

RED FIRE

ISSUE #34

\$2

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!



Above: Ansar Allah fighters in Yemen. Image from www.english.almayadeen.net

World War III Nears as the US & UK Strike Yemen

(Article was current at the time of writing. Sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

21-01-2024: The Anglo-American powers are relentlessly pushing the globe towards World War III, after the governments of the US (United States of America) and the UK (United Kingdom) announced they had launched massive air strikes against the Houthis (Ansar Allah) in Yemen on January 11. The US Air Force claimed it had hit 60 targets at 16 sites in Yemen, and that it had non-

operational support from the governments of Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea ("South Korea"). These strikes are ostensibly to "protect global shipping" from the actions of the Houthis in boarding and blockading commercial shipping traversing the Bab al-Mandeb strait into the Red Sea en route to Israel. In reality, the Houthis had only been blocking shipping bound for Israel, while allowing other

ships to pass through without incident. The Houthis have taken these actions in an effort to slow down or stop the Zionist Israeli state from the genocidal bombing of Gaza in the wake of the October 7 terrorist attacks on Israel by Hamas. The actions of the Houthis in solidarity with Palestine, putting themselves at risk to help others, can only thus be defended by working people worldwide.

RED FIRE is the publication of the Workers League.

The Workers League is an organisation which seeks to build a vanguard party for working people, which can lead the struggle for socialism and a world without war.

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Middle East and the World on the brink

The day after, the Houthis reported that the strikes had killed five of their fighters,¹ and represented a new stage of a war Yemen has been enduring for 10 years. Days later, Mohamed al-Bukhaiti, a member of the political bureau of the Ansar Allah resistance movement (Houthis) declared that US and UK forces can no longer pass through the Bab al-Mandeb strait and that the Axis of Resistance had regained control over the region.² If the aim of the US and UK imperialists was to deter Yemen from defying them and from defending Palestine, it has clearly failed, as potentially one million Yemenis rallied in a vast demonstration in the capital Sanaa two days after the strikes – waving the flags of Yemen, Palestine and the Lebanese Shia resistance force Hezbollah.³

¹ www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/biden-warns-more-strikes-yemens-houthis-if-red-sea-attacks-persist-2024-01-13/ (16-01-2024)

² www.presstv.ir/Detail/2024/01/16/718317/US-UK-forces-can-no-longer-pass-Bab-el-Mandeb-Strait-Yemen (16-01-2024)

³ www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/yemen-houthi-strikes-protest-livefeed-b2477628.html (16-01-2024)

The Ansar Allah movement of Yemen, which swept to power in 2014 and then endured and survived a relentless and murderous bombing from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia backed by the US and UK governments – clearly has the overwhelming support of the majority of Yemen's population of some 34 million.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan condemned the Western attacks on Yemen, implying that they would “turn the Red Sea into a bloodbath”. The Russian Federation also denounced the attacks, while Russia and China abstained from a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution demanding that the Houthis immediately halt all attacks on international shipping.⁴ Yemen's neighbour Oman broke with other Gulf states in the region and declared a no-fly zone for all military aircraft participating in air strikes against Ansar Allah. This effectively denies the use of Omani airspace for US and UK warplanes.⁵ Seemingly in support of Yemen, the Islamic Republic of Iran launched ballistic missile strikes on an ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) base in Syria and a stronghold of the Israeli spy service Mossad in Iraq on January 15. However, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corp (IRGC) stated that these attacks were a reprisal for the January 3 terrorist attacks on the memorial meetings for General Qassem Soleimani in Kerman.⁶

It should be noted that there have been a series of strikes by US forces in Iraq and Syria throughout last year, with counter strikes by Shia resistance forces. However, the January 11 strikes were the first to have been accompanied by grand public announcements from the Western media. To

⁴ www.zerohedge.com/geopolitical/turkey-russia-condemn-strikes-yemen-west-eager-turn-red-sea-bloodbath (16-01-2024)

⁵ www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/oman-declares-no-fly-zone-refuses-airspace-for-us-proxy-war-in-yemen/ar-AA1mUHko (16-01-2024)

⁶ www.rt.com/news/590702-iran-missiles-terrorists-spies/ (16-01-2024)

some extent, they may have even been constructed as a mass media narrative. Andrew Korybko on *South24* reported that the US government apparently tipped off the Houthis before the January 11 strikes, in a similar manner in which the Iranian government tipped off the US in 2020 before hitting US bases in Iraq following the Soleimani assassination.⁷ While these actions can appear to look like collaboration between enemy forces, it may contain the logic of an unwritten agreement that a major scale war would not benefit both sides at a particular time, while a strike by either side allows both to not appear to be backing down from their respective positions. Regardless of this somewhat organised expediency, the Middle East remains on the brink of a devastating war which is being instigated almost entirely by the ruling classes of the US and the UK along with its Israeli Zionist state delegate.

Desperation of imperialism

It is commonplace today to observe that World War III is approaching. If anything is driving this potentially catastrophic scenario, it is the desperation of imperialism as it counts down the remaining days of its survival. What is imperialism? Russian revolutionary leader VI Lenin once described imperialism as “that stage of capitalism when the latter, after fulfilling everything in its power, begins to decline”. Co-leader of the October 1917 revolution L Trotsky later expanded on Lenin’s observation, noting that the cause of the decline of capitalism is that the productive forces are hemmed in by the framework of private property as well as the boundaries of the national state. Hence, in place of national wars come imperialist wars, which are totally reactionary in character as an expression of

the impasse, stagnation and decay of monopoly capital.⁸ This was the case in the time of the early 20th century, so one can imagine the stagnation and decay of monopoly capital one hundred years later.

Today, what confronts imperialism as a mortal danger is not the Soviet Union and its “communist” allies, but the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) alliance which is clearly a *non-imperialist bloc*. The BRICS now contains 10 members, with the addition on January 1 of Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Ethiopia. By far the most powerful of the BRICS bloc is the People’s Republic of China (PRC), which remains a bureaucratically deformed workers’ state politically led by a conservative Stalinist caste. Despite this, the BRICS *process* is one which represents rising economic development on *potential* lines which are *not* based on the ruthless exploitation of the working class and the environment. Imperialism is well aware of this, which is one reason why it is now targeting Iran, as a brand-new BRICS member, for a dire regime change war. In reality, imperialism is well aware that *it cannot win* a war in the Middle East against Iran, a war against Russia via Ukraine, and a war against the PRC via Taiwan. So the aim appears to be to do as much damage to its adversaries as is possible, before it is forced to exit the stage of history while risking a civilisation obliterating third World War.

“Anti-War” movement must be transformed

The onus on reigning in, and indeed overthrowing imperialism so that it can no longer wage wars which threaten civilisation, falls largely on the working classes of the West. For this task, consistently anti-imperialist leadership is at the

⁷ www.south24.net/news/newse.php?nid=3756 (16-01-2024)

⁸ www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1939/02/lenin.htm (17-01-2024)

very least a necessity. Unfortunately, the leadership of the “Stand with Palestine” movement which has mobilised in the collective West has been hamstrung from the beginning by politics which remains subordinate to imperialism, rather than offer a challenge to it. Examples of this misleadership emanate from the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) in the US,⁹ the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the UK,¹⁰ and Socialist Alternative (SA) in Australia.¹¹ These parties, along with much of the ostensible left, *did not* change their politics on October 7. Prior to this, they joined with the capitalist states they swore they oppose on the fraudulent “Covid pandemic”, which in reality was fascistic repression aimed at working people. Then they gave mealy mouthed backing to NATO’s (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) Nazified proxy war on Russia via Ukraine, even as they claimed to be opponents of NATO. On October 7, they leapt into action to lead a “anti-war” movement which in practice was only partially anti-war.

It is true that millions of workers in the West have mobilised in defence of Palestine since October 7. These movements have, however, been weighed down by the question of terrorism and Hamas – despite elementary justice being on the side of Palestine. The opportunist left leaderships have either apologised for, or even justified and defended, the blatant terrorism carried out by Hamas and other “resistance” factions. This drags the name of socialism in the mud, and in Palestine it breaks any chance of joint struggle between Arab and Israeli workers, which is a vital step towards ending both the conflict and the vastly unequal Zionist state. Secondly, these so-called left parties view Palestine in a vacuum, seemingly unconnected to the Middle East or the global conflicts of which it is an inevitable part. They

scarcely recognise the major support the Palestinian authorities receive from the governments of Iran and Syria, let alone the diplomatic support of the major non-imperialist powers such as Russia and China. They don’t even call for the withdrawal of US troops from Syria and Iraq, despite the fact that Shia resistance militia have been in constant conflict with this illegal occupation.

These faux left parties also tail after the Democrats in the US, the Labour Party in the UK, and the Labor Party in Australia. This often happens via plaintive appeals to trade Union officials, who often only offer a few words in support, if that. This misleadership also fails to link these major imperialist wars to the war at home – the skyrocketing cost of living, the loss of elementary rights such as free speech, the climate crisis and much else. Without the linking of the anti-war movement to the erosion of basic living standards for working people, the “anti-war” movement will ultimately remain a lobbying exercise, which is predominantly appealing to the politicians of the elite to “change their spots”.

This “anti-war” movement must be transformed. It must totally reject indiscriminate terrorism. It must offer military support to those forces actually fighting imperialism (Iran, Syria, Iraq, Hezbollah, Yemen) while strategically aligning itself with the non-imperialist BRICS bloc which is offering an economic and political alternative future to a floundering imperialism in its death throes. It must link the wars abroad to the wars at home, and it must break entirely with “liberal” capitalism. A real and genuine Marxist leadership can guide working people towards the establishment of their own states as a final end to imperialist wars.🌀

⁹ www.liberationnews.org/national-march-for-gaza-brings-enormous-crowd-to-dc-to-reject-u-s-israeli-genocide/ (17-01-2024)

¹⁰ www.socialistworker.co.uk/comment/hamas-call-for-arms-and-the-politics-of-resistance/ (17-01-2024)

¹¹ www.redflag.org.au/article/why-wont-arab-and-muslim-countries-help-palestine (17-01-2024)

AUSTRALIA: FREE SPEECH IN GRAVE DANGER



Image: www.thedailyblog.co.nz

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

27-11-2023: Free speech and even the right to political communication is in grave danger in Australia. The proposed Communications Legislation Amendment Bill (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023,¹² drafted by the governing Australian Labor Party (ALP), contains parts which could lead to the criminal prosecution for individuals posting information on the internet which disagrees with government policy. Under the guise of “combatting misinformation and disinformation”, normal political and social discourse could be deemed to be “harmful” and social media platforms will be obliged to remove it. The

proposed legislation is so outrageous that even the government funded Australian Human Rights Commission is opposed to it, saying it “risks freedoms it aims to protect”.¹³ It also empowers one government body alone – the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) - to directly intervene, allegedly for the purpose of preventing “harm”.

Orwellian exception

In writing his classic 1984 novel condemning totalitarianism, even George Orwell may not have imagined such legislation which outlaws certain forms of information – except when it comes from the government itself. Yet this is precisely what the Bill will do if adopted. By definition,

¹²

www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/communications-legislation-amendment-combatting-misinformation-and-disinformation-bill2023-june2023.pdf (22-11-2023)

¹³ www.humanrights.gov.au/about/news/opinions/why-misinformation-bill-risks-freedoms-it-aims-protect (22-11-2023)

government information cannot be deemed “misinformation and disinformation”. This is akin to an entire government becoming a “Ministry of Truth”. The Victorian Bar, an influential legal association, in a 12-page submission, raised concerns that the Bill “creates an unlevel playing field between governments and other speakers” and an “illiberal double standard”.¹⁴ The lawyers also make the critical point that it is better to engage in rational discussion and debate and attempt to persuade others of your viewpoint, rather than coercing others into silence with the implied threat of state repression. It may also lead to an appalling social environment where people may self-censor themselves rather than be publicly labelled a purveyor of “misinformation and disinformation”.



Section 2 of the proposed legislation lists a number of examples of what could be defined as “harm” caused by alleged misinformation and disinformation. This includes: hatred against a group in Australian society, disruption of public order, harm to government institutions, harm to the health of Australians, harm to the environment and economic or financial harm to the Australian economy.¹⁵ This definition is so broadly defined it could contain information with

regard to almost anything. Reasonable people would likely have diverse opinions on exactly what causes harm to people’s health, or what causes harm to the environment. Describing “disruption of public order” as serious harm could very easily be invoked to stop or ban the organisation of entirely legitimate political protests. It is not only whistleblowers that could be subject to prosecution under this Bill. Content released by the government will never be considered to be “misinformation”, but criticism of the government by ordinary citizens can be. What is more, ACMA would be given sweeping powers to require any person to appear at a time of its choosing to answer questions about “misinformation”. The powers range from infringement notices, to million-dollar fines, to imprisonment in cases of “extreme harm”.¹⁶

Liberal betrayal

How did a situation of the government giving itself the power to prosecute criticism of itself, on social media platform or in society generally, come about? Along with the general breakdown of the capitalist socio-economic system over the last ten years, the fraudulent “Covid pandemic” accelerated the tendency of the state to sharply curtail basic bourgeois democratic rights the further towards crisis it lurches. During the years of 2020 to 2022, almost the entire wave of what was previously progressive and liberal society capitulated to the fantastic narrative of a “deadly contagious pandemic” which was nothing of the sort. With some crucially important exceptions, those who described themselves as leftists, environmentalists, trade Unionists and humanitarians swallowed government propaganda wholesale and effectively merged with the capitalist state as it imposed fascist repression on the working masses, from

¹⁴ www.lawyersweekly.com.au/the-bar/37834-draft-misinformation-bill-will-create-illiberal-double-standard-vic-bar (22-11-2023)

¹⁵ www.sott.net/article/485790-A-new-law-is-about-to-kill-free-speech-and-democracy-in-Australia (22-11-2023)

¹⁶ Ibid, 4.

lockdowns to travel bans to vaccine mandates and a litany of logically absurd and legally dubious “rules”. The right to see your friends, to visit your family, to go to church, to protest, and to exercise the right to free speech was virtually eliminated with the active assistance of a parade of “socialist” parties, the Australian Greens, the ALP and a bevy of Union bureaucrats.

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Anyone who questioned lockdowns, or indeed ANY part of the Covid narrative, were condemned as “anti-vaxers” and “conspiracy theorists” and, wholly inaccurately, as “far-right”. Anyone who questioned why we should be injected with an untested vaccine, or why we can’t use vitamins or other treatments for what appeared to be a cold and flu type virus (assuming it existed in the first place), were maligned as spreading “misinformation”. As it turned out, once the extreme period of Covid repression had passed, the government and its faux left acolytes simply moved on, scarcely bothering to think about how they may have been misled or mistaken, let alone apologise to those they had condemned only weeks earlier. At that time, these liberal paragons of virtue had donned facemasks and marched in lockstep with the capitalist state at arguably its most repressive point in history. The right to free speech and the right to protest should be ignored during a “health emergency”, supposedly.

After not raising an eyebrow at the online censorship of those who questioned Covid, this so-

called left today have the temerity to complain about pro-Palestinian content on social media being censored by the very same social media giants. While working people should defend Palestine against a horrific US backed Israeli war, it is plain to see that the right to free speech and normal political discourse is vitally important and can never be ceded to the power elite. Those who do not question the state and its big corporations when it moves to block or prevent the working masses from researching, learning and expressing their point of view are not allies but sworn adversaries of common humanity.

Capitalism in Australia and the West in general is in an intractable crisis. Housing is close to unaffordable for whole swathes of the population. The cost of living is out of control, and food is prohibitively expensive. The privately owned banks are raking in billions of dollars of profits every quarter, with virtually nothing going back into society. Floods and bushfires are now common, fuelled by climate collapse. What is desperately needed is a *revolution*, which establishes the rule of working people administering a collectively owned and planned economy. To lead the way, a Marxist vanguard party must be built from amongst those workers willing to struggle and fight for a socialist order.



IRAN: THE WEST PREPARES YET ANOTHER REGIME CHANGE WAR



(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

13-11-2023: In what seems to be rather convenient, a war between the Israeli state and Palestine has broken out, in response to the indiscriminate terrorist acts of Hamas on October 7. It comes just at the time when the NATO armed Nazified forces in Ukraine had come to a standstill with a completely failed “offensive” in which the Western proxies reportedly lost 90 000 servicemen dead, 600 destroyed tanks and around 1900 armoured vehicles.¹⁷ Following on from a fraudulent “Covid pandemic”, and NATO’s blundering proxy war against Russia, “all of a

sudden” the Israel/Palestine issue has taken the headlines. Yet this latest scenario, which has reportedly taken around 9000 Palestinian lives¹⁸ alongside around 1300 Israeli lives¹⁹ is arguably one more deadly ploy to provide cover for another catastrophe – a US led war for regime change on the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI). In what appears as a grotesque bait and switch, Washington and its imperialist allies have set off a powder keg situation backed by 75 years of injustice against Palestine as a foil for Wall Street to finally be given an excuse to topple the Iranian revolution which has been a thorn in their side since 1979.

¹⁷ www.sputnikglobe.com/20231030/ukraine-lost-more-than-90000-servicemen-since-beginning-of-counteroffensive---shoigu-1114588707.html (07-11-2023)

¹⁸ www.abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/live-updates-calls-humanitarian-pause-increase-palestinians-gaza-104626887 (07-11-2023)

¹⁹ www.timesofisrael.com/us-jewish-progressives-are-grappling-with-how-to-respond-to-hamas-terror-onslaught/ (07-11-2023)

Target Iran

Iran is the clear target of the US carrier strike groups operating in the Middle East since October 7, which have just been joined by the aircraft carrier Dwight D. Eisenhower and its strike group, which transited the Suez Canal and entered the Red Sea on November 5. They join some 11 000 US troops conducting exercises there, with F-15, F-16 and A-10 fighter aircraft.²⁰ This huge US military build up is hardly going to target Hamas – which are more or less a terror proxy force utilised by the Israeli state and Washington. They may be used to target Hezbollah, a genuine Shia resistance force based in Lebanon, which has mass support in that country and the region due to its history of using arms to guard against Israeli state assaults. However, the sheer size of the US military mobilisation is a stark indicator that neither Israeli civilians nor Palestinian civilians are a concern for the Pentagon. In fact, it appears that both can be sacrificed if it provides a pretext for strikes on Iran.

Potentially the apparent strategy of distracting the masses with the sheer horror of US backed Israeli state slaughter of Palestinians in Gaza may pay gruesome dividends. While millions understandably mobilise in mass demonstrations in an effort to prevent the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) from levelling Gaza, Washington knows that far fewer numbers will mobilise to defend Iran. This is largely due to the fact that Iran and its 1979 revolution has been demonised by the West's propagandists to a level approaching that meted out to the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea or "North Korea"). It is not just that Iran overthrew the US backed Shah in 1979, nor that Iran publicly opposes Israeli state crimes in the region. Patently, Washington is not irked about a

theocratic government in Tehran, nor about "women's rights" or other claimed concerns. There are many more valid reasons why Wall Street desperately seeks the reversal of the 44-year triumph of Iran's unique revolution.

Iranian Islamic Socialism ?

Press TV journalist Ramin Mazaheri published a book in 2020 titled: *Socialism's Ignored Success: Iranian Islamic Socialism*.²¹ A comprehensive reply to this work would require a careful study. Yet the basic argumentation of R Mazaheri appears to be that the 1979 Iranian revolution was motivated by revolutionary Shi'ism, which at its core is based on socialist principles. In 2018, R Mazaheri wrote an 11 part article series in response to a critique of the concept of "Islamic Socialism" by the Socialist Equality Party (SEP), written as a three part series.²² In this debate, R Mazaheri was undoubtedly correct to denounce the SEP for aiding imperialism by backing one of the many Western sponsored regime change attempts via demonstrations that took place in Iran at the end of 2017. The SEP did not back the 2009 pro-Western "Green Revolution" in Iran, but later capitulated to Western elites bent on regime change by throwing their weight behind the counter-revolutionary demonstrations over the 2017-2018 new year.

An indication of how they were co-ordinated from abroad was the fact that Masih Alinejad called for women to remove their headscarves during the anti-government actions – from New York...! Alinejad is paid at least \$85 000 per year by the Broadcasting Board of Governors, an official outlet of the US state department. She has worked for Voice of America's (VoA) Farsi language program *OnTen* for at least 10 years.²³ What is more, some

²⁰ www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2023/11/06/eisenhower-strike-group-submarine-arrive-in-middle-east/ (07-11-2023)

²¹ www.annas-archive.org/md5/a95f18104ccb6f02b345d00c4aab02ef (08-11-2023)

²² www.wsws.org/en/articles/2018/02/14/maz1-f14.html (08-11-2023)

²³ www.redfireonline.com/2018/06/03/iran-regime-change-is-war/ (08-11-2023)

of the demonstrations were joined and sometimes led by the terrorist MEK (Mojahedin-e Khalq), a despised and loathed cult which acts as a proxy force for the US and Israeli states.²⁴ The MEK fought on the side of Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war of 1980 to 1988, when Iraq was egged on by the US government to wage war in an attempt to overturn Iran's triumphant 1979 revolution. Needless to say, the MEK cannot today exist in Iran and remains in exile. By spruiking for regime change destabilisation more or less openly orchestrated from the West, the SEP joined forces with the very imperialism it repeatedly claims to stand against.



Above: The terrorist MEK (Mojahedin-e Khalq) is reviled in Iran for fighting for Iraq and the US government against Iran in the 1980s. It is banned in Iran and remains in exile, dredging support from imperialism for its counter-revolutionary activities against the Islamic Republic of Iran. It has rebranded itself the "National Council of Resistance of Iran" (NCRI), which fools many liberals in the West. www.youtube.com

Despite such treachery, the SEP is *partially* correct to point out that "Islamic socialism" in Iran is not based on working class struggle *per se*, nor does it

aim to extend class struggle internationally in an effort to end capitalism. As R Mazaheri would admit, "Iranian Islamic Socialism" is patriotic within Iran, which is generally counterposed to an international working-class struggle for international socialism. However, R Mazaheri makes the very valid point that the international assistance that the IRI constantly offers and supplies to those forces which are in combat with imperialism is extensive. Despite being under massive and unrelenting economic sanctions from the West, Iran continually sends material, diplomatic and political backing to Hezbollah in Lebanon, a series of Shia militias in the Middle East such as the Popular Mobilisation Units in Iraq, to Afghanistan, and to Bolivia (before Evo Morales was overthrown). Iran indeed stands shoulder to shoulder with Russia, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Syria, Venezuela and Cuba, despite incurring the wrath of imperialism for doing so.²⁵

While the IRI also extends some support to the terrorist Hamas organisation in Palestine, arguably it does so in an attempt to influence it to become a genuine resistance movement such as Hezbollah. This course of action is perhaps mistaken given the fact that Hamas was created and formed by the Israeli state²⁶ partially in order to counter the secular Palestinian Liberation Organisation. Nevertheless, the IRI has remained one of the staunchest supporters of Palestine for decades. It sustains the "axis of resistance" in the Middle East, which is an informal alliance of both Sunni and Shia Muslim militias and governments in Yemen, Syria, Lebanon (Hezbollah), Gaza and Iraq.²⁷ The IRI fell out with Hamas during the US led war on Syria, when Hamas fought on the side of the Israeli state, ISIS/Al Qaeda and the US military – demonstrating where it really stands. The Quds Force, a special operations branch of the

²⁴ www.lobelog.com/the-iran-protests-regime-change-and-mek/ (08-11-2023)

²⁵ www.greenvillepost.com/2020/05/15/iran-socialist-internationalist-powerful-and-determined/ (08-11-2023)

²⁶ www.theintercept.com/2018/02/19/hamas-israel-palestine-conflict/ (08-11-2023)

²⁷ www.npr.org/2023/10/26/1208456496/iran-hamas-axis-of-resistance-hezbollah-israel (08-11-2023)

Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corp (IRGC) is targeted by the Pentagon²⁸ precisely due to its effectiveness in leading and marshalling various militia in Syria and Iraq which are working their way towards expelling the US military from both countries, despite enormous difficulties.

Iranian economy off limits to Western plunder

If Iran's measured but extensive military resistance to imperialism in the region was not enough to draw an imperialist target on its back, its vast economy on its own is well qualified for such a badge of honour. For example, anti-Iran groups complain that state-owned companies in Iran "devour" some 70% of Iran's budget.²⁹ This is of course a benefit for Iran's working class, even if Iran's state-owned companies do not directly equate to state-owned firms in bureaucratically deformed workers' states such as China or Vietnam. Some write that the Iranian economy is divided into three distinct sectors – public, private and "semi-state". The "semi-state" includes religious, revolutionary and military foundations and cooperatives, as well as social security and pension funds. The IRGC apparently dominates ownership in the semi-state. Some estimate that the public sector contributes 35% to Iranian Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the private sector about 25%, and the semi-state sector approximately 40%.³⁰ So, if around 75% of the Iranian economy does not run on the basis of production for private profit, claims of "Iranian Islamic Socialism" certainly cannot be discounted.

Alas, the Iranian government genuflected before imperialism with its bogus "Covid pandemic", as it was seemingly unable to see through that particular barrage of propaganda. Subsequently,

there was a huge decline in Iranian GDP during 2020, but it has since rebounded to pre-Covid levels.³¹ Undoubtedly, the huge proportion of state ownership of industry aided this recovery. From 2005 to 2014, Iran underwent a "privatisation" drive – but this was "privatisation" unlike any seen in the capitalist West. Even conservative economic observers in the West admit that the IRGC was excluded from this "selling off". In fact, the IRGC was one of the main beneficiaries of this process. This means that the IRGC own or control firms concentrated in the key *strategic* economic sectors such as oil, mining, telecommunications, petrochemicals, automotive, banking and construction.³² If this was not Iran, Western corporate propaganda would decry this as "communist" ! Indeed, in some ways it mirrors the economy of today's China, which also has its major strategic industries firmly state-owned. Some say that Iran's economy is a "masterpiece of structural ambiguity",³³ where it is impossible to draw clear lines between the public and the private.

BRICS

In addition to organising, leading and partially funding military resistance to US imperialism in its own region, the IRI is now well and truly part of the rising Eurasian bloc, which is exposing the rapid economic and political deterioration of the fading Western powers in the US and Europe. For close to two centuries, the Western powers have effectively ruled the globe through colonial means. Today, the capitalist system has long since failed to provide substantial economic growth, reflected in the winnowing away of manufacturing in favour of financial speculation. By contrast, the

²⁸ www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/03/top-us-general-advocates-targeting-irans-irgc-quds-force-after-syria-drone-attack (08-11-2023)

²⁹ www.ifmat.org/10/12/state-owned-companies-devouring-iranian-economy/ (08-11-2023)

³⁰ www.al-monitor.com/originals/2017/08/iran-irgc-economy-footprint-khatam-olanbia.html (08-11-2023)

³¹ www.statista.com/statistics/294233/iran-gross-domestic-product-gdp/ (08-11-2023)

³² www.nationalinterest.org/feature/who-really-controls-irans-economy-12925 (08-11-2023)

³³ www.al-monitor.com/originals/2017/07/iran-quasi-state-sector-economic-reform-rouhani-challenge.html#ixzz4oVTkiFno (08-11-2023)

BRICS alliance (Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa) is anchored by the gargantuan socialistic economic powerhouse of mainland China. Real economic wealth is generated here, as it is largely based on manufacturing. This provides enormous benefits to the Chinese working class, and indirectly to the world's working class by providing access to affordable but high-quality consumer goods.³⁴ The West, with its production for private profit basis, cannot hope to compete with China's state backed economy which *primarily* operates on a basis of providing goods and services for its people. Despite being politically led by a conservative Stalinist caste, the Chinese masses reap the benefits of its 1949 socialist revolution.

The IRI has deep fraternal relations with the PRC, exemplified by the 25-year Iran-China trade, investment and defence pact signed in 2021. This deal, which was in the works for five years, will reportedly result in \$400 billion worth of PRC investment in Iran.³⁵ This deal alone was a blow to Washington, plus later that year Iran was admitted to full membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), which contains the BRICS members Russia, China and India, and covers one third of the world's land mass.³⁶ Naturally, this means Iran becomes a central pillar of the PRC's flagship Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a multi-trillion dollar trade and infrastructure linking mega-project. To top it off, in August this year, Iran was named as one of the six states which will join the expanded BRICS alliance from 1 January, 2024.³⁷ Every such move fortifies the defence of Iran against the non-stop Western backed internal and external attempts at counter-revolution.

It is in the vital interests of workers internationally to stridently oppose US/European attempts to bring about regime change in Iran either internally (colour revolution) or externally (imperialist war).

Despite the Islamic nature of Iran's "socialism", it remains a steadfast opponent of imperialism, and combines with its BRICS partners to provide an alternative to the rotting edifice of Western capitalism. The only scenario where a new revolution in Iran could be supported would be IF it was clearly led by political forces which were *more* anti-imperialist and *more* pro-working class than the current leadership AND if it had no association whatsoever with the deep states based in Washington, London and Brussels. In the meantime, working people should form a tactical bloc with the IRI against imperialist war in the Middle East and beyond. To be sure, the building of authentic Marxist vanguard parties in Iran and the region based on Permanent Revolution remains a necessary task. Working alongside the Iranian masses while taking into account revolutionary Shi'ism and acknowledging the martyrs that have already fallen defending 1979 against imperialist sabotage will involve a high degree of deference where appropriate, together with flexible and tactical argumentation for international class struggle socialism, i.e., genuine Trotskyism. ***No War on Iran! US troops out of the Middle East!***



³⁴ www.globalsources.com/STM/knowledge/article/why-is-everything-made-in-china/ (10-11-2023)

³⁵ www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/iran-china-us-deal-b1824034.html (10-11-2023)

³⁶ www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/19/iran-shanghai-cooperation-organisation (10-11-2023)

³⁷ www.iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2023/aug/24/iran-join-brics-alliance (10-11-2023)

US Primes the Philippines for War on the People's Republic of China



Above: President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr greets US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin III at the Malacanang Palace in the Philippines on February 2, 2023. Image from www.bworldonline.com

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

20-11-2023: In a short space of time, the Philippines has been transformed from a friendly neighbour of the People's Republic of China (PRC), to one which is being pushed in the direction of a hostile adversary. The election of President Ferdinand “Bong Bong” Marcos Jr has been the catalyst for the tilt towards the US hegemon and away from an ally of the PRC and of the Russian Federation, which was cultivated by the former Filipino President Rodrigo Duterte. In fact, it is potentially much worse than just a shift in foreign policy. As *The New Atlas* points out, the Republic

of the Philippines is being shaped into being South-East Asia's “Ukraine” – a hapless Nazified proxy of US imperialism destroying itself in a failed war on Russia.³⁸ However, this rapid about turn is not being implemented in the Philippines without opposition, seemingly from such allies of the former President Duterte as current Vice President Sara Duterte (the daughter of Rodrigo Duterte) and former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. While it is the case that Rodrigo Duterte and Sara Duterte have not always been side by side in politics, it does appear as though the Philippine

³⁸ www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATiC301RhYI (15-11-2023)

elite are dividing on the pro-US course of Marcos Jr.

About face from Marcos Jr

The rapid turn away from the PRC and towards the United States of America in political and military affairs is dishonest on the part of Marcos Jr. During his election campaign, he did not at all mention a turn towards the US - the former colonial power in the Philippines – and even gave indications that he would continue the same “peace with China” approach of Rodrigo Duterte. This was little more than deceptive rhetoric. In February, Marcos Jr urged the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) to focus on “territorial integrity” in the South China Sea, without mentioning China specifically. He stated that the mission of the AFP has changed, citing “the intensification of the competition between the superpowers”.³⁹ In reality, the US military has been sailing its warships up and down the South China Sea in an attempt to provoke a response from the PRC, while urging the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei to more aggressively stake their claims to disputed reefs and islands. All of these nations have competing claims against each other, not just against China, and these maritime disputes would not lead to war if it was not for the presence of the US military in the region.

Egged on by the US state, the Philippines has been provocatively stationing a handful of AFP soldiers on the wreck of the BRP Sierra Madre, a rusty World War II ship which was deliberately run aground on the Ren'ai Reef near the Spratly Islands in 1999. Though the PRC has repeatedly asked for the ship to be removed from the reef, the Philippines is attempting to use it as a base for more provocations against China, knowing that

the US state backs them in doing so. The Spratly Islands are claimed by China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei.⁴⁰ These overlapping claims would otherwise be resolved in various courts, but for the meddling of US imperialism. The Philippines has been ferrying building materials under the guise of being ordinary provisions such as food, to its few soldiers on the Sierra Madre, further inflaming the issue.

Philippine Coast Guard Commodore Jay Tarriela recently stated in an interview that they are launching a “transparency initiative” in relation to conflicts with Chinese boats in the South China Sea, which some Filipinos refer to as the “West Philippines Sea”. Tarriela stated that they would begin filming confrontations between their vessels and Chinese vessels “trespassing” in the South China Sea.⁴¹ In reality, the Philippine boats will be deliberately attempting to provoke a response from Chinese Coast Guard ships in the area, film it, and then sensationalise the clash in the media. Only the Chinese reactions to relentless provocations will be filmed, which will then be painted as Chinese “aggression” in the region. Meanwhile, the sailing of US warships directly through the South China Sea and even around the Paracel Islands in March this year, along with many other such incidents, is claimed by the US government to be a “freedom of navigation” exercise.⁴² One can only imagine the response of the US government if China or Russia sailed some of its warships through the Gulf of Mexico and claimed that all it was doing was exercising “freedom of navigation”.

Preparations for war

In a blatantly anti-China move, in March this year Marcos Jr granted the US military access to four

³⁹ www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/2/28/philippines-marcos-jr-urges-military-to-focus-on-south-china-sea (15-11-2023)

⁴⁰ www.theguardian.com/world/2023/aug/09/us-beijing-shipwreck-military-outpost-south-china-sea-philippines?ref=upstrack.com (15-11-2023)

⁴¹ www.itv.com/news/2023-11-13/inside-the-filipino-coastguards-transparency-initiative-aimed-at-china (15-11-2023)

⁴² www.apnews.com/article/us-china-destroyer-south-china-sea-5f761c49179f622b8c296885c46a2a80 (15-11-2023)

new bases around the Philippines, on top of the five existing locations under the 2014 Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).⁴³ These bases are thinly veiled “forward operating bases” for the US to wage yet more war provocations against the PRC. Without these bases, a coastal assault on China from the Pacific becomes difficult from a point of view of sheer logistics. This has also effectively doubled the US military presence in the Philippines. Not surprisingly, the spokesperson for the Chinese embassy in the Philippines released a statement in response, stating that enhanced cooperation with the US could bring serious geopolitical strife, which would not benefit the Philippines – especially if they are dragged into a conflict with the US, China and Taiwan.⁴⁴ Former President Rodrigo Duterte was less diplomatic, in his characteristic style. In an episode of his weekly television show in July, Duterte remarked that “..in the event of a clash between the US and China, the Philippines would become a cemetery..”.⁴⁵

Such are the tragic consequences of signing up to become a US proxy – just ask Ukraine. Even if an outright war is somehow avoided, the Philippines under Marcos Jr stands to lose huge economic opportunities by severing ties with China. The Philippines has reportedly canceled three joint rail building projects with the PRC, with the Filipino government now not only seeking no further funding from China, but will supposedly seek alternative contractors for the projects.⁴⁶ However, seeing as there are no other nations with the capability to build such rail projects overseas, the Philippine government has effectively canceled this much needed infrastructure. What is more, as with many countries in the region and in the world, China is

the number one trading partner of the Philippines. Over 30% of its exports go to China, while exports to the US and Japan *combined* make up around 25%. In addition, Philippine imports from China comprise around 33% of the total, while US and Japanese imports together amount to only 14%.⁴⁷ In short, the Philippine economy would be sacrificed.



Above: Protests in the Philippines (while wearing facemasks!) against the revived Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), which expands the number of US “forward operating bases” located in the Philippines. www.peoplesdispatch.org

The US took control of the Philippines after the Spanish-American war of 1898, and effectively administered it as a colony until the Philippines won its independence in 1946 following the defeat of Japan in the Second World War. Somewhat ironically, Independence Day for the Philippines is July 4, the same date as its former US colonial master.⁴⁸ Like many other former imperialist powers with their former colonies, the US still

⁴³ www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/marcos-says-new-military-bases-with-us-be-scattered-around-philippines-2023-03-22/ (15-11-2023)

⁴⁴ www.ph.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/sgdt/202303/t20230312_11039384.htm (15-11-2023)

⁴⁵ www.asiatimes.com/2023/07/marcos-jrs-coalition-ripping-apart-on-us-china-lines/ (15-11-2023)

⁴⁶ www.journal-neo.su/2023/11/02/us-shapes-philippines-into-southeast-asias-ukraine/ (15-11-2023)

⁴⁷ Ibid, 9.

⁴⁸ www.aboutphilippines.org/the-philippines-a-history-of-american-acquisition/ (18-11-2023)

exerts strong influence in the Philippines, and a section of its ruling class – now represented by Marcos Jr – is open to do its bidding. This runs up against the recent legacy of former President Rodrigo Duterte, whose six-year term as President was unprecedented in Filipino history. Rodrigo Duterte was unquestionably the most popular leader ever, with his approval rating hovering around an astonishing 80% for almost his entire term.⁴⁹ One of the main reasons for this overwhelming support from four out of five Filipinos was his emphasis on restoring Filipino sovereignty over the affairs of their own country. Duterte famously stood up to former US President Barack Obama and declared that the Philippines is not an American puppet anymore.⁵⁰

While it is true that Duterte did not completely sever all ties with the US, he repeatedly declared that he would never order his troops to launch a war against China. Moreover, he emphasised that diplomacy is the way to settle disputes and “never by force”.⁵¹ In an indication of how pro-war the liberal so-called left has become, even in the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte was criticised for NOT going to war with China.⁵² While a host of liberal left parties absurdly decried Duterte as a “fascist”, one of the central mouthpieces of this slander was the *Rappler* “news” organisation. Yet *Rappler* itself is funded by the US government, via the notorious National Endowment for Democracy (NED), to the tune of some \$150 000 per year.⁵³ Liberal left opposition to Rodrigo Duterte, and somewhat now to Vice President Sara Duterte, is once again doing the bidding of US imperialism to provoke conflict and war with China.

This course is obviously dangerous for the Philippines, and catastrophic for the region. The PRC is studiously doing what it can to avoid war, despite relentless provocations from Filipino fishing vessels, and now since Marcos Jr assumed the Presidency, the Filipino Coast Guard and military. In late October, after Chinese vessels blocked Filipino vessels attempting to “re-supply” the grounded BRP Sierra Madre on the Ren’ai Reef, the Chinese Embassy urged the Philippines to “take seriously China’s grave concerns...stop making provocations at sea, stop making dangerous moves, stop groundlessly attacking and slandering China, and to tow away the illegally grounded warship as soon as possible so that the peace and stability of the South China Sea will not be jeopardised...”.⁵⁴ Given the size mismatch of the Philippines armed forces in relation to those of China, the Philippines would only be goading and prodding the giant PRC if it knew that it was being backed by a great power – the US Empire. And there is no shortage of indicators that the US ruling class is attempting to drive a wedge in the Filipino ruling class between those who want to remain on friendly terms with the PRC, and those who want to gamble the whole house in hostile provocations with the PRC. On November 15, US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin stated that Washington “stands shoulder to shoulder” with Manila in defending its sovereign rights and jurisdiction in its Exclusive Economic Zone”.⁵⁵

Against war for a desperate Empire

Little could be worse for the Philippines than an insane drive to war against its giant neighbour, on behalf of a declining US hegemon on the other side

⁴⁹ www.asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Duterte-on-track-to-become-Philippines-most-popular-president (18-11-2023)

⁵⁰ www.journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2057891120912008 (18-11-2023)

⁵¹ www.globaltimes.cn/page/202107/1229929.shtml (18-11-2023)

⁵² www.rappler.com/nation/170573-philippines-senators-duterte-china-war-threat/ (18-11-2023)

⁵³ www.manilatimes.net/2022/03/06/opinion/columns/is-rappler-inciting-another-ukraine-in-the-philippines/1835221 (18-11-2023)

⁵⁴ www.cebudailynews.inquirer.net/535366/china-tells-ph-to-stop-making-provocations-at-sea (18-11-2023)

⁵⁵ www.rappler.com/philippines/philippines-us-defense-secretary-meeting-november-2023/ (18-11-2023)

of the Pacific Ocean. Yet there are already moves against some in the Filipino political class who recognise the irrationality of war with China. Former Senator Antonio Trillanes IV accused former President Duterte of supporting efforts to destabilise and stage a coup against the current Marcos Jr administration – something which Duterte himself firmly denied.⁵⁶ Former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was suddenly demoted from the number two post in the Filipino chamber as the Senior Deputy Speaker. The speculation was that the former President – who still retains some influence from her term in office – was “upstaging” Marcos Jr during his foreign trips, as Arroyo had attended seven of his 13 overseas visits so far. The demotion may have been a warning to Duterte supporters against making moves to replace Marcos Jr.⁵⁷ In addition, Vice President Sara Duterte abruptly resigned from the political party with which she won office – the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD). Without mentioning Marcos Jr by name, she stated that her leadership “cannot be poisoned by political toxicity” or “undermined by political power play”.⁵⁸ This may have been a move to protect her position while deflecting accusations of moving against Marcos Jr.

Many on the left assume that former President Rodrigo Duterte is a populist right-wing figure for his moves to reduce or remove the insurgency led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People’s Army (NPA). However, this only came about as the CPP originally *formed an alliance* with Duterte soon after he came to office in 2016. This alliance reached the heights of Duterte *offering CPP*

*members positions in his cabinet.*⁵⁹ It was only *after* the CPP unilaterally withdrew from this alliance, to once again take up arms against the Philippine government, that led to Duterte onto the path of using the AFP to militarily eliminate “communists”. Yet the CPP is a *Stalinist/Maoist* organisation, chock full of class collaboration and nationalism. Other so-called left organisations such as Bayan⁶⁰ and Anakbayan⁶¹ opposed Rodrigo Duterte from a liberal basis, which in practice lines up with the liberalism of Stalinism and Maoism. Unable to comprehend why Duterte gained and maintained historic levels of popularity amongst working class Filipinos, the Stalinists and liberals aligned themselves with the politics and practice of US imperialism.

Today, Bayan, the CPP and the liberal left are lining up once again with US imperialism for war against China and in favour of Marcos Jr out of hostility to Duterte (Rodrigo or Sara) *despite* forming their organisations or coming to prominence in fighting the original Ferdinand Marcos in the 1980s!! Filipino workers need to reject this entire mess and seek to form genuine Leninist vanguard parties upholding an authentic application of Permanent Revolution. This is the path both to prevent US instigated imperialist war, and towards socialism in the Philippines, combined with proletarian political revolutions in the neighbouring Asian deformed workers’ states. The future of the Asia-Pacific depends on it.



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www.philstar.com/headlines/2023/11/13/2311000/trillanes-accuses-duterte-destabilization-coup-plot-vs-marcos (18-11-2023)

⁵⁷ www.newsinfo.inquirer.net/1771200/sudden-demotion-pampanga-rep-gloria-arroyo-loses-senior-house-rank (18-11-2023)

⁵⁸ www.newsinfo.inquirer.net/1771350/fwd-sara-duterte-resigns-from-lakas-cmd#: (18-11-2023)

⁵⁹ www.asia.nikkei.com/NAR/Articles/Duterte-makes-room-for-communists-in-Philippine-cabinet (18-11-2023)

⁶⁰ www.medium.com/paninindigan/what-is-bayan-993af3620c32 (18-11-2023)

⁶¹ www.thenation.com/article/archive/philippines-duterte-dictatorship-anakbayan/ (18-11-2023)

Serbia: Colour Revolution Foiled



Above: Supporters of the SPN ("Serbia Against Violence") attempt to storm the Belgrade City Hall. Image: Reuters

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

03-01-2024: You can almost set your watch to it. In almost any country which is not totally and completely subservient and compliant to every whim of the ruling classes of the West, Western deep state operatives will seek to interfere with the electoral process. This may take the form of creating and funding whole new pro-EU (European Union) and pro-US (United States of America) parties out of whole cloth, funding an array of pro-Western "civil society" NGOs, corrupting existing opposition parties, or triggering street violence to enact regime change. This is happening with regularity now in Asia, Africa and Latin America, but most recently it was the turn of the Balkan state of Serbia. Yet Serbia was this time prepared

for such an outcome. In the aftermath of the launch of the Special Military Operation of the Russian Federation in Ukraine in March 2022, Serbia's Interior Minister Aleksandar Vulin warned of just such a scenario – the possibility of a "Maidan-style" coup.

No second Maidan

At the time Vulin stated that the Maidan coup in Kiev in 2014 was where Ukraine lost its democracy, and where thugs from the Right Sector and other Nazi organisations overthrew the

elected government.⁶² This would be repeated in Serbia, he claimed, not because of Serbian elections, but because President Aleksandar Vucic refused to impose sanctions on Russia (over the Special Military Operation in Ukraine) and decided to maintain Serbia's military neutrality. In reality, it was not only Serbia's refusal to endorse NATO's (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) arming of Nazi battalions in Ukraine to fight Russia which triggered a Western backed colour revolution attempt against them. It was also Serbia's refusal to recognise the Western backed "Kosovo Republic", which in practice amounts to an illegal secession of Kosovo and Metohija.⁶³ Towards the end of 2022, the US state pumped up tensions between Kosovo and Serbia as a means to distract from the Nazified forces in Ukraine suffering significant setbacks at the hands of Russia's military. However, due to Serbia's non-recognition of any declaration of a break-away, both the United Nations (UN) and the EU have refused to recognise an "independent" Kosovo.⁶⁴

This time there was no "second Maidan". Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova stated that the events in Serbia during December was an obvious attempt by the collective West to destabilise the situation through a Maidan coup.⁶⁵ The US government can hardly claim to have no involvement, as the US Ambassador to Serbia Christopher Hill bragged that the American Embassy had 14 teams spread across Serbia and Belgrade.⁶⁶ The pro-Western opposition was thrown into a coalition of parties under a ticket name of "Serbia Against Violence" (SPN) – which in itself is a giveaway about who was behind it. In the snap December 17 elections, the governing

Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) won 46.72% of the votes, with SPN coming second with 23.56% of the vote, and the Socialist Party of Serbia third with 6.56%.⁶⁷ However, the pro-Western SPN claimed that the results were fraudulent, and that President Vucic had stolen the election. On December 24 the SPN and their supporters attempted to break into the Belgrade Town Hall where the local election commission is based, but they were pushed back at around 10pm by anti-riot police.

Capitalising on mass shootings

The same day the Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic expressed gratitude to the Russian security services, which had forewarned Belgrade of plans for riots in the capital following the election.⁶⁸ President Aleksandar Vucic, in an emergency address to the nation blamed the unrest on foreign interference. He said the claims that the government manipulated the elections are "rubbish and lies, [and that] the ones who swore to fight against violence just confirmed once again that they are the real thugs...".⁶⁹ Supposedly, SPN was formed in response to two mass shootings in Serbia in May, and weekly Saturday evening vigils held since that time. Yet the horror at these shootings was simply used as a cover for the pro-Western parties to push for regime change to push back Serbia's "pro-Russia" positions. President Vucic claimed that the SPN led opposition groups are not about an end to

⁶² www.rt.com/news/553139-serbia-maidan-elections-sanctions/ (01-01-2024)

⁶³ www.globalresearch.ca/kosovo-situation-prospects/5824118 (01-01-2024)

⁶⁴ www.redfireonline.com/2022/11/28/us-primes-kosovo-for-tension-with-serbia/ (01-01-2024)

⁶⁵ www.bignewsnetwork.com/news/274075672/attempted-color-revolution-in-serbia-what-we-know-so-far (01-01-2024)

⁶⁶ www.rferl.org/a/serbia-snap-parliamentary-municipal-vote-vucic-kosovo/32734334.html (01-01-2024)

⁶⁷ www.reuters.com/world/europe/thousands-protest-belgrade-demand-elections-annulled-2023-12-24/ (01-01-2024)

⁶⁸ www.rt.com/news/589632-serbia-thanks-russian-spies/ (01-01-2024)

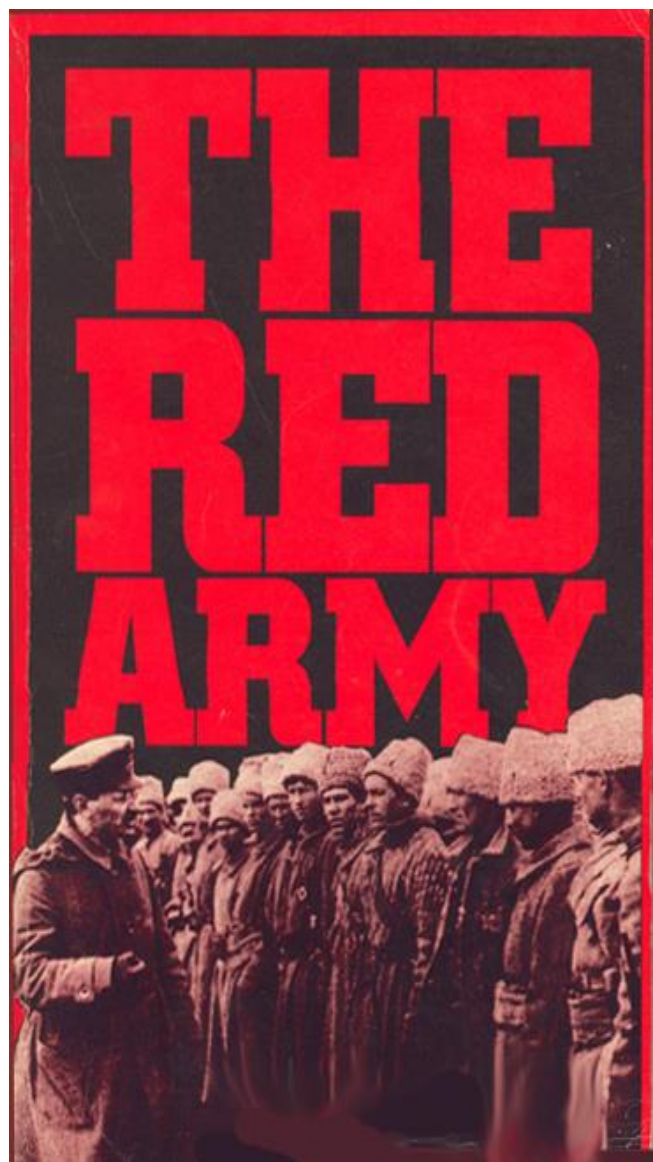
⁶⁹ www.bbc.com/news/business-67817072 (01-01-2024)

violence at all, and in fact want him toppled by force or even killed.⁷⁰

Some of the parties that make up the SPN, such as the Freedom and Justice Party, the People's Movement of Serbia and the Green Left Front/Ne Davimo Beograd⁷¹ have innocuous sounding names – but have no qualms about taking part in riots on the streets to achieve their aims. This is a tell-tale sign of the backing of the deep states of imperialism, particularly the EU and the US. While it is certainly true that both the SPN and the governing SNS are both pushing for Serbia to integrate into the EU,⁷² President Vucic is attempting to do so *while also* co-operating with Russia, and by extension, the rising BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) alliance. The BRICS bloc will expand in 2024 to include Saudia Arabia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Ethiopia – becoming the “BRICS 10”. While President Vucic and the SNS may wish to tip-toe a line between the EU/US and the BRICS powers, Brussels and Washington can barely tolerate other countries co-operating with BRICS, as it once again exposes the declining fortunes of the West and their faltering capitalist economies.

Working people in Serbia and internationally need to defend the right of all nations to join and/or engage in friendly relations with the BRICS 10, which is clearly a *non-imperialist bloc* anchored by the gargantuan manufacturing, scientific and technological power of the People's Republic of China (PRC). It is also necessary to defend Serbia against US government led attempts at regime change, colour revolutions (which are the opposite of revolutionary) and encouraging Kosovan separatism. Serbia has cultural ties to Russia, a fellow Slavic nation, and it has also suffered the horrors of a NATO war against it in 1999. Vucic's

plan to stay the hand of imperialism by balancing cooperation with the BRICS while seeking to join the EU will unfortunately not end Western attempts to overthrow Serbia. This requires the bringing down of imperialism in the West via the working classes raising themselves to positions of power, alongside a proletarian political revolution in the PRC – the world's most powerful bureaucratically deformed workers' state. This path to bona fide socialism requires the forging of genuine Leninist vanguard parties throughout the Balkans, Eurasia and internationally.



⁷⁰ www.apnews.com/article/serbia-protest-vucic-mass-shootings-36dea9b009a5fbb90e4f97a2296e71d (01-01-2024)

⁷¹ www.bnnbreaking.com/politics/serbia-against-violence-a-nations-cry-for-change/ (01-01-2024)

⁷² www.globalresearch.ca/dragana-trifkovic-us-coordinating-actions-serbian-government-serbian-opposition/5844483 (01-01-2024)

Western Backed “Pro-Democracy” Terrorists Wage War In Myanmar



Image: A Tatmadaw (Myanmar military) parade from 2017. www.frontiermyanmar.net

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

04-12-2023: If the West’s corporate media is anything to go by, popular pro-democracy groups in Myanmar have linked with ethnically based armed organisations in an attempt to restore civilian rule in the South-East Asian nation, which is bordered by Bangladesh and India to the west, Laos and Thailand to the east, and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to the north. Supposedly, the Tatmadaw (the military of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar) cancelled elections in

February 2021, brought the military to political power, and then proceeded to wage war against all those who resisted the takeover. Of course, this narrative, like many spun in the corporate media of the West, is little but an elaborate fabrication. In reality, the ruling classes of the West, principally those of the United States of America (US) and the United Kingdom (UK) are engaged in yet another *proxy war of regime change* in Myanmar,⁷³ which is squarely aimed not only at Naypyidaw, but also against its giant northern neighbour and economic

⁷³ www.redfireonline.com/2021/04/08/myanmar-western-backed-subversion-aids-regime-change-war/ (29-11-2023)

and political partner, the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Operation 1027

On October 27, the grandiosely titled "Three Brotherhood Alliance" launched coordinated attacks on military posts in the northern Shan state bordering China. They claimed to have taken several towns and border crossings, in an operation named "1027" after the date it began.⁷⁴ The "Three Brotherhood Alliance" comprises the Arakan Army, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army. These groups claim that there have been large numbers of the Tatmadaw and national police surrendering themselves to the ethnic armed militia, but these claims are not able to be verified⁷⁵ - and hence are likely to be little more than propaganda. The same goes for the claim from the Orwellian named US government funded United States Institute of Peace (USIP), which stated that the 1027 offensive had cut off 40% of the Tatmadaw's land access to China.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, it does appear that the attacks were coordinated, with the Arakan Army opening a front against the Tatmadaw in the Rakhine state on the West coast, attacks were launched in Kayah state bordering Thailand to the east, and in the Chin state which borders India.⁷⁷

The United Nations Officer for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) claims that the clashes between the Arakan Army and the Tatmadaw in the Rakhine State have resulted in the displacement of 25 175 people.⁷⁸ How this exact figure was arrived at is anyone's guess, but there is a history of innocent civilians fleeing

deadly clashes between the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and the Tatmadaw in 2017. This was blamed on Myanmar, but in fact the Tatmadaw were only responding to armed provocations from ARSA, who do not at all deny their links to Al Qaeda.⁷⁹ It is probable that ARSA has simply been renamed to today's "Arakan Army", containing many of the same personnel. The plight of the Rohingya people in the Rakhine state has been skillfully exploited by imperialism, with many liberal refugee rights groups in the West pleading with their governments to accept Rohingya asylum seekers. While it is the case that many Rohingya people are seeking refuge in regional countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia,⁸⁰ they are not fleeing from the State Administration Council (SAC - the Tatmadaw led government which assumed power in February 2021), but *from the deadly attacks on the SAC* launched by the bloodthirsty anti-government groups.

Proxy terrorist forces

The corporate Western media labelling these armed groups as "pro-democracy" borders on absurdity. In practice, these ethnic armed groups are *proxy terrorist forces* of US and UK imperialism, which seek to abolish Myanmar's independence via violent conflict which would serve to destabilise the region. The chaos and destruction would then undermine Myanmar's economic cooperation with the PRC and provide a beach head for terrorist militias to cross into the Chinese mainland. What is more, these ethnic armed organisations are a part of the fake National Unity Government (NUG),⁸¹ which only exists with the express backing of US imperialism. In 2022, the

⁷⁴ www.abc.net.au/news/2023-11-22/myanmar-junta-civil-war-three-brotherhood-alliance-1027/103130406 (29-11-2023)

⁷⁵ www.nbcnews.com/news/world/entire-army-battalion-surrendered-myanmar-rcna125275 (29-11-2023)

⁷⁶ www.usip.org/publications/2023/11/myanmars-junta-losing-control-its-border-china (29-11-2023)

⁷⁷ Ibid, 2.

⁷⁸ www.dw.com/en/myanmar-un-says-tens-of-thousands-displaced-in-clashes/a-67471901 (29-11-2023)

⁷⁹ www.redfireonline.com/2018/09/13/myanmar-rohingya-manipulated-for-the-wests-drive-to-war/ (29-11-2023)

⁸⁰ <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-calls-increased-regional-support-rohingyas-search-protection> (29-11-2023)

⁸¹ www.nugmyanmar.org/en/ (29-11-2023)

fraudulent NUG “Defence Minister” Yee Mon called on Western governments to provide arms and funding for its “resistance” forces, in the same way Western governments have provided arms and funding for Ukraine.⁸² In other words, the NUG calls for arms and funding from the West in the same manner in which the US and the UK states sent weapons and money to Nazi infested Ukraine in a failed war of regime change aimed at Russia.



Above: Pro-Western “protestors” in Myanmar brandish placards advocating the so-called “Civil Disobedience Movement”. Printed in English, and obviously mass produced, its funding is highly likely to have come from the US and/or the UK government. www.bnionline.net

Grotesquely, the agents of the West also refer to the unhinged armed attacks on the SAC as a “revolution”, which fools some well-meaning individuals. As the slavish Vox media organisation states, so called “civil society” groups have been a part of what is in practice a terrorist operation, with medical professionals associated with the “Civil Disobedience Movement” (CDM) who have been caring for the wounded ethnic armed organisations fighters.⁸³ The CDM is joined by the ludicrously named “People’s Defence Forces”

(PDF) in frenzied conflict alongside the proxy terrorist armed militias. However, it is not difficult to see where the funding and political support for the ethnic armed organisations, such as the CDM and the PDF, arrives from. The notorious National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the US Congress funded specialist overseas regime change arm, admits to hundreds of thousands of dollars in funding for “civil society”, “human rights”, “democratic norms” and “citizen inclusion” groups in Burma (disrespectfully using the old British colonial name for Myanmar) just in the year 2021.⁸⁴

Not to be outdone, the US government funded Agency for International Development (USAID) boasts that it had trained 255 “independent” media outlets on “unbiased” reporting (!), and “strengthened” 235 civil society organisations to advocate for “democratic reforms” in “Burma”.⁸⁵ Referring to Myanmar as “Burma” is par for the course, and an indicator that the US and the UK essentially aim to recolonise Myanmar in its overall war on the giant PRC. In the UK the “Burma Campaign UK” dubiously appears as a dedicated NGO, disconnected from the UK government. For example, it complains that the UK government has slashed aid to Myanmar by 70% since February 2021.⁸⁶ Yet last year, in response to their campaign to prevent British companies supplying aviation fuel to Myanmar (supposedly to prevent Tatmadaw bombing), the UK government “suddenly” announced warnings to British firms against supplying such fuel to its former colony.⁸⁷ In reality, British imperialism has never accepted the loss of its former colony, which fought for and won its independence in 1948. Since that time, the UK ruling class has covertly backed the ethnic

⁸² www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/myanmar-resistance-urges-west-provide-arms-fight-against-junta-2022-05-17/ (29-11-2023)

⁸³ www.vox.com/world-politics/2023/11/25/23975516/myanmar-military-junta-tatmadaw-three-brotherhood-alliance-china (29-11-2023)

⁸⁴ www.ned.org/region/asia/burma-2021/ (29-11-2023)

⁸⁵ www.usaid.gov/burma/our-work (29-11-2023)

⁸⁶ www.burmacampaign.org.uk/british-government-cuts-aid-to-burma-by-70-since-coup/ (29-11-2023)

⁸⁷ www.burmacampaign.org.uk/uk-government-warns-companies-against-supplying-aviation-fuel-to-myanmar-military-mizzima/ (29-11-2023)

armed organisations against the central Myanmar government, as has the US ruling class in more recent decades. The relentless economic rise of the PRC has only accelerated the West's ongoing deadly meddling in Myanmar.

Myanmar “on the verge of collapse” ?

The West's corporate media has seized on comments by interim Myanmar President Myint Swe where he remarked that if the SAC does not effectively manage the incidents happening in the border regions, the country would be split into various parts. Yet Myint Swe made these remarks at a meeting of the National Defence and Security Council, which was attended by SAC chief Min Aung Hlaing and other Tatmadaw officials.⁸⁸ The fake NUG “Foreign Minister” Zin Mar Aung, who is in exile in Japan, recently made fantastic comments that the Tatmadaw “is ready to collapse”,⁸⁹ which has been augmented by Western corporate media as meaning that Myanmar is “on the verge of collapse”. Yet this has been claimed by various conservative media outlets since 2021,⁹⁰ and nothing of the sort has occurred. Moreover, Zin Mar Aung is a *fellow* of the NED⁹¹, which exposes the NUG not as a “shadow government” but the US government funded front which presents itself as a pivot from which to further propagandise for liberal international support for the reactionary overthrow of the SAC.

Myanmar is obviously not about to collapse – though this is the direct aim of Washington and London in their proxy war of regime change to

undermine Red China. Yet the nation of Myanmar, with a population of over 54 million people,⁹² does face a reactionary Western backed armed insurgency dressed in the risible claim that it is a “Spring Revolution” which has linked with decades old Western backed ethnic militia such as the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the Karen National Union (KNU).⁹³ However, there is a long history of the Kachin, Karen and Chin ethnic groups being used by British imperialism against the newly independent Myanmar (then Burma), which continue to be funded today to disrupt desperately needed infrastructure projects agreed to between Myanmar and the PRC, such as dams, roads, ports and pipelines.⁹⁴

In fact, it is not only the KIA, the KNU and other ethnic armed organisations which are funded by Washington and billionaire regime change specialist George Soros – so too is the National League for Democracy (NLD) and even Aung San Suu Kyi herself. More than three decades of funding from the US state department and George Soros⁹⁵ *created and sustained* the NLD to the point where it was impossible for any other party to win an election in Myanmar. Even so, the NLD and its Western backers still had to carry out staggering levels of electoral fraud to “win” the 2021 election. The electoral commission appointed by the SAC found *11 million cases* of fraud, which included instances of people without citizenship being on voter rolls and duplicate registrations *in all 315 constituencies*.⁹⁶ Needless to say, if the SAC did not take action in response to this, Myanmar would likely have lost any semblance of independence,

⁸⁸ www.france24.com/en/live-news/20231109-armed-rebellion-risks-break-up-of-myanmar-junta-backed-president (02-12-2023)

⁸⁹ www.asia.nikkei.com/Editor-s-Picks/Interview/Myanmar-s-shadow-government-says-military-is-ready-to-collapse (02-12-2023)

⁹⁰ www.spectator.com.au/2021/07/myanmar-is-on-the-verge-of-collapse/ (02-12-2023)

⁹¹ www.ned.org/fellows/ms-zin-mar-aung/ (02-12-2023)

⁹² www.worldometers.info/world-population/myanmar-population/ (02-12-2023)

⁹³ www.thediplomat.com/2023/11/operation-1027-the-end-of-the-beginning-of-myanmars-spring-revolution/ (02-12-2023)

⁹⁴ www.landdestroyer.blogspot.com/2018/07/militants-threaten-chinas-obor.html#more (02-12-2023)

⁹⁵ <https://landdestroyer.blogspot.com/2011/11/burmese-pro-democracy-movement-creation.html> (02-12-2023)

⁹⁶ www.bangkokpost.com/world/2146643/myanmar-election-commission-finds-fraud-everywhere (02-12-2023)

and may have been remote-controlled by the West.

No to war in South-East Asia

Myanmar's Western backed "freedom fighters" have no claim to anything but extreme violence. Even the British government funded BBC reported on the case of Lily Naing Kyaw, a 58-year-old singer who was shot in the head and later died.⁹⁷ Her "crime" was nothing but disagreeing with the US and UK backed "opposition" political views, by speaking out in favour of the SAC. The barbarous acts of the proxy terrorist forces has a chilling effect on free speech and normal political dialogue in Myanmar. During the recent "Operation 1027" even the US government funded *Voice of America* outlet reported that the terror groups had attacked military checkpoints, toll gates and police stations. Tatmadaw spokesperson Zaw Min Tun also stated that a *hotel* was attacked, with hotel staff and civilians being seized and taken away.⁹⁸ In other words, the "pro-democracy" fighters have engaged in literal terrorism including the *kidnapping of innocent civilians* as hostages. Just as with Hamas in Palestine on October 7, the terrorist "pro-democracy" militias have little to no concern for the lives of bystanders.

Yet the Western backed terrorist proxies not only face the Tatmadaw itself. The Tatmadaw has trained the Pyu Saw Htee civilian militia, which takes action to defend the government and Myanmar itself from this Western backed violence. Even the US government funded *Myanmar Now* reported that Pyu Saw Htee groups had forced the terror militias to retreat from two villages (Ye-U and Shwebo) in the Sagaing Region.⁹⁹ Moreover, the PRC is well aware of the dangers of the terror militia's deadly campaigns

against the Tatmadaw, especially in areas which border China. In late November, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) began conducting live fire drills on its side of the border, in which they tested "rapid mobilising, border sealing and fire strike" powers.¹⁰⁰ Myanmar is a key partner in Red China's flagship Belt and Road Initiative, which is another reason why Washington and London seek to break ties between Naypyidaw and Beijing at almost any cost.

Working people have the power to stop war in South-East Asia, despite the never-ending attempts at regime change and politically reactionary colour-revolutions ultimately aimed at the PRC. The fact that imperialism has to resort to war and violent terrorism via proxy forces is proof positive that capitalism cannot combat the giant publicly owned and planned economy on the Chinese mainland, and its friendly and co-operative relations with its neighbours, and indeed the world. While the PRC remains a bureaucratically deformed workers' state which is hampered by the leadership of a conservative Stalinist caste, it is in the interests of workers internationally to defend Myanmar and China against the ravages of imperialist backed machinations. The formation of Marxist vanguard parties forged with the theory of Permanent Revolution remains key for Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Bangladesh and India, combined with proletarian political revolutions in China, Vietnam and the DPRK ("North Korea"). Only genuine socialism has the power to stop and reverse a rapidly deteriorating Western Empire.



⁹⁷ www.journal-neo.su/2023/06/20/why-the-west-is-whitewashing-terrorism-in-vietnam-and-myanmar/ (02-12-2023)

⁹⁸ www.voanews.com/a/trio-of-ethnic-rebel-groups-attack-military-targets-in-myanmar-/7330775.html (02-12-2023)

⁹⁹ www.myanmar-now.org/en/news/resistance-assaults-militia-held-villages-in-sagaing-region/ (02-12-2023)

¹⁰⁰

www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3242819/chinas-pla-starts-live-fire-drills-myanmar-border-security-test-junta-rebel-clashes-escalate (02-12-2023)

Homelessness Explodes in Australian Cities



Above: A protest in Sydney's Martin Place highlighting the unaffordability of housing. www.streetsmartaustralia.org

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

19-12-2023: Video footage of people living in tents in the major Australian city of Brisbane recently exposed the dire state of the housing and cost of living crisis. A passing cyclist took the footage of a new tent city appearing along the river in West End, which was picked up by the mainstream media. According to the census conducted in 2021, 122 000 individuals in Australia now experience homelessness every night, while in Queensland the number of people experiencing homelessness has increased by 22% in the last five years.¹⁰¹ In nearby Musgrave Park, 50 homeless people had to

be moved into temporary accommodation last May to make way for the famous Paniyiri Greek Festival.¹⁰² But not all homeless people are so lucky to even receive temporary accommodation. Brisbane City Council staff have been reported to be removing tents from inner-city parks and dumping them, leaving some people without a home to return to. A Musgrave Park resident told the *Brisbane Times* “..that’s all you’ve got in life, and they take it off you and dump it”.¹⁰³

Covid quarantine shelters?

¹⁰¹ www.australian5.com/2023/12/07/heartbreaking-footage-showing-growing-tent-city-in-major-australian-capital/ (13-12-2023)

¹⁰² www.msn.com/en-au/news/australia/brisbane-housing-crisis-as-50-homeless-people-moved-from-musgrave-park-amid-pinkenba-facility-pledge/ar-AA1b80IX (13-12-2023)

¹⁰³

www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/queensland/council-staff-thought-empty-tents-where-homeless-lived-were-abandoned-20231031-p5egc9.html (13-12-2023)

In response, Brisbane's Lord Mayor put forward a proposal to turn a Covid detention centre ("quarantine facility") at Pinkenba into a 500-bed emergency accommodation facility. Adrian Shrinner claimed that the facility was not purpose built for crisis housing, but it was "better than living in a car or a tent".¹⁰⁴ The fraudulent "Covid pandemic" was in reality a deliberate shutdown of the economy in a desperate attempt to re-start a floundering production for private profit system which is in an intractable crisis. Unprecedented political repression on the basis of blatantly unscientific motives was meted out against working people and the poor, while millionaires and billionaires added to their wealth portfolios. The cost-of-living crisis afflicting Australia and other Western countries which is now driving even more homelessness is inextricably linked to two years of engineered partial economic collapse via absurd and harmful lockdowns combined with hundreds of thousands of job losses due to unconscionable vaccine mandates with an untested and potentially deadly formula. Housing was already nigh-on unaffordable for many before lockdowns, and now some are simply priced out of access.

Housing should be a basic right, but it is treated as a commodity under modern capitalism. One of the more concerning outcomes is the fact that older women over the age of 55 now make up the fastest growing cohort of those who are homeless in Australia.¹⁰⁵ There are many factors which contribute to this appalling situation, including a shortage of affordable housing, an ageing population, and a significant gap in wealth accumulation between men and women across their lifetimes. Women tend to accumulate less superannuation, due to working part time or casually throughout their lives and taking time out

of the workforce to care for family members. There is also age discrimination in employment, plus an increasingly unaffordable private rental market.¹⁰⁶ The fact that housing is treated as a "market", rather than a human need, in itself inevitably generates homelessness for the "have-nots".

The "Lucky Country"

For some time after Donald Horne wrote the book *The Lucky Country: Australia in the Sixties*, the nickname of the Lucky Country stuck for decades afterwards.¹⁰⁷ In the 1960s, the "great Australian dream" of home ownership was certainly achievable for the vast majority of the working class. Yet this was just one effect of the post-war boom in the West, where capitalism was able to expand from the 1950s to the mid-1970s, and this period ended decades ago. During that time, the ruling classes in the West also felt compelled to offer something to counter universal home supply for workers in the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). With the USSR now long gone, in a certain sense the "socialist demon" has been replaced by the People's Republic of China (PRC). Today, Western corporate media propaganda against the PRC is at saturation level, as they attempt to counter news of the PRC's stupendous and decades long economic growth with nonsensical claims of the "threat" of China. The "Lucky Country" is dead, replaced with dangerous war provocations against the PRC.

In fact, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural development in the PRC plans to build 6.5 million government-subsidised rental apartments in 40 major cities by 2025, benefiting 13 million

¹⁰⁴ www.mandurahmail.com.au/story/8194427/push-to-turn-covid-facility-into-homeless-shelter/ (13-12-2023)

¹⁰⁵ www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/age-discrimination/projects/risk-homelessness-older-women (13-12-2023)

¹⁰⁶ www.mercyfoundation.com.au/our-focus/ending-homelessness/older-women-and-homelessness/ (13-12-2023)

¹⁰⁷ www.australia-explained.com.au/history/the-lucky-country/ (17-12-2023)

people.¹⁰⁸ In a country of 1.4 billion people, nearly 90% of its people are homeowners. Even in the neighbouring Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), with far fewer economic resources than the giant PRC, an astounding 88.1% of the population owned their own home, putting Vietnam in the global top 10.¹⁰⁹ While Australian workers endure a daily struggle against a sharply rising cost of living crisis, the average cost of living in the Laos People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) is 45.5% lower and average rents are 32.8% lower than the corresponding figures for Australia.¹¹⁰ In the much maligned DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea – "North Korea"), Article 25 of its constitution guarantees all working people *the right* not only to housing, but also to food and clothing.¹¹¹ On the other side of the Pacific Ocean, in the Republic of Cuba, 85% of Cubans own their own homes.¹¹² While it is the case that many homes are in poor repair, the harsh economic conditions would be largely alleviated if the crippling six decade long economic blockade imposed by the US government was lifted.

Despite some differing circumstances, it is clear that homelessness as such is unknown in those states which have overthrown capitalism, and have embarked on a path towards socialism. This fact indicates that for working people in the West to similarly ensure they no longer have homeless people living on the streets, or in tents or in cars, a revolution which places the proletariat in power is required. To be sure, political decision-making power in the PRC, the SRV, the DPRK, the LPDR and Cuba is restricted to conservative and bureaucratic Stalinist castes which value coexistence and collaboration with imperialism above even the welfare of "their own" working classes. This is one

reason why these misleaderships capitulated to the West with its nefarious "Covid pandemic" narrative. To retain legitimacy, however, these bureaucrats must be seen to address critical issues such as housing, and public ownership of the major means of production combined with a planned economy enables them to do just that. What is required are socialist revolutions in the West, combined with proletarian political revolutions in the East, to enable workers in power to forever end the scourge of homelessness.



¹⁰⁸

www.gov.cn/policies/policywatch/202202/14/content_WS6209be64c6d09c94e48a5045.html (17-12-2023)

¹⁰⁹ www.e.vnexpress.net/news/perspectives/the-housing-paradox-in-vietnam-4565703.html (17-12-2023)

¹¹⁰ www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/country_result.jsp?country=Laos (17-12-2023)

¹¹¹

www.ncnk.org/sites/default/files/DPRK%20constitution%20%282019%29.pdf (17-12-2023)

¹¹² www.horizontecubano.law.columbia.edu/news/housing-socialist-cuba-and-structural-reforms (17-12-2023)

BYD nudges Tesla for the Title of World's Top EV Manufacturer



www.mydroll.com

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

26-12-2023: Floods, bushfires, cyclones, hurricanes, storms and other dangerous climate events continue to wreak havoc across the globe as a stark reminder of the approach of perilous tipping points linked to two centuries of greenhouse gas emissions. Atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide today stand at 420 ppm (parts per million) compared to a pre-industrial level of around 280 ppm.¹¹³ Although the decarbonisation of transport is *but one* element of the urgent need to address the dire condition of the earth's planetary boundaries¹¹⁴, it is an important starting point. To this end, two

manufacturers of EVs (electric vehicles or BEV – battery electric vehicles) are neck and neck for the crown of the most sales and total market share. For years, tech billionaire Elon Musk's Tesla was the leader, but this is now being challenged head on by the Shenzhen based BYD. BYD was only founded in 1995, and its BYD Auto subsidiary began a short two decades ago with the aim of developing "new energy" (emission free) passenger cars, buses, trucks and forklifts for the People's Republic of China (PRC).¹¹⁵ It has already achieved this goal and is now expanding internationally.

BYD vs Tesla

¹¹³ www.climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/carbon-dioxide/ (22-12-2023)

¹¹⁴ www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.1259855 (22-12-2023)

¹¹⁵ www.electrek.co/2023/12/19/tesla-byd-has-caught-up-expected-to-take-lead-global-bev-market-share-ev/ (22-12-2023)

BYD (which stands for “Build Your Dreams” – though apparently this was added years after its founding) had already overtaken Tesla in the first six months of 2022 in terms of unit sales. Though, to be fair, Tesla’s Shanghai Gigafactory was closed for two months during that year due to the nonsensical and harmful “Covid” lockdowns imposed by the conservative Communist Party of China (CPC) led government. This cost Tesla the production of some 50 to 70 thousand vehicles.¹¹⁶ However, in the third financial quarter of 2023, BYD was only 3456 EV sales behind Tesla, and is expected to overtake the famous brand in the final financial quarter of 2023.¹¹⁷ In 2022, BYD also overtook South Korea’s LG as the world’s second-largest producer of EV batteries. The number one producer of EV batteries is China’s Contemporary Amperex Technology Co Ltd (CATL), which has recently unveiled an EV battery which allows an astonishing 1000-kilometre journey on a single charge.¹¹⁸

The fact that BYD produces its own batteries automatically provides it with an advantage over Tesla. For, while Tesla does have a joint venture with Panasonic to produce batteries at its Gigafactory in Storey County, Nevada, for all its China and many US produced vehicles it purchases off the shelf batteries from suppliers such as China’s CATL.¹¹⁹ However, BYD does operate a bus manufacturing factory in Lancaster, California, which features a workforce of over 1000 – 750 of whom are Unionised.¹²⁰ Despite many Tesla vehicles appearing on Australian roads over the past five years, BYD is throwing down the gauntlet

in the island continent. BYD plans a massive expansion in Australia, with aims to become one of the top 5 car brands. Liu Xueliang, BYD’s General Manager of its Asia Pacific auto sales division, stated that BYD is committed to bringing the best quality vehicles to Australia at affordable prices. Indeed, BYD has three models now for sale in Australia, and all three of them are priced below \$50 000.¹²¹

Until this point, EVs have largely been too expensive for large sections of the working class, with many of them having no option but to keep older petrol and diesel powered vehicles on the road. Yet BYD’s intervention into the market could begin to change this and may force the other manufacturers to cut their prices or fall behind. BYD’s Han sedan retails in China for around \$32 000, which is almost \$18 000 less than Tesla’s competitor the Model Y, so it is little wonder that BYD are selling many more.¹²² Thus far, Tesla’s lowest price EV starts at around \$60 000, and increases from there to around \$148 000 for the top of the range Model X.¹²³ For many workers East and West, such prices are currently out of reach and are not realistic in the near term, if at all.

State backing for BYD

BYD CEO Wang Chuanfu, who is known as the father of the “blade battery”, grew up in extreme poverty in China’s Anhui province.¹²⁴ Both his parents passed away before he entered high school. The blade battery is a game changer in battery technology, and virtually eliminates the

¹¹⁶ www.scmp.com/business/china-business/article/3184241/chinas-byd-takes-teslas-crown-worlds-biggest-electric (22-12-2023)

¹¹⁷ www.linkedin.com/pulse/byd-vs-tesla-faces-loss-gets-closer-global-ev-throne-evindiaonline (22-12-2023)

¹¹⁸ www.news.cgtn.com/news/2022-07-07/Chinese-auto-maker-BYD-overtakes-Tesla-in-global-EV-sales-1btgWjQDBu/index.html (22-12-2023)

¹¹⁹ www.linkedin.com/pulse/byd-already-delivering-could-tesla-crown-slipping-robert-guest (22-12-2023)

¹²⁰ www.en.byd.com/bus/about/#bus-about-2 (22-12-2023)

¹²¹ www.thedriven.io/2023/11/30/byd-plans-to-overtake-tesla-and-become-top-5-car-brand-in-australia/ (22-12-2023)

¹²² www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/7/28/chinas-byd-was-dismissed-by-elon-musk-now-its-beating-tesla (22-12-2023)

¹²³ www.carsguide.com.au/tesla/model-3/price (22-12-2023)

¹²⁴ www.gulfnews.com/special-reports/wang-chuanfu-meet-the-elon-musk-of-china-from-peasants-son-to-billionaire-disruptor-1.1680534947799 (22-12-2023)

concerns about battery safety in EVs. The blade battery passed the nail penetration test with flying colours, emitting no smoke or fire while being penetrated, as opposed to conventional lithium batteries which emit oxygen which fuels fire. The blade battery also passed other extreme tests, such as being crushed, bent, heated in a furnace to 300 degrees Celsius and being overcharged by 260%, without resulting in a fire or explosion. It was also driven over by a 46-tonne truck which resulted in no leakage, deformation or smoke, came out intact and was then able to be refitted to an EV.¹²⁵ Today, Wang Chuanfu works until 11pm or midnight, five or six days a week. BYD engineers are housed in company owned apartment complexes and receive low-cost meals in BYD canteens. A US executive who studied BYD remarked: “They’re basically breathing, eating, thinking and working at the company 24/7”.¹²⁶

However, as brilliant as Wang Chuanfu is, and as hard working as the BYD engineers are, this is only part of the reason for the mega-success of BYD. A huge reason is the sheer volume and extent of government subsidies for BYD from the various levels of government in the PRC – stretching into the billions of dollars. It is true that Tesla (and Elon Musk’s other companies Space X and SolarCity) has also received US government subsidies in the vicinity of billions of dollars,¹²⁷ so why is BYD on the verge of overtaking Tesla in EV production? As mentioned, one reason is that BYD can now build very high quality EVs at a lower cost to the consumer, bringing them somewhat within reach of large sections of the working class in the East and the West. We can see that there is a world of difference between government subsidies in a

capitalist state (the USA) and government subsidies in a workers’ state (the PRC). In a capitalist state, private corporations are subsidised *in order to make profits* for themselves, with the end product a secondary concern. In a workers’ state, firms are subsidised by the government *for a purpose*, to fulfil some of the goals of a planned economy, and/or to provide some economic or social benefit to the working class. This is not always achieved directly, but in this case, PRC government subsidies to BYD results in more affordable, high quality EVs being available in the PRC (and now for export). This contributes to the environmental goals of the electrification of transport and industry in the PRC, by lowering harmful greenhouse gas emissions. It also allows the working class to access high quality but affordable products, improving their quality of life.

No to war on China

Over a decade ago, the central government of the PRC government began encouraging carmakers to make electric vehicles, and they did this with subsidies and other incentives. These subsidies are extensive. The QZ website calculated that BYD received about \$1 billion in EV government subsidies for the EVs it sold in 2016 – which is *more* than its \$750 million net profit for that year.¹²⁸ More recently, BYD’s annual report for 2021 showed that it received 2.3 billion Chinese Yuan in subsidies, which accounted for *57% of its net income* that year.¹²⁹ Some speculate that Chinese “New Energy” vehicle manufacturers would not be able to survive without these huge government subsidies,¹³⁰ and this may well be true. Yet this

¹²⁵ www.evreporter.com/byd-blade-battery-what-makes-it-ultra-safe/ (22-12-2023)

¹²⁶

www.money.cnn.com/2009/04/13/technology/gunther_electric.fortune/ (22-12-2023)

¹²⁷ <https://www.businessinsider.com/elon-musk-list-government-subsidies-tesla-billions-spacex-solarcity-2021-12?op=1#spacex-lands-a-289-billion-contract-with-nasa-in-april-2021-1> (22-12-2023)

¹²⁸ www.qz.com/1579568/how-much-financial-help-does-china-give-ev-maker-byd (23-12-2023)

¹²⁹ www.seekingalpha.com/article/4524732-byd-a-congested-investment-that-investors-should-avoid (23-12-2023)

¹³⁰ www.researchgate.net/publication/363370156_Will_Chinese_New_Energy_Vehicle_Manufacturers_Survive_Without_Government_Subsidies (23-12-2023)

only highlights the fact that private profit for private corporations is not the driver of the overall economy of the PRC. The main drivers of the economy in the PRC are human needs and the development of its economy to benefit the majority. As profits for shareholders are a minor concern, social, economic and environmental goals can be, and are, factored in. In other words, capitalism does not rule the roost in the PRC, as it does in the West.

The spectacular scientific, technological and economic development in the PRC over the last two decades is a particular concern for the ruling classes of the US and Europe. The PRC is demonstrating in practice that an economy which is *not* based on the direct exploitation of labour and the environment has the ability to challenge and surpass those that do. Capitalism was overturned in China following a 20-year civil war which culminated in the victory of a socialist revolution in 1949. While imperialism “lost” China at that stage, the PRC’s economic development lagged behind the West until the early 1990s. In the last two decades, it is clear that the PRC has built up a powerful state guarding an economy which has the reserves to offer the world stupendous advances in technology that are accessible to the masses and contributes to environmental goals.

Imperialism in the West has but one answer to a rising socialistic power which exposes the shortcomings of capitalism – all out war. While it is true that the PRC remains a bureaucratically deformed workers’ state, where the working class is generally excluded from political power, the ruling classes of the West cannot tolerate the barest threat of an alternative. This is the real source of the relentless attempts at internal counter-revolution in China (Tibet, Hong Kong, Xinjiang) combined with non-stop provocations in the South China Sea and arming Taiwan for a fruitless battle for a fake “independence”. What is

required is a proletarian political revolution in the PRC which sweeps away Stalinist rule, combined with international working class defence of the PRC against internal imperialist fomented subversion and deadly war provocations on its coastline. Authentic Marxist vanguard parties need to be assembled to lead working people East and West to the socialist future they deserve.



Above: Wang Chuanfu and a BYD EV at left, and Elon Musk and a Tesla EV at right. BYD vehicles built in the PRC receive massive subsidies from its deformed workers’ state, which enables them to produce high quality EVs at a much lower price than Tesla vehicles produced by private capital in the West.
www.techkagaj.com

“Stand With Palestine”: Anti-War or Pro-War?



Above: A pro-Palestine action in Melbourne. www.habitattlaut.blogspot.com

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

11-12-2023: Houthi Brigadier General Yahya Saree claimed responsibility for two strikes on assumed Israeli ships in the Red Sea on December 4. The Yemeni General stated that they will continue to prevent Israeli ships or those associated with Israel from navigating the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden “until the Israeli aggression against our steadfast brothers in the Gaza Strip stops.”¹³¹ Missile and drone strikes were reported on three commercial vessels, the Bahamas flagged bulk carrier *Unity Explorer* and the Panamanian flagged bulk carriers *Number 9* and *Sophie II*. The USS *Carney*, an Arleigh Burke-class missile destroyer, claimed that

it shot down a drone bearing down on it, and two other drones in response to distress calls by the ships.¹³² Not surprisingly, the US government pointed the finger at Iran, despite being claimed by Yemen’s Houthis. White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan stated that while the attacks were launched by the Houthis in Yemen, they were “fully enabled by Iran”.¹³³ These attacks follow the Houthi seizure of the cargo ship *Galaxy Leader* in the Southern Red Sea, which was

¹³¹ www.apnews.com/article/red-sea-houthi-yemen-ships-attack-israel-hamas-war-gaza-strip (06-12-2023)

¹³² <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/12/4/yemens-houthis-target-israeli-linked-ships-in-red-sea-heres-what-to-know> (06-12-2023)

¹³³ www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12824549/White-House-blames-IRAN-attacks-commercial-vessels-Red-Sea-U-S-talks-allies-appropriate-responses-Tehran-backed-Houthi-rebels-shot-vessels-warship-downed-three-drones.html (06-12-2023)

reportedly partly owned by an Israeli businessperson, on November 19.¹³⁴

Preparation for war on Iran

While the Islamic Republic of Iran and Hezbollah have not been drawn into militarily responding to Israel's genocidal war on Gaza, the Houthis appear to have no such qualms. For their part, Iran and Hezbollah have wisely decided against striking Israel in response to its deadly Gaza bombing campaign. If one responds directly to open provocations by US imperialism, one loses the advantage significantly. Arguably, the October 7 Hamas attacks on Israel and the inevitable military response from the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) was specifically designed by the US ruling class to provoke at least Iran into a wider war. The October 7 Hamas assault came at the precise time when it became definitively clear that the "offensive" of NATO's proxy Nazified forces in Ukraine had been defeated, and that Ukraine would never come anywhere close to inflicting major military losses on Russia.

In practice, both Hamas and the Zionist Israeli state are proxy forces which are heavily influenced ultimately by Washington and London. As Thierry Meyssan writes, the narrative and explanation for the events of October 7 given by both Hamas and the Israeli government are full of lies and evasions.¹³⁵ It is inconceivable that the Israeli state did not know what was in the pipeline prior to October 7, in the same way that it is scarcely credible that Hamas could have built 500 kilometres of concrete reinforced tunnels without arousing any suspicion in Tel Aviv. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu is on record for supporting and financing Hamas terrorists, while the IDF has

also *recruited* ISIS and Al Qaeda mercenaries¹³⁶, during the imperialist orchestrated war on Syria. In fact, there is solid documentation which verifies that between 2012 and 2018 Netanyahu gave the Qatari monarchy approval to transfer around one billion dollars, half of which went to Hamas including its military wing.¹³⁷ Netanyahu's actions became too much even for hawkish Israeli Defence Minister Avigdor Liberman, who resigned in 2020 after photos of *suitcases full of cash* going to Hamas became public. Liberman quit his post in protest against Netanyahu's policy, which he said "marked the first time Israel is funding terrorism against itself".¹³⁸ In addition, Hamas worked with Al Qaeda in Syria¹³⁹ for ten years, which therefore means it worked *alongside the IDF* in the shared goal of overthrowing the Syrian Republic in arguably the worst proxy war involving the slaughter of innocents ever to be conducted.

Covid, Ukraine...Palestine?

The world is approaching multiple trip wires for a global war. It is urgent that working people mobilise and organise to prevent capitalism from setting off an unprecedented conflagration. At the very least, what is required is a genuine anti-imperialist anti-war movement, which pushes back directly against the war aims of the ruling classes of the West and their henchmen in Europe. In these countries, there certainly have been large rallies and multiple demonstrations in defence of Palestine, in an attempt to stop the Israeli state from conducting its carpet bombing in Gaza. Yet these rallies have, in the most part, been led by the same liberal "socialist" parties which were not at all against the designs of imperialism since their gaping capitulations of March 2020. In fact, these

¹³⁴ www.sott.net/article/486179-Video-shows-Yemens-Houthis-seize-cargo-ship-in-Red-Sea-warn-that-Israeli-assets-are-legitimate-targets (06-12-2023)

¹³⁵ www.voltairenet.org/article220078.html (06-12-2023)

¹³⁶ www.globalresearch.ca/netanyahu-supports-both-hamas-as-well-as-al-qaeda-terrorists/5836901 (06-12-2023)

¹³⁷ www.pressenza.com/2023/11/how-netanyahu-funded-built-up-and-made-an-ally-of-hamas-from-2012-to-2018/ (06-12-2023)

¹³⁸ www.cbc.ca/news/politics/netanyahu-israel-gaza-hamas-1.7010035 (06-12-2023)

¹³⁹ www.middleeasteye.net/news/how-did-hamass-military-expertise-end-syrias-rebels (06-12-2023)

self-described “Marxist” organisations in fact merged with the capitalist state during the fraudulent “Covid pandemic”, where the same governments that are now backing Israel’s war on Gaza enacted an unprecedented form of fascism via repressive lockdowns and vaccine mandates. During this time, the Zionist Israeli state was more aggressive than any other in enforcing vaccine mandates on its population, complete with other onerous non-scientific restrictions such as a Green Pass.¹⁴⁰

These “left” parties, who now claim to oppose Israel as a whole, said nothing about the Israeli state’s Covid repression, even though the Israeli state was doing *precisely what it had demanded*. Then from February 24, 2022, this supposed “left” switched on a dime to practically march lockstep with NATO in its proxy war on Russia via Ukraine. Of course, lest they be totally exposed as imperialist automatons, some of them *claimed* to oppose NATO expansion.¹⁴¹ In practice, however, they could not get around the fact that the US led Western governments were arming Nazis in Ukraine,¹⁴² in the only country in the world in which Nazi battalions formed part of its state. Despite a handful of leftists trying to organise protests against a NATO armed Nazi led war, the liberal left parties who had previously acted as Covid enforcers, fell silent. They could not bring themselves to oppose a blatant war on Russia.

Then, “all of a sudden”, came October 7. The very self-described left parties which had enforced unprecedented state repression in the name of a virus, and waved Ukrainian flags while covertly cheering on Nazis in an escalation which could at any time have led to a nuclear world war, leapt to

the defence of Palestine. From “Stand with Ukraine” (which in practice meant “Stand with Nazis”), the Ukrainian flags were replaced, overnight, with Palestinian flags, to become “Stand with Palestine”. While it is undeniable that elementary justice is on the side of Palestine, have the Covid/liberal/opportunist left completely changed their stripes? Have they performed a 180 degree turn from de-facto support for imperialism to sharp opposition to imperialism and its wars? Practice indicates otherwise.



Above: Thousands march on the Israeli embassy in London. www.itv.com

Terrorism is not “resistance”

The former United Kingdom (UK) Home Secretary Suella Braverman described the pro-Palestine demonstrations there as “hate marches”,¹⁴³ and attempted to prevent them. No doubt this ruling class figure was defending the UK government’s position of unqualified support for the Israeli state, yet there was a grain of truth in this remark. It was as if we were supposed to simply line up on one side of the Israel/Palestine divide, and hate the other until we are blue in the face, as was cleverly satirised by CJ Hopkins.¹⁴⁴ While the conservative right immediately demanded that

¹⁴⁰ www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/with-boosters-masks-green-pass-israel-sees-covid-19-wave-retreat-2021-10-15/ (09-12-2023)

¹⁴¹ www.redflag.org.au/article/ukraine-war-russia-out-no-nato (09-12-2023)

¹⁴² www.sott.net/article/393128-The-real-Ukraine-Americanized-nazi-dominated (09-12-2023)

¹⁴³ www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/10/30/pro-palestine-protests-hate-marches-says-suella-braverman/ (09-12-2023)

¹⁴⁴ www.off-guardian.org/2023/11/22/the-hate-machine/ (09-12-2023)

everyone “condemn Hamas”, they were doing so in order to absolve the crimes of the ongoing occupation of Palestine by the Zionist Israeli state. The opportunist left parties, however, not only could not bring themselves to condemn the slaughter of innocent Israeli civilians, but many of them also embraced this blatant terrorism as an act of “resistance”. Thus their pro-Palestine demonstrations did not have the character of a genuine anti-war movement, even despite the correct call for an end to the siege of Gaza. Minimising or apologising for the bloodthirsty actions of Hamas, could well be interpreted as a call for more terrorism.

New York Times columnist Michelle Goldberg correctly lampooned the liberal left as “edge lord anti-imperialists” for downplaying or even celebrating terrorist murder committed by Hamas.¹⁴⁵ Noted climate justice author and reformist commentator Naomi Klein made the point that justifying and/or hailing the killing of Israeli Jews by terrorists is experienced as anti-Semitism by many other Jews, which in turn fuels Zionism.¹⁴⁶ Klein wistfully calls for a left which is able to recognise this. In response, Ben Becker, a leader of the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), effectively claimed that liberals who demand the left condemn Hamas are in effect calling for Palestinians to lay down whatever weapons they may have and surrender. He also claims that liberals who call on the left to distance themselves from “resistance” will not be able to build a movement, citing the large demonstrations which have taken place in the US in support of his case.¹⁴⁷

Even though Ms Goldberg and Ms Klein could be described as liberals, Mr Becker has the shoe on

the other foot. It is the PSL and the opportunist left parties who are adopting the liberal position, which is NOT socialist, let alone “revolutionary”. It is a quirk of history that imperialism’s main political ally today is liberalism – which encompasses the opportunist left parties. The conservative right are no longer consistent political allies for capitalism’s needs at this point – witness the Donald Trump phenomenon. And capitalism is so desperate to counter the rise of the non-imperialist BRICS bloc (Brazil, Russia, China, South Africa and others soon to join), that it needs outraged liberals in a near state of permanent mobilisation. This is one reason why the mobilised the liberal “socialist” left for Covid, Black Lives Matter, Ukraine and now Israel/Palestine. However, the Israel/Palestine conflict is being ignited at this point apparently as a cover for a regime change war against Iran, as part of imperialism’s ongoing war preparations against Russia and China.¹⁴⁸ Imperialism is mobilising this faux left for “Palestine” today, as they are probably well aware that this “left” will NOT mobilise against a war on Iran, Russia or China (apart from a few notable exceptions), and may even be allies in such wars.

For a real anti-war movement

The left can agree that the Zionist Israeli state, backed in particular by US and UK led imperialism, is culpable for the daily oppression of Palestinians. However, the only chance the Palestinian working class has of liberating itself from this oppression is by linking with the Israeli working class, many of whom also struggle with the vast inequalities of Israeli capitalism. The Israeli and Palestinian workers are so inextricably intertwined that anything that presents itself as an obstacle to joint

¹⁴⁵ www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/nyt-columnist-slams-american-left-for-justifying-hamas-s-atrocities-edgelord-anti-imperialists/ar-AA1i9KDD (09-12-2023)

¹⁴⁶ [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/oct/11/why-](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/oct/11/why-are-some-of-the-left-celebrating-the-killings-of-israeli-jews)

[are-some-of-the-left-celebrating-the-killings-of-israeli-jews](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/oct/11/why-are-some-of-the-left-celebrating-the-killings-of-israeli-jews) (09-12-2023)

¹⁴⁷ www.red-ant.org/2023/12/07/building-a-real-left-not-one-that-condemns-resistance/ (09-12-2023)

¹⁴⁸ www.redfireonline.com/2023/10/16/the-west-ignites-another-proxy-war-in-the-middle-east/ (09-12-2023)

struggle must be overcome – however far away that may seem today. For Palestinian workers to have any chance at reaching Israeli workers, they must *distance themselves entirely* from not only Hamas, but also Islamic Jihad, the Stalinist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Maoist Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and other smaller outfits which also *carry out indiscriminate terrorism against Israeli civilians*. There can be no path to a bi-national Arab/Hebrew workers' state without this perspective, nor without the basis of an Arab/Israeli Marxist vanguard party. If there is to be any Palestinian "national liberation" it can only do so via the theory of Permanent Revolution.

To some this sounds "ultra-left", but the struggle against war and the struggle for socialism has been combined many times throughout the 20th century by necessity. It is an obvious liberal falsehood to struggle against war, then for a supposed democracy, followed by a gradual transition to socialism. Internationally, the left needs to defend Palestine while condemning mindless terrorism, and stridently opposing a US led war on Iran, Russia and China. In one sense, Hamas is one giant false flag, an organisation which claims to be pro-Palestine, but in fact has the mission of destroying secular Arab unity.¹⁴⁹ The term "controlled opposition" is often misused, but in fact Hamas provides a real live working model. Hamas carries out terror attacks which then "justifies" retaliation by the Israeli state, in an endless cycle of violence.¹⁵⁰ There is no doubt that Zionism amongst Israelis is a significant problem, but obviously counter-productive terrorism only fans the flames of this odious ideology.

Unfortunately, what we now experience in the West is a pro-Palestine "anti-war" movement which arguably prepares the ground for more war. In Australia, the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) correctly recognise that the current pro-Palestine movement is being led by Socialist Alternative, Socialist Alliance and Solidarity directly behind the fortunes of the Labor Party federal government and the trade Union bureaucracy.¹⁵¹ Yet the SEP went way further than the parties they criticise with Covid repression, as it still condemns the Labor Party today (in December 2023) for abandoning Covid "safety" measures!¹⁵² What is more, all these parties appear unmoved while the IDF bombed Syria no less than *four times*¹⁵³ in the two weeks following the Hamas attacks of October 7.

The opportunist left parties also neglect to link Israel's war on Gaza and the Western led war preparations against Russia and China to the war at home. The cost of living is outrageous, basic food is expensive, housing for many is nigh on unaffordable. These and many other costs are being deliberately driven up, as the West wages war abroad. Yet both wars are bound together, and both must be fought together. Justifiable outrage over imperialist backed military assaults, on their own, only goes so far. A real left would link the two of them to a much-needed drive to undermine the pillars of the vastly unequal "free market" madness, and towards a real revolution.



¹⁴⁹ www.theduran.com/heres-why-hamas-is-still-a-dangerous-terrorist-organisation/ (09-12-2023)

¹⁵⁰ www.globalresearch.ca/israel-americas-mad-dog-in-syria/5580768 (09-12-2023)

¹⁵¹ www.wsws.org/en/articles/2023/11/30/xqbo-n30.html (09-12-2023)

¹⁵² www.wsws.org/en/articles/2023/12/08/andq-d08.html (09-12-2023)

¹⁵³ www.timesofisrael.com/syria-accuses-israel-of-bombing-aleppo-airport-for-4th-time-in-2-weeks/ (09-12-2023)

HANDS OFF THE RED SEA!



Above: Ansar Allah patrol boats from Yemen operating in the Red Sea. www.shipsandports.com.ng

30-12-2023: The US military has announced “Operation Prosperity Guardian” allegedly to protect “freedom of navigation” through the Red Sea. Much like the US military’s “freedom of navigation” operations in the South China Sea, its claimed objectives are light years away from the reality. Yemen’s Supreme Political Council member Mohamed Ali al-Houthi stated that contrary to US government propaganda, the Ansar Allah forces (also known as the Houthis) have not blocked trade through the Red Sea. Rather, the Red Sea trade route is open to everyone *except* those ships heading to Israel.¹⁵⁴ Yemen’s Ansar Allah have boldly stepped up to the plate to take practical military action as a means of assisting the world-wide attempts to end the Zionist Israeli state’s war on Gaza following the Hamas led terror attacks of October 7. While millions have

mobilised in demonstrations in solidarity with Palestine in subsequent months, the Ansar Allah forces are the first to offer military assistance.

Shaky coalition

On December 21, US Major General Pat Ryder claimed at a Pentagon news conference that 20 nations have joined Operation Prosperity Guardian, but he declined to name them as the nature of their participation was not yet determined.¹⁵⁵ Previously, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin had named the United Kingdom, Bahrain, Canada, France, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Seychelles and Spain as countries participating “to address security challenges in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden..”. Yet the Netherlands was committing two officers (!!), and Spain was yet to make a decision with regards to

¹⁵⁴ peoplesdispatch.org/2023/12/22/us-led-maritime-force-will-not-stop-yemens-houthis-from-enforcing-blockade-against-israel/ (26-12-2023)

¹⁵⁵ www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3624836/ryder-gives-more-detail-on-how-operation-prosperity-guardian-will-work/ (26-12-2023)

its participation.¹⁵⁶ The Australian government announced that it was sending six (!) ADF (Australian Defence Force) officers, but later claimed that it would “almost triple” this number to 16.¹⁵⁷ These almost comical contributions were soon followed by the announcement that Spain and Italy would be *withdrawing* from the US led Red Sea Operation, while France stated that it will only remain within the coalition if it did not have to follow US orders.¹⁵⁸ This coalition is falling apart before it has begun.

Make no mistake, this faltering operation is *not* about protecting trade routes for commercial shipping. Rather it is a desperate attempt to launch what was arguably the real reason for re-igniting the Israel/Palestine conflict – a regime change war on the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is one reason why US government propaganda constantly claims that the Houthis are “Iran backed” – and that therefore they have to “go to the source”. While it is the case that Iran does lend some support to Ansar Allah and other Shia resistance forces in Syria and Iraq – this is for *the purpose of defending the Middle East from the ravages of US military forces*, which still occupy parts of Syria and Iraq. While Iran also offers some backing for Hamas at times, it is by no means a consistent ally, being a Sunni extremist section of the Muslim Brotherhood. “Operation Prosperity Guardian”, therefore, is about war on Iran.

No to war at home and abroad

A Western led war on Iran is simply the latest frantic move towards World War III by the desperate imperialists of the NATO/G7 (US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan) bloc, in their confrontation with the rising non-imperialist BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)

alliance. Underpinned by the gargantuan manufacturing power of the Chinese deformed workers’ state, the BRICS alliance is not politically anti-imperialist, but it does offer a vitally needed alternative to Western economic plunder, reactionary colour-revolutions and regime change wars. Covid repression, arming Nazis in Ukraine, arming separatists in Taiwan against China, a looming war on Iran – all of these are different fronts of the same war against the workers of the world. Another linked front is the war at home – a skyrocketing and unsustainable cost of living, where for many food, housing, fuel, health care, education and other essentials are close to unaffordable.

Unfortunately, the current pro-Palestine “anti-war” movement in the West is largely led by the same liberal opportunist forces which have been manipulated by imperialism since their epic capitulation in March 2020 under the rubric of “public health”. After then cheering on the losing Nazis fighting Russia in Ukraine, from October 7 they were given a new lease of life. However, in leading the “Stand with Palestine” movement, these faux left forces combine with a handful of reluctant Union bureaucrats to perform a quadruple betrayal. Firstly, they apologise for, or even justify, the blatant terrorism of the maniacal Islamist cutthroats of Hamas. This immediately divides the working class, preventing it from uniting in a genuine anti-war movement. They know full well that Hamas will never win Palestinian liberation, due to Hamas’ irrational goal of a Middle Eastern caliphate. They know that wanton terrorism is counter-productive, but throw their “Marxism” out of the window out of opportunism.

¹⁵⁶ www.defensenews.com/naval/2023/12/19/us-unveils-international-force-to-defend-red-sea-heres-what-we-know/ (26-12-2023)

¹⁵⁷ thewest.com.au/politics/federal-politics/australia-will-send-extra-sailors-to-red-sea-to-help-international-efforts-to-keep-shipping-lanes-open-c-12976043 (26-12-2023)

¹⁵⁸ www.countylocalnews.com/2023/12/22/us-red-sea-operation-faces-challenges-as-spain-italy-withdraw-and-france-seeks-independence/ (26-12-2023)

Secondly, they steer the “anti-war” movement towards the liberal parliamentary parties administering imperialism, e.g., the Labor Party in the UK, the Democrats in the US, the Labor Party and the Greens in Australia, and so on. This lobbying of politicians again divides working people. Thirdly, the liberal left treat Israel and Palestine as if it exists in a vacuum, with no relation to the Middle East or the global threat of war. They do not recognise, or choose to ignore, the fact that the largest supporters of Palestine in the region are the states of Syria and Iran, together with the Shia resistance movement Hezbollah in Lebanon. They are silent on the looming war on Iran, as most of them are in fact in favour of regime change there, and they do not call for the withdrawal of US troops from Syria or Iraq. And despite all of their pretensions to international revolution, they function as flag-waving Palestinian ultra-nationalists, which locks the entire movement into a permanent state of fruitless conflict.

Fourthly, the liberal left parties refuse to link these devastating wars abroad to the war against workers and the oppressed at home. The cost of living is the most expensive it has ever been, people are living in tents in public parks, and some are paying rent instead of buying food. *This must end.* What is required is a genuine anti-war movement, which links the imperialist wars abroad to the harsh living conditions for workers at home, as capitalism inflicts ever more hardships. All forces *in combat with imperialism* must be given military support, from the Houthis to Iran to Syria. However, there remains a political need for authentic Leninist parties. **HANDS OFF THE RED SEA! NO WAR ON IRAN!**

