgeois liberals. They certainly don't talk about socialism – the one thing they do have in common with Scottish Labour – and waving the Brussels flag hasn't done them much good either. Arguing that independence was the key for getting back into the European Union was a divisive argument that failed to electrify the electorate.

The SNP clearly still have a mountain to climb in winning over the undecided and convincing unionist opinion in the Tory, Labour and Lib-Dem camps that independence is the best and indeed the only way forward for Scotland.

But the SNP-led Scottish government has other options within their powers to revive the Scottish economy – and one of them is to boost trade with People's China.

China and Scotland enjoy enormous scope for co-operation in trade and economy, education, culture, green energy, infrastructure, agriculture and creative industries. And that was the point stressed by Chinese Ambassador to Britain Zheng Zeguang at the China-Scotland Co-operation Forum held in Edinburgh last week.

Over the last 50 years since the establishment of China-UK ambassadorial diplomatic relations, Scotland and China have seen fruitful co-operation in economy and trade, Zheng said.

unique

The Scottish economy is unique and Scotland's resources are abundant, he said, noting that over the last two years, co-operation between the two sides has continued to grow, fully demonstrating its strength and resilience.

The business communities of both China and the UK should strengthen dialogue and expand mutually beneficial co-operation to push for growth, improve people's livelihoods and help achieve sustainable development goals, he



Jiang Zemin 1926 – 2022

Jiang Zemin, the president of People's China from 1993 to 2003, sadly passed away on Wednesday 30th November. He was 96. Jiang Zemin died of leukemia and multiple organ failure after all medical treatments had failed.

Comrade Jiang Zemin was an outstanding leader, a great Marxist, a great proletarian revolutionary, statesman, military strategist and diplomat, a long-tested communist fighter, and an outstanding leader of the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. He was the core of the Communist Party of China's third generation of central collective leadership and the principal founder of the Theory of Three Represents.

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added.

Also at the meeting, Fang Wenjian, the chairman of the China Chamber of Commerce in the UK, said that in recent years, Chinese enterprises have expanded their investment in Scotland from traditional areas to broader and more diversified sectors, adding that they have also actively undertaken corporate social responsibility and made an increasingly significant contribution to the Scottish economy, especially low-carbon development.

Sherard Cowper-Coles, chair of the China-Britain Business Council, said Scottish exports to China have been growing rapidly, and that co-operation between Scotland and China is increasingly close and with a bright future in

many areas including education, culture and tourism.

Chinese investment in Scotland is a win-win situation, says Graeme White, the global head of Inward Investment, Strategy and New Investment at the Scottish Development International, the international arm of the Scottish Government and Scotland's enterprise agencies.

"We're very keen to have a partnership approach with China, across a whole range of areas from tourism to student exchanges. And in my area, very importantly, investment," White said. "You can see that we have shared objectives in terms of going towards a net zero future and creating the jobs and industries that will be needed for the 21st Century."

Boris claims key role in Ukraine conflict

by James Tweedie

BORIS JOHNSON led the charge on arming Ukraine – both before and during Moscow’s military operation – and imposing sanctions and embargoes on Russian exports that prompted a Europe-wide inflationary crisis.

Now the former Prime Minister says that European leaders had hoped for a quick Russian victory in Ukraine.

In a TV interview last week with a US channel, Johnson also conceded that there were “sound economic reasons” for Germany wanting Kiev to agree swiftly to a peace deal with Moscow but that he “couldn’t support” it.

It was Johnson – backed by Washington – who persuaded Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky to break off peace talks with Russia just a month into the conflict, when they were on the verge of a breakthrough, during a visit to Kiev in late March.

But a US military analyst says Johnson “miscalculated” by encouraging the clash with Russia.

“The Germans, for all sorts of sound economic reasons, really didn’t want it,” Johnson told the broadcaster. “I’ll tell you a terrible thing, the German view was at one stage that if it were going

to happen, which would be a disaster, it would be better for the whole thing to be over quickly and for Ukraine to fold.”

“I couldn’t support that, I thought that was a disastrous way of looking at it. But I can understand why they thought and felt

mally recognised days earlier.

Meanwhile, Johnson also accused French President Emmanuel Macron of being too optimistic of a diplomatic solution even as “we could see the Russian battalion tactical groups amassing”.

of the Russian-speaking people” who had rejected the “puppet” government in Kiev “installed by the United States” in 2014, Bennett said.

“Russia’s special military operation was a necessary defensive move against the growing

Stream 1 and 2 gas pipelines from Russia, which Moscow has blamed on “Anglo-Saxon” nations, was designed to force Germany to “abandon its agenda of removing itself from the conflict and abandoning the US economic sanction war

itarian’ *Intervention to Advance Economic and Strategic Interests*, says that there was no country in the West willing to negotiate with Russia.

“The USA, which does not want to negotiate with Russia, and is putting pressure on the EU not to do so as well,” he said.

“I think the USA wanted this war,” Kovalik added. “That’s why it did not address Russia’s security concerns that could have been easily addressed.” He believes the West’s aim is simply to “destroy Russia”.

“They thought if they could suck Russia into Ukraine, they could then turn around and destroy Russia economically and or militarily, which has not happened. And so they want this war to continue and that’s why they don’t want to negotiate.”

He stressed that Russia had always been willing to talk peace but that the talks had been sabotaged by Kiev’s allies.

“Russia and Ukraine probably had a deal, at least the outlines of a deal sometime in March or April,” Kovalik pointed out, but “Boris Johnson went to scuttle the deal.”

Returning to the raft of mutual security proposals that Russia presented to the USA and other NATO members in December 2021 – only to have them rejected out of hand – Kovalik said their belligerent stance would continue “unless there is a change in governments in those countries”.

“I don’t think in terms of Germany and France that’s their instinctual position,” he said, but “the USA is kind of running the show and pressuring those countries to take on Russia” – and that policy of trying to “undermine” Moscow would continue. **Sputnik**

• The RAF flying in anti-tank weapons to Ukraine.



as they did,” Johnson said.

“I remember the Italians, again, massively dependent on Russian hydrocarbons, at one stage simply saying that they would be unable to support the position we were taking,” he added.

Johnson was also amongst the most strident voices for sanctions and embargoes on imports of Russian fuels, food and fertilisers, which prompted the inflationary crisis that is set to tip most of Europe into recession.

His government was also one of the biggest providers of military assistance to Ukraine before and after the launch of Russia’s military operation on 24th February, which Moscow says pre-empted a Ukrainian offensive on the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics that it had for-

“Be in no doubt that the French were in denial right up until the last moment,” he claimed.

Western Miscalculation

Scott Bennett, a former US Army psychological warfare officer, says Johnson had always harboured delusions of being another Winston Churchill, Britain’s Second World War leader.

“Churchill was a former military commander and diplomat, while Boris Johnson is a clown in search of a circus,” he said.

Johnson had “miscalculated regarding Ukraine and Russia, and foolishly expected the Russian government to allow NATO and the USA and Britain to launch an invasion into the Donbas region in a final extermination

NATO aggression and Ukrainian proxy army threat,” the former officer said, “and this defence operation by Russia was fully justified and indeed absolutely necessary in order to preserve the lives of Russians.”

Bennett said Johnson’s reliance on accusations, threats and insults against Russian president Vladimir Putin led him to “miscalculate and commit errors in his political judgment, communication strategy and policy agenda”.

The former PM’s downfall came when Brits grew “increasingly dissatisfied” with the conflict in Ukraine and “Britain’s wasteful and foolish expenditures of money and resources” and he lost the confidence of his Conservative Party.

Bennett said the sabotage of the Nord

against Russia”.

He argued that the sabotage served Washington’s agenda since “an enslaved Germany has always been the essential cornerstone of a US-dominated Europe”, but stressed it was likewise a miscalculation.

“The German people are increasingly viewing the United States as a slave-master rather than a friend and ally, and this will most likely lead to violent political and social unrest – if not revolution – in Germany over the next six months,” Bennett said.

No Will for Peace

Dan Kovalik, adjunct professor of law at the University of Pittsburgh and the author of *No More War: How the West Violates International Law by Using Human-*

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by Tang Yuankai

TWENTY years ago, the Chinese football team competed in World Cup competitions. In recent years however, Chinese fans have had to enjoy the World Cup without a national stake in it.

Although China's national football team plays and stays at a regional level, the Chinese public are still eagerly following the FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

Peaking enthusiasm

The time difference between China and Qatar is five hours. Most matches are taking place during China's late nights and early mornings, particularly the knock-out rounds. Due to the impact of COVID-19, most Chinese soccer fans will have to watch the matches at home and thus many fewer fans will head to Qatar for the competition.

Hardcore fans, however, will not be satisfied with catching up via morning news feeds or video recordings. They will try their best to watch the whole match live, even if weeks of sleepless nights will leave them with dark circles under their eyes.

Broadcasting of World Cup matches will greatly increase viewership. During the 2002 Korea–Japan World Cup, a China Central Television (CCTV) programme devoted to the matches reached an accumulated audience of six billion people.

In addition to fans, Chinese enterprises are also involved in this year's World Cup. Lusail Stadium is the first major FIFA World Cup ground built with Chinese companies as major contractors. It is also the largest stadium Chinese companies have ever built in a foreign country and it can accommodate 92,000 spectators.

The Chinese passion for football runs high



• China won the Women's Asian Cup, 2022.

Products made in China for this year's World Cup range from stadium equipment and new-energy vehicles to footballs, shirts, scarfs and souvenirs.

According to the local sporting goods association in Yiwu City in Zhejiang province, the home to the world's largest small commodity wholesale market, 70 per cent of the peripheral products sold during the Qatar World Cup tournament will come from Yiwu. Thanks to the special ocean shipping route for the World Cup, it takes just 20–25 days for products made in Yiwu to reach the docks of Hamad in Qatar from the ports of Ningbo, also in Zhejiang and Shanghai.

China's FIFA efforts

In recent years, a growing number of Chinese businesses have begun to sponsor World Cup tournaments. Of

the 14 top sponsors in Qatar, seven are Chinese companies.

When the Sixth World Cup began on 8th June 1958 in Sweden and was broadcast live for the first time, CCTV had been operating for little over a month. From then on, the Chinese team began to fight to qualify in the competition.

The Hungarian national football team visited China just before taking second place in the 1954 World Cup. The Chinese team lost all 11 of its matches against the Hungarians, the widest gap being an 8:1 defeat at the hands of Hungary's "golden squad". After that, young Chinese players were sent to Hungary for training.

In the early 1970s these players returning from Hungary to China became coaches of the national team, but rarely did they watch the World Cup games on TV because then a TV set was too big a luxury for most Chinese fam-

ilies. In 1978, CCTV broadcast the semi-final and final of the World Cup in Argentina. China began to implement the reform and opening-up policy in the late 1970s, but at that point only 13 per cent of households owned a TV.

In those early days of black-and-white television, dozens of people would gather around a single set. It was not until colour TV entered tens of millions of households that many Chinese came to witness the failure of their national team in their bid to qualify for World Cup tournaments.

Many efforts and attempts have been exerted to improve the Chinese national team in previous years. In addition to reforms, the team has naturalised foreign players and employed well-known foreign head coaches such as Bora Milutinovic, who sent several national teams into the World Cup top 16, and Marcello Lippi, under whose guidance Italy won the

World Cup in 2006. In 2001, under Milutinovic, the Chinese team finally qualified for that year's World Cup, much to the delight of Chinese lovers of the beautiful game.

Bittersweet

The Chinese team has, since then, never again participated in a World Cup. Evergrande Group, a Chinese real estate giant based in Guangdong province, got involved in Chinese football in 2010 and its Guangzhou Evergrande Taobao Football Club won eight championships in the Chinese Football Association (CFA) Super League over the last 10 years and even two championships in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Champions League. Meanwhile, with the arrival of world-class foreign coaches, the Chinese FA Super League is extremely robust. Over the last 10 years ballooning

transfer fees have led to more than 30 multi-million-dollar deals with foreign players.

In the long run, however, in a country of poorly performing football teams, money is distorting the sector. The Chinese teams are falling behind even their Asian rivals in terms of league competitiveness, management, training systems and discovering promising young players.

Worse still, the Chinese men's teams are lured into the traps of quick success by defying the actual rules of the game. Fortunately, some are trying to draw lessons from these bitter experiences.

Meanwhile, the Chinese women's team has brought hope. In the final of the AFC Women's Asian Cup in February, the Chinese team turned around an unfavourable situation and finally won the match in a 3:2 victory over south Korea to win the championship for the ninth time.

In the 1999 FIFA Women's World Cup, the Chinese team managed to compete in the final. And after 14 years of missing from the FIFA list, the team is now set to compete in the 2023 Women's World Cup.

In October, several departments, including the General Administration of Sport of China, Ministry of Education and the Chinese FA, jointly released a plan for the reform and development of Chinese women's football between 2022–2035, setting the goal that by 2030 the Chinese team should return to world-class standards.

Nowadays, numbers of new recruits by the women's team have sharply increased and their training level and competition results continue to rise. The plan further states that China is preparing to place its bid for hosting the 2031 FIFA Women's World Cup.

Beijing Review

Israelis shunned at Qatar World Cup

ISRAELIS attending the World Cup in Qatar say they are meeting an atmosphere of hostility and hatred, with fans refusing to speak to Israeli journalists, waving Palestinian flags in the background of their videos and yelling at them.

Moav Vardy, KAN TV's foreign affairs reporter, was yelled at by a Saudi fan, who told him that: "You are not welcome here. This is Qatar. This is our country. There is only Palestine, no Israel."

Other videos from Qatar show people immediately walking away when they find out the person interviewing them is Israeli. In one particular video, N12's Ohad Hemo begins to interview a group of Lebanese men who walk away when Hemo tells them he's Israeli. One of them then turns back and asks Hemo what he's doing there and then tells him that Israel doesn't exist.

In other videos, people stand behind various Israeli reporters and raise

Palestinian flags to protest against Israel.

Israeli soccer legend and KAN panel member at the World Cup, Eli Ohana, also faced anti-Israel sentiments when he was driven on a golf cart by a Qatari policeman. When Ohana mentioned that he was an Israeli, the officer asked him if he was joking. Ohana then said that he was Portuguese in order to avoid trouble. The officer told him that if Ohana was Israeli, he would turn the car around and refuse to drive him.

Raz Shechnick, *Yedioth Ahronoth* reporter for the World Cup, wrote on his Twitter account about his experiences in Qatar regarding the atmosphere for Israeli media and fans. In a series of tweets, Shechnick described an atmosphere of rejection and hostility from both locals and foreigners attending the games.

"We didn't want to write these words, we are not the story here. But after ten days in Doha, we cannot hide what we are going



• Palestinian flags fly in Qatar.

through. We are feeling hated, surrounded by hostility, not welcomed." He also described an incident in which he and his colleague had lied about their country of origin, saying they were Ecuadorian in order to prevent them from being harassed by fans.

Israeli journalist Dor Hoffman reported on

Thursday that a Qatari taxi driver kicked him out of his cab after he discovered he was Israeli, refusing to take his money. He later continued to a restaurant on a Qatari beach, where he was escorted out of the restaurant by security, with the owner demanding that he delete every photo taken in his restaurant. Hoffman

said that the owner took his phone and that he felt threatened.

On Saturday, Tunisian fans waved a banner saying "Free Palestine" despite Qatar and FIFA's policy of not allowing political protests at matches, a policy which led to the confiscation of rainbow-coloured items

in support of the LGBT community, and Iranian anti-regime signs.

But Jerusalem resident Michael Janekowitz, a former spokesman for the Jewish Agency, who is also in Qatar for the World Cup, refuted the claims that Israelis were being targeted and said his experience has been without incident.

"Qatar is very welcoming to the Israeli visitors," he said. "These Israeli journalists are going with magnifying glasses to find haters of Israel. Most of these Israel bashers have come to the World Cup from outside of Qatar. They are like being provoked by headline-seeking Israeli journalists."

"Qatar has a population of about 3.3 million of whom only 300,000 are Qataris. The other three million are mostly workers from mainly India, Bangladesh, Kenya, Uganda, Philippines and Sudan," he added, saying that was where the antagonism against Israelis was emanating from.

Radio Havana Cuba

Africans are victims of capitalism, imperialism and colonisation

AFRICAN people have been the victims of Anglo-Zionist capitalism, imperialism and colonisation that have created a false demand for blood diamonds, says political analyst Ramiro Funez, an activist and political commentator based in Los Angeles. He made the comments in an interview with Press TV.

"The reason for the exploitation of African children and the extraction of blood diamonds is the current Anglo-Zionist world order that created the diamond industry, to begin with," Funez said.

"The demand has created a whole market around the extraction of these rare minerals and jewels that ultimately resulted in the loss of millions of lives, especially young children,

so the African people have been a victim to Anglo-Zionist capitalism, imperialism, and colonisation that has created a false demand for something that has no intrinsic value."

A new report by the Global Witness campaign states that much of the world's supply of coltan, tungsten and tin were extracted in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) using child and forced labour. The beneficiaries of these blood or conflict minerals are the world's biggest tech companies, including Alphabet, BMW, Apple and Tesla.

The DRC is considered to be amongst the richest countries in the world in terms of natural resources. Its untapped deposits of raw minerals are estimated to be worth in excess of

24 trillion dollars.

Despite this, the DRC has some of the poorest people in the world. Numerous reports indicate that global tech giants have been looting Congo's rare minerals. To add insult to injury, they are buying minerals extracted by children working in slavery-like conditions.

Funez mentioned the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's remarks describing the USA as "a great Satan" and "a great deceiver".

"The great deceiver always lies about their true intention. The USA and the European powers go into continents like Africa, Asia and Latin America with the claim of wanting to develop the area or promoting human rights and uplifting people,"

he said. "They are in there with the sole intent of extracting minerals and raw materials resources."

Funez went on to add that the increased fighting between groups in the DRC and neighbouring areas as well as the so-called South Sudan, an artificial nation created by the USA and backed by Israel, is because of the high demand for rare earth minerals.

The people of the DRC also believe the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the region are working at the behest of imperialist powers. Recently, Congolese civilians attacked a UN peacekeeping convoy, injuring several people. They accused the UN mission of failing to protect them from worsening militia violence.

"There's a huge contradiction in the resources that are available in the DRC and in Central Africa, versus how these resources are distributed," Funez explained, suggesting that leaders who are subservient to the World Trade Organisation, London and Wall Street, and international banking institutions, must know that the only solution to this is to bring the power back to the people.

The investigation by the Global Witness campaign found that smelters and manufacturers that use coltan, tungsten and tin in cars, mobile devices and other electronics can't be sure the minerals have been extracted without using children or forced labour.

The International Tin Supply Chain Initiative (ITSCI), which is supposed to guarantee responsible supply chains, has ignored or downplayed failures in the monitoring and chain of custody of mining in the DRC. Tech companies, mostly from Western countries, are ready to obtain blood or conflict minerals from Africa, even if that means walking on the skeletons of African children.

Clearly, slavery is still being practiced by Western countries, such as the USA, France and Britain, who claim to champion human rights. The Western powers are looking away amidst this gross violation of the rights of African children by Western tech giants.

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