

‘The empowerment of this megalomaniac and his far-right and billionaire backers poses a grave threat to democratic rights, the environment and peace.’



Workers of all lands, unite!
Communist Party February 2025

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Unity!

BREAK THE US/BRITAIN ‘SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP’

Unity Reporter
UNITED STATES

RESPONDING to Donald Trump’s inauguration as US president Britain’s Communist Party said: “The empowerment of this megalomaniac and his far-right and billionaire backers poses a grave threat to democratic rights, the environment and peace.”

The party’s general secretary Robert Griffiths added: “Trump and his clique’s contempt for women, trade unionists, immigrants and for the national rights of the peoples of Palestine, Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua,

Panama and Greenland demands the united, militant opposition of left, progressive and anti-imperialist forces across the world.

“The continuing, increasingly reckless and aggressive nature of US foreign policy under Biden will continue under Trump. The US ruling class and both their political parties are determined to maintain US hegemony at any cost.

“The cost to the working people of Britain in terms of the billions squandered on weapons and the risk of war and nuclear armageddon are immaterial to them

“Instead of queuing up behind Nigel

Farage to kiss Trump’s rump, if Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Foreign Secretary David Lammy stood up for the working people of Britain, they would prepare to remove Britain from NATO and all US military bases from Britain. But they won’t do that because they don’t stand for us. They serve the same ruling class interests that profit from war.

“More than ever, we need an independent foreign and defence policy based on international peace, cooperation and solidarity – not a “special relationship” with the world’s aggressive, money-mad, war-mongering superpower.



Far right humiliated

Tony Conway
AGAINST FASCISM

RACISTS SEE the problems workers face through the prism of race. Socialists see them through the prism of class. It is by acting on this understanding that we can challenge and defeat fascism and its bedfellow, racism.

This was our purpose at the 1 February demonstration countering the street protest called by Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, (aka Tommy Robinson) from his prison cell.

The wannabe fuhrer of Britain’s fascist fringe is far from being political prisoner. He is banged up for libelling a 15-year-old refugee at school in Huddersfield and fined £100,000 plus costs. He repeated the libel and is now serving 18 months.

Two significant events happened at the end of January. First there was the police attack on the Palestine solidarity demonstration followed by a flood of arrests.

This was a bid by the state to warn the left and progressives that they had gone far enough. It was designed to warn people – who ponder potential state and racist violence – that getting involved entails real costs. It was designed to quell the mounting opposition to government policies on austerity, pay, anti-racism, Palestine and the environment.

The economies and foreign policies of Britain and the US are deeply entwined. Our ruling classes are transatlantic.

The British state flexing its muscles should be seen as a ruling class nod towards Trump. And Starmer and Lammy, not to mention their poisonous envoy Mandelson are at Trump’s beck and call.

Continued on Page 12

National Demonstration

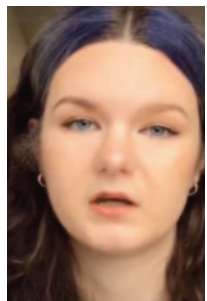
FREEDOM FOR PALESTINE

NO TO ETHNIC CLEANSING

STOP ARMING ISRAEL

12 noon, Saturday 15 February **Whitehall to the US Embassy**





BREAK THE LINK WITH NATO

‘Confronted with the indiscriminate mass murder of more than 50,000 Palestinians, the destruction of whole towns and cities in Gaza, and a resurgence of Israeli state and settler terrorism on the West Bank, all prime minister Keir Starmer can do is hide behind Israel’s formal right to self-defence. Even when necessary, self-defence does not justify genocide.’ **Georgina Andrews** general secretary of the Young Communist League



Unity reporter IMPERIAL PARTNERS

YOUNG COMMUNISTS leader Georgina Andrews told the Communist Party’s late January political committee meeting that Trump’s plans for US imperialism include the destruction of the Palestinian community in Gaza, in collaboration with Israel, as Britain and other NATO members do nothing to stop this genocide.

The US president and his new friends in the West have dropped any fig-leaf commitment to a two-states Israel-Palestine solution in favour of a policy of ethnic cleansing in Gaza, ‘cleaning up’ – Trump’s words – the territory for Israeli settlers and US construction companies.

‘Confronted with the indiscriminate mass murder of more than 50,000 Palestinians, the destruction of whole towns and cities in Gaza, and a resurgence of Israeli state and settler terrorism on the West Bank, all prime minister Keir Starmer can do is hide behind Israel’s formal right to self-defence.

‘Even when necessary, self-defence does not justify genocide.

Britain’s Communists condemn Trump’s threats to use economic and even military force to seize the Panama Canal and Greenland.

‘Capitalism’s general crisis intensifies the struggle for control over natural resources, commerce and communications, which fuels economic conflict, ecological disaster, militarism and war.

In criticising Trump’s actions Georgina Andrews said Keir Starmer’s supine response shows that the Communist Party’s policy for Britain to leave NATO and stay out of the EU with its expanding military dimension is right for our people.

‘Britain’s Labour government sucks up to the City banks and markets and relies on capitalist market forces to resolve the very crises they helped create for working people in living standards, housing, the NHS, social care, transport, pollution and the economy generally.

The young communists leader said: ‘More trade unions must embrace a progressive ‘left-wing programme’ of policies to boost wages, pensions, benefits and investment in public services and the productive economy.’

SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY

2025 President Trump’s trade war threatens any plan for growth in Britain that relies on US and EU inward investment and the financial markets said Communist Party of Britain general secretary Robert Griffith.

We should neither grovel to Trump alongside the Tories, Reform UK and Lord Mandelson nor side with the EU and escalate the conflict as proposed by Labour and LibDem “Rejoiners”.

Instead, we should commandeer

Britain’s enormous corporate and private wealth to invest in green technology, R&D, public sector housing and well-paid workers’ skills; renationalise the energy sector; and control retail prices.

In particular, Britain needs to expand its trade in electrical, mechanical and technical products with the world’s emerging economies - a policy first recommended by Chinese ministers to a Communist Party of Britain delegation almost twenty years ago.

Donald Trump in the White House again

Ben Lunn

UNITED STATES

IN THE LEAD up to the inauguration of Donald Trump, the bombast and frantic nature of it made it very difficult to predict what the next few years would look like for the US, both domestically and in terms of foreign policy.

It was already apparent that this would be the most reactionary US government, arguably ever, however the question remained would this be akin to the previous Trump presidency which leaned more towards protectionism, or would it continue US foreign policy under Biden and continue to push a hawkish agenda.

Though it is still early days, certain signs are becoming apparent. Firstly, the shift in the capitalist class shows a massive political realignment, with Musk evolving into the face of US capitalist interest. This has seen Zuckerberg and Bezos all falling behind Trump, and the gesture politics under Biden or Obama like Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion initiatives being dropped like a sack of potatoes.

In the realm of foreign policy, though this is equally unpredictable, there have been some very tell-tale signs about where Trump’s interests lie. The immediate reversal of the Biden’s executive order regarding Cuba and the State Sponsor of Terror List, show Trump is eager to pressure Latin America and continue to strangle Cuba. Similarly, the threats against Greenland and Panama, though potentially just bombast and political showboating, demonstrate this Trump administration are eager to enforce their political will both domestically and internationally to try and save its position of influence. With the melting of the Arctic, the mineral wealth in places like Greenland, combined with the new trading routes, and military strategic importance will see an already militarised Arctic circle intensify.

Trump’s grand statements regarding the Palestinian population in Gaza, show the US intervention in the Middle East is not only likely to intensify it is likely to evolve into the most reactionary form of imperialism, whereas previous administrations have tried to justify their actions as part of the ‘greater good’, this period is likely to be the most brazen and naked form of imperialism.

Musk’s relationship with Trump has stirred a lot of controversy already, and it is hard to say how long the two will stay cosy with each other, however, the trend is not only like to lead to a more emboldened extreme right wing, it is also like to see a more openly antagonistic capitalist class who will use the opportunity to squash worker rights and any form of resistance.

Much like the previous Trump administration, the politics will be brazened and outlandish. It will see US policy not acting in its usual ‘sophisticated’ manner. Similarly, it will also likely see lots of inconsistencies in its approach. However, we cannot afford to presume it will be the same slapdash approach we saw under the previous administration. Those close to Trump are continuing to ally itself with the rising Right Wing across the world and will use it to build alliances that will look to uphold US and capitalist interests at the cost of the working class all over the world. We are at dangerous crossroads.

BEN LUNN IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY’S NORTH AMERICA GROUP



Mark Gruenberg

DATeline WASHINGTON

TRUMP’S JANUARY 20 inaugural address in the U.S. Capitol rotunda—a sacred space his Trumpites rampaged through four years before in the failed insurrection he ordered—was shot through with racist and imperialist language, even more than his speeches on the campaign trail. Add exploiting natural resources and you have a potent brew. Needless to say, Trump often got applause, plus some standing ovations from the right-wing Republican crowd and the oligarchs lined up behind him. The few Democrats, including outgoing President Joe Biden, clapped tepidly, if at all. And learned later that Trump had pardoned the 1,500 violent insurrectionists, convicted or not. Besides that, here are some of Trump’s incendiary priorities, sure to raise tensions, not unite the U.S.

Abolish birthright citizenship, Trump declared, despite the U.S. Constitution’s mandate that anyone born here is a citizen. That Trump threat targets people of color and appeals to his white nationalist base.

Send more troops to the U.S.-Mexico border, close it, finish his racist Mexican Wall, ban migrants and deport those—kids, too—who seek to enter, including asylum seekers. Split families here at home, deporting parents who lack papers, leaving the kids behind unless their citizenship is ended, too. No Spanish-speakers allowed.

Rename the Gulf of Mexico the Gulf of America. When Trump first floated that, a week before, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum noted an 1814 Mexican state document called North America “América Mexicana,” or Mexican America. “That sounds nice, no?” Sheinbaum deadpanned.



US COMMUNISTS SPEAK OUT

'We are outraged that the Anti Defamation League weaponizes Jewish heritage for the purpose of defending genocide and the occupation of the Palestinian nation, and suppressing pro-Palestine voices, while supporting rabid Christian Zionist, pro-Trump, and MAGA right voices here in the U.S. This is not surprising, however, as the ADL continuously makes clear it, but only to defend the Israeli government, even as it commits occupation and genocide.' **CPUSA Jewish Committee 2025**



Retake the Panama Canal, by force, Trump said. The late President Jimmy Carter and Panamanian President Gen. Omar Torrijos signed a treaty handing it over by 2000. To Latin Americans, the Canal Zone was a century-long reminder of U.S. imperialism. And evict the Chinese from controlling the Canal, Trump said. They don't, the Canal Zone Authority reports.

Restore the old name, Mount McKinley, to Mount Denali in Alaska. Alaskans, including its large Native American population, prefer Denali. Many live near Denali, now a National Park. Ohioan President William McKinley, a Gilded Age white imperialist Trump lauded, is his state's favourite..

Drill, baby, drill, while ending Biden's plans to combat global warming and climate change by ending promotion of electric vehicles and cancelling "The Green New Deal." Trump claimed autoworkers and consumers would be able to make and buy 'the cars they want.' Trump declared a so-called 'national emergency' to carry out his energy goals.

Green groups denounced the idea while the United Autoworkers, whose new contracts with Ford, GM and Stellantis mandate manufacturing EVs in wall-to-wall union plants, had no immediate comment.

Make the U.S. the world's top oil and natural gas producer. It already is, statistics show. And Trump signed a pro-drilling executive order after the speech. It gratifies the fossil fuel barons of the corporate class. Trump hosted them at his Mar-a-Lago estate during last year's campaign. Give my campaign a billion bucks, he told them behind closed doors, and that's what I'll do for you.

Trash the federal civil service and cut the budget. Trump's named

multibillionaire Elon Musk, who schemed to be president without the title, and millionaire Vivek Ramaswamy to head a so-called "Department of Government Efficiency" to recommend those cuts. Both sat in the front row of corporate chieftains attending the inaugural ceremony. So did Amazon majority stockholder Jeff Bezos, a notorious union-hater and labor law-breaker.

The agenda shows, of course, the bankruptcy of the capitalist system itself which drains the nation and the world of resources that could provide everyone with a decent living and puts them under the control of corrupt oligarchs who exercise influence over dictators like Trump. If ever there was an argument for socialism it was on display yesterday during the inaugural speech.

Workers and allies respond

The response from workers and their allies? Critical union comments, and a lawsuit from the Government Employees, the Teachers/AFT and two good-government groups.

The suit, in federal court in D.C., against DOGE's legality, says it violates the open meetings and balanced appointments law covering U.S. advisory councils, which is what DOGE now is.

'We're part of this new lawsuit because DOGE must come out of the shadows & comply with the law before the sweeping, self-serving plans of billionaires upend the federal government and cause irreparable damage in the lives of working people,' AFT President Randi Weingarten tweeted.

Trump signed an executive order after the speech, reinstating his controversial 'Schedule F' to politicize top civil service posts, then turn them over to Trump toadies, just like in the spoils system of the Gilded Age.

'Trump's order is a blatant attempt to corrupt the government by eliminating employees' due process rights so they can be fired for political reasons. It will remove hundreds of thousands of federal jobs from the nonpartisan, professional civil service and make them answerable to the will of one man,' said Government Employees president Everett Kelley.

'This unprecedented assertion of executive power will create an army of sycophants beholden only to Donald Trump, not the Constitution or the American people. The integrity of the entire federal government could be irreparably harmed if this is not stopped.'

In his speech, Trump blasted diversity, equity and inclusion and gave a nod to Dr. Martin Luther King without supporting the economic and civil rights King fought for. He criticized what he called a failed economy—despite data showing otherwise—and even said God sent him to make America great again. That's his campaign's catch phrase.

And from now on, Trump declared,

gender in the U.S. 'will be two sexes, male and female.' That's a slam at LGBT people, specifically transsexuals, a favourite Trump campaign punching bag.

Trump also told the crowd he plans to impose high tariffs on imports, including those from the U.S.'s immediate neighbours, Mexico and Canada. He claimed tariffs would bring in billions of dollars. Trump tried the higher tariffs in his prior term, and the Auto Workers, the car companies and the Steelworkers shot them down, pointing out the immense tri-country interdependence in that sector.

On the campaign trail, Trump said tariff money would replace funds lost by extension of the eight-year-old Trump-GOP tax cut for corporations and the rich. This time, Trump was silent—at least in the Rotunda—on the tax cut. Provisions benefiting individuals end at the end of this year. Those affecting corporations don't. Tariffs appeal to the nativism of Trump's base, but produce price spikes for major goods, from cars to cell phones. They contain parts, such as steel, iron, and microchips, from abroad.

'The people or the plutocrats? Will Trump do the bidding of Big Tech and the billionaires who bankrolled his campaign? Working families need the relief that puts more money in their pockets and gives them a chance to get ahead,' the Teachers/AFT tweeted.

Trump, a convicted felon who railed against what he called politicization of the Justice Department, added to his list of goals in a second speech to even more supporters downstairs in the Capitol Visitors Center, the Associated Press reported, and in a slew of approximately 200 executive orders.

Upstairs, speaking of DOJ, Trump surprisingly said he would not pursue 'political enemies.'"Biden, not believing him, signed pardons in advance just before he left office for members of the House Committee that investigated the invasion and insurrection, plus Hillary Clinton, Trump's Democratic foe nine years ago. On the campaign trail, Trump yelled 'Lock her up!' every chance he got.

Another key response

Another response, from communities of colour, came from United We Dream. Speaking for 'Dreamers' brought to the U.S. as youngsters, it convinced the Government Employees (AFGE) Local 3354, the United Teachers of Los Angeles and 78 other organizations to protect the young people against Trump's threat. They want state and local elected officials to sign on to such protection, too.

About the only campaign promise Trump left out of his inaugural was to abolish the federal Department of Education.

With few exceptions, unions were silent on January 20 in reacting to Trump's speech. The AFL-CIO and all but two of its member unions withheld comments, as did

the Teamsters, the Service Employees and the National Education Association. All instead chose to hail Dr. King and his strong support for unions and for economic and political justice for workers.

Two union exceptions were the Government Employees (AFGE) and the Teachers, plus UFCW Local 3000 President Faye Guenther, a fighting local with 50,000 members. It recently helped beat corporate greed—a grocery megamerger—and it battles the establishment, including entrenched local brass.

"If we want things to be different in four years, IF we all want to be able to say NO to the greedy whims of the corporate billionaire class, we MUST REBUILD THE labor movement. A union, a union contract, organizing a union, striking when needed, is the answer to the crisis we FACE," Guenther said in an open letter. The capitalization is hers.

'Unions, even when they are not perfect, move us TOWARD economic equality AND protect democracy.'

Jason Walsh, executive director of the BlueGreen Alliance, which the Steelworkers co-founded, also hit the executive orders for the reasons other green groups and unions cited. And Walsh pointed out exploited and poor communities would especially suffer.

Trump 'ended the Biden administration's Justice40 Initiative, which set a policy that 40% of the benefits of all federal investments must go to disadvantaged communities and he repealed an executive order setting a national goal for electric vehicles to make up half of new cars and trucks sales by 2030.

'It is telling, but not surprising, that President Trump would target workers and underserved communities and snuff out efforts to clean up our air and water as one of his first acts in office. BGA stands in solidarity with the civil servants and all the workers whose livelihoods are threatened.

'Our country, and the world, cannot afford setbacks in the fight against climate change... Trump pulled us from a path that not only secured clean air and water for future generations but also millions of good jobs into the U.S. economy in clean manufacturing and construction of clean energy projects.'

Most unions ignored Trump's address and posted tweets, which AFLCIO reposted, honouring Dr. King and citing his voice for workers and unions. The Laborers were typical:

'Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood shoulder-to-shoulder with labor unions in the fight for dignity, fair wages, and workers' rights. His dream of economic justice and social equality lives on through the strength and solidarity of [Laborers] members today. On this MLK Day, we honor his enduring legacy and continue his work of building a just country for all Americans,' the union said.



AWARD-WINNING JOURNALIST MARK GRUENBERG IS HEAD OF THE WASHINGTON, D.C., BUREAU OF PEOPLE'S WORLD. HE IS ALSO THE EDITOR OF THE UNION NEWS SERVICE PRESS ASSOCIATES INC.

People's Weekly World correspondent Taryn Fivek contributed the Local 3000 material for this story

Reprinted from the Peoples Weekly World online newspaper of the Communist Party USA

Picture above shows the racist Trump-supporting Proud Boys group in Grove City Ohio



LABOUR & CAPITAL

‘Comrade Trotsky’s political mistakes, aggravated by Comrade Bukharin, distract our Party’s attention from economic tasks and “production” work, and, unfortunately, make us waste time on correcting them and arguing it out with the syndicalist deviation (which leads to the collapse of the dictatorship of the proletariat), objecting to the incorrect approach to the trade union movement (which leads to the collapse of the Soviet power)....’ **VI Lenin** *Once Again On The Trade Unions* January 1921



Employment Rights Bill: Next steps for the labour movement?

The Employment Rights Bill (ERB), currently passing through its parliamentary stages, has provoked sharp disagreements



Carolyn Jones
WORKERS' RIGHTS

BOSSES' ORGANISATIONS, the Confederation of British Industry and the Federation of Small Businesses claim the Bill will cost jobs and damage growth. They predict a tsunami of sackings aimed at avoiding the protections offered by the promise of day-one rights. Their focus, of course being on retaining their ability to make profits by exploiting vulnerable workers.

The TUC on the other hand, see the Bill as transformative and have welcomed it as the biggest upgrade to workers' rights for a generation. Individual trade unions have also expressed 'gratitude' for the direction of travel the Bill takes, praising the proposals and seemingly reluctant to contemplate any criticism.

There is little doubt that the principles behind the Bill are to be welcomed, based as they are on progressive policies formulated by trade unions with the assistance of IER experts. Which union would not welcome the Introduction of employment rights from day one, banning

zero-hours contracts and "fire and rehire" tactics, improving statutory sick pay, proposing sectoral collective bargaining in the social care sector, improving trade union access to workers in the workplace and removing the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act and the 2016 Trade Union Act? Nick, you can take this bit out if you want?

But glee at the general election result and loyalty to a labour government should not blind us to the realities of the deficiencies in the Employment Rights Bill. We cannot allow the Bill to become the proverbial Emperor's New Clothes, shielding the naked truth by declaring all is well. What is blindingly obvious is that while the Bill correctly identifies many of the problems associated with the world of work in the UK today, it falls unnecessarily short of delivering the required solutions.

With that in mind, the Institute of Employment Rights is once again leading the way in examining, exposing and amending those aspects of the Bill most in need of attention. IER's materials - advocate important changes needed to make the Bill more effective. Just three of those areas needing attention are listed below.

Employment status

First, is the issue of employment status. Too many workers continue to be denied employment protections because they are deemed not to be "employees". Labour's Plan to Make Work Pay: Delivering a New

Deal for Workers included a commitment to 'move towards a single status of worker' to help simplify the law and make rights universally applicable. However, this policy is now to be subject to a 'full and detailed consultation' which will delay implementation and have a knock-on effect on new proposed protections against fire and rehire tactics, controlling the use of zero hour contracts and the ability of unions to apply for recognition.

Sectoral collective bargaining

Second, the Bill introduces a form of sectoral collective bargaining into the care sector. However, as an IER Briefing points out, what is proposed is not collective bargaining as we understand it and the outcomes of the processes are not collective agreements. In fact, it is expressly stated that regulations may provide that nothing done by the negotiating body is to be regarded as collective bargaining for the purposes of TULRCA 1992, s 178.

Leaving aside that the Bill restricts the introduction of 'collective bargaining' to the care and teacher support sectors only, the template being proposed appears not fit for purpose, looking more like the discredited Pay Review Body models than real, sectoral collective bargaining.

This is a real missed opportunity. Workers in many other sectors of the economy would benefit from the improved terms and conditions collective bargaining would deliver. They would also gain a voice at work and a level of workplace power denied them over recent decades. It is vital therefore that the Labour Party returns to the original proposal for a gradual and strategic roll out of sectoral collective bargaining as the most effective way of expanding collective bargaining coverage across our economy.

Collective rights at work

Third, improved access and recognition rights are identified in the legislation as important issues. So far, so good. However, the solutions proposed tinker around the edges and will not correct the mischief. Enforcement of those rights will involve time consuming and costly applications to the CAC for trade unions. And, if an employer refuses to be bound by a decision of CAC, the only option open is to impose a financial penalty on the employer, money payable to the government and not to the union. No provision is made for any remedy to the union for the violation of its 'right' of entry or even for the recovery of its costs in enforcing the law. Such a system will not deal with the issues raised in the recent Amazon case.

On other collective rights, the repeal of the anti-trade union legislation of 2023 and 2016 is a massive boost. However, as Hendy and Ewing highlight, in the recent P&O case, the ILO Freedom of

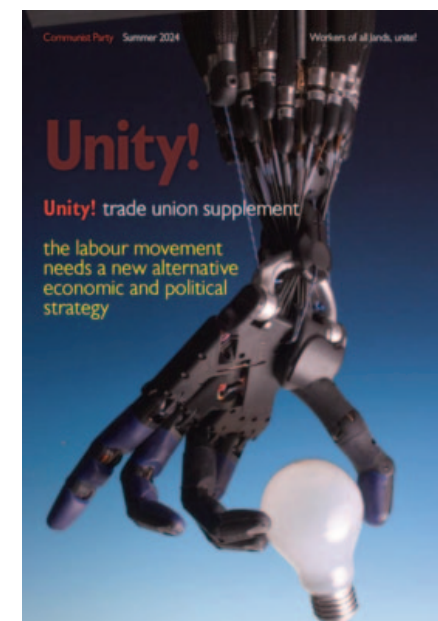
Association Committee noted that the restrictions on trade union freedom did not begin in 2016. The UK's trade union laws have been criticised consistently by the ILO supervisory bodies and the European Social Rights Committee since 1989.

Labour originally promised to 'ensure that UK law complies in every respect with the international obligations ratified by the UK'. That promise needs to be resurrected. The heavy restrictions on industrial action imposed in the 1980s must be reversed if the power imbalance in the workplace is to be redressed.

Taken as a whole, the development of a new framework of individual and collective rights at work, with trade unions sitting at the policy-discussion table, can only be seen as a welcome change in political direction. But the Bill's content will inevitably be measured against the backdrop of more than 40 years of anti-trade union legislation. There is much to gain if the progressive policies promised are delivered. Concessions can still be forced from the government, but that will require industrial and political pressure led by a united and organised trade union movement.

To assist in that objective, the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom together with IER and a number of supportive organisations and media partners will be holding a rally on 22 March in central London. At that rally, voices across the movement will outline what more needs to be done by our majority Labour government to truly deliver a new deal for working people. Put the date in your diary!

CAROLYN JONES IS A FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS





INTERNATIONAL

‘Imagine you go into the voting booth, you vote for the New Popular Front, the union of the left, it comes out on top, and...you get Michel Barnier as prime minister, whose party came fourth!... Or, how about this, you vote for a candidate from the president’s camp – from Macron’s party – for les Republicaines, and you have a government that is in alliance with Rassemblement National.’ **Fabien Roussel**, general secretary of the French Communist Party

The transformation of Rassemblement National towards globalist elite-thinking



Rainer Rupp
FAR RIGHT



Rainer Rupp was sentenced to 12 years in gaol after it was revealed that, as an officer of socialist Germany’s HVA foreign intelligence organisation, he became a top NATO official and worked against war from within NATO’s Brussels HQ.

Picture Jordan Bardella at the European Union Creative Commons

THE FRENCH Rassemblement National (RN), since its creation known for its national-conservative politics, frequently denounced as fascist, is undergoing a significant transformation under its new young leader, Jordan Bardella.

This shift signals a departure from Marine Le Pen’s earlier positions – Euro- and NATO-sceptic – and reflects a calculated strategy to turn the RN into a credible mainstream contender for government in France.

Here are the key facets of this evolution. Rassemblement National is moving away from anti-EU rhetoric. Under Marine Le Pen, the RN was a vocal critic of the euro and European integration. While the idea of ‘Frexit’ – a French exit from the EU – never officially entered the party’s programme, RN leaders maintained an ambiguous stance to appeal to voters opposed to the EU. This strategy, however, failed to yield sufficient support, with many attributing Le Pen’s loss in the 2017 presidential elections to her party’s contentious views on the euro.

The young new RN leader Jordan Bardella has decisively distanced the party from these positions. By dropping anti-EU rhetoric, he aims to make the RN more palatable to the

upper crest of the French electorate. The pivot also suggests a pragmatic recognition of the political realities within France and Europe, where the majority of voters remain supportive of EU membership.

This is a shift in geo-strategic alignment. The RN’s international policies have undergone a dramatic overhaul. During Marine Le Pen’s leadership, the party leaned toward a pro-Russian stance, endorsing Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014 and criticizing NATO’s role in the Ukraine conflict. Even as late as 2022, RN opposed EU sanctions on Russia and aligned with narratives blaming NATO for escalating tensions.

Bardella, however, has steered the party toward a pro-NATO and pro-EU security approach. Repeating the western narrative of the geopolitical threats posed by Russia, he has called for a bolstered French military involvement in Eastern Europe and endorsed continued Western support for Ukraine. His rhetoric, which echoes official NATO discourse, signals a clear departure from the party’s previous alignment with Moscow.

RN’s strategic internal adjustments are designed to shed its image as a fringe party, the RN has emphasized “professionalism” to build credibility among the electorate and French

elites alike. The RN has also strengthened its connections with business circles, aiming to attract a more diverse voter base.

Bardella’s leadership underscores this transformation, as he cultivates an image of competence and pragmatism. The party’s deputies in the National Assembly have been instructed to focus on practical governance, even at the expense of earlier populist positions. This shift marks a departure from fiery rhetoric to more calculated political manoeuvring.

One of the most striking changes under Bardella’s leadership is the RN’s growing integration into European institutions. Bardella himself serves as both RN leader and head of the European Parliament faction ‘Patriots for Europe’, symbolizing the party’s increasing engagement with EU structures. Bardella’s strategy underscores the RN’s intent to reshape its narrative as a constructive participant in European politics, rather than a disruptive force.

The moves bring new risks and challenges. While Bardella’s strategic pivot has enhanced the RN’s respectability, it also carries significant risks. Internal tensions could arise as traditional RN supporters perceive the abandonment of the party’s core populist demands. The shift may alienate segments of the RN’s base, particularly voters who were drawn to its earlier anti-establishment and Eurosceptic rhetoric.

Moreover, as the RN moves closer to the mainstream, it risks being seen as indistinguishable from other parties. Against the background of the worsening economic, financial and societal crisis in Europe and in particular in France, such a perception could undermine the earlier RN’s appeal as a voice of protest and disillusionment.

The transformation of the Rassemblement National under Jordan Bardella is a calculated gamble. By redefining its positions on the EU, NATO, and economic policy, the party seeks to shed its fringe image and emerge as a viable governing force. However, this evolution comes at the cost of internal unity and the potential alienation of its traditional voter base. Whether this gamble pays off will depend on Bardella’s ability to balance the demands of credibility with the expectations of the RN’s core supporters. For now, the RN’s shift marks a fascinating chapter in the evolution of French political dynamics.



Off the list: Cuba is not a ‘state sponsor of terrorism’

B RITAIN’S Young Communist League has sent a message of unwavering solidarity with the Cuban people after President Trump, as one of his first acts of office, returned Cuba to the spurious State Sponsors of Terrorism list.

The YCL said: ‘This decision goes against the millions of people and countries around the world, which recognise Cuba as a state sponsor of peace and as a victim of terrorist acts against the country. It reiterates the baseless nature of the ‘state sponsors of terrorism’ list and further exposes US imperialism’s intention of subjugation and domination to countries who defend their right to sovereignty.

‘Biden is responsible for not taking Cuba off the list when he began his presidency, but in his last few days of office as a final act of political football, fully knowing the intention of the incoming US administration to place Cuba back on the list.

‘This inclusion has serious and real humanitarian consequences for the Cuban people, on top of the inhumane and unjust extra territorial blockade of Cuba. We will continue to fight for an end to the US blockade of Cuba and the unjust inclusion on the SSOT list.

‘We call upon all people and youth in Britain to continue to campaign to demand that Cuba is removed from the list of countries supposedly sponsoring terrorism and end to the economic, financial, and commercial blockade of Cuba.

‘We send our solidarity to the Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas of Cuba in their fight for sovereignty of their country and in their struggle for socialism. To all the Cuban youth and people of Cuba, we will stand with you until victory is yours.’

¡Patria o Muerte!
¡Venceremos!



OUR HISTORY

‘We shall not forget you; and, when the olive tree of peace is in flower, entwined with the victory laurels of the Republic of Spain — return! Return to our side for here you will find a homeland — those who have no country or friends, who must live deprived of friendship — all, all will have the affection and gratitude of the Spanish people who today and tomorrow will shout with enthusiasm — Long live the heroes of the International Brigades! **Dolores Ibárruri** ‘Spanish Communist leader 1932-1960



London's 1930s Aid to Spain movement

For every one of the thousands of anti-fascists — organised by the Communist International — who went to fight in the International Brigades in Spain there were many more who contributed to the Republican cause through numerous Aid Spain committees.

They sprang up across Britain after July 1936 to bring much needed humanitarian relief to the country after Nationalists, backed by Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, waged war on the progressive Popular Front government forces writes **Steve Silver**

WHILE THE British government pursued a policy of non-intervention, these committees, some independent, some attached to the Labour or Communist Parties, raised money to equip the Republicans with ambulances, medical supplies and other necessities.

There were hundreds of committees, and they raised enormous funds and collected food, often in poverty-stricken areas like the East End of London, in a campaign which brought together Communists, Labourites, Quakers, Liberals, Catholics and those of no political or religious attachment.

In addition to the activity in Britain itself some 200 British men and women went to Spain as non-combatants to work with the medical services or relief organisations, and a number gave their lives.

When the Basque country fell to Franco's forces 4,000 refugee children were housed in British homes in a massive demonstration of solidarity.

The Aid Spain campaign was particularly intense in Stepney in the East End of London where some 60,000 Jews lived in mainly overcrowded conditions and poverty. For the Jewish community in particular the connections between fascism at home and abroad were all too obvious.

Solly Kaye, an East End Communist in the 1930s — later elected to Stepney



council — said of the period “Spain had a very big ideological effect” among East End Jews.

Aid Spain activity in the East End centred around Circle House, the Jewish Workers' Circle Friendly Society building in Great Alie Street in Stepney, which was a hub of wider anti-fascist activity.

Several Aid Spain organisations, including the Spanish Relief Committee (Jewish Section) and an Aid Spain committee affiliated to the Communist Party sponsored National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief, had their offices in Circle House. Many of the officials were members both of the Circle and Stepney Communist Party.

The Jewish People's Council Against Fascism and Anti-Semitism, which played an important role in the build-up to the Battle of Cable Street, was also very active in support of Spain.

At one of their meetings, in September 1936, Julius Jacobs, a leading activist (and later the party's assistant industrial organiser) whose younger brother fought in Spain, said that the organisation was buying “pills with plenty of lead in them” for use by the Republicans.

While nationally anti-fascists supported the British Battalion of the International Brigades, and the East End also saw both volunteers and support, in Stepney many of the Yiddish-speakers born in Russia, Poland and Romania took a great interest in the fate of the East European Jews who comprised the Botwin Company.

They supported the Company through the Circle House based London Botwin Aid Committee. The Botwin Company was named after Naftali Botwin, a Polish Jewish Communist executed in 1925 for killing a police informer. With Yiddish as its official language it comprised 175 men, most of them Polish Jews. Fighting as part of the Polish Dombrowski Battalion they suffered many casualties in

some of the heaviest fighting in the war, at Teruel, on the Aragon front and elsewhere.

In July 1938 an East End NUTGW tailors' union branch raised the funds to send an ambulance to Spain in memory of two of its members who had died in combat there, Sam Masters and Harry Gross. Some 5000 garment workers gave the ambulance a send-off at a gathering near Epping Forest.

Picasso's Guernica

In January 1939 Picasso's famous Guernica painting temporarily displayed at the Whitechapel Gallery, the only time it has ever exhibited in Britain. The Spanish Republican government commissioned the painting, initially for the 1937 Paris International Exposition.

After that it toured internationally to help raise funds for the Republican cause. Guernica depicted the ariel bombing of the town by Nazi Germany's Condor Legion and the Italian fascists' Aviazione Legionaria.

The exhibition was organised by the East London Aid Spain Committee in collaboration with the Stepney Trades Union Council to raise awareness of the Spanish Civil War. The suggested price of entry was a pair of boots, left underneath the work, for dispatch to the Republicans in Spain.

While on show at the gallery the painting acted as a focal point for several speeches and rallies, and Clement Attlee, MP for Limehouse and leader of the Labour Party, made the opening speech.

Tragically, General Franco's forces crushed the Republic in April 1939 just a few months later.

The working people of Britain responded magnificently to the cause of Republican Spain and the East End of London more than played its part. The Spanish Civil War was the precursor to the Second World War, for which

Above Hammersmith Communist Party banner

Above right

Pablo Picasso's 1937 Guernica painting marking the fascist bombing of the Basque town of Guernica



IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

'Trump's victory in the US presidential election and in the Republican Party's election in the Senate and the House of Representatives highlights the advance of reactionary, xenophobic and sexist values, and shows that elections are not contested exclusively in the electoral campaign, but are in a certain way the result of an ideological struggle' **Political Commission of the Communist Party of Spain** January 2025



Picasso's painting offered a grim vision of what London's East Enders were also to face shortly in the form of Nazi aerial bombardment and rocket blasts. Stepney was one of the most heavily bombed areas of London with a third of its housing destroyed.

Material for this article was drawn from:

Alexander, Bill, *British Volunteers for Liberty, Spain 1936-1939*, Lawrence and Wishart, 1982
Fryth, Jim, *The Signal Was Spain: The Aid Spain Movement in Britain, 1936*, Lawrence and Wishart, 1986
Srebrenik, Henry Felix, *London Jews and British Communism 1935-1945*, Vallentine Mitchell, 1995

STEVE SILVER IS A TRADE UNION COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER. HE WRITES IN A PERSONAL CAPACITY AT LEADENSKIES.SUBSTACK.COM



Above: Education workers demonstrate in Navarra
PCE picture

Spain at a crossroads. **Alan McGuire** reports from Madrid on mounting protests, far-right electoral gains, and the challenges the Spanish Left now faces

WITH THE government's inability to approve a budget and lack of political action, the country's forward motion has been halted for 18 months. Meanwhile, protests over pensions and housing continue to simmer across the country, showing up a government that struggles to address the challenges faced by working people.

Furthermore, the Socialist led coalition government is struggling to maintain validity in the face of mounting defeats in congress and economic pressure. Seven autonomous communities, alongside the national government, have failed to approve budgets for 2025. This failure reflects not only dysfunction at the parliamentary level but also a deeper crisis of governance.

For ordinary Spaniards, however, these debates offer little comfort. The housing crisis continues to spiral out of control, with soaring rents and rampant real estate speculation pricing thousands out of their homes in the cities. Foreign investment funds are snapping up properties across major cities, fueling protests from housing activists demanding affordable housing and rent controls. On the ground the Union of Renters has taken a similar model to Acorn in the UK and is a more organised outfit than its predecessors the early 2000s anti-eviction groups.

In Andalusia, pensioners took to the streets, demanding better conditions and the revalorization of their pensions. These movements highlight the growing frustration among citizens who feel abandoned by a government mired by parliamentary mathematics that don't add up.

A Fractured Left

The protests have also underscored the fragmentation of Spain's left, which faces increasing pressure to respond to the crisis but remains in a suspended state of melancholia. For Podemos, the party that once promised to transform Spanish politics, its trajectory in recent years has raised doubts.

After joining the last coalition government, Podemos are now attacking the current coalition government of which they are not a part of. With this they come across as opportunistic hypocrites a bit like the bitter kid left out of the football team.

Inside the coalition government, the Communist Party of Spain (PCE), finds itself balancing the demands of governing with the need to remain a voice for revolutionary change. A balancing act that is hard to maintain. Thus, the term "Italianization" has become a warning in leftist circles—a cautionary tale of how once-radical parties can be absorbed into the structures of the state, abandoning their transformative goals in favor of technocratic pragmatism. Some argue that the left must refocus on class struggle and grassroots mobilization to avoid the same fate.

The same critics argue that Spain's left is heading in the same direction, with parties like Sumar failing to propose bold, material policies that resonate with the working class. Without strong communication and a clear message, Sumar's diminishing is becoming evident, as it is gradually swallowed by the Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE). Furthermore, the failure to deliver a compelling narrative or offer concrete solutions to Spain's mounting social crises leaves the space wide open for the right to capitalize on frustrations.

While the left avoids the debates about its future, the far-right Vox party has capitalised on widespread

discontent. Vox has used recent climate disasters, such as floods in Valencia, to push its anti-environmentalist agenda, blaming government inaction while promoting nationalist and xenophobic policies. The party's growing influence is a reminder of how reactionary forces can thrive when the left appears fractured and disorganised.

Right wing appeal

Vox's rhetoric appeals to those frustrated with the government but offers no solutions to the systemic inequalities at the heart of Spain's current crisis. Instead, it diverts attention from the failures of capitalism, using immigration and cultural issues to fracture class solidarity.

Compounding these challenges is the shifting alliance between regional elites and national parties. The Catalan bourgeoisie, represented by Junts, who were once crucial allies in securing Pedro Sánchez's, have recently aligned themselves with the Popular Party and Vox to reject key parts of the government's proposed budgets. This shift in the political landscape points to a more volatile future, with Junts playing hard to get in the face of an increasingly fragmented political playing field.

The alignment of Junts with the right and far-right parties underscores the precariousness of Sánchez's coalition and could force Spain back to elections. If this trend continues, it may lead to a return of the far-right to power—an alarming prospect given that it would coincide with the 50th anniversary of Franco's death, marking a dark moment in Spain's democratic history.

As parliamentary politics meets a dead end, the PCE and other leftist forces face a critical test. Can they reconnect with grassroots movements and provide a coherent, class-based alternative to the far right and neoliberal centrism?

If the left is to counter the rise of Vox and address the deepening inequalities in Spanish society, it will need to refocus its energy on the struggles of ordinary people, offering not just reforms but a vision for systemic change.

Spain's political crisis is a microcosm of broader struggles across Europe, where the failures of capitalism are becoming increasingly evident. The country's left faces a stark choice: embrace reformist pragmatism and risk irrelevance, or recommit to the ideals of class struggle and revolutionary transformation. The coalition government's future remains uncertain at this time more than ever, as does the leftist strategy and unity to get out of it.

ALAN MCGUIRE IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF SPAIN IN MADRID AND OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN

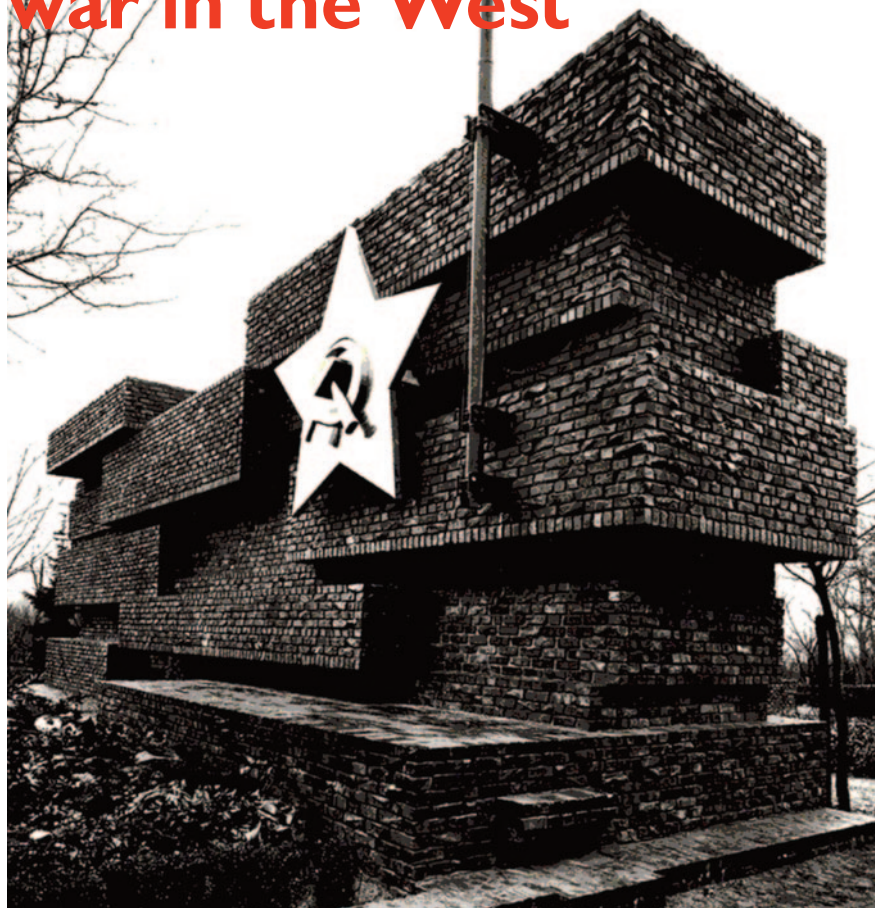


Magazine of the International Brigade Memorial Trust
<https://international-brigades.org.uk>



Left: Berlin police attack the demonstration
Picture by the Berlin DKP

‘The Russian Revolution ended the war in the East. The German Revolution ended the war in the West’



John Ellison is a retired solicitor. He credits his socialist politics to a Quaker father, marching with the CND and reading *Rise like Lions* the autobiography of the Communist MP Willie Gallacher.

See overleaf for a Manifesto Press promotion of his two books:

Memorial monument to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg 1926, designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, destroyed by the Nazis 1935

LUXEMBURG LEIBKNECHT LENIN BERLIN 2025

Dan Ross

REPORT FROM BERLIN

THE ANNUAL Luxemburg Leibknecht Lenin march pays tribute to the hero martyrs of the 1918 German revolution drowned in blood.

Along with the march to the memorial to the two leaders of the German revolution – which unites the whole of the German left – *Junge Welt* (Young World) the sister newspaper to the *Morning Star* organises an international conference.

I joined a dozen comrades from the Manchester branch of the Communist Party for the annual commemoration. Originally, we planned to fly out on the evening of Friday, 10 January, but due to flight delays, we didn't depart until later. As a result, we missed the Saturday lineup,

including *Junge Welt*'s Rosa Luxemburg. The event featured keynote speakers Clare Daly, former Irish MEP, and Peter Mertens, leader of the Belgian Workers' Party. Unfortunately, we also had to miss an evening event hosted by the German Communist Party (DKP).

On Sunday morning, we made our way along Karl Marx Allee, stopping by the bust of Karl Marx at Strassburger Platz, for a photo opportunity. We then joined the main march at Frankfurt Gate by 11am, where we met up comrades from the Dumfries and Galloway Communist Party.

The police presence was immediately noticeable, with large groups of officers stationed around the perimeter. They were dressed in full riot gear, wearing helmets and carrying firearms, which were clearly, and purposely, visible.

We saw an arrest early on of a man

John Ellison

REVOLUTION

NEWSPAPER readers in Britain looking back from November 1918 would have appreciated that the balance of military forces on the Western Front, after four years of relative stability, had changed crucially in the Allies' favour since August, causing the front to move remorselessly eastwards towards Germany's frontiers.

But readers remained insulated from the human reality of the war's daily horrors by authoritarian censorship and unconditional support for the war given by war correspondents and mainstream editors, who were generally even reluctant to draw attention to the decisive role since the summer of the fresh million-plus US army.

In 1936, the then editor the *Daily Worker*, Rajani Palme Dutt summed up the war in his classic *World Politics*. 'The war of 1914 was inevitable in the sense that imperialism could find no other solution for its conflicts ... The outbreak of the war ... revealed that the world forces unleashed by imperialism had fully outstripped the control of the statesmen of imperialism ... The war, once begun, drove forward with its own murderous logic ... The Gordian knot ... was finally cut by the sword of the revolution ... The Russian Revolution ended the war in the East. The German Revolution ended the war in the West.'

An armistice with Turkey — the Ottoman empire — took effect on October 31. Its surviving empire dissolved, with Britain and France eager to digest Palestine and Syria. Then came an armistice between the Western Allies and Austria-

Hungary, just after Hungary had declared itself a separate republic.

A preliminary overture to the US from Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany in early October was succeeded by exchanges of messages and increasing readiness to concede defeat. So, wrote communist journalist Allen Hutt, in his 1937 *Post-War History of the British Working Class*, 'Hapsburg and Hohenzollern followed Romanov into the dust.'

In Britain, at the highest political level, prophecies about when the war would end changed swiftly. At a meeting on October 19 between prime minister Lloyd George, War Cabinet colleagues and generals, it was concluded that the war would continue until some time after the commencement after the 1919 campaign. On October 27, Lloyd George and his *News of the World* proprietor friend Lord Riddell agreed upon 'a slight shade of odds in favour of an armistice before Christmas.'

On the 26th, Labour's weekly *Herald*, edited by George Lansbury, inserted in its editorial the latest weekly casualty list, heading it with the words: 'The cost of going on.' The figures were: 'Dead; 5,866, Wounded; 29,453, Missing; 1,481.'

The editorial pronounced: 'Germany has at last committed what is, in the eyes of our jingoists, the most unpardonable sin. He has left us nothing to fight about.'

Total army casualties so far that year, the War Cabinet, but not the public, was told on November 1, were 800,000.

On November 3, a Sunday, a mass meeting of trade unionists took place at London's Albert Hall. The Independent Labour Party's weekly, the *Labour Leader* commented the following week: 'Over an



carrying a flag displaying guns though we were told by locals that he was regularly attended left events and demonstrations, and it was a rarity if he wasn't arrested.

Once the various blocs of leftist and Marxist groups had formed, the march began its walk through Karl Marx Allee toward Friedrichsfelde Central Cemetery. We proudly displayed the Communist Party's Manchester branch banner throughout the march, sparking interest from fellow marchers and passers-by.

There were frequent stops and delays. Some of us, out of curiosity and to stay warm in the frigid temperatures, broke away to walk the length of the line and back. Large groups of police continued to gather at street corners, and when we reached the Palestine bloc, the police presence was particularly heavy.

hour before the time of commencement the Albert Hall was packed, there must have been over 8,000 persons present ... It was soon obvious that the meeting was more revolutionary than the resolution.'

The resolution called for peace but did not insist on the 'left' formula of self-determination of nations and no annexations or indemnities. An amendment proposed to change this state of affairs was refused. Nevertheless, when a speaker declared: 'What we want is a Soviet government in Britain, God speed the Social Revolution and long live the Socialist Republic,' he was 'vociferously cheered.'

The same day another demonstration for the release of outstanding Scottish socialist John Maclean from his viciously punitive five-year jail term awarded in May for anti-war speeches took place on Glasgow Green. Speakers from four platforms addressed an estimated 25,000 workers.

Maclean, believing that, when in prison on a previous occasion, he had been given drugged food, had been refusing to eat after the privilege of receiving his own food from outside the prison had been withdrawn. The British Socialist Party's *The Call* put a question to the 'Workers of the World' in the issue of November 7: 'What are the workers going to do for John Maclean? Do they know what it means to be forcibly fed through an india rubber tube forced down the gullet? Do they know that food so administered enters the stomach without mastication or mixing with saliva, which are the preliminaries in the process of digestion? Do they know that the absorption of food thus administered causes horrible pain?'

It quickly became clear that the delays were due to the cops periodically charging into the bloc, pulling out one or two individuals, and taking them away. I saw at least three people who were punched and kicked by officers. Locals informed us that the police were focused on the bloc because of chants like 'from the river,' and that a police announcement had warned that everyone would be arrested if the chanting didn't stop. Other individuals appeared to be targeted for carrying placards or wearing items of clothing that were considered offensive.

The march came to an immediate halt each time the police rushed the crowd. The organizers quickly responded, leading the main group – which tended to stretch out when moving – to tighten up and close the gaps to protect those being targeted. I

On November 4, an Allied Western Front attack across the Meuse proceeded at the cost of many deaths, including that of Wilfred Owen, the 25-year-old poet responsible for an unforgettable verse record, as yet unpublished, of the horrors and miseries of the Western Front's trenches, associated with anger about dying for an empty cause.

The German armies still held their retreating line. Kaiser Wilhelm resigned on the 9th and fled to Holland. Germany's new government, headed by Social Democratic leader Friedrich Ebert, surrendered in the name of an armistice on the 11th with Germany's borders intact.

Germany's revolt had developed dramatically. On October 24, Germany's High Seas Fleet had been ordered to make a last-ditch attack against Britain, but an unexpected, unprecedented mutiny of German sailors was the answer. By early November the sailors, not their commanders, were in charge, first in Kiel and then in other centres including Lubeck and Hamburg, joined by factory workers and soldiers.

Among the many anti-war political prisoners released by a troubled government were socialists Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. Liebknecht was released on October 23 and welcomed in Berlin by more than 20,000 people and Luxemburg on November 8.

In Berlin on the 9th, from the steps of the imperial palace, Liebknecht announced the establishment of a German soviet republic and, that same day, Luxemburg addressed a mass rally.

But the revolutionary movement had by no means captured control of Germany's

was really impressed by the discipline and level of organization! The atmosphere had become very tense at one point, but this soon dissipated once the march was able to begin moving again.

The main body of the march arrived at the Friedrichsfelde Central Cemetery by 1pm. Hundreds of red carnations had been handed out along the route, and by the time the British communist delegation arrived, thousands of flowers had been laid at the site in tribute to Rosa Luxemburg and Friedrich Liebknecht. It was an impressive and moving sight. Nearby, the various groups that had formed the march had set up stalls and tents, and several people delivered speeches and we posed for a group photograph before moving off back towards the city.

Barely ten minutes into our walk back, after the march and event had largely dispersed, large groups of police continued to monitor the area, seemingly targeting a group of around 50-60 young communists. Without any apparent provocation – since the group was simply walking back without chanting or holding signs or placards – police suddenly rushed in. They knocked at least one young man to the ground and detained another.

(Earlier in the march, one member of this group had been seized for wearing a red triangle.) The group, along with several other onlookers, became visibly agitated and angry at the clear overreaction.

The young communist bloc – in another display of impressive discipline and organisation – quickly gathered themselves into a tight unit, linking arms to make a chain. Only then did chants from the group begin.

Following the suppression of the Spartacist uprising in which Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were prominent leadersthe two revolutionary leaders were killed by members of the Guard Cavalry Rifle Division after they had consulted with Gustav Noske, the Social Democrat minister of defence

The police provocation continued for at least another 45 minutes, with the group split in two some were forced into the nearby railway station entrance by a line of riot police, the others at a nearby café. This latter group continued to get charged and attempts were made to seize individuals – I saw one man knocked to the ground and kicked by officers – and pepper spray (or at least a cannister of liquid/gas) was used at least once.

My two cents on the police conduct are that firstly, it seemed like little more (or less) than a training exercise. The decision to deploy large numbers of officers at an essentially self-policing, peaceful march is, of course, nothing new for such events. However, the choice to come dressed in full riot gear, displaying weapons, and charging at the crowd in an apparent attempt to provoke a response—again, credit to the organizers and young communists for maintaining discipline in the face of it—felt more like riot practice on easy targets. Second, it seemed aimed at creating an image of enforcing public order, rather than ensuring it. Each of the reported instances of police conduct are verifiable by my own video footage and can be seen on my social media.

After leaving the now-dispersed commemoration event, we met a group of young DKP members at a nearby bar. We enjoyed a comradely chat with them and took yet another opportunity for photos, with party and branch emblems on display.

DAN ROSS IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND WAS A CANDIDATE IN THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTION



Left: Tribute postage stamps issued in the German Democratic Republic

'The real danger now is not the Boche but Bolshevism' Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Henry Wilson

Bolshevik Russia, drawing in France, Japan and the US. On November 2 the *Herald* commented, under the heading Remember Russia: 'From Archangel, from Vladivostok, and from Persia, the Allied armies are menacing the Soviet Republic. The pretext of rescuing Russia from German influence is virtually abandoned. The cry is already raised that even if peace comes with Germany, the war against the Bolsheviks shall continue.'

On November 4, the War Cabinet noted that 1,500 men were required in Baku and could be there in a fortnight. On the 10th Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Henry Wilson, recorded a War Cabinet discussion — 'The real danger now is not the Boche but Bolshevism.'

On the 13th, the same body decided to proceed with the occupation of the Baku-Batum railway and to maintain both the present Siberia expedition and the occupation of Murmansk and Archangel. On the last-named front, over three days from the 11th, British and allied troops suffered 28 dead in clashes with Bolshevik forces on the River Dvina.

On the 7th, anti-conscription weekly *The Tribunal* pointed out: 'Over 2,000 men and women are political prisoners in the gaols of this country. When are they going to be set free?'

Mostly in spring 1919 was the answer, though John Maclean, after a series of large monthly demonstrations, was released — with War Cabinet approval 'as an act of grace' — on December 3.

If the world war was over, the title of his pamphlet *The War After the War* grimly symbolised what would follow.

destinies. November's issue of *The Socialist*, the Socialist Labour Party's monthly, which the authorities had been attempting to suppress, considered the implications with insight. 'The only danger and weakness inherent in the German revolution is the presence of the moderate Socialists in the Government. They will attempt the same work as Kerensky in the Russian revolution.'

They did so successfully and, tragically and infamously, Liebknecht and Luxemburg were to be assassinated in January.

There was no let-up in the war against



COMMUNISM & FREEDOM

'Communism -- the effort to give all men what they need and to ask of each the best they can contribute -- this is the only way of human life. These aims are not crimes. They are practiced increasingly over the world. No nation can call itself free which does not allow its citizens to work for these ends.'

WEB Du Bois, the leading African American intellectual, on joining the Communist Party USA



Claudia Jones

2025 Commemoration & Celebration

Sunday 23 February 2025 from 12 – 1pm

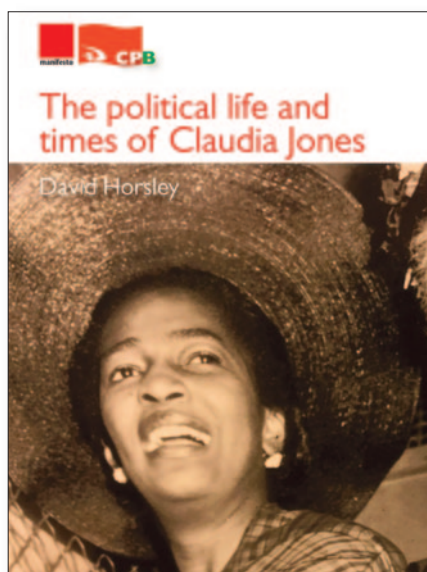
The Communist Party commemorates Claudia Jones on the 110th anniversary of her birth on 21 February 1915

Speakers ★ Sarah Wooley *General Secretary of the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union* ★ Rob Griffiths *General Secretary of the Communist Party* ★ Roger McKenzie *International Editor of the Morning Star* ★ Georgina Andrews *General Secretary of the Young Communist League* ★ Dr. Claire Holder *Former Director of the Notting Hill Carnival* **Chair** Ruth Styles *Communist Party chair*

CLAUDIA JONES had a major impact on politics during her lifetime. Born into poverty she moved from her homeland to New York, where poor housing conditions resulted in lifelong ill- health and premature death. Yet in New York she found reason in revolt.

The Communist Party USA was the first political organisation to recognise the critical experience and talent of Black women. Claudia emerged through its ranks as a thinker and doer of considerable journalistic and leadership skills.

Her activism made her a national figure in the struggle for equality, peace and opposition to oppression at home and imperialism abroad. For this, the US government exacted a cruel punishment, which saw her deported to Britain. In this country she began her struggles all over again, becoming the core of an emerging anti racist and anti imperialist movement and taking the message of Peace to Russia, China and Japan. Her influence was felt everywhere and especially in Africa and the Caribbean.



David Horsley's
The political life
and times of
Claudia Jones is
obtainable
from Mmanifesto
Press



Peace dividend now!

Alex Gordon

STOP THE WAR

DEFENCE SECRETARY John Healey told parliament on 6 January 2025 that the UK has £3 billion additional military spending in 2025/2026 for AUKUS nuclear submarines and the UK nuclear strike force and is committed by spring to further increases to reach 2.5% of GDP.

Healey boasted to MPs, 'The UK has for many years been one of the highest spenders on defence in NATO. We continue to hold that proud record. Increasing spending this year will mean that Britain continues to be one of the highest spenders in NATO.'

On 24 January Healey told BBC Radio 4: 'We will spend more on defence. Everyone agrees we need to spend more on defence to meet the rising threats and one of the results of that sort of long-term commitment that we're making as a new government means we can make long-term commitments. £9bn to Rolls Royce is the biggest contract they have ever had from the British government, and it will be a big boost to jobs, to growth and to our nuclear deterrent. And it will create more than 1000 new jobs, but I think it shows that defence is an engine of growth in this country.'

Meanwhile, Reeves says her fiscal rules are 'non- negotiable'. Her multi-year spending plans due to be revealed on 11 June will require government departments to find 5% efficiency savings, with the Treasury admitting this will mean "difficult" decisions. For example, Reeves promises 'fundamental reform of our welfare system' including 'looking at areas that have been ducked for too long like the rising cost of health

and disability benefits".

Reeves' spending review timetable is strikingly similar to Healey's Strategic Defence Review, which is led by Lord George Robertson (former NATO secretary general) and Fiona Hill (Washington neocon) and is due to report 'before the second half of this year'.

The Stop the War Coalition 2025 Annual General Meeting on 2 February put Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves 'Austerity 3.0' and the unhinged pledges to increase arms spending from Defence Secretary, John Healey under sharp scrutiny.

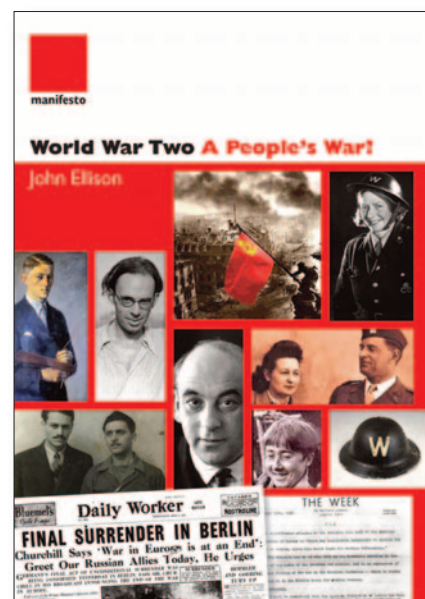
STW pledged to expose the glaring contradiction between Healey's empty boasts about job creation through arms manufacturing and Reeves' war on the poor to win the arguments at trade union conferences for welfare, not warfare.

Stop The War laid out its plans for the coming period and pledged to:

- Resist increases in military spending put forward in 2025 in the government's 'Strategic Defence Review'.
- Demand a 'Peace Dividend Now' by working with anti-poverty and anti-austerity campaigners for the £3 billion of additional nuclear military spending announced for 2025/2026 to be restored to fund essential social needs.
- Campaign to scrap AUKUS, which extends nuclear proliferation in the Asia Pacific and work with peace campaigners in Australasia, Asia and America to expose and oppose AUKUS.
- Continue to call for Britain to leave NATO, which is an expansionist, imperialist alliance and to prioritise public spending on welfare, not warfare.

ALEX GORDON REPRESENTED THE COMMUNIST PARTY AT THE 2025 STW AGM

Picture of the Red Block on the 1 February Palestine demonstration by Robert Streader



www.manifestopress.org.uk

Books by John Ellison

World War Two: a peoples war?
£15

Censorship overruled: an alternative history of 1918

is temporarily out of print but a free download is available at the Manifesto Press website





SOLIDARITY ON EARTH

'It has been said many times and my response has always been that, if anything, it is the communists who think like Christians. Christ spoke of a society where the poor, the weak and the marginalized have the right to decide. Not demagogues, not Barabbas, but the people, the poor, whether they have faith in a transcendent God or not. It is they who must help to achieve equality and freedom'. **Pope Francis 2024**



Sheffield



Birmingham



Greater London East



South East London



Cambridge



Ipswich

Solidarity not charity

Unity reporter
FOOD BANKS

COMMUNISTS throughout the country have taken to the high streets in a winter offensive on food poverty. Since 2010 the number of emergency food parcels provided by foodbanks has increased from just 40,898 per year in 2010 to 3,121,404 in the 2023/24 financial year – an increase of more than 7,600%. Use has doubled in the last 5 years alone.

Last more than 1.1 million parcels went to children. The reality behind these statistics is sickening – working people in one of the richest countries on the planet are unable to feed themselves or even their children. It is a damning indictment of the inhumane capitalist system. This is the direct result of the austerity and attacks on the value of our wages and living standards. This is also the result of profiteering by the supermarkets and big food monopolies, driving working people to hunger and small businesses and farmers to bankruptcy.

Workers must fight to fight for real, lasting, systemic change. But we also need to come together to help the most vulnerable working people made to suffer in the interests of big business and finance capital.

Communists don't believe in charity. Working people deserve more than the crumbs off the table. This is a political act. We intend to draw attention to the cruel impact of the continuing austerity and attacks on our living standards. We want to show working-class solidarity and a demonstration of unity in the face of this government. Equally important, it

The generous food contributions that people make are a testament to the spirit of our working class.

It completely rejects the cynical conclusion that 'human beings are fundamentally selfish'. Despite the efforts of the capitalist system to isolate and break down working people, we remain social and compassionate. Working-class solidarity can overcome divisions of race and religion and any obstacle.

Our aim is to build on these collections and tie it to the broader fight to create a mass movement for real change in Britain that can end poverty once and for all.

Communist Party statement On the sexual exploitation of women and girls

January 2025

In a class based society, misogyny, sexual abuse and objectification of women and girls is part of the oppression all women suffer because of their sex. The Communist Party of

Britain supports and is playing a rôle in the building of a new, unified women's movement to challenge this exploitative system as part of the struggle for true liberation.

We express our deepest concern at the violent abuse and sexual exploitation of young working-class women and girls in this country by organised criminal gangs which left wing feminists were the first to report on twenty years ago.

We reject the racist and ethno-cultural stereotyping of this commercial sexual exploitation and recognise the systematic failure of the state to protect these girls from violent, abusive men as a class issue.

All reports make it clear that grooming gangs do not come from any one particular culture.

Malicious misinformation and fictitious narratives are used by the Right to serve their racist agenda.

Cuts to Police forces, NHS, social work outreach, children and youth services render the safeguarding of all children in this country impossible, leaving working class children at particular risk.

Institutional misogyny is at the root of the widespread failure to protect vulnerable working-class girls from being raped, tortured and murdered by criminal gangs. Teenage girls were treated as culpable and 'deserved what they got', ignored, dismissed or delivered back into the hands of the gangs rather than supported and protected by the agencies responsible for safeguarding them.

Instead of acting in the best interest of the victims, the police and child protection services not only ignored the young girls and their desperate families but in some cases brought

charges against them. Their ongoing commercial sexual exploitation and the dismissive way many have been treated when they have sought help exposes the class nature and inadequacy of the organs of state under capitalism. There can be little doubt that there has been a widespread failure to act on reports from victims, families and communities which is utterly unacceptable.

Furthermore, had these girls been the children of wealthy parents with the resources to challenge the failure by the police and children's services to perform their safeguarding duties, the perpetrators would probably have been behind bars years earlier.

The physical and psychological harm inflicted on young women and girls is not being fully understood or addressed. Schools, communities and public services are without action plans to prevent the commercial trafficking and sexual exploitation of girls.

We acknowledge the anguish of the women and girls who have been and still are preyed upon by organised criminal gangs up and down this country. We believe that their voices are not being heard, they are not safe or protected and too many have been denied the justice they need and deserve.

The Communist Party of Britain demands the immediate and full implementation of the recommendations from Professor Alexis Jay's IICSA Report, a thorough review of the practices of all institutions involved in the safeguarding and protection of children and the development of a code of conduct for all professionals working with the young.



DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

‘Criticism within the limits of the principles of the Party Programme must be quite free, not only at Party meetings, but also at public meetings. Such criticism, or such “agitation” (for criticism is inseparable from agitation) cannot be prohibited. The Party’s political action must be united. No “calls” that violate the unity of definite actions can be tolerated either at public meetings, or at Party meetings, or in the Party press.’ **VI Lenin** *Freedom to Criticise and Unity of Action* May 1920

22/03/25 HAMILTON HOUSE, WC1H 9BD 11AM

3 YEARS ON FROM P&O SACKINGS

STRENGTHENING THE EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS BILL

Rally

MICK LYNCH, RMT MARYAM ESLAMDOUST, TSSA TABUSAM AHMED, UNITE LORI HOLMES, PCS
LORD JOHN HENDY KC PROF KEITH EWING MICK WHELAN, ASLEF STEVE GILLAN, POA CAROLYN JONES

IER STRIKE MAP Peace & Justice TRADE UNION CO-ORDINATING Morning Star TRIBUNE

Continued from front page

Britain’s fascists fringe were humiliated when their far-right protest demanding the release from prison of Tommy Robinson, real name Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, drew a tiny fraction of the support a similar rally last October gathered.

Despite lavish funding the bedraggled column was out numbered by a five thousand strong counter demonstration – mostly composed of young people – organised by the Stand Up to Racism campaign group.

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament leader Sophie Bolt put the struggle against Tommy Robinson and the far right as central to the struggle for peace, global co-operation and ‘absolutely central to stopping a global nuclear war.’ The far-right ultranationalism, promoted by Tommy Robinson, is accelerating the war drive and a huge attack on living standards she said.

‘They are building on the government’s racist warmongering, ripping up xenophobia, Islamophobia and Sinophobia to create fear and hatred, to dehumanise people in order to justify war.’

Former teachers union leader Kevin Courtney said that the far right ‘don’t want anything for working people in this country, they seek to divide us.’

David Rosenberg of the Jewish Socialists Group told the rally that the anti racist and anti fascist movement must ‘expose the Robinsons and Nigel Farage to their own supporters as the self-centred grifters and exploiters they are.

What is to be done?

We must challenge the growth of online fascism and oppose the political and media consensus which fosters racism. We must challenge racism in our own communities and workplaces.

Our role as socialists and anti-racists is to build a movement which supports pensioners and workers, women and children and our services, health and social.

We need housebuilding and public investment, public services brought into public and democratic ownership. This requires a democratic reset so that real power exists to take public control of water and energy. Unions must be given power in the workplace, with anti-union companies such as Amazon being proscribed.

And we need an anti-racist immigration and nationality system.

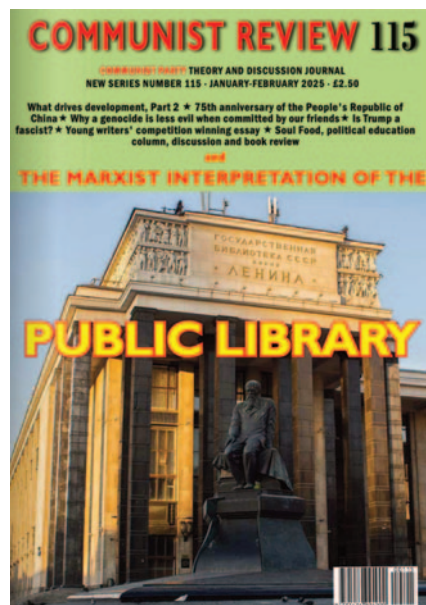
TONY CONWAY IS CONVENOR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY’S ANTI-RACIST ANTI FASCIST COMMISSION



▲ Hammer and Sickle badges



▲ Communist Party pamphlet £2



▲ Communist Review magazine of theory and discussion £2.50 bi monthly
All Communist Party merchandise is available at www.communistparty.org.uk

MARK ASHTON PINK AND RED

A talk by queer communist James Shannon on the life and politics of Britain’s most famous – and most whitewashed – gay communist activist!

7pm, Tuesday 11th February
Wandsworth Friends Meeting House
SW18 2PT
Also on Zoom!

Free entry, donations welcome!

BOOK TICKETS HERE:

How you can help Unity!

Unity! is the Communist Party’s monthly tabloid newspaper. It appears usually online, often in print form and frequently as a supplement in the *Morning Star* daily newspaper.

If you get a print copy pass it on when you have read it, if you get the online version make a habit of sending it to friends, family and workmates.

Meet the Unity! team



Trade union, youth and solidarity activist **Micaela Tracy Ramos** left deals with international solidarity and foreign affairs. Music journalist **Victoria Holmes** inside left handles news and home affairs. Veteran TUC general council member and former party chair **Anita Halpin** inside right keeps a sharp eye on the labour movement and is first call on journalistic and production standards. Editor **Nick Wright** right also handles production/design. Former RMT president **Alex Gordon** bottom left edits labour and capital and **Bill Greenshields** bottom right organises the events page.

We are keen to develop better connections with party commissions and are actively seeking comrades to work with us on environment, home, youth and students and especially Scottish and Welsh affairs with the prospect, given time and resources, of national editions.

Contact nickbwright@mac.com to volunteer