



Workers of all lands, unite!

CP BRITAIN CP BRITAIN

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international bulletin

US, Israel, Saudi Arabia conspire to strangle Palestine

Joint statement by the Palestinian People's Party and the Communist Party of Israel, 5 June 2020 signed by 80 Communist and Workers parties across the world including the CP Britain
The PPP is the successor party of the Palestine Communist Party and a member of the PLO. The CP Israel is a member of the Hadash/Joint List alliance, the fourth biggest party in the Knesset.

Occupation is Terror, Annexation is Apartheid
 On June 5th 2020 it is the 53rd anniversary of the 1967 aggressive war when Israel occupied the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza strip, the Syrian Golan and Sinai peninsula.
 This anniversary comes in the shadow of the Israeli government's declared intention to annex the Occupied Palestinian Lands supported by the American administration, as part of the disastrous "Deal of the Century". The means perpetuating the occupation, deepening the settlements and creating an official Apartheid regime while clearing the Palestinian people's right

of self-determination and preventing the end of occupation, the settlements and the establishment of a Palestinian independent state on the borders of June 4th 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital and the right of return for refugees according to international resolutions.
 Netanyahu's government and Trump's administration are pulling the region to the edge of catastrophe. They are both perpetuating conflict in the service of projects to fasten their joint hegemony over the Middle east. They are betting on the silence of the international community in face of these crimes – war crimes – as the world is preoccupied with COVID-19.

We, the undersigned workers' and communist parties of the world, call upon the progressive anti-imperialist forces around the world to continue the struggle against this criminal Israeli policy and its callous and unprincipled support for imperialism in liquidating the rights of the Palestinian People and exterminating any chance to exercise international law and attain security and stability in the region.
 Down with the Occupation!
 Forward with the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination!

World-wide Covid deaths expose capitalism as a social system

Since our April Bulletin the tragic world-wide death toll from covid 19 has starkly illustrated the contrast between socially-planned economies and those driven by the imperatives of capitalist profit.
 China's death rate from Covid has remained at 0.3 per 100,000 – with no more than 8,400 deaths in a population of 1,400,000,000. Cuba's death rate is 0.7 per 100,000 – just 88 in total. Vietnam's remains at 0. All three countries have supplied massive amounts of medical aid to other countries and all have sent medical teams throughout the world. All three have also more than double the number of hospital beds compared to Britain. China has acted immediately and publicly to contain a new area of infection in a neighbourhood of Beijing – which was identified as a result of the country's comprehensive testing regime.
 Britain's death rate is now the second highest in the world at 68.8 per 100,000 – with all workers now being pressed to return to work. At a minimum estimate over 42,000 people have lost their lives (the Alternative Sage estimate is 62,000). In the US there have now been 119,000 deaths with a death rate of 36 per 100,000 – up from 18 per 100,000 in April. Italy's is now less than Britain at 53.9 per 100,000. In India, with 12,900 deaths, the death rate is rapidly increasing – with the highest concentration in Mumbai – and stands at 0.9 per 100,000. This is in stark contrast to the state of Kerala, under a Communist-led government for the past two decades and with a strong welfare state. There the death rate is 0.05 per 100,000 in a total population of 34 million. In Brazil, where the extreme right-wing government has opposed any systematic lockdown there have been 47,000 deaths – a death rate of 23 per 100,000. In Iran over 9,000 people have died with a death rate of 11.8 per hundred thousand.

The European Union fails to act

CAROL STAVRIS REPORTS
 The dilemma for the European Union if Israel goes ahead with its plan to annex its settlements built on Palestinian land in the West Bank is how then to legitimise its dealings with a country that has so blatantly defied UN Security Council resolution 2334, adopted in 2016, which states that Israel's settlement activity constitutes a "flagrant violation" of International Law and has "no legal validity". It demands that Israel stop such activity and fulfill its obligations as an occupying power under the Fourth Geneva Convention.
 The EU could, in combination with the United Nations and the League of Arab States, mount a strong protest now to try to stop Israel's plan.
 The majority of EU members oppose annexation but there is weakness and division on what to do about it. There has been no serious attempt to confront Israel's unlawful actions over time or to recognise a Palestinian State, effectively abandoning the Palestinians to Israeli controlled 'bantustans'.
 Annexation would challenge the EU's stated position for a two-state solution by Israel's contempt for International Law on the prohibition of acquisition of territory by force, resulting in a one-state reality for Palestinians. Some member states will push for sanctions.
 The fallout from annexation threatens bilateral trade relations as the EU presently distinguishes between Israel and the settlements and does not recognise Israeli sovereignty over occupied Palestine.
 The EU's response could be to widen and strengthen the measures against Israeli settlement goods, extend it into financial and consular services without the necessity of a new decision from the European Council.
 Opposition from some EU member states within the European Parliament make it unlikely that the EU will be able to sign new agreements with Israel.

Right-wing coalition in Israel threatens West Bank annexations

ROBERT WILKINSON REPORTS
 The surprising outcome to long-serving Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's seemingly endless manoeuvring has been the conclusion of a power sharing deal between him and his apparent nemesis Benny Gantz. The coalition was described by The Times of Israel as a 'resurgent Netanyahu' who 'can advance annexation and has a guarantee of elections if High Court disqualifies him' as a result of 'his indictment on corruption charges'.
 Netanyahu accused the Supreme Court as being part of a 'judicial deep state' along with what he sees as the 'liberal establishment' and the media in their continuing attempts to bring him to trial on charges of corruption.
 The Times of Israel article concluded that 'Gantz has merely handed Netanyahu at least another six-month stint as prime minister, during which the incumbent will further boost his current much improved popularity by quashing the pandemic, healing its economic consequences, and pushing ahead with annexation'.
 Expectations that the most recent election had enabled Benny Gantz of the Kahol Lavan (Blue and White) bloc to oust Netanyahu had been dashed by Gantz's reluctance to form a government that relied for its majority upon support from the centre and Left parties.
 Benny Gantz and his Kahol Lavan coalition had received the support of many voters (especially from the Druze ethnic minority) in the expectation that he would effect changes in the recently adopted ethnically exclusionary 'Nation State Law'. Gadeer Kamal-Mreeh of Gantz's own party Israel Resilience, the first Arab-Druze woman elected to the Knesset, vowed she would not join Gantz in the new government. She said 'I came to politics to replace the racist, divisive government of the Nation State Law and not to be a partner in it'.
 Gantz's acceptance of the post of Prime Minister in waiting (set to take office in 18 months' time) and Netanyahu's policy of the unilateral annexation of the Jewish settlements

in the Palestinian Occupied Territories on the West Bank, resulted in many of his former supporters denouncing him as weak in the face of Netanyahu's mishandling of the Covid19 crisis and 'moral rotteness'.
 The Communist Party of Israel said in a statement that the 'formation of the new far-right annexation government means an end to the two-state solution and the dismantling of the rights of the Palestinian people as established under international law and resolutions and more neoliberal economic and social capitalist policies'.
 The 'liberal' newspaper Haaretz in an editorial warned that Israel was 'Heading for a Shin Bet Police State' as emergency regulations had been enacted to control the spread of the coronavirus. The Shin Bet (Security Service) and the police had been given extensive surveillance powers to monitor the population. It argued that 'Shin Bet's recklessness in the occupied territories, the methods put at its disposal and its almost unlimited powers, with no real judicial and public supervision, are the foundation on which the state now leans in seeking to move these methods into Israel proper.' It certainly appeared that chickens were coming home to roost.
 The new right wing coalition government is headed by what the Israeli media described as a 'bloated' cabinet whose membership has been enlarged by apostates from the Kahol Lavan bloc without too many of Netanyahu's Likud Party being disadvantaged. They have even considered implementing a 'Norwegian Law' so that government Ministers would resign their seats in the Knesset being replaced by the next candidate on the Party Lists with which Israeli elections are fought out.
 No matter how many times the Israeli political establishment shuffles the pack, they are playing with a marked deck of cards. Hopes for a just peace with the Palestinians will never come whilst the Joker remains in the White House. Even the normally compliant King Abdullah of Jordan has denounced the annexation plan and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas threatened to withdraw from the security agreements that had been agreed in the Oslo

MIDDLE EAST

The ground shifts between the United States, Iran and Iraq

Iraqi Communist Party: early elections is people's urgent demand

FROM SALAM ALI

The new Iraqi government headed by Mustafa al-Kadhimi was finally endorsed by the Parliament in the early hours of 7th May after several weeks of manoeuvres by the ruling blocs and an undeclared US-Iranian consensus. This important development came about more than five months after the previous Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi was forced to announce his resignation after a massacre of tens of young protesters committed by security forces in the city of Nasiriyah in southern Iraq.

Among the principal demands of the Popular Uprising, that erupted on 1 October 2019, was the setting up of a transitional government that would prepare for early elections and also bring to justice those responsible for killing more than 700 peaceful protesters.

The obstinate refusal of the ruling blocs to comply with the demands of popular protests deepened the political impasse. An already deep political crisis was further aggravated by the coronavirus pandemic and an unprecedented economic crisis caused by the sharp fall in the prices of oil. Worst hit by these two recent crises were the poor and low-income strata. Popular resentment therefore intensified, threatening to ignite a new wave of protests with far-reaching consequences for the corrupt oligarchy. Furthermore, there has been a recent upsurge in terrorist attacks by remnants of Daesh targeting security forces in some areas in three provinces north of Baghdad.

The formation of Al-Kadhimi's government thus came about as a result of the current balance of forces, the clinging of ruling blocs to the sectarian-ethnic quota system and external interference in Iraq's internal affairs. But it also reflects the new facts that have been created in the political scene by the courageous October Popular Uprising.

The new PM declared in the programme which he presented to the Parliament that his government is transitional. He mentioned a

number of important issues that are among the main demands of the people and the Uprising.

The Iraqi Communist Party had elucidated these urgent demands soon after the eruption of the popular uprising last October. They were further developed after the coronavirus pandemic and the new economic crisis.

Among these urgent demands are the following:

- 1- Combating the coronavirus pandemic, tackling its consequences.
- 2- Alleviating the suffering of the people, especially the poor and low-income strata.
- 3- Confronting Daesh and terrorist groups.
- 4- Conducting early elections under effective UN supervision and on the basis of a just electoral system.
- 5- Bringing to account those responsible for killing the peaceful protesters.
- 6- Taking firm measures against corruption.
- 7- Resolving the issues of internally-displaced people, revealing the fate of the forcibly disappeared and rebuilding the areas that were liberated from Daesh.
- 8- Dismantling the Deep State and putting an end to the role of militias and outlawed armed elements.
- 9- Adopting an alternative economic policy that leads to sustainable development, tackling the rentier state of the economy, diversifying it and reviving the productive sectors.
- 10- Protecting Iraq's sovereignty and preventing external interference in its internal affairs.

It is also quite clear that none of the promises made by the new PM, Al-Kadhimi, can be achieved without popular pressure. His government will therefore be judged on the basis of what it actually achieves, in deeds not words, regarding these priorities and concrete measures.

Iraqi Communists, meanwhile, remain fully committed to the demands of the people and the peaceful protest movement, and to continuing the popular pressure, until their goal in abolishing the sectarian-ethnic quota system, and establishing the desired alternative: a democratic civil state and social justice, is achieved.

SALAM ALI IS INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE IRAQI COMMUNIST PARTY

AFRICA

Tribute to Denis Goldberg 1933-2020 hero of the anti-apartheid struggle

Dennis Goldberg died on 29 April 2020. As a co-defendant with Nelson Mandela at the 1963 Rivonia Trial he was sentenced to four life sentences and was imprisoned for 22 years. He was the youngest of the defendants.

Born in Cape Town in 1933 and taking an engineering degree at its university, Goldberg was politicised as a child reading about the struggles against fascism in Europe. He became active in the anti-apartheid movement as a student and was recruited into the Communist Party by Bram Fischer. During the State of Emergency of 1960 he was arrested and imprisoned for four months. When released he took part in the formation of the African National Congress's armed wing uMkhonto weSizwe MK in 1961 and, as a trained engineer, acted as its technical officer. He was arrested at the SACP's headquarters at Liliesleaf Farm in July 1963 along with Mandela.

On his release he worked in the ANC's London office from 1985-1993. He acted as spokesperson for the ANC at the Anti-Apartheid Committee of the United Nations

and during his time in London he worked closely with Britain's Communist Party and YCL forming close links and building on the history of the YCL's London Recruits in previous decades. He returned to South Africa in 2002 and was appointed Special Adviser to Ronnie Kasrils, then Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, until 2004. He worked subsequently on plans for community development in Cape Town. These will be continued in his honour.

The ANC London Recruits issued a statement on his death. 'His integrity and strength, generosity and kindness - qualities critical in the fight against injustice - had not diminished with the years but had, rather, been enhanced. He was a man of principle and a man of stature. A man also of humour and good will.'

John Hunter, General Secretary of the YCL

Africa and the politics of water

LIZ PAYNE REPORTS

Access to clean water, for drinking and sanitation, is denied to a growing number of people in many countries. According to the World Health Organisation half the population of the world will live in water-stressed areas by 2025. Parts of Africa are already experiencing the effects of severe water scarcity - caused by a combination of climate change, the impact of interference with river catchments, industrial pollution of water sources, and urbanisation

In Iran the struggle for progressive change reaches a crucial juncture

FROM NAVID SHOMALI

Iran is in the midst of a complex series of contradictions that have severely shaken the foundations of the ruling theocratic dictatorship to the point of inevitable major social and political upheaval in the forthcoming period. The political developments inside Iran have been marked by a serious and growing crisis of legitimacy for the Islamic Republic (IRI) - rooted in economic collapse, widespread corruption and continuing brutal mass oppression.

The huge uprising and protests that erupted in November 2019 continued for several days in more than 100 cities. The main participants came from the working class, underemployed and unemployed. In January 2020 people took to the streets again protesting against the regime's distortion of the realities behind the shooting down of a Ukrainian airliner leaving the international airport in Tehran - with the loss of all 176 people onboard. Many of these protesters were born after the 1979 Revolution in Iran and had experienced no other government than that of the Islamists.

The regime's social base has now shrunk significantly and opposition is widespread. Protests by workers dissatisfied with their poverty wages and sky-high inflation are commonplace. Workers at major industrial complexes across Iran - including the Iran National Steel Industry Group (in Ahvaz), HEPCO and Azarab heavy engineering manufacturers - are now joining the strikes to protest against their wages and conditions of service including the prohibition on their right to self-organise.

However, these protest actions remain unlinked overall and are vulnerable to the hostile tactics of the employers and their backers in the regime.

The clerical regime has totally failed to respond to the realities of the socioeconomic situation of the waged, salaried, retired, unemployed and underemployed. Obviously, the imposition of cruel sanctions over the last few years has added to the intensity of economic collapse - with the national currency devalued by more than 500 percent over the last two years alone and the current rate of inflation soaring at well above 43 percent. However, the main cause of the economic crisis is not the US sanctions. The IRI is now reaping the harvest it has sown over the last three decades through its harsh neoliberal restructuring, which has led to a hollowed-out and unproductive national economy that is

unsupported by infrastructure, as well as the effects of conflict on public health provision. Approximately one in three of the continent's population are affected, with several countries including Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Somalia being among the most water-deprived on the planet. What is needed, as the COVID-19 crisis and recent Ebola outbreaks have demonstrated, is investment in public infrastructure. Stiff fines for mega-polluters must help to cover the cost. Multinational mining corporations listed on the London Stock Exchange control over \$1 trillion in 37 countries of sub-Saharan Africa. Ultimately, their operations must be nationalised so that income from high-value resource extraction can be used not to amass private fortunes but to meet people's basic needs.

Water in vast quantities is also vital for agriculture, industry, and as a source of power. Water rights are set to become highly contentious internationally, with water replacing oil as the most fought-over prize in the resource wars of the future. A glimpse of how this might look is afforded by current tensions between the governments of Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) on the Blue Nile. When complete, the GERD will be the largest hydroelectric plant in Africa and one of the biggest in the world. But Egypt and Sudan are downstream of Ethiopia and their water supply, including for irrigation, is under threat. The scale of the concern is indicated by the fact that 85% of the water that enters Egypt comes through Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, however, wants control. Its economy and infrastructure desperately need the electrical output. China,

import-based and wholly reliant on the export of crude oil. This economic crisis in Iran is bound to worsen due to the severe damage caused by the COVID-19 epidemic, continuing US sanctions and international disruption arising from the disastrous policies of the Trump administration.

While the continued tension between the IRI and US is not to be disregarded lightly, it is crucial to remember that the clerical regime is not progressive or anti-imperialist. The IRI has collaborated with the imperialist powers in their attack on and occupation of both Afghanistan and Iraq. There are currently important signs that, behind the scenes, a deal is in the making between the IRI and US. The installation of the new Iraqi prime minister, Mustafa al-Kadhimi, was the direct outcome of a secret deal in May between the two. Meanwhile, there is also talk of negotiations regarding a role for Iran in assisting the stabilisation of Afghanistan. Furthermore, on 5th June, the media reported an exchange of messages on Twitter between Trump and Javad Zarif, the Iranian Foreign Secretary. It is obvious that in return for the removal of economic sanctions and an accommodation of Iran by the Trump administration, the IRI is prepared to throw a lifeline to Trump in his forthcoming now imperilled bid for re-election.

The Tudeh Party of Iran (TPI) has stated that the Islamist regime is beyond reform - its fundamental nature as a dictatorship based on theocratic rule cannot change.

The class base of the regime is rooted in the finance-merchant capital with links to the bureaucratic-military bourgeoisie. Its survival hinges on the continuation of the "absolute role of the Supreme Leader" and the dominant "Political Islam" doctrine.

Therefore, the TPI is of the view that the continuation of the "absolute role of the Supreme Leader" and the role of theocracy is in conflict with the immediate demands of the majority of the people for fundamental change and the building of the foundations of democratic freedoms and social justice. We believe that the objective conditions for a National Democratic Revolution in Iran are present and that the difficult task ahead is realisation of the necessary subjective conditions to change the balance of forces on the ground. This can only be achieved by the formation of a united anti-dictatorial front.

The international situation and global balance of forces will also influence the future direction of our country and the speed of change. Therefore, worldwide support and solidarity is vital in helping the people of Iran to shape peace, democracy, human rights, social justice, and national sovereignty.

NAVID SHOMALI IS THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE TUDEH PARTY OF IRAN

Ethiopia's biggest trading partner, is set to run power lines to the plant and build an electric railway linking land-locked Ethiopia with the seaports of Djibouti - a true lifeline.

Egypt, backed by the US, has long put barriers in the way of the project and even allegedly threatened to sabotage construction. Addis Ababa, Khartoum, and Cairo have, however, been in talks 'facilitated' by the US and World Bank, on how and over what period the dam should become operational without affecting flow downstream. Egypt is demanding an on-site monitoring facility; Ethiopia says this would breach its sovereignty. After the US intervened directly tensions between Addis Ababa and Cairo heightened. Egypt and Sudan have argued that Ethiopia should not put any water in the structure without reaching a tripartite agreement. Ethiopia has responded to the effect that it has no need of anyone else's permission to fill its own dam and will begin to do so in July. In mid-May Cairo complained to the UN Security Council and has now accused Ethiopia of holding Egypt hostage.

Aside from a warning of the kind of tension and dangerous flare ups that might lie ahead, what the affair demonstrates is that retreat into national isolationist positions will never produce a solution. A democratic and peaceful future depends on planned management of the vital resources that are shared between countries. Their governments must be able to so engage without the predatory interference of the US, capitalist financial institutions and the monopolies scrambling to control Africa's resources.



LEFT AND RIGHT IN THE AMERICAS

Uruguay: the right-wing takes over

FROM WENDY EMMETT

Between 2005 and 2020, and following years of right wing governments and dictatorships, a left coalition, the Broad Front, ruled Uruguay. The political orientation of the Front ranges from democratic socialism to Marxism-Leninism, and the Communist Party of Uruguay (PCU) is a core member. It has a strong following in the country, with a presence in all social classes and all generations.

During the past fifteen years the Front has led the nation through significant growth in the economy, as well as a reduction of unemployment rates and the levels of poverty and extreme poverty. Under that government the county proved to be a successful model to alleviate inequality, reducing poverty to 8.1 percent from 40 percent since 2004 and increasing the educational budget to "more than US\$2 billion." The leftist governments led by Pepe Mujica, a former leading member of the Tupamaros, and Tabare Vasquez also consolidated a series of labour rights as well as social rights including same-sex marriage, the legalization of abortion under certain circumstances and the expansion of transgender people's rights.

However, in the elections of 2019 the Broad Front narrowly lost the election due to all the right wing parties giving their support to the National Party, the support of the media, and interference by the US. There is a history of collaboration between Uruguay's conservatives and the Trump administration whereas the Broad Front has often opposed U.S. foreign policy in the region including U.S. attempts at regime change in Venezuela and the blockade on Cuba.

President Lacalle was inaugurated in March 2020. Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela's representatives were not invited to the event. Instead, Lacalle invited Bolivia's coup leader Jeanine Añez, a U.S.-backed senator who

proclaimed herself president of the Andean country, and Lacalle also acknowledges opposition politician Juan Guaido as Venezuela's president.

In a short period of time the government has demonstrated elements of neoliberalism with 200,000 people recently losing their jobs, and social programme cut, creating increasingly difficult living conditions for the most vulnerable. Steps have been taken to join the Lima Group, and there has been a push for trade liberalization within Mercosur, the South American customs union. With both positions, Lacalle's government aligns itself with Brazil under far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, while distancing itself from the recently elected Peronist administration of Alberto Fernandez in Argentina.

However the government has a very slim majority and is made up of many disparate parties making it less robust. At the same time a strong Broad Front presence in the General Assembly, the trade unions and on the street should act rein in any dramatic shifts in foreign and social policy.

Argentina – Left solidarity work under a centre-left government

ABBIE RHODES REPORTS

Mandatory isolation has been imposed by the Argentine government until at least the 24th of May. However, as the spread of the virus is not homogeneous across the country, jurisdictions can apply for varying degrees of exception to this isolation. Compliance with isolation consists of people making only minimum and essential trips to stock up on cleaning supplies, medicines and food. Those in the military, security, health service, fire service, meteorological service, ATC, as well as most diplomatic personnel and international services can be exempted in appropriate circumstances.

Several districts of Buenos Aires have been working with the Frente De Todos (coalition of socialist parties: 'Everybody's Front') during lockdown to supply canteens and picnic areas to the most vulnerable groups of people, particularly in the districts of Tres de Febrero and Vicente Lopez. In the city of Bahia Blanca, a bi-

weekly meeting has been initiated with commissions focusing on human rights, gender, and communications. The communists are active participants.

At the universities of Avellaneda and Lanus, student centres run by the Party have provided access to study materials and bibliographies online and free of charge. A series of podcasts on the discussion of healthcare as a human right were also recorded and distributed. Active political education and training continues during quarantine alongside the 90th anniversary of the death of Peruvian revolutionary Jose Carlos Mariategui, with readings of his essays on Marxism-Leninism, indigenismo, and the history of communism in Latin America. In the Barracas neighbourhood, the Tejada Gomez Cultural House is maintaining support classes for local children while schools are closed.

Chile: big business politics, Covid and the popular resistance

REPORT FROM ABBIE RHODES

The government have been late in adopting the necessary lockdown measures, only implementing them in metropolitan areas recently despite having months of warning from experts. President Piñera ignored clear advice based on concern raised by the Medical College on 16th March at a meeting called by its president. State funds are primarily destined for large companies: of the \$3 billion from FOGAPE that is intended to guarantee banks the loans that they grant, a large majority has been tendered for loans to medium and large companies. The small Mipymes entrepreneurs and persons dedicated to various enterprises – the generators of almost half the country's employment – are still waiting for government assistance and assistance from those same banks.

The Chilean Communist Party (PCC) have reported that small merchants, bus drivers, taxi drivers, artisans and other such workers have been left without income, or have seen their income ostensibly reduced, and continue to receive no help. Likewise, the COVID-19 voucher and the Emergency Family Income, which represent a very minor part of the

resources mobilized by the State, are stated by the PCC to be insufficient. Neither reach the hundreds of thousands of Chileans who have been left without income and are insufficient for those who do manage to access it.

The PCC are also currently fighting against the move by right-wing reactionaries to remove Communist Deputy Hugo Gutiérrez from parliament. Gutiérrez has a long history defending human rights, beginning in the fight against the Pinochet dictatorship, and is a founding promoter of the battle for a new political Constitution, by way of constituent assembly and based on popular sovereignty. The PCC report that the real reason for this persecutory attempt is that it is intended to remove from the Chilean people a deputy who has always acted in defence of their interests, in order to make way for a more regressive parliament led by the reactionary right.

PCC deputy Karol Cariola met with health workers in a San Jose hospital, where they reported to her a lack of medical supplies and PPE that was preventing them from combatting Covid-19 to the best of their ability.

Nicaragua – facing US sanctions

BEN LUNN REPORTS

The health ministry of Nicaragua has reported a rise in number of cases and deaths from Covid-19 with 759 cases being the most recently reported number and a total of 43 deaths (0.7 per 100,000 as against 34.2 per 100,000 in the US) The Pan-African Health Organisation (PAHO) have stated they expect to see an increase of Covid-19 cases within the central American nation. This has led to accusations of a government 'denial' of the severity of the pandemic or simple inaction from Ortega.

The Bolivarian Alliance of the Peoples of our America (ALBA-TCP) have slammed the US for recently placing more sanctions on the small nation. This sees Nicaragua, alongside Venezuela and Cuba, facing the ire of the US – being referred to as a 'Troika of Tyranny'. ALBA-TCP have called for international support to make sure, especially during these dangerous times, nations maintain their sovereignty, independence, and self-determination.

DEVELOPMENTS IN GERMANY

Based on discussions with representatives of the DKP and the Die Linke Communist Platform

LEO IMPETT REPORTS

An economy in crisis

The number of unemployed has strongly increased. 3.5 million are without work (the official figures give 2.8m at the end of May – which is 0.5 million more than late 2019 and excludes unemployed people over 58 who are not in the official statistics) The real figure is therefore 3.5 million and is not only due to Covid, but to the underlying economic crisis. Additionally around 6 million people are on Kurzarbeit (Furlough). Nobody knows if they will be allowed to return to their job after the crisis.

At the beginning of June the government announced a 130 bn euro programme to support the economy, most of which is for large enterprises. There is mostly for the automotive industry and some (10 bn) for the weapons industry. Very little is to meet the problems of local government (towns and villages) which has been in financial difficulties for the past 10-20 years. The federal government will pay slightly more for local government expenses but nothing significant.

Attitudes to Brexit and to a fiscal union for the EU: the significance of the Karlsruhe Supreme Court ruling

This is not particularly well-covered in the German media. The big worry of the German monopoly capitalists was large-scale state-controlled industries in Britain. But with Corbyn removed this worry is less acute.

On the issue of a fiscal union it is not clear that there has been any decisive change in favour of all-EU level tax collection and grant funding but, at the same time, the ruling of the German Supreme Court against this was not particularly significant.

Politicians from the right-wing CSU and AfD supported the concerns expressed by Court on the purchase of government bonds by the ECB at the 2.3 Tr Euro which the ECB has spent since 2014 under the public sector purchase program. The EU commission president V.d.Leyen has said that monetary policy was only a decision for the EU (not German constitutional court). Looking at the small print, the court's decision is far less important than at first sight. The court does

not say that the bond programs are fundamentally unconstitutional. They only said that the ECB and German Federal Bank (ECB's largest shareholder) has to explain its actions to the government and parliament in greater detail. There is therefore no threat at all to the 750 Bn Euro pandemic emergency purchase program and the judgement is of little political importance.

There are no grounds to assume that the main interests of German monopoly capitalism are against ECB policy (including the German Federal Bank. The situation is not like in other EC countries where significant portions of the national capitalist class are against the EC (the EC being, noted Renate Koppe, International Secretary of the DKP, an instrument of German imperialism). There has been very little comment from the mainstays of German capitalism (Frankf. Allge., Sudd. Zeitung, Handelsblatt etc). The main interest of German imperialism is to remain the dominant economic power within the EU.

Tensions within the SPD

More superficial than real – though resulting from declining electoral support (now around 16 per cent) and the discontent of the youth wing and the left. Left Wingers Walter-Borjans and Saskia Esken were elected as SPD leaders in December 2019 by a 53-47 per cent vote against right-winger and current German finance minister Scholz, a strong supporter neo-liberal monetarist policies. So far they have made very little progress. They opposed the Coalition with the CDU. But this remains. They wanted a tougher tax policy on big business but this has been resisted. They opposed the purchase of a new generation of jet bombers with A-bomb capacity to replace Tornados (which are designed to carry A-bombs). But this has also been resisted by Scholz who remains Vice Chancellor and Finance Minister and the SPD defence minister who claimed that there was no remit in SPD policy for opposing. This failure of the Left within the SPD has led to a defection of a number of left-wingers to Die Linke, including some trade union leaders.

ASIA PACIFIC

Cold War 1.5

FROM KEVAN NELSON

The May edition of the New European podcast featured New Labour acolyte Lord Andrew Adonis interviewing Kevin Rudd the former Labour Prime Minister of Australia on western relations with China.

'Are we on the verge of a new Cold War with

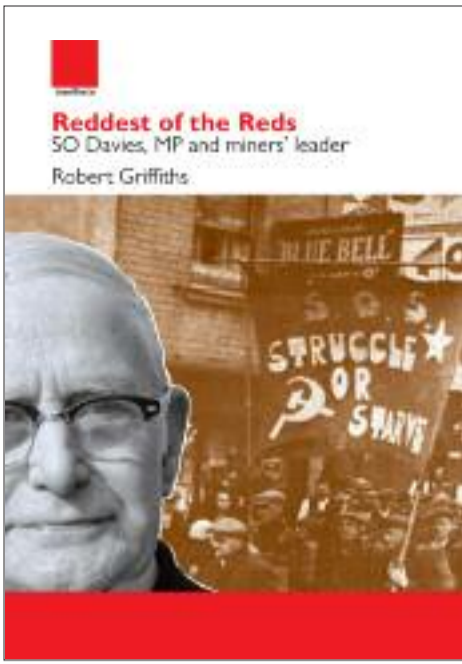
China?' asked the Atlanticist Peer. Rudd, a prolific commentator on Chinese affairs, replied cautiously 'Cold War 1.5' citing China's nuclear capability, ideological conflict, the evolution of the Belt and Road Initiative and simmering trade wars.

Australia's ruling class has long been compliant with the US war drive against China. John Pilger writing in Counterpunch on 3 June stated that Australia is a 'vassal state bar none: its politics, intelligence agencies, military and much of its media are integrated into Washington's sphere of dominance and war plans' and noted that in Trump's current provocations of China the US bases on Australia are the 'tip of the spear'. Rudd's reticence to endorse outright the

belligerence of Trump was matched by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in his 8 June speech launching 'NATO 2030 - steering the alliance in an increasingly competitive world' when he said that 'NATO does not see China as the new enemy but we must face up the country's growing might. They are growing closer to us in cyberspace, we see them in Africa, we see them investing in our critical infrastructure. And they're working more closely with Russia. All of this has security consequences for NATO allies'.

The smooth diplomacy of Washington's Brussels-based sock puppet belies the rising threat of conflict between the US and China. The 5 June statement of the Stop the War

Coalition was very timely - 'The US has pledged to spend \$1.5 billion dollars on new military technology and to refocus the Marines from combatting insurgents in the Middle East to facing of the Chinese in the Western Pacific. The moves by the British Government and some in the Labour leadership to endorse Trump's anti-China policy is to be condemned.' <http://www.stopwar.org.uk/index.php/news-comment/3705-statement-on-the-growing-danger-of-conflict-between-the-us-and-china>



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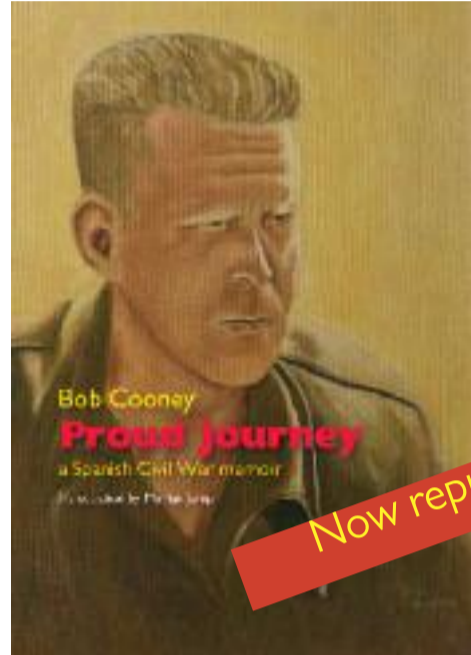
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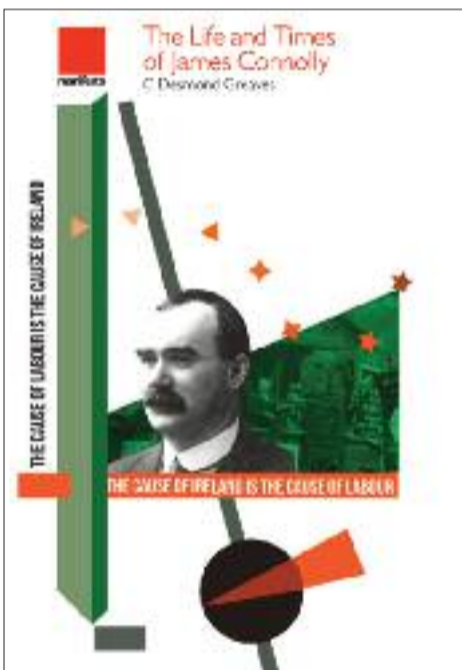


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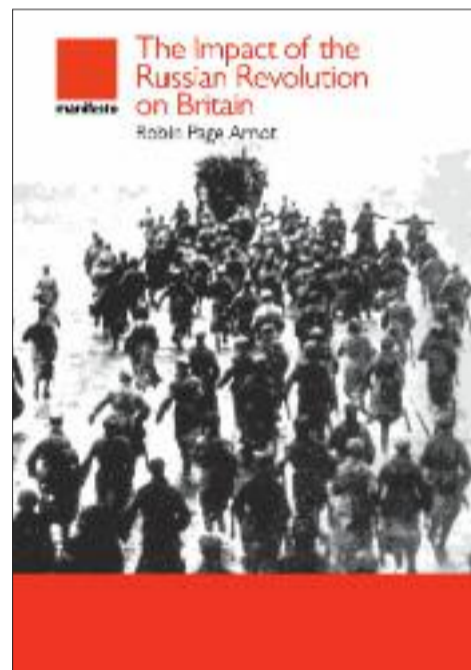


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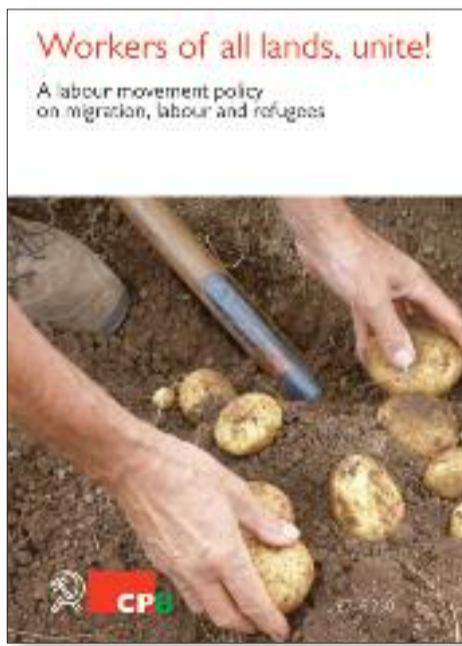
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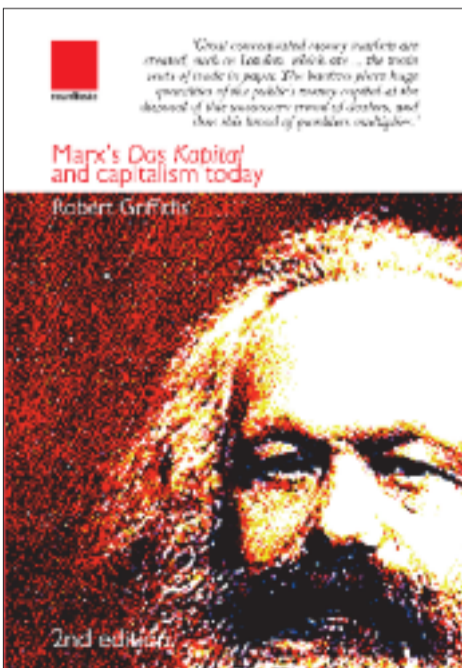
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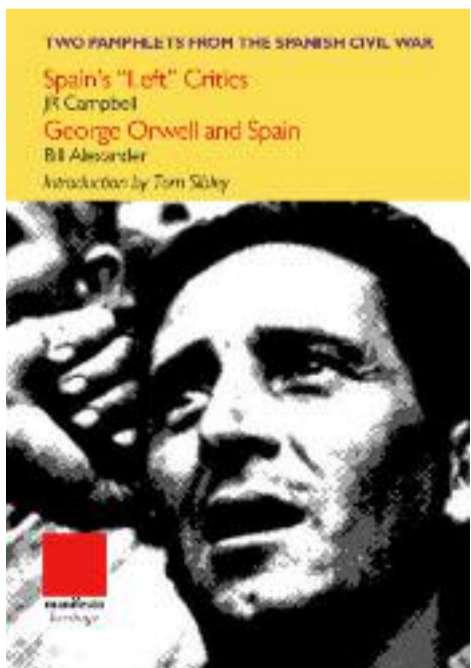
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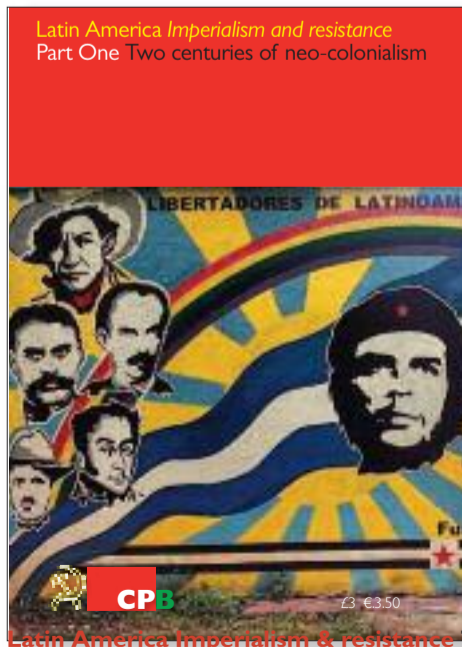
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