

A paper of Marxist polemic and Marxist unity

weekly **worker**



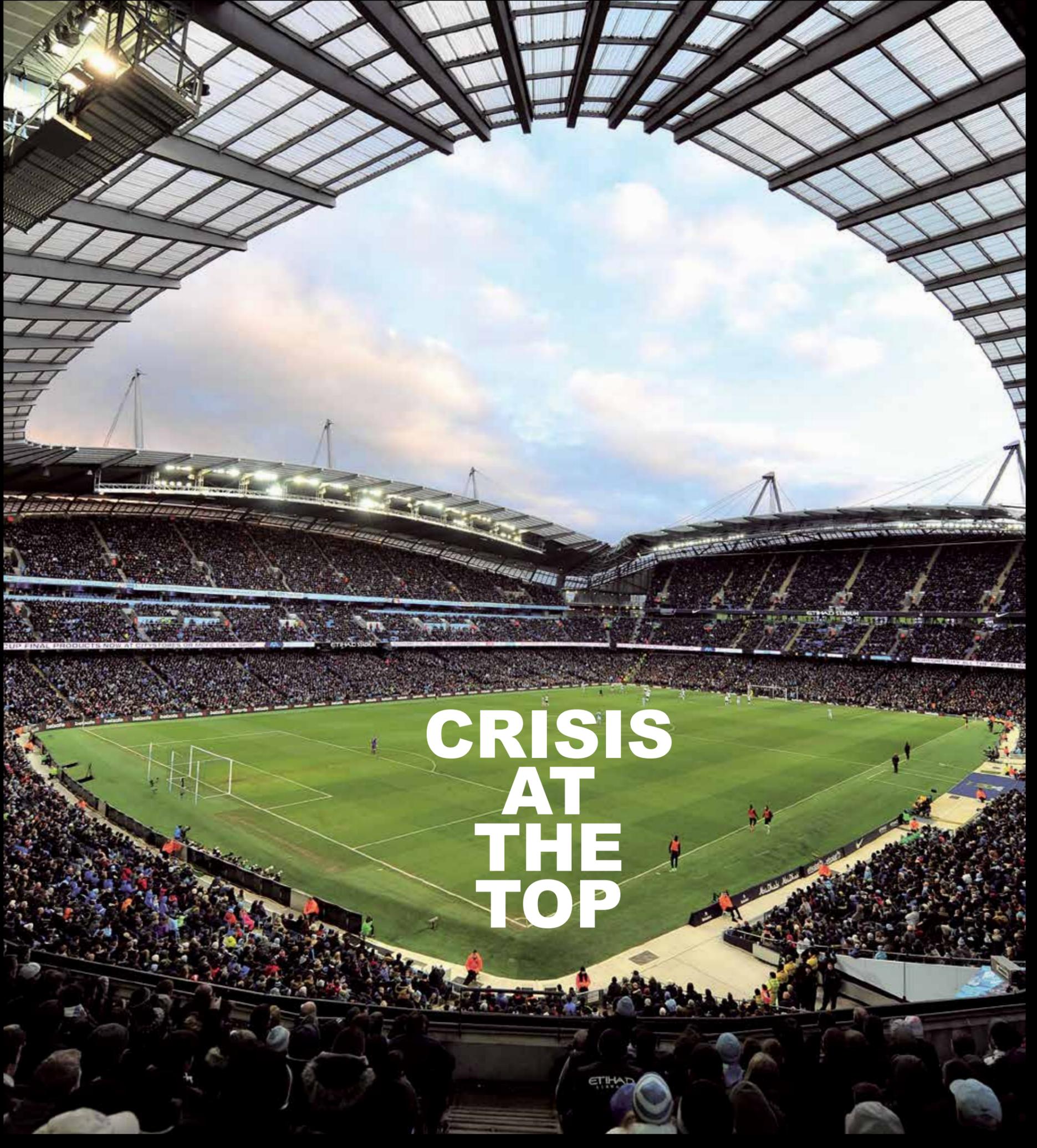
**Prelude to ethnic cleansing:
Moshé Machover slates
Trump's 'deal of the century'**

- Letters and debate
- 'Morning Star' hypocrites
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- Zionism and anti-Semitism

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Towards a Communist Party of the European Union

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**CRISIS
AT
THE
TOP**

LETTERS



Letters may have been shortened because of space. Some names may have been changed

Identity politics

Prefiguring the more public row over trans rights in the Labour Party, last week *Tribune* editor Ronan Burtenshaw felt it necessary to clarify the magazine's position in 18 words from page 61 of their latest edition. The words in question, written by Laura Pidcock, ran as follows: "The women's movement needs the space to talk about sex and gender, without fear of being 'no-platformed'."

Burtenshaw ran to Twitter to clarify in a now-deleted response that *Tribune* will not be providing any such "space", implying he agrees with the no-platforming and expulsion of prominent socialist-feminist union activists involved with groups such as Women's Place UK on the grounds that they are transphobic.

It is a sad indictment of the state of much of the Labour left that, having learnt absolutely nothing from the anti-Semitism witch-hunts, they are now prepared to call for the expulsion of anyone who dares to express the belief that women's historic oppression may be based on biological sex. Indeed such is the degradation of the left on identity politics that some are supporting Dawn Butler - who believes babies are born without a biological sex, that 90% of giraffes are gay and has a pre-Corbyn history of voting, as you'd expect an MP of the Labour right to do on various issues such as benefits sanctions, 42-day detention and others - for deputy leader over the obvious left candidate, Richard Burgon.

I wait with interest to see what position the newly formed Labour Left Alliance takes on identity politics. It has been formed with a clear position around the anti-Semitism witch-hunts, but that is not the only free speech issue live in the Labour Party or the wider movement, and any group worth its salt must put freedom of thought and debate at the apex of its *raison d'être* in the current climate of denunciation, expulsions and the prioritisation of optics over all. Meanwhile I'll continue enjoying the *Weekly Worker's* culture of lively debate rather than waste £10 a quarter on *Tribune's* glossily presented pages of worthy windbags,

writing the same articles over and over again.

Sean Carter
South London

For or against

Ian Donovan has charged that I was Nazi-baiting everyone I conflicted with on the philosophical origins of Nazism. I 'Nazi-baited' Sebastian Burgen of *Historical Materialism* because I criticised his softness on Friedrich Nietzsche; I 'Nazi-baited' Tony Greenstein because I criticised his softness on Martin Heidegger and Hannah Arendt; and Toby Abse 'Nazi-baited' Jack Conrad over his disagreement on Norman Finkelstein.

The light dawned when you realised that the reason these political positions had to be defended by Ian Donovan, Gilad Atzmon and others was because many Zionists attacked these people as Nazi ideologues and whatever the Zionists attack must be OK, relatively speaking. Ian sees the whole world in terms of 'for or against Zionism'. If you are against, you could be any kind of a Nazi and that is OK. If you agree with what a Zionist says on any subject whatsoever, you are a capitulator to Zionism. I will leave the reader to conclude where lies anti-Semitism in this.

There is a traceable line of the development of thought lodged in the philosophical idealist - as opposed to the dialectical materialist - view of history. The idealist tradition came from god, as the origin of all, though to Nietzsche "God is dead" and only the Übermensch can rule and the *Untermensch* must serve them. And that does ultimately lead to a justification of Nazism, even if that was not the original intention. Elements of the thought of ancient Greece, Plato and Rome, Kant and Hegel, which led to the mystical Arthur Schopenhauer and thence to the elitist Nietzsche, the individualist Wittgenstein and Heidegger - the uber-Nazi who never abandoned his Nazism and never apologised for his part in promoting and defending the holocaust. And he never expressed a genuine ounce of sympathy for its victims, in the holocaust or in the war itself.

Of course, elements of ancient Greece, Heraclitus, the 18th century Spinoza, Kant and Hegel also led to Ludwig Feuerbach and thence to Marx and Engels, and from them to Lenin and Trotsky.

So modern philosophy must explain Heidegger: why is this Nazi regarded as the greatest philosopher of the 20th century by so many liberal

intellectuals? Why were Jean-Paul Sartre and so many others so strongly influenced by this philosophy of the Übermensch? Why wasn't Heidegger executed in Nuremberg post-war? Why did the Jewish liberal, Hannah Arendt, become his lover after 1923 and then from 1950? Her piece, 'Heidegger at 80', is a shocking defence of his philosophy in general. And is it possible totally to separate his politics, his Nazi Übermensch supremacism, from his philosophy, which is supposedly progressive?

Can human thought be bifurcated in this manner? Of course not. The truth is that his philosophy is a defence of capitalism in general against the appalling vista of the socialist revolution, as it appeared in Russia in October 1917. In the 1930s Nazism was necessary to prevent socialist revolution in Germany, so it served that purpose. In the 1960s it served Sartre, Stalinism and the French philosophers to defend against revolution in France in 1968.

And it served Hannah Arendt to defend Israel ultimately against the Palestinians, albeit now in a liberal, democratic form - still counterrevolutionary, but no longer bearing the stigma of Hitler. So ponder the contradictions of liberal men and women forced to rely, like Hannah Arendt, on a Nazi philosopher to defend their privileges against the dreaded socialist revolution.

Gerry Downing
Socialist Fight

Join the WPB

I welcome Paul Demarty's article, 'George's marvellous medicine' (February 13), about the new Workers Party of Britain.

As Paul correctly points out, "the 2019 general election result will have dashed very many dreams against the rocks amongst the Corbynites. Though many will no doubt simply fall into cynicism and despair, some will find new political homes." This, is where the Workers Party of Britain comes in. Its name doesn't have the baggage of the 'Communist' Party of Britain, or the 'Socialist' Party in England and Wales, or the 'Socialist' Workers Party, or the Scottish 'Socialist' Party. As the revisionist Alliance for Workers' Liberty learnt many years ago, the words 'communist' and 'socialist' have negative connotations, whereas the word 'workers' has a positive gloss to it.

In the video of George's speech at the founding rally of the WPB in Birmingham on February 1, he explains how he keeps a close eye on the local election result for the Labour Party. He concludes that the Labour vote has recently fallen to around 20%. As Paul writes, "Galloway is no fool, however, and, if he can use the Brarites to bootstrap his organisation, he can perhaps build himself another power base to edge them out later on."

The models of the Party for Socialism and Liberation in the US, the Workers Party of Belgium and the Socialist Party in the Netherlands are good ones. Interestingly, in the latter party, both the International Marxist Tendency and Committee for a Workers' International have members active inside it. Talking of the CWI, I read in the February edition of its *Socialism Today* magazine that its Scottish comrades are seriously discussing the formation of a Scottish Workers Party, given the death agony of the Labour Party in Scotland.

The key word here is 'Workers'. George Galloway and the CWI have both learnt, with different conclusions, the need for a new party to represent the 'left-behind' working class in the former 'red wall' seats of the north of England and the west Midlands, and in Scotland - although George is opposed to the Scottish nationalism of the CWI and the SNP.

As George said in his Birmingham

speech, "Labour is rapidly going the way of the French Socialist Party and the Greek Pasok - big parties can become small parties, and small parties can become big parties." The best news for the Workers Party of Britain will be if, as seems likely, Sir Keir Starmer becomes leader of the Labour Party. Interestingly, even Corbyn's own Islington CLP voted to nominate Starmer for leader - such is the mood of Labour activists in metropolitan London.

Rebecca Long Bailey would be a disaster as leader. As both the *Weekly Worker* and the Socialist Party have pointed out, Rebecca is a new Neil Kinnock, who is travelling to the right at a speed of knots. Hence her commitment to press the (nuclear) button and support for the anti-Semitic witch-hunt led by the misnamed Jewish Labour Movement.

I have now become a supporter of the Workers Party of Britain. After a six-month probationary period, I will apply to become a full member of the party. I suggest other disillusioned Corbyn-supporters who read the *Weekly Worker* do as I have and join the WPB.

John Smithee
email

Left vote?

Comrade Ann McShane makes a lot of interesting points in her article, 'Sinn Féin's success, left's collapse' (February 13). However her statement, "Sinn Féin transfers under the PR system went as often to the Greens as to the left", is completely false, as even a cursory perusal of the actual counts would demonstrate.

In Dublin South West, Paul Murphy of Rise got 3,444 transfers and Sandar Fay (SP) got 1,571, while the Greens got 590. These transfers were key to Paul retaining his seat. In Dublin South Central, Brid Smith (PBP) got 4,794, Joan Collins (Independents4Change) got 1,747, the Greens 408 - both left candidates retained their seats. There are many other examples.

Overwhelmingly Sinn Féin voters transferred left where there was a candidate; they also transferred to the centre-left Social Democrats, left independents and Labour. There was a huge campaign, both formal and informal, amongst activists on social media for transfers to be targeted. This was a class-conscious vote, directed at removing the centre-right from power.

It wasn't a vote for social revolution, but then there were no candidates of that strain standing.

I suspect an element of the PBP's desire to cosy up to SF is influenced by the enormous rate of transfers it received and indeed on which the election of all of the six most leftwing TDs visibly depended.

James McBarron
email

Deportations

When I read about the deportations commented on by Eddie Ford ('Cruel and unusual punishment', February 13), it reminded me of an episode of *That was the week that was* from nearly 60 years ago, which included a satirical interview with 'Henry Brooke', the then home secretary. He had, among other things, decided to deport a woman to Jamaica for £2 worth of shoplifting, but then backed down after an outcry. After listing other crimes of his, the punch-line of the sketch was: "If you're home secretary, you can get away with murder".

I must admit that I had to check the details online, but it has come to mind so often over the years. The real question must be, with deportations to Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran, as well as the West Indies and other places, is there any home secretary who does not have blood on his or her hands?

The last few years have seen such a rush of deportations, including the Windrush scandal, that we are looking not just at murderers, but at a string of serial killers. But, of course, they don't care.

Jim Cook
Reading

Satire

The *Weekly Worker* has never been too hot on humour, and in these grim times we all need a bit of a laugh. So I was delighted to read the parody by Elijah Traven (Letters, February 13). This brilliant piece of satire will have been particularly appreciated by older readers like myself; younger comrades may find it hard to believe that people - more or less - like this once existed in real life.

My only complaint is that it went on a bit too long. A good comedian knows when to stop. You should offer comrade Traven a regular humorous column - but impose a strict word limit.

Ian Birchall
email

Kautsky's republic



Sunday March 1, 5pm

Speaker: Ben Lewis
editor and translator of the newly published
Karl Kautsky on democracy and republicanism

Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1

Organised by CPGB: www.cpgb.org.uk and
Labour Party Marxists: www.labourpartymarxists.org.uk

Fighting fund

Do your bit

Our February fighting fund received the expected boost in the shape of the regular standing orders we get at this time of the month: just five comrades raised between them £345 - thank you, comrades TR, MM, KB, GB and TB.

On top of that there was a £60 bank transfer from another regular donor, comrade PB, plus two PayPal contributions - the first from US comrade PM for £25 and the other from someone more local: KC from London (£10). Finally a single cheque came our way from RN, who added a generous £40 to her £60 annual subscription. Good stuff, comrade!

But, overall, it's not been as good a week as I was hoping for - an extra £480 towards our £2,000 target, giving us a running total of £1,224. But that still leaves us £776 short with only 10 days to go. Let's hope some comrades take inspiration from the words RN wrote, accompanying her

£100 cheque: "Every time my subscription comes up for renewal, it makes me think how much the *Weekly Worker* is needed and so I throw in a bit extra! Thanks for the continued quality of the content - especially Paul Demarty."

(I was thinking of knocking that last bit out - we don't want him getting big-headed.)

RN concludes: "I don't understand why you don't get a lot more. Your articles on the Labour Party have been brilliant and I know quite a few people who think the same as me." Well, perhaps some of them will read your words and do their bit, comrade! I hope so, as we're looking a bit below target in the shortest month of the year.

Any offers? ●

Robbie Rix

Fill in a standing order form (back page), donate via our website, or send cheques, payable to *Weekly Worker*

MIGRATION

Crooked formulations

No human is illegal, says the *Morning Star*. But, notes Eddie Ford, the paper goes on to argue that not all humans should be legal



Dustbowl migrants 1935: heading to California

Having promised a “points-based” immigration system in its election manifesto, this week the government announced that low-skilled workers would not get visas, when free movement with the European Union ends - notably urging employers to “move away” from relying on “cheap labour” from Europe. After December 31, EU and non-EU citizens coming to the UK will be “treated equally”, with home secretary Priti Patel declaring that the new system would mean “the brightest and the best” will be able to come to Britain. As for your poor and huddled masses, they can bugger off.

Business is not enthusiastic about the new system, it goes without saying - how they will be able to recruit the workers needed to run their businesses? Those workers now designated low-skilled or unwanted by the government include waiting staff, carpenters, plasterers, bricklayers, groundworkers, child-minders, cleaners, fishery workers, and so on. The economy in the south-east and London could grind to a halt. And who will build big infrastructure projects like HS2?

Laughably, Priti Patel, says that business should train Britain’s 8.45 million “economically inactive” adults to do those jobs. The fact that many of these people are students (2.3 million), incapacitated (2.1 million), looking after a family (1.9 million) or early retirees (1.1 million) does not seem to occur to her. The main question is singing the anti-migrant tune to that section of the electorate that puts down overcrowded schools, long queues in the NHS, poor housing and low wages to workers coming from southern and eastern Europe.

Transparently, a points-based system of migration will do nothing to improve the position of worst-paid labour in Britain. Conceivably, matters could be made worse. Not only is the government allowing waivers - ie, quadrupling the number of seasonal workers allowed into the UK. The fact of the matter is that outlawing the legal movement of

low-skilled workers, will only add to the number of *illegal* workers. They are prepared to accept long, long hours and appalling levels of pay. Competition between workers will not be reduced and will possibly increase.

Given all this, it sad to read a recent editorial in the *Morning Star* (February 3). We discover that the paper *welcomes* the ending of the free movement of people in Europe. Thankfully, Brexit means that “our nation-state is no longer bound by the free and often *forced movement of labour* that accompanies the EU’s free movement of capital” (my italics). That is, workers from Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Albania, etc were “forced” to move to the UK. Of course, there is a kernel of truth in this statement - poorer European workers come here looking for work. Then again, you could say the same about the very large number of workers from Glasgow, Liverpool, Birmingham or Devon who have also been ‘forced’ to relocate to London and the south-east for the same reason.

Anyway, the *Star* reminds us that Britain “has responsibilities that arise from its colonial role”, when the “drive for plunder and profit” took millions of Britons to “colonise a substantial part of the globe” - feel the guilt. We are also correctly told that “no human being is illegal” - something that is in complete contradiction to what follows.

The editorial concludes that Britain needs a “non-racist” immigration policy that both serves “our economic needs” and “meets our humanitarian obligations”. So the human beings who illegally seek work in Britain will be ... illegal human beings then. And, of course, Boris Johnson is quite capable of dressing up his points-based system precisely in that sort of language - he and Patel can happily look you in the eye and say their new immigration system is totally “non-racist”, as it treats EU and non-EU citizens “equally” - what more do you want? What the *Morning Star*’s Communist Party of Britain actually

advocates as “non-racist” immigration controls is discrimination against the vast majority of people across the planet - not because they are brown or black, but for the crime of being *poor*.

Anyone who calls themselves a Marxist will recall that the First International proclaimed that “each member of the International Association, on removing his domicile from one country to another, will receive the fraternal support of the Associated Working Men” - no ifs or buts. Both Britain and the US started to import workers on a substantial scale in the 19th century, in order to meet the “economic needs” of capital. Unfortunately, more than once the ‘native’ labour movement responded in the same shameful spirit as the *Morning Star*. In America there were demands to stop the influx of “yellow labour”. In Britain the TUC passed a resolution against any further migration of Jewish workers from Russia and eastern Europe.

However, let us not forget that the Second International aimed to *organise* workers everywhere against scabbing - ie, prevent Irish workers coming to Britain to break a strike. It also wanted to organise workers in a way that prevents migrants being used by the bosses to undermine wages and conditions, which requires powerful trade unions - the aim being to recruit migrants as soon as they arrive in the country. The Second International did not try to keep them out, or form exclusive ‘British trade unions for British workers’ - which would have been pandering to chauvinism. Rather, it argued vociferously that unions should accept and organise all workers, regardless of nationality or background - assimilation in the very best proletarian sense.

But, crucially, it specifically came out against *all* immigration controls - whether anti-Jewish in Britain or anti-Chinese in the US. Sadly, the *Morning Star*’s Communist Party of Britain appears to have forgotten what it claims is its own history ●

eddie.ford@weeklyworker.co.uk

ACTION

London Communist Forum

Sunday February 23, 5pm: Weekly political report from CPGB Provisional Central Committee, followed by open discussion and reading group: study of Abram Leon’s *The Jewish question - a Marxist interpretation*. This meeting: chapter 3, ‘Relations of the Jews with other sections in society’, Part A, ‘Royalty and the Jews’. Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1. Organised by CPGB: www.cpgb.org.uk and Labour Party Marxists: www.labourpartymarxists.org.uk.

Radical Anthropology Group

Tuesday February 25, 6.30pm: Series of talks on social and biological anthropology, Daryll Forde seminar room, Anthropology Building, 14 Taviton Street, off Gordon Square, London WC1. This meeting: ‘Dulling our senses: neoliberalism and the archaeological imagination’. Speaker: Alicia Colson.

Organised by Radical Anthropology Group: radicalanthropologygroup.org.

Labour Left Alliance launch

Saturday February 22, 10am to 5pm: Delegate conference, venue in Sheffield very close to the railway station. To discuss structures, organisation and strategy for bringing together and strengthening the Labour left. Guest speaker: Jo Bird. Entrance £10 (£3).

Organised by Labour Left Alliance: labourleft.org/lla-launch-conference.

Don’t extradite Assange

Saturday February 22, 11.30am: Demonstration. Assemble Australia House, Aldwych, London WC2, for march to Parliament Square. The extradition trial begins on February 24 - the Trump administration wants to jail Julian Assange for 175 years.

Organised by Don’t Extradite Assange Campaign: www.facebook.com/events/931609000567992.

Solidarity with UCU strikers

Staff at 74 universities across the UK are on strike for pensions and pay. Events organised by University and College Union London region:

Tuesday February 25, 6pm: Rally, Royal National Hotel, 38-51 Bedford Way, London WC1. Speakers include: John McDonnell MP and Mark Serwotka, PCS general secretary.

www.facebook.com/events/2675312232503829.

Wednesday February 26, 12 noon: Demonstration. Assemble Tavistock Square, London WC1, for march to the City. End casualisation, decent jobs on decent pay, end pay inequality, tackle the workload crisis and defend pensions.

www.facebook.com/events/624182748363863.

Capitalism, crisis and imperialism

Tuesday February 25, 7.30pm: First of four weekly lectures, Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1. Sorcha Foster on Lenin’s ‘Imperialism’ and its relevance today. Entrance £5 (£3).

Organised by Marx Memorial Library: www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/event/250.

Labour and socialism

Wednesday February 26, 6.30pm: Rally, Indian YMCA, 41 Fitzroy Square, London W1. Speakers include MPs Richard Burgon, Bellavia Ribeiro-Addy, Zarah Sultana and Apsana Begum, plus Mark Serwotka (PCS) and Ian Hodson (BFAWU). Free entrance.

Organised by Arise: a festival of Labour’s left ideas: www.facebook.com/events/175357760464173.

Support arrested arms fair activists

Thursday February 27, 9am: Protest outside Stratford magistrates court, 389-397 High Street, London E15. Over 100 people were arrested during the week of action against the DSEI arms fair last September. Bring banners, flags and placards to support the defendants.

Organised by Campaign Against Arms Trade: www.facebook.com/events/2489413751346961.

Prevent and the criminalisation of protest

Thursday February 27, 6.30pm: Public meeting, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1. The state is monitoring legitimate political activity under the guise of tackling terrorism. Speakers include: Lowkey, Diane Abbott MP, Kate Hudson (CND), Lindsey German (Stop the War) and Ben Jamal (Palestine Solidarity Campaign). Organised by CND, Stop the War Coalition and PSC: www.facebook.com/events/477237519617913.

Palestine 101: Trump’s ‘deal of the century’

Friday February 28, 7pm: Public meeting, Tasty’s Peri Peri, 21 Manchester Street, Luton LU1. Hazem Jamjoum (Al Shabaka - The Palestine Policy Network) discusses how Trump’s scheme continues the historical confiscation of Palestinian land.

Organised by Luton Palestine Solidarity Campaign: www.facebook.com/events/258883228428823.

Kautsky and the democratic republic

Sunday March 1, 5pm: Public meeting, Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1. Speaker: Ben Lewis, editor and translator of works by Karl Kautsky, who at that time was the leading theoretician of the German Social Democratic Party.

Organised by CPGB: www.cpgb.org.uk and Labour Party Marxists: www.labourpartymarxists.org.uk.

Miners’ strike stories

Friday March 6, 7pm: Film premier and public meeting, National Union of Mineworkers, 2 Huddersfield Road, Barnsley S70. Preserving on film the heroic struggles of miners, families, Women Against Pit Closures and other supporters in the 1984-85 Great Strike.

Speakers include Richard Burgon MP. Entrance free. Organised by Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign: www.facebook.com/events/653823325362615.

CPGB wills

Remember the CPGB and keep the struggle going. Put our party’s name and address, together with the amount you wish to leave, in your will. If you need further help, do not hesitate to contact us.

FOOTBALL

Crisis at the top

Paul Demarty asks what the expulsion of Manchester City from Europe means for a sport married to mega money

On Valentine's Day in 1998, Manchester City hosted Bury FC in what was then the first division - the second tier of English football. Bury and their fans travelled the short distance home as 1-0 victors - one of many bad days in a terrible season for City, who were relegated to spend their first ever (and so far only) season in the third tier.

February 14 2020, in a piece of cruel anti-serendipity, saw bad news for both teams, although they now occupy not only different leagues, but different planes of existence. Bury, in a limbo state since the team's expulsion from the league last autumn, learned that its owner, Steve Dale, had defaulted on his debts, and so the club will now almost certainly be liquidated entirely, bringing to an end 130 years of (admittedly mostly unremarkable) history. Man City, meanwhile, are defending Premier League champions and sitting pretty in second place; but their immediate future was cast into chaos after Uefa (the Union of European Football Associations) ruled that they had seriously breached financial fair-play rules and banned them from the Champion's League for two seasons.

City's misfortune casts a light on the current state of elite football, its extraordinarily obvious corruption by the forces of capital, and also hints at a step-change to come. Bury's demise is indicative of the effects this circus has on the thousands of teams of more modest ambitions. For now, these two phenomena are linked - although part of the story is that they may not be very much longer.

Only the most deluded of City fans could deny the crucial role played by moneyed new owners in the journey from the second division to the cream of the English footballing elite, as they certainly were in the two seasons before this one. Though they fought their way back to the premiership under an antique ownership structure, by the middle of the 2000s City were on the shopping lists of some very wealthy individuals. The first to buy them was the Thai tycoon and deposed prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatra; things were looking up until it turned out that the military junta that replaced him back home had frozen most of his \$800 million fortune. A mysterious consortium of Arab investors swept in to the rescue, and it soon became clear that the real mover behind it was Sheikh Mansour, a senior member of the Abu Dhabi royal family. Mansour was playing for keeps, and invested enormous amounts of money. It paid off, and City won their first premier league title on goal difference in 2012.

At the same time, however, plans were afoot to restrict this particular business model. Manchester City were not the only club to benefit from enormous injections of cash of this sort: in this country, Chelsea had already been propelled from mid-table stagnation to considerable success, thanks to the financial clout of the Russian oligarch, Roman Abramovich; and the Qatari regime has since bought Paris Saint-Germain, with the result that *Ligue 1* is essentially a one-party state at this point. Rules for 'financial fair play' (FFP) were cooked up by Uefa, and considerably shaped by the continent's most powerful clubs; the result was that strict limits were placed on the *losses* clubs were permitted to make over several years.



Man city shirt: fans get a raw deal

This was highly problematic for a club like City under its new ownership structure. Yet, as is the way with capitalism - especially high finance - there is usually a way around the problem. City's get-out (and not only theirs) was to use sponsorship money from various Abu Dhabi businesses (notably the Etihad airline), which counts as revenue, instead of direct investment from the owners, which does not. These businesses, of course, are very closely linked to the monarchy.

City have already been fined under FFP rules before: the recent reopening of the case comes after a large cache of internal emails was leaked by Rui Pinto - a Portuguese man who has embarrassed many football clubs this way and is currently facing trial for hacking (which he denies). The emails reveal the contempt with which the club treated the rules, openly discussing means of flouting them, and making crass comments about Uefa's investigators. This apparent breach of trust led to the far more serious sanction of a two-year ban from European football.

On the verge

There is a lot at stake for Man City, as they prepare to drag this through the Court of Arbitration for Sport (and perhaps then the European Court of Justice). Missing out on two Champion's Leagues will cost them something like £200 million in missing TV revenues and sundries. It also makes the loss of their restless head coach, Pep Guardiola, far more likely, and may cause a stampede to the exits for their best players. In itself, however, that is not terribly interesting (unless you are a fan of the club, or of a club that might be able to hire Guardiola).

The interest starts when we imagine City *winning* this battle - an outcome that would essentially find the FFP regulations unlawful, or at least Uefa incompetent to regulate the European game. Even if Uefa prevails, and the punishment is upheld, there is a non-doomsday version of all this, whereby City are joined in a boycott by other big clubs with a chip on their shoulder about Uefa, or reasons to be worried about sterner enforcement of the rules.

The fact that we can talk about these scenarios - indeed, even the fact that the City PR strategy in relation to all this is to declare war on Uefa and declare it to be biased, corrupt and responsible

for breaches of information security - indicates that we are on the threshold of a crisis in the sport.

Uefa is vulnerable to these sorts of charges, because it is seen - accurately - as too beholden to the elite European clubs. City's posture as underdog outsiders is laughable in 2020, but keenly felt at least among supporters (and, as the sheer nastiness of some of the leaked emails suggests, also at many levels of the club hierarchy). FFP has always been vulnerable to the accusation that it permanently enshrines those clubs that are already very wealthy and therefore have huge existing revenues from commercial partnerships, merchandising and all the rest as an impenetrable aristocracy. The timing of its introduction is felt by the City faithful to be rather less than coincidental, as if it were designed to keep *them* out of that elite.

In recent years, meanwhile, talk has gotten louder about a breakaway by all of Europe's richest clubs to form a 'super league' - an eventuality given plausibility by the huge gulf that separates them from their national competitors. Paris Saint-Germain have won every *Ligue 1* title except one since the Qatari takeover, by an average margin of around 15 points. The past and present of the German *Bundesliga* is a story of overwhelming dominance by Bayern Munich - though they are now challenged by RB Leipzig, the plaything of the ever larger Red Bull sports-franchise empire, with minor tweaks to get around the stricter German laws on club ownership. Real Madrid and Barcelona have between them won all but five league titles in Spain since 1990, and Juventus are on track to claim their ninth consecutive *scudetto*.

The Premier League is less predictable, partly because our parasitic, tax-haven economy is more welcoming to dubious benefactors with suitcases full of banknotes than Germany or Spain, with their strong traditions of fan ownership (it should be noted that RB Leipzig are widely despised for this reason). There is the possibility, then, of a Manchester City or Chelsea situation. We also have a lot of crafty accountants to hand who can engineer a club's way around rules like FFP. The current state of affairs, with an undefeated Liverpool streaking off into the distance, is a bit of a fluke - though it is worth remembering that two years ago City were not much

less dominant. Nonetheless, there is a well-established 'top six', however much it is fraying this season, and it would be foolish to expect (say) Sheffield United - a newly promoted side vastly outperforming their budget - to permanently replace Arsenal or Tottenham Hotspur as an elite force in the English game.

A European Super League would be a natural sequel to the foundation of the Premiership, which saw the top 20 clubs secede from the football league - essentially to get out of having to split their suddenly vast TV revenues with the likes of Tranmere Rovers and Plymouth Argyle via the existing 'solidarity arrangements'. But it would be far more dramatic in its effects. The Premier League remains, after all, within a continuous football hierarchy that reaches down to Sunday leagues, however notional that continuum is.

And it is getting pretty notional. Although there are still, as there were 50 years ago, four tiers of professional football in this country, in reality there are two: the best and the rest. The disparity becomes more obvious with every shiny new stadium and training ground. The revenue gulf is so great that clubs spend wildly in the second tier for a chance at even one year in the top flight; which in turn drives up transfer fees and wages at all levels. (Bury FC in fact bankrupted themselves in pursuit of promotion to the third tier.)

A continent-wide version of that would necessarily sever these ties altogether. (Who would get relegated, to where?) Elite football would become formally, as well as *de facto*, an oligarchy of extremely wealthy clubs. Everything else would be reduced to the status of minor-league baseball in America - effectively a proving ground for new 'talent'. Some of that infrastructure already exists, with owners (including the Abu Dhabi crowd that owns City and, of course, Red Bull) acquiring a growing portfolio of clubs, and the best players being siphoned upwards into the elite outfits - a cheaper option than wrestling with super-agents and rival teams on the open transfer market. In baseball, this system is close to a century old, and is charmingly called 'farming'.

Class element

Part of the urgency of the situation for City, then, is that a lot may depend on who has a seat when the music stops on

football as we know it. And part of the urgency for Uefa is making sure that it is integral to this brave new world, which is by no means guaranteed. Few enough people doubt that this will happen one way or another, so obviously is it the terminal point of the game's development over the last three decades.

Football, certainly throughout its modern history, has always had an edge of class struggle, beginning with the expropriation of a traditional peasant game by the English public schools and its codification by such types, which was partially reversed by the successive revolutions in play and organisation imposed by teams of working class men in Scotland and England. As the game spread to other countries, it did so confusingly in both forms at once; the public school elite heritage is visible in team names like Newell's Old Boys (Argentina) and Young Boys (Switzerland). The proletarian and otherwise plebeian side shows up in the slum boys who became some of the great individual geniuses of the game in Brazil; the importance in the English game of overtly socialist managers like Brian Clough, Bill Shankly and even Alex Ferguson; and in the profile above all of football supporters in the game's strongholds.

Its expropriation by the old elite of the public schools was abortive, then; the more recent raid on the most universally successful form of mass popular culture outside of the major world religions (not necessarily *outside* of them, depending on who you ask ...) by those elites' successors - the financiers, media moguls and their fossil-fuel-oligarch friends - is rapidly reaching its completion.

Football fans are historically underserved by the left, which is suspicious of the apparently divisive tribalism of ultra-culture and - more and more - of the promotion of a shallow, acquisitive consumerism, as the players get richer and more flash (to say nothing of the lingering spectre of racism and sexism in the stands, and quasi-fascist groupings like the English Defence League and Democratic Football Lads Alliance). The few bright spots are the overtly leftwing clubs - notably Hamburg's FC Sankt Pauli, who have a vibrant following in global antifa circles.

Nevertheless, there is a real ground for this unease, but it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: one more piece of evidence for demagogues to cite, when they decry the left as fundamentally middle class, and implicitly or explicitly opposing a mythical 'working class culture' which is macho, patriotic and whatever else; making football culture more alienating to the left; and so on.

Labour's election manifesto in December did contain a whole section on reforms to football, which aimed to mitigate the kleptocratic side of the game, and, while it was good of the inveterate Arsenal fan, Jeremy Corbyn, to actually try, the actual policy prescriptions were extremely modest - not even going so far as the existing German system on fan ownership, for example.

The revolutionary left ought not to be so timid: football's disastrous marriage to money must be annulled entirely. The changes to the game will be considerable, but it will be ours again ●

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CENTENARY



Fight for unity

We have seen from the first instalment of this series the importance of international developments for the progress towards unity of revolutionary organisations in Britain. The October Revolution proved inspirational. Thus it was with the formation of the Third (Communist) International (March 1919). The first serious attempts were made to combine the divided revolutionary groups into a single, united, Communist Party.

The first unity meeting between the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party,¹ the Workers' Socialist Federation² and the South Wales Socialist Society

was held in London on May 13 1919. As the report in the BSP's *The Call* made clear, it proved to be a difficult meeting. The BSP was solidly committed to founding a Communist Party. In early 1920 it organised two national branch ballots: the first, on affiliation to the Communist International, was carried by 98 branches to four; the other, on revolutionary unification in a Communist Party, was also carried by an overwhelming majority.

Things were far messier in the other organisations, however. The SLP leadership deliberately confused the issue of communist unity by making it contingent on an agreement that an approach to

the Labour Party for affiliation was ruled out. The SLP membership had voted by a large majority for a merger; predictably they also voted overwhelmingly against any affiliation to the Labour Party. The dogmatic wing of the SLP leadership was mulishly determined on unity with the BSP only on its own terms. Indeed, it had even come to mistrust its own unity negotiating team, composed of Tom Bell, Arthur MacManus and William Paul. These comrades, although opposed to Labour affiliation themselves, correctly put the launch of a united CPGB above (admittedly important) tactical differences.

Consequently, the SLP leadership

London, on March 13 1920

F Peet, acting secretary for the BSP, was appointed chairman, explained the reasons for the adjournment of the conference of January 24, 1920, and read the following statement from the BSP executive:

The matter of the unity negotiations was again under the consideration of the BSP executive at their meeting held in London on February 14, when our delegates reported on the proceedings of the previous conference. The executive committee of the BSP adhere to the views their delegates have expressed as to the relations of the Communist Party to the Labour Party and the industrial organisations of the working class. Nevertheless, they feel that this question, important though it is, is secondary to the need for uniting in one Communist Party all those organisations in this country that adhere to the Third International and accept the soviet system and the dictatorship of the working class.

For this reason they are prepared to make a further concession in order to carry the negotiations with the other bodies to a successful issue, and have instructed me to express their willingness to withdraw that clause in the original unity recommendations referring to a referendum three months after the formation of the Communist Party on the question of its relations with the Labour Party ...

Hodgson (BSP) asked the SLP for their opinion of this proposal, but Mitchell (SLP) replied that, as the SLP were not present at the two previous conferences (January 9 and 24), they preferred to hear the opinions of the other societies represented. S Pankhurst (WSF) stated that the proposal seemed unsatisfactory ... as soon as the new party was formed

voted to break off the negotiations and to dissolve its 'unreliable' Unity Committee.

Given its left-communist template, Sylvia Pankhurst's Workers' Socialist Federation also produced a contradictory result in its referendum: for unity in theory, but against it if this concretely meant a commitment to parliamentary action and Labour Party affiliation.³

Consequently, the two meetings of the Unity Committee in January both ended in failure. The second report we are reproducing - originally carried in the SLP's paper, *The Socialist* - makes clear that the return of the SLP to the negotiations in March only compounded the

the contest regarding affiliation to the Labour Party would begin, and a split would probably result ... The WSF considered that it should be laid down from the start that there should be no affiliation to the Labour Party.

She then proceeded to read the resolution dealing with this point passed by the meeting of the Third International held at Amsterdam [this was the Western European Committee, headed by Dutch left communists, which was closed on the orders of the International's executive committee] and stated that the WSF held the same views. N Edwards (SWSS) expressed himself in a somewhat similar manner. At this juncture Hodgson (BSP) made the statement that he entirely repudiated the Amsterdam meeting [which he had attended - ed], as only a few organisations were represented there. F Willis (BSP) claimed that, were the BSP to definitely withdraw from the Labour Party, the work of years would be lost, as on many local Labour Parties there was a decided rebel element, and on others, again, they found that the revolutionaries had already captured and gained complete control of these local Labour Parties ...

Mitchell (SLP) stated, in reply, that the mandate of the SLP members was most emphatic in its opposition to affiliation to the Labour Party and could never agree to sink the identity of the revolutionary movement in any compromise with social-patriots such as the Labour Party. *On this point the SLP could concede nothing, as a new party formed on such loose lines as indicated by the BSP would undoubtedly result in an immediate split ...* All bodies affiliated, whether locally or nationally, to the Labour Party were responsible for the crimes the Labour Party had perpetrated against the workers, and the SLP realised that the Labour Party was as

impassé.

Readers will be struck, I think, by the tenacious way these outstanding comrades approached the struggle to form a CPGB, and for principled communist unity and a qualitative leap in terms of their ability to engage with workers and form the class into a class for itself. No doubt, some silly sectarian obstacles had to be dealt with: there might have been a few 'turf' squabbles revisited and unresolved political grievances flagged up, whether relevant to the agenda on the table or not.

Either way, the process of unity had begun ●

William Sarsfield

Socialist Unity

The Call August 21 1919

So far as fundamental principles and the general basis upon which it was suggested the four organisations could unite in a new party are concerned, the discussion showed that there was little disagreement. The main difficulty arose, as anticipated, on the question of tactics, particularly in regard to relations with the Labour Party and the existing industrial organisations.

There was, on the part of the WSF, a tendency displayed against any participation whatever in parliamentary action, although the representatives of that body said that their views regarding parliamentary action would not be allowed to stand in the way of the formation of a united party. The chief division of opinion arose respecting the relations of the proposed new party to the Labour Party.

On behalf of the BSP reference was made to the referendum of the BSP membership taken last year, when a proposal to withdraw from the Labour Party was defeated by a majority of four to one, and to the vote of the Easter conference of the party, when the policy of Labour Party affiliation was reaffirmed by an overwhelming majority. The BSP members stated that they felt that the bulk of the BSP membership would make it conditional upon any steps in the direction of unity that the basis of amalgamation should include the affiliation of the new organisation to the Labour Party.

Against this the comrades from the other bodies argued that, however much they, as individuals, might be prepared to make the concessions in order to achieve unity, it would be quite useless for them to approach their members with any proposal for unity that made affiliation to the Labour Party one of the bases of amalgamation.

Subsequently a further proposal was made as suggesting a middle course, to which all might agree. That proposal was that the membership of the several parties should be consulted as to their willingness to merge their respective bodies in a new party, and that the question of affiliation to the Labour Party should be settled by a referendum of the members of the new party three months after its formation. The representatives of the SLP, in support of this proposal, said that, whilst they considered it futile to approach their members with a proposal that included immediate affiliation to the Labour Party, their members would, in the event of unity being achieved, and a referendum of the new party of affiliation to the Labour Party, abide loyally by that decision, however much they might disagree with it. Eventually it was agreed that those present should submit the proposal to their respective executives in the following form:

That the membership of the various organisations be consulted as to their willingness to merge the existing organisations into a united party, having for its object the establishment of communism by means of the dictatorship of the working class through soviets; and that the question of the affiliation of the new party to the Labour Party be decided by a referendum of the members three months after the new party is formed.

This proposal was in due course remitted to the BSP executive, when the action taken by the BSP members at the meeting was endorsed and the proposal adopted.

Unity conference

The Socialist March 25 1920

Report of the unity conference held in Miles Restaurant, Charing Cross,

PALESTINE

181 pages oozing hate

Moshé Machover spoke to the London Communist Forum about Donald Trump's 'deal of the century'



Trump's deal is really an Israeli deal

A lot was written about Donald Trump's 'deal of the century' when the so-called 'peace plan' was announced. At the time it was very widely commented on and I am not going into the details of what is in the 181-page document, which has been described in great detail in various articles.¹ I will focus instead on just one or two points.

The less well-informed commentators said that it spells the end of the two-state solution. My comment on this is, 'Yes and no'. It depends what you mean by 'the two-state solution', because there are two versions of it. The first is the illusory one, which people who were naive or wanted to deceive described as 'a sovereign Palestinian state alongside Israel'.

But no-one in the know - certainly not in Israel - believed in it. It was just a confidence trick. One of the best comments in the media was written by David Hearst, who used to be a leader-writer for *The Guardian*. He is one of the best Middle East correspondents in the British media. But he no longer writes for *The Guardian* - surprise, surprise.

I would like to quote from an article that he published in the *Middle East Eye* on January 29, entitled: 'Palestinians have only one option left: stay and fight':

No-one should underestimate the historic nature of the declaration that has just taken place. The two-state solution - or the idea that a viable, contiguous Palestinian state can be created alongside a Jewish majority state - is dead. It was dead

long before the Oslo accords.²

So this is the 'end of the two-state solution', which in reality never actually existed. (By the way, there were in fact two Oslo accords: 1993 and 1995.)

As I said, there are two versions of the 'two-state solution'. There was an illusion created, a confidence trick. Confidence tricks are in fact based on an illusion - or, if you prefer, a stage magician's trick. The Palestinians were sold a pig in a poke by Israel. 'A pig' is not exactly an appropriate animal, but I will use it: you believe there is something in the poke - it squeals; but actually it is not what you think it is.

In fact, this plan is part of a ratchet mechanism of the long so-called 'peace process', which was not intended to produce peace. It was all about 'process' and was never intended to get anywhere.

If you want to understand the background to the 'deal of the century', I recommend you read my article in the *Weekly Worker*: 'Zionism: a quest for legitimacy' (September 18 2014). This explains the ratchet mechanism. At each stage of the process the Palestinians are presented with a plan: 'This is what we propose'. (This actually started not recently, but as far back as the 1940s. The United Nations resolution for the partition of Palestine was one of the stages. And it goes further back to the 1930s and the Peel Commission, which first recommended partition.)

So, each time the Palestinians and the Israelis (or, in the period before 1948, the Zionist movement) were

presented with a plan, the Palestinians either accepted it or rejected it. If they rejected it, they were blamed, because now 'we have nobody to talk to'. If they accepted, then the Israelis (or previously the Zionists) would demand further preconditions. Today we have the demand that Israel must be recognised not as just 'a Jewish state', but as 'the nation-state of the Jewish people'. In other words, it belongs not to the people who live there, but to the whole of the Jewish people, who therefore have the right to colonise Palestine, and you just have to accept it.

Harsher conditions are imposed and the Palestinians, of course, are expected to reject them. But, whether they do or not, it amounts to the same thing. There is a ratchet and each time the Palestinians are offered a smaller and smaller part. It is like two people negotiating how to divide a pizza, while one of them is eating piece after piece of it. 'Let's discuss how to partition Palestine', while one side is already helping itself. This is what we are currently seeing.

Even, believe it or not, Jonathan Freedland rubbished Trump's plan in *The Guardian*. He pointed out that the Palestinians are not meant to accept it. It is an Israeli plan, pure and simple - and not just that, but a plan of the extreme Zionist colonisers.

Less than

It does not propose a Palestinian state in the normal sense. But that is not new - Hearst mentions that the 'two-state solution' was dead before the Oslo accords of 1993 and 1995. He knows what he is talking about. A lot

of people believed that the accords were about a two-state solution, but they were not. The possibility of a Palestinian state was *never mentioned* in the accords. Nor was there any mention of stopping Israeli colonisation - the settlements were just taken for granted.

Moreover, on October 5 1995, just a month before he was assassinated, prime minister Yitzhak Rabin made a speech in the Knesset, in which he said:

We view the permanent solution in the framework of the state of Israel, which will include most of the area of the land of Israel, as it was under the rule of the British mandate; and alongside it a Palestinian entity, which will be home to most of the Palestinian residents living in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. We would like this to be an entity which is *less than a state* and which will independently run the lives of the Palestinians under its authority.

In other words, they can collect their own rubbish.

The borders of the state of Israel, during the permanent solution, will be beyond the lines which existed before the Six-Day War [the so-called Green Line]. We will not return to the June 4 1967 lines.³

This is very clear: "an entity which is less than a state". That is also what the 'deal of the century' proposes. But it also bears a striking similarity to the Oslo accords, which were

about dividing the responsibility in the interim period for who will be in control of the area of the territory conquered by Israel in 1967.

The total area was divided into three parts. Part A would consist of the most densely populated, mainly urban areas, that would be under the 'full control' of the Palestinian authority (ie, it would be able to police its own dense urban population). Part B would be 'shared control', while part C would be under the full control of Israel 'for the time being'. Part C included the Jordan Valley: that is, the whole strip along the Jordan river. That made parts A and B, which were fully or partly under Palestinian control, completely disjointed from Jordan, and completely surrounded by an area under total Israeli control. This meant the least densely populated, mostly rural areas, which included the best land - the Jordan Valley is an extremely fertile part of Palestine.

And it included the settlements - not only those which existed before the accords, but the numerous settlements which have now metastasised. There was nothing in the Oslo accords to prevent this: on the contrary, Israel is allowed to do this, because all planning decisions relating to construction, infrastructure, roads and so on in area C were left in its hands. Since then, this area has been very intensively colonised.

In fact, Israel was not going to colonise the Gaza Strip, which was extremely densely populated. Indeed, 10 years after the accords, Israel withdrew its presence and made it into a sort of prison. It is besieged by Israel - surrounded, completely sealed

off. Israel also controls the coast and the border with Sinai (with the help of Egypt), because the sea and the short border with Sinai are the only parts not contiguous with Israeli territory.

The Gaza Strip runs along the Mediterranean, of course. It is surrounded mainly by Israel, but on one side by the sea and also by a narrow section of the Sinai Desert, which is part of Egypt. And Egypt helps to besiege it.

If you look at what Trump proposes, it is very similar. Part C of the Oslo accord is more or less the same as what the 'deal of the century' allocates for Israeli annexation. In other words, it will be part of the state of Israel. The rest will be run by a Palestinian authority which, exactly as Rabin said, will be "less than a state".

So, although people believed that the Oslo accords were about a two-state solution, it was, as I said, a pig in a poke - or rather it was a cat and now the cat is out of the bag! A poke is a kind of bag, after all.

And in fact the 'deal of the century' is not actually Trump's own plan. He presented it, but it is drawn up under consultation with extreme Zionist elements in Israel - not only Binyamin Netanyahu, but people even further to the right, even more ardent colonisers. It was drawn up by two people. The main author is supposed to be Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law, but a co-author is David Melech Friedman, who is the US ambassador to Israel.

According to Wikipedia, Friedman

volunteered to head American Friends of Bet El Institution - an organisation that advocates against a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and provides around \$2 million per year to the Israeli settlement, Bet El. The organisation also received donations from the family foundation of Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law.⁴

So you can now see who is behind this wonderful plan. In presenting it, Trump was confused and referred to Friedman as "your ambassador": ie, Israel's ambassador ... (He also referred to the al-Aqsa mosque as "al-Aqua".)

It proposes something that is not at all like a state. If you look at it on a map, it looks a bit like Swiss cheese, full of holes. The 'cheese' connects one part to another without crossing any holes, but you cannot go from one hole to another without crossing the 'cheese'. And guess which part is reserved for the Palestinians and which is earmarked for annexation by Israel. Of course, there will be roads and tunnels between the holes; but guess who is going to be in control of the whole affair?

The minimum attribute of an independent, sovereign state is control of its armed forces. Who is going to be in control of this? The document states:

Upon signing the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Agreement, the State of Israel will maintain overriding security responsibility for the State of Palestine, with the aspiration that the Palestinians will be responsible for as much of their internal security as possible, subject to the provisions of this Vision.

In other words, Israel will remain in military occupation: that is, the armed forces in control of the area will be the Israeli military and security services, the Shabak (aka Shin Bet, Israel's MI5). But hopefully the Palestinians will be able to police their own neighbourhoods - on behalf of Israel.

Then there is the question of natural resources. I have already referred to arable land - the most fertile part of

what remains of Palestine is going to be incorporated into Israel, as well as other parts, which will be annexed, where there are Israeli settlements. But the second most important resource is, of course, water, without which you cannot live. But the water will be controlled by Israel. According to the 'deal of the century', Israel will remain in overall control. Already Israel is using by far the lion's share of the water - Palestinians are not allowed to drill new wells, for instance.

If you go to Israeli settlements colonising the West Bank, you will see swimming pools and green lawns. But Palestinian farmers are left with a meagre allocation of water. Gaza is a catastrophe in terms of water, which is completely salinated by the incursion of sea water. Experts are saying that soon it will be impossible to live there, because there will be no usable water. One of the projects that Israel is actually using is desalination, but Palestinians are not able to enjoy this in Gaza.

Why now?

So what is the bottom line of this plan? According to one writer,

A peace plan has to be predicated on both sides saving face, on both sides being able to declare some kind of victory. The plan announced is a 180-page hate letter from the Americans (and by extension the Israelis) to the Palestinians. Until one reads the entire document (and unless one knows the history of the conflict), it is hard to convey the depth of contempt and scorn this text displays towards Palestinians. It oozes colonialist supremacism.⁵

Who is the author of these comments? Surprisingly, his name is Daniel Levy, a former Israeli negotiator with the Palestinians. So, far from being an advocate of Palestinian rights, he was actually negotiating during the Oslo period and beyond on behalf of the government of Israel. And this is his assessment. I wonder what a Palestinian or a neutral person is supposed to think about it.

The question is, why now? Why was Trump impelled to 'let the cat out of the bag'? Why was it so urgent? Well, there are several reasons why the time was ripe. First of all, Trump in this crude way, as Levy says, is showing his "scorn" towards the Palestinians in a way that "oozes colonialist supremacism". Trump is not bothered about diplomatic finesse. The smooth formulations of traditional diplomacy are not his style - and this applies not only to Israel-Palestine. His international interventions, mostly made by tweeting, are hardly couched in traditional diplomatic language. Also, he has cottoned on to the fact that the so-called 'international community' (which used to be called the 'free world' in olden days) really does not care. They are occupied with other things.

Second, both he and his friend, Netanyahu, were at the time it was announced involved in trials. Of course, the impeachment attempt against Trump has now ended and will be forgotten tomorrow, but Netanyahu was and is still indicted on three counts of bribery and similar forms of corruption. These cases do not yet include a fourth case, for which somehow the Israeli attorney general has managed not to indict him. This relates to the submarines he ordered for the Israeli navy (which it did not actually want) and it turns out that his cousin is involved in a firm that produces parts for them. This cousin gives Netanyahu a yearly 'contribution' of several million dollars.

Two elections last year and one coming this year, Netanyahu hoped, would provide him with a Knesset which would give him immunity from

prosecution. The 'deal of the century' was announced after the first two elections failed to give him what he wanted - that is to say, a 'stay out of jail' card - and, he hopes, the election this year finally will. (Probably not, according to the opinion polls.)

Netanyahu was very happy with Trump's scheme. He thought that the plan would give him the green light, and he was actually told by Friedman that he could incorporate the areas earmarked for annexation before the coming election, which will take place in March. Netanyahu heads a transitional government - it is not one that has the confidence of the Knesset, which has now been dissolved. But then the other author of the plan, Jared Kushner, said that the annexation would have to wait until after the election. You have to 'do it properly'. So apparently Netanyahu accepted that there had been a misunderstanding and is now hoping to annexe 60% of what remains of the West Bank after the election.

Where next?

So, what is this pointing to in the future? Let me once more quote from the article by David Hearst in *Middle East Eye*. He is one of the few correspondents who understands what is going on in the Middle East and does not try to throw sand in your eyes:

You can announce as many times as you like, as US president Donald Trump did yesterday, that Israel will take over the Jordan Valley - and thus about 30% of the West Bank - and establish Israeli law over the settlements. But without physically moving greater and greater numbers of Palestinians out of the expanded state of Israel, little changes. Annexation just becomes another form of occupation.

Population transfer, mass population transfer - another Nakba or catastrophe - lies therefore at the heart of Trump's and Netanyahu's 'vision' for peace.

According to Hearst then, for all the assurances that nobody is going to be forced out, this is about population transfer. And in this light we should consider that part of the plan which proposes to at least consider annexing an area populated by Arab citizens of Israel - 10 towns in the so-called 'triangle' - to this new 'Palestinian state'. They are Israeli citizens, but such a move would make them citizens of a non-state.

So, this is about annexation, creating a *one-state* reality. Recently I read an article by Ian S Lustick - a professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania and a specialist on Israeli politics, who happens to be Jewish - in which he says that 'one state' is now a reality. And this is going to be one state under Israeli control. He adds that this will be an apartheid state and there will be a prolonged struggle to democratise it, as happened in South Africa.

One thing he ignores, however, is that Israel has an option that never existed for the apartheid regime in South Africa, which, of course, had a white quasi-class at its head. One thing it could not do was get rid of the indigenous population - for two reasons. Firstly, there were just too many black people. And the other reason, most importantly, was that the economy of South Africa depended on their labour. However, as I keep pointing out, the Israeli Zionist colonisation of Palestine is not the same as the colonisation of South Africa. It is what Marx called a "colony properly so-called".

Marx distinguished in volume 1 of *Capital* three types of colonies: plantation colonies, using slaves; those colonising rich and densely populated countries, like India and

Mexico, for extracting value out of them, for spoils; and the others are colonies "properly so-called", like Australia. Israel and South Africa fall into two different categories.

In the case of Israel, Palestinians in the 'one state' will account for about half of the population - most of it surplus to requirement. The 20% of the population of Israel which is Arab is integrated into the economy, occupying the lowest echelons of the Israeli working class, by and large. But the majority of the Palestinians under Israeli control, in Gaza and the West Bank, play hardly any role in the Israeli economy. They mainly serve as a testing ground for Israeli military and security equipment. They are the guinea pigs on which this equipment is first used, allowing it to be extolled as something that has been tried out in actual practice, not in simulation.

When Britain sells arms to Saudi Arabia, for example, frequently they have only been tested under simulated conditions. However, Israeli products, which are high-tech and sophisticated, have often been put to the test under real conditions. So the Palestinian population do fulfil an economic function, and, as I have said, a small proportion is employed in the Israeli economy. A large part of these are employed in Israeli settlements as building workers, etc. But they are not a major part of the labour force in the Israeli economy.

And so the pressure will be increasing for ethnic cleansing. Here I am not inventing something out of a horror story: there are actual plans, which are currently being discussed. I referred earlier to an article of mine in the *Weekly Worker* and there I quoted Bezalel Smotrich, who is now a minister in the present government. He takes seriously the biblical myth that Zionism portrays as its deed to occupy the 'Promised Land' - 'promised to us by god'.

This land was supposedly populated by 'our ancestors', but, even according to the myth (and it is a myth), the 'children of Israel' were not indigenous inhabitants in the land of Canaan. They were descended from Abraham, who came from Mesopotamia - just read the book of Genesis. He and his son, Isaac, and his grandson, Jacob, were roaming seminomads in what the book of Genesis does not call the land of Israel, but the land of Canaan. It was populated by Canaanites. But, following a famine, they went to Egypt and became slaves of the Egyptian state for a couple of generations. And then they remembered that the land of Canaan was promised by god to Abraham. The book of Joshua relates how they came to the land of Canaan as conquerors, as invaders, and ethnically cleansed it. Yes, this is a myth - it has no historical validity. But the point is not whether I believe it: the point is that the Zionists who are now in the Israeli government *do* believe it, and take it as their template.

On April 28 2002 *The Sunday Telegraph* published an article by a learned Israeli military expert and historian, Martin van Creveld. The title of the article was 'Sharon's plan is to drive the Palestinians across the Jordan'. Why is he writing this at that time? Because by April 2002 it was clear to him, and to any person who was following what was happening in the Middle East, that there was going to be an invasion of Iraq. The British public were told in 2003 that it was something to do with a United Nations resolution or the security council. Rubbish! By that time, Tony Blair had promised George Bush that he would support him, so van Creveld knew - and in fact in the article he mentions - that this plan is a contingency for a possibility of war: for example, an invasion of Iraq. So it was on the cards.

The then prime minister, Ariel

Sharon, knew about it too. But it did not work out, because the war in Iraq ended too quickly to be used as a smokescreen, under which it would have been possible for ethnic cleansing to be perpetrated elsewhere in the region. And, by the way, it was commented on at the time, although now it is forgotten, that Sharon was not too enthusiastic about the invasion of Iraq. According to him, Iraq was not the main problem. Our real target should be Iran, he said.

Israel and Iran

And this brings me to the connection between the 'deal of the century' and Iran. From the point of view of Israel, the real problem in the Middle East, as everyone should know by now, is Iran. Perhaps you remember Netanyahu standing in the Houses of Congress inciting action against Iran. But he did not get the kind of response he was seeking, because that was during the presidency of Barack Obama, who represented the policy of that section of the ruling class which was interested not in forcing Iran to cave in, but in making some kind of deal; in managing American global decline in a more gentle way.

But now we have Trump, who, as you know, has withdrawn from the nuclear treaty with Iran, and is trying to compel Tehran to capitulate. This accords entirely with Israeli interests. Not that he is doing it *because* it is in Israeli interests, but because it is part of a general policy to undo whatever Obama did (for example, Obamacare and the Paris convention on climate change). So this happens to be in the interests of Israel, which wants to bring this serious rival for influence in the Middle East to its knees.

Some people regard Iran as an anti-imperialist country, but I think this is rubbish. However, the Iranian regime is indeed an obstacle to US influence and to the wider American camp in the region. So, for that reason, there is a possibility that Iran will be attacked at some point.

As I have said, for its part Israel wants to bring down a rival power in the Middle East which is not subject to Israeli hegemony. But there is an additional reason: a war with Iran would be a useful context in which to perpetrate ethnic cleansing - Israel's means of securing the one-state reality. Israel wants one state in the whole of Palestine, but one without a large Palestinian Arab population. So it needs a way of getting rid of a large part of that population, which is not fulfilling any useful role from the point of view of Zionist colonisation.

So this is the context, but is it going to happen? The future is unpredictable - we live in an uncertain world. But there is going to be strong pressure in this direction. Of course, from Israel's point of view, the involvement of the United States will be essential. It is inconceivable that Israel would launch a war against Iran without US support. Israel needs the global superpower to prepare the way, or else it would suffer major casualties. Israel could be directly involved as a junior partner, or simply cheer from the sidelines, as was the case in Iraq.

The reason I keep saying this is because our role is to mobilise opinion. We need to make people aware of this danger: that war in the Middle East - and specifically against Iran - is a possibility ●

Notes

1. See, for example, Jonathan Cook's 'Trump's "deal of the century" won't bring peace - that was the plan', January 29: www.jonathan-cook.net/2020-01-29/trump-deal-israel-no-peace.
2. www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/palestinians-have-only-one-option-left-stay-and-fight.
3. See 'Zionism: quest for legitimacy' *Weekly Worker* September 18 2014.
4. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_M._Friedman.
5. *The American Prospect* January 30: <https://prospect.org/world/don-t-call-it-a-peace-plan-israel-palestine-trump>.

IRAN

Legacy of failure

Yassamine Mather shows that the passivity of Tudeh in the 1960s and 70s led to the rise of guerrillarist adventurism. Paradoxically, under the pressure of the Iran-Iraq war there was a convergence between the two currents. The Islamic Republic was supposed to be moving towards the ‘socialist’ camp



Embassy takeover begins: and divisions on left deepen

In the period following World War II, Tudeh's policy towards prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh fluctuated from one extreme to another: first they attacked him as an “agent of American imperialism”, and then they gave him support during and after the July 1952 uprising against the shah. Tudeh called for the nationalisation of the British-owned oilfields, but opposed such a policy when it came to those owned and operated by the Soviet Union.

On August 15 1953, an attempted coup against Mosaddegh was thwarted, thanks in part to information uncovered by Tudeh's military network. Some believe demonstrations called by the party two days later to pressure Mosaddegh to declare Iran a democratic republic had inadvertently helped destabilise the nationalist government. Mosaddegh reacted to these protests by calling on troops to suppress the demonstrators. Ironically, the party demobilised the next day, just as the CIA coup was unfolding.

On August 19, Mosaddegh's democratically elected government was overthrown by ‘Operation Ajax’ - a coup brought about by the intelligence agencies of the UK and the United States. CIA agents worked with military officers loyal to the shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Led by Fazlollah Zahedi, they bribed thugs, clerics and politicians to take part in a propaganda campaign against Mosaddegh. According to the CIA's declassified documents, some of Tehran's most feared mobsters were paid by Zahedi and the CIA to stage pro-shah riots. Others were brought into Tehran on buses and trucks, and took over the streets of the city.¹

Mosaddegh was arrested, tried and convicted of treason by the shah's military court. On December 21, he was sentenced to three years in jail, and then placed under house arrest for the remainder of his life.² Zahedi became prime minister of a military government, following a royal decree dismissing Mosaddegh.³ Supporters of Mosaddegh were rounded up, imprisoned, tortured or executed. After the coup, Pahlavi ruled as an authoritarian monarch for the next 26 years, until he was overthrown in 1979.

If the coup marked the end of the nationalist government, it also destroyed Tudeh, which until then had been the largest ‘socialist’ party in the Middle East. Its networks were smashed and most of its cadre were arrested or forced to flee to the Soviet Union. Of course, the perceived threat of Tudeh and the possibility of Iran's rapprochement with the Soviet Union were part of

the rationale behind the coup.

In his book, *Iran between two revolutions*, Ervand Abrahamian analyses Tudeh's conduct prior to and during the 1953 coup, pointing out the historic political differences between the party and Mosaddegh's National Front. He also questions the size of the party and whether the Tudeh military officer corps was in a position to change the course of events. According to CIA reports, on the eve of the coup Tudeh had a core membership of around 20,000 and a network of officers within the Iranian armed forces organised by Sazman Nezami Hezb. The party acted as a semi-legal political force, publishing three daily papers and organising supporters under the banner of the Iranian Society for Peace (Jamiyat Irani Havadar-e Solh).

During 1944-46, the Military Organisation, run by Tudeh, had been involved in two episodes which led to an attempt at its disbanding and the severing of ties with Tudeh. First, in August 1944, around 20 army personnel in the Khurasan division of the army rebelled and attempted to reach the Turkmen areas of west Khurasan and east Mazandaran in order to wage war against the central government. The rebellion was led by major Ali Akbar Eskandani and colonel Mohammad Ali Azar. Many of the personnel involved, including

Eskandani, were killed before they reached their destination and others, such as Azar, fled to the Soviet Union.

Secondly, the Military Organisation sent aid and officers to Azerbaijan at a time when the province was rebelling against the central government. The defeat of the Azerbaijan movement caused the party's leadership to attempt to disband the MO or, at any rate, cut all contacts with it. But it was not disbanded, and some officers resigned their party membership in order to keep MO alive. The party invited the MO back into its ranks in 1948, as a result of active Soviet pressure, and the reunion was finalised the following year.⁴

Iranian Marxists have blamed Tudeh and its Military Organisation for inaction during the 1953 coup. Many believe that, even if - as party loyalists argue - defeat was inevitable, it would have been preferable for Tudeh officers and the party to be defeated resisting the coup. They condemned the passivity shown by both organisations.

On the other hand, some in the officer corps have disputed the claim that the MO was too weak to make any difference. Fereydoun Azarnour, a high-ranking MO officer at the time, believes that Tudeh allies occupied important military posts during the coup and estimates that

491 Tudeh military personnel had the ability to aid the party in defeating the coup.⁵ But Abrahamian notes that none of the Tudeh officers were in the “crucial tank divisions around Tehran” that could have been used for a coup d'état and that the shah had screened them carefully:

Ironically, a Tudeh colonel had been in charge of the shah's personal security - as well as that of vice-president Richard Nixon, when he visited Iran. Tudeh had the opportunity to assassinate the shah and the US vice-president, but not to launch a coup.

The officer corps' other main task was to protect the party. Its decimation in 1954 rendered it useless for this task.

Irrespective of the debates regarding the strength and weakness of the party, it is clear that Tudeh (and, by extension, the Soviet Union) did not come out of this period well. Throughout the early 1950s, party leaders appeared confused about their attitude towards the nationalist government. Tudeh's labelling of Mosaddegh as a CIA agent and its opposition to the nationalisation of the northern oil fields, as well as its passive attitude to the coup, led to charges of its being *khaen* (treacherous). The party was commonly referred to as *Hezb Khaen*

Tudeh from then onwards.

After the coup, the party faced a serious crackdown, with mass arrests and the execution of some 40-50 leaders: "Between 1953 and 1957, Iranian security forces tracked down the whole Tudeh underground and more than half the party membership." In 1966, several party members, including Ali Khavari and Parviz Hekmatjoo of the central committee, were arrested and sentenced to death. This sparked international outcry from sister parties and forced the government to reduce the sentences to life imprisonment.

Tudeh had its rivals on the left. Following the Sino-Soviet split, a Maoist group broke away in the early 1960s and another smaller faction split in 1965. Then, throughout the 1960s, Tudeh remained a constitutionalist, reformist party that parroted Soviet dogma about "peaceful coexistence" and even went so far as 'detecting' progressive aspects in line with the "non-capitalist road to development" it claimed in regard to some of the shah's policies.

Birth of Fedayeen

The Fedayeen organisation was formed through the merger of two groups on the Iranian left, both opposed to Tudeh. One was led by Massoud Ahmadzadeh, whose politics were a combination of Maoism and the espousal of guerrilla warfare. One of his closest allies was Amir-Parviz Pouyan - someone influenced by the events in Europe in 1968 and also an advocate of armed struggle. Ahmadzadeh's book *Armed struggle: both strategy and tactics* was for many years the bible of the Fedayeen.

Pouyan also wrote a book, entitled *The necessity of armed struggle against the theory of survival*. The "theory of survival" refers to the passive line of Tudeh, against which the Fedayeen were rebelling. Since 1953, Tudeh had advocated a policy of survival, refraining from taking direct action in order to avoid arrest and imprisonment. Pouyan argued that this was tantamount to accepting defeat:

We must demonstrate that the theory of 'Let us not take the offensive in order to survive' is in fact no more than saying, 'We shall allow the police to destroy us in embryo without the slightest resistance'. If defeatism is the same as liquidationism, then there is no room for asking, 'Why should we survive?' All the same, the posing of the question helps us to recognise the opportunistic nature of the above theory.

The idea of 'refraining from offensive' signifies the negation of all and any constructive endeavour aiming at increasing the possibilities of revolutionary forces. Such a theory wishes to limit the struggle for meagre possibilities not controllable by the enemy: that is, a simple gathering of elements not significant in numbers, in fact not exceeding one's fingers; and then occupying oneself with the study of Marxism and history in total secrecy.⁷

The revolutionary theorist, Masoud Ahmadzadeh, also attacked the illusion that the national bourgeoisie could have a progressive role: "Struggle against imperialist domination - ie, world capitalism - has some elements of the struggle with capitalism, and therefore some elements of the socialist revolution are born in this struggle." On the role of working class he wrote: "The proletariat [in Iran] is numerically weak, but its special qualities and

capabilities to organise are stronger than any other class."⁸

Bijan Jazani was another leading figure. He came from a different tendency (the youth organisation of Tudeh), but he had rebelled and agreed to bring his small forces into any new grouping.

To summarise the politics that influenced the Fedayeen in this period, one can say that a version of guerrillaism dominated. There was also a very simplistic attitude to the Soviet Union - just a critique of 'revisionism', which in fact did not go beyond a critique of 'peaceful coexistence'. The Fedayeen's founders were against the changes brought about by the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and adopted a line claiming to be independent of both the Soviet Union and China. In reality, however, they remained very much influenced by Stalinism.

In debates with Communist Unity, a middle-of-the-road student organisation, the Fedayeen were very clear on where they stood regarding the Soviet Union. Their position was that, until 1962, the USSR was 65% good and 35% bad (a Maoist view). However, as China adopted the theory of social-imperialism and later that of the 'three worlds', the Fedayeen and other Iranian leftwing groups distanced themselves from Maoism - only to end up being soft on the Soviet Union.

1971-79

Those who lost their lives in 1971 in the guerrilla operation known as the 'Siakhai incident' had considerable impact on the youth and student movement in Iran. It was not quite what Ahmadzadeh had predicted, however. The small motor did not make the large motor move and the whole country rebel, but the student movement became very sympathetic to this new, emerging left and was heavily influenced by it, as were many young workers.

The years 1971-79 shaped the political thought of the generation that came to the Iranian revolution as leaders of the Fedayeen. For this reason, it is an important period. As an organisation, the Fedayeen was mainly underground, preparing for armed warfare and organising occasional bank robberies. Its activities were sporadic, but there were losses - particularly because, as an armed organisation, its members could be killed in the streets. This denied the Fedayeen a mass base and endangered anyone who supported it, such as university students. Supporters were regarded as part of the armed movement by association. Around 370 leftwingers were executed in this period, of whom 60% were Fedayeen.

While in prison Fedayeen members debated issues such as the united front, intervention in working class struggles and the advantages and disadvantages of armed struggle. During this time Bijan Jazani moved away from some of the original positions he had taken. In his book *United front against dictatorship*, Jazani clearly rejects earlier positions taken by Ahmadzadeh and Pouyan (some argue that he was moving back to Tudeh's politics). In another book, *Capitalism and revolution in Iran*, Jazani provides a valuable analysis of the shah's regime.

Jazani was killed in Evin prison in 1975. It is therefore difficult to assess whether some of the writings and ideas attributed to him were truly his own opinions. Certainly the people around him became leaders of the Fedayeen.

By 1979, there was a mass revolutionary movement and members of the Fedayeen were released from prison - many during the February uprising, when people broke down the doors of the jails. During this period

the Fedayeen had become a real force amongst students and young people, gaining popularity as a result of its past actions (although some of it was actually populist myth). However, the organisation was now very divided, with Jazani's supporters following one political line and Ahmadzadeh's supporters another.

There were debates over armed struggle. Jazani supporters contended that the armed struggle line, as both strategy and tactic, was mistaken. In that they were right, as it had separated the Fedayeen from its potential mass base. On the other hand, some supporters of Jazani were now excusing Soviet foreign policy and even saw a positive role for the national bourgeoisie.

Throughout this period there was very little done in terms of theoretical work. The book that everyone read and which gave them "everything", according to a Fedayeen elder, was Lenin's *What is to be done?* It resulted in the Fedayeen adopting a stance against sectarianism, economism, syndicalism and anarchism - its entire analysis seemed to be based on this one short pamphlet. However, its leaders did not necessarily understand it fully, especially given the problematic Farsi translation by the USSR's Academy of Sciences, which sought to turn the emphasis of centralism over democracy into a founding tenet.

In addition, the Fedayeen had failed to make any headway in the working class or Iranian society as a whole. In the universities, however, it had a great deal of support, as became clear during the revolution. Amongst the intellectuals and especially the poets (some famous), there was an amazing amount of praise for the Fedayeen. One thing is clear though: it had no strategy about what to do when a revolutionary situation arose. That was the problem of February 1979.

While the clergy used the period of economic crisis (1974-79) to build its base, make propaganda and mobilise, the imprisoned Fedayeen debated in very abstract terms such questions as the united front against the dictatorship. In addition, the shah showed more leniency towards the religious groups than he did towards the left, for whom building a mass organisation was much more difficult. The Fedayeen attempted to go to the factories, but all its comrades could do was distribute leaflets and then disappear.

It is not, therefore, a question of the February revolution being hijacked. Rather it was the fact that the left was simply not prepared for it. In a sense it is a good thing that the left did not come to power, as it had no strategy and definitely no theory about what it should do.

The oil workers were crucial in the February revolution. It was their strikes that broke the back of the shah's regime. The Fedayeen had some influence amongst them, but it was hampered by its lack of experience of organising with the working class. There was no plan about what to do with their strike or how to move it forward. Nevertheless, the first rally called by the Fedayeen in Tehran after the overthrow of the shah attracted 500,000 people. Despite some reservations, they stood in the elections to what was a sort of constituent assembly and gained a couple of million votes.

Splits

The splits within the Fedayeen started in 1979 and continued long afterwards. In both the pre- and post-1979 periods, the Fedayeen committed many mistakes: militarism and centralism, as well as a culture revolving around the heroic guerrilla and the professional revolutionary. It was also confused regarding criticism

of the Soviet Union.

The problem was that the myths surrounding the Fedayeen guerrilla struggle did influence the uprising of 1979. Many Fedayeen were becoming aware of their organisation's weaknesses, not least its total divorce from the mass movement. The supporters of the armed struggle as a tactic and strategy were in a small minority, but they survived and still survive. To this day their slogan is: "The shah was the running dog of imperialism and so is the Islamic republic". They have neither theory nor analysis.

The main division, however, revolved around understanding not only the Islamic republic, but also a whole set of issues, such as the nature of the era. The immediate question was the nature of the Iranian government: was it progressive or counterrevolutionary? In 1979-80, the majority of the central committee held the view that the principal contradiction of the period was one of imperialism versus socialism, the one as represented by the United States and the other by the USSR! On Iran's regime they said that, although it was Islamic, the government was objectively moving Iran towards the 'socialist camp' and therefore should be supported!

Most of the central committee consisted of those who claimed to stand in the tradition of Bijan Jazani. They were called the Fedayeen Majority not because they had the support of the majority of members, or the majority of congress delegates. No, they constituted a majority on the central committee. They considered the regime anti-imperialist and gave it first conditional and later full support.

Things became very tense after the spring of 1979, with the government strengthening itself and beginning to repress opposition forces. It was in this context that the takeover of the United States embassy by pro-regime students happened - hailed by both the Fedayeen Majority and Tudeh, as well as most of the left outside Iran, as an anti-imperialist act. However, the radical left in Iran saw it for what it was. A cynical stunt, a diversion, designed to torpedo the wave of political strikes and growing opposition to the Islamic regime.

It was the embassy occupation that really brought the arguments within the Iranian left to a head. The minority had walked out of the central committee, but had support from thousands of leftwing students and youth who had no wish to tail the Islamic Republic. However, it is also true that the Fedayeen Majority retained some support amongst the working class.

The embassy occupation was also significant, in that the government declared that anyone who did not support it must be a counterrevolutionary ... or an out-and-out CIA agent. Counterrevolutionaries were, of course, to be hunted down, imprisoned and even executed. A drive to destroy the left which intensified with the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war (the regime portrayed the war as being against imperialism). Some on the left, including the Fedayeen Minority, adopted the line - originally put forward by 'line three' Maoists - that it was a reactionary war. This meant they could now be arrested simply for being a member of the Fedayeen Minority. They were accused of being in league with US plots against Iran. By contrast, the Fedayeen Majority might still be invited into ayatollah president Ali Akbar Rafsanjani's office for consultation over the organisation of various events.

Both the Majority and Tudeh supported the government, including its repression of the rest of the left. By now the Majority was following the

Moscow line and stood very close to the Tudeh Party. Its line was: "Produce more - this is an anti-imperialist war and a war economy, and Iran is moving towards the socialist camp." The Minority, however, told workers that, while it was right to be against imperialism, they also had to fight the regime. It should be noted that Iranian Trotskyist groups were divided along similar lines.

From this point on we are talking about two very different organisations. The Majority was able to operate openly until at least 1984, with offices in Tehran until 1982-83. The Minority, on the other hand, was a proscribed organisation. Houses were raided and many died.

The first congress of the Fedayeen Minority (around 1980) showed the diversity of forces that had taken a united position against the Majority. There was even a split at this congress. Those in favour of joining the Mujahedin in the National Council of Resistance departed. There was also a Trotskyist tendency with won some considerable support amongst younger members.

Aside from the political problems, there were other concerns. The Fedayeen's secret printing press was discovered by government forces and many comrades were killed. Political debate became confused with security issues. This formed a terrible backdrop for militarism and bureaucratic centralism within the Fedayeen (some of the blame for which was unjustly attached to the Trotskyist tendency). Here was the beginning of a complete disregard for democracy in the organisation. Preserving the organisation became the be all and end all.

The ideological ethos of the Fedayeen had always been based on romantic notions of professional revolutionaries and heroic guerrilla fighters. In practice that amounted to an elite: dedicated people who had no other life, no other concerns and no interaction outside the organisation. Isolation guarded against getting 'confused' and doing something that was not in the interests of the organisation. Nonetheless, for all its faults, the Fedayeen Minority remained for many years the main left group in opposition to the Islamic Republic.

However, Tudeh and the Majority also suffered. A CIA plant in the Soviet embassy in Tehran handed the names of a whole raft of Tudeh members to the Islamic government. Many leading members of the Majority were arrested too. It was the beginning of the end for the two organisations inside Iran. There was a flight into exile. Those workers who had illusions in the Majority gave up by then. By 1982, leading oil workers, who had gone with the Majority or Tudeh, resigned, drifted away or went elsewhere.

In these two articles I have tried to explain the disastrous legacy of Tudeh in Iran both in terms of the Soviet-Iranian relationship and the history of Tudeh and the Fedayeen Majority. Its fate can only serve as a warning for the future ●

Notes

1. J Zulaika *Terrorism: the self-fulfilling prophecy* Chicago 2009, p139.
2. E Abrahamian *Iran between two revolutions* Princeton 1982, p280.
3. MJ Gasiorowski *US foreign policy and the shah: building a client state in Iran* New York 1991, pp237-39, 243.
4. M Behrooz, 'State of paralysis: Tudeh factionalism and the 1953 coup' *The Iranian* November 2 2001: www.iranian.com/History/2001/November/Tudeh/index.html.
5. Fereyoun Azamour in conversation with Hamid Ahmadi: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKk9ca3INvI.
6. E Abrahamian *A history of modern Iran* Cambridge 2008, p122.
7. AP Pouyan *Against the theory of survival* Fedayeen Publications, 1980.
8. M Ahmadzadeh and M Mossalaneh *Armed struggle: both a strategy and a tactic - ham strategy, ham tactic* Fedayeen Publications.

REVIEW

Zionism and anti-Semitism

Stanley Heller **Zionist betrayal of Jews, from Herzl to Netanyahu** self-published, 2019, pp147.

Available from Middle East Crisis Committee, Box 3626, Woodbridge CT, 06525, USA, for a donation of \$10 or more

This book is really just a sampler with a fairly arbitrary selection of topics about Zionism's relationship with its Siamese twin, anti-Semitism. Without anti-Semitism there would have been no Zionism and that is why the Zionist movement has always considered anti-Semitism as a kind of 'distant relative'.

The founder of political Zionism, Theodor Herzl, in his pamphlet *The Jewish state*, compared the Zionist use of anti-Semitism to the use of steam as a source of power. Zionism sought not to fight anti-Semitism, but to harness it.

There are, however, large gaps in Heller's brief account and his selection of topics is somewhat arbitrary. Why choose the visit of the Nazis, Adolf Eichmann and Leopold von Mildenstein, to Palestine as guests of the Labour Zionists, when there are so many worse examples of Nazi-Zionist collaboration? Why omit completely the story of Kasztner and the collaboration of Hungarian Zionism with the Nazis, which cost thousands of lives?

Yet these are minor points. Heller has done us a service with this book in reminding us, in the days when Zionist accusations of 'anti-Semitism' are rife, that, when it comes to genuine anti-Semitism, you will not see the Zionist movement for dust.

One of the most remarkable things about the fake 'anti-Semitism' campaign waged against Jeremy Corbyn for the past four years - what Justin Schlosberg has called a "disinformation paradigm"¹ - is the absence of evidence: hence why such a high percentage of those suspended and expelled have been Jewish anti-Zionists.

Herzl made it clear that opposition to anti-Semitism was "futile", before going on to "pardon" it.² He believed anti-Semitism contained a "divine will to good".³ One of the most remarkable aspects of the false anti-Semitism campaign is that even the truth can be anti-Semitic!

By 'anti-Semitism' I mean what the man on the Clapham Omnibus understands by it, which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as "hostility to or prejudice against Jews". Because Zionism has no interest in opposing genuine anti-Semitism it has tried to foist the IHRA definition of it onto public bodies. Anti-Semitism has been redefined as hostility to Israel and Zionism.

It was Ken Livingstone's propensity for blurring out the truth - namely that the Nazis 'supported' Zionism - which was responsible for the vitriolic attacks on him. A little known fact is that Labour's disciplinary process excluded, from the start, any examination of the truth of what Livingstone had said. What mattered was that he had said it. The sole concern of Labour's witch-hunters was that Ken had 'given offence' to the 'Jewish community'.

In the wake of the *Charlie Hebdo* murders in France, *The Guardian* and others supported freedom of speech. An op ed in *The Guardian* by Jodie Ginsburg thundered: "The right to free speech means nothing without the right to offend."⁴ Perhaps she should have added: 'except if they are Zionist Jews or their non-Jewish supporters'.

Not one British newspaper,

not even *The Guardian* or *The Independent* supported Livingstone's freedom of speech. They demanded his expulsion from Labour. He was sacked by LBC radio, which was happy to employ neo-Nazi Katie Hopkins and the far-right Nigel Farage.

But targeting Muslims, as *Charlie Hebdo* did, was acceptable. One front page called the *Koran* "shit", because anti-Muslim racism is consistent with imperialist discourse. However, speaking the truth about the record of Zionism during the Nazi era is not covered by freedom of speech. Zionism is the ideology that gave birth to and governs the Israeli state. What is at stake is not a quibble about the truth, but very real political, strategic and economic interests. Jews have been summoned as the first line of defence of western strategic and economic interests. Jews are the shield for western imperialism.

Heller's description of how Zionism has betrayed the Jews, from the days of its founder, Theodor Herzl to Netanyahu is a gripping one. One theme runs through the book: Zionism sought to utilise, never to oppose, anti-Semitism. When a conflict arose between the needs of Jews and building the 'Jewish' state, then the latter always won out.

Heller builds on Lenni Brenner's book, *Zionism in the age of the dictators*, which exposed some of the sordid details of the Zionist movement's relationships with fascism. This despite serious problems with Brenner's understanding of events and analysis.⁵ It would though have been useful to have provided, if not an index, at least a contents page!

Heller begins his journey with Herzl - "the Jewish man who thought that anti-Semitism was natural". The belief that anti-Semitism was a natural phenomenon was common to all Zionists. Chaim Weizmann, president of the Zionist Organisation and first president of Israel (his name does not appear in the book once) wrote in his autobiography:

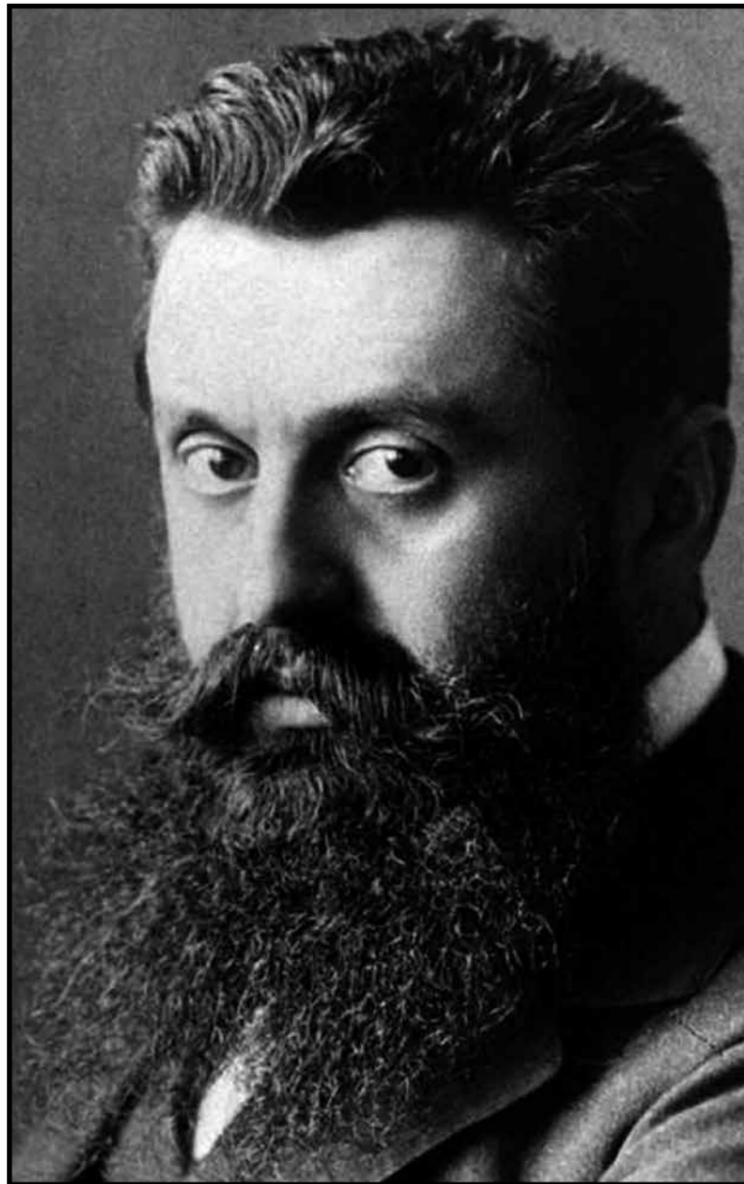
Whenever the quantity of Jews in any country reaches saturation point, that country reacts against them ... The determining factor in this matter is not the solubility of the Jews, but the solvent power of the country.⁶

Collaboration

Heller rightly points out that Herzl's conversion to Zionism occurred not as a result of the Dreyfus affair, but the election of Karl Lueger as mayor of Vienna in 1897. Lueger's election was a shock to both the Jews and emperor Franz Joseph, who only confirmed him in office after the fifth election. The last thing Joseph wanted was anti-Semitism in his multi-national empire.

Whilst Hitler praised Lueger as his inspiration, he was no Hitler himself. Lueger was an opportunist, who realised that without the spice of anti-Semitism he could not win over the artisan vote in Vienna. He was more in the tradition of 'municipal socialism'. Lueger also had many Jewish friends and, when reproached about this, famously declared: "I decide who is a Jew."

What Heller does not mention is that Herzl created a myth, claiming that it was the Dreyfus affair that had



Theodor Herzl: needed anti-Semitism

been the cause of his conversion to Zionism. Any objective examination shows that Herzl was not interested in Dreyfus and almost certainly believed in his guilt. This was why Herzl and Bernard Lazare, the earliest campaigner for Dreyfus, parted company in 1899.

Heller describes how early Zionists were willing to work with the worst anti-Semites. Herzl met with Vyacheslav von Plehve, the Russian interior minister responsible for the pogrom at Kishinev in 1903. In return for the legalisation of the Zionist movement, he agreed not to criticise the Russian government. Vladimir Jabotinsky, the founder of revisionist Zionism, reached an agreement with the White Russian leader, Symon Petliura, who had the deaths of up to 50,000 Jews to his credit. But that did not stop Jabotinsky holding hands with him.

Heller looks at the Zionist sabotage of the Jewish boycott of Nazi Germany through its negotiation of a trade agreement, Ha'avara, with the Nazis. The Zionists saw the rise of the Nazis as an opportunity: "The last thing they considered was mobilising world opinion against the brownshirt menace."

The Zionists broke the boycott, even though it held out the only possibility of leading to the overthrow of Hitler. In practice they were writing off German Jewry. Today the Zionists claim that Ha'avara was about saving Jews, but this is a lie. It was about saving German Jewish

wealth: 60% of capital investment in Jewish Palestine between 1933 and 1939 came from Nazi Germany.⁷ According to Edwin Black, a rightwing Zionist and author of *The transfer agreement*, "the Nazi party and the Zionist Organisation shared a common stake in the recovery of Germany. If the Hitler economy fell, both sides would be ruined."⁸

An article on the *Jewish Telegraph Agency* site is headed 'Reich on verge of collapse'.⁹ This was on account of the Jewish boycott. The sabotage of the anti-Nazi boycott by Zionism was an example of prioritising the interests of the 'Jewish state' over the lives of living Jews. Although the Zionists claimed that no-one in 1933 could predict the extermination of the Jews, this is untrue. Samuel Untermyer, organiser of the boycott, did just that.

As Edwin Black pointed out, the boycott forced Hitler to restrain anti-Jewish attacks. It denied Germany foreign exchange and the ability to "acquire the raw materials needed to rebuild its war machine". None of this mattered to the Zionists.

Heller rightly concentrates on the situation in Poland, where after the death of Józef Piłsudski in 1935, the level of anti-Semitism soared. Jewish benches were introduced in the universities. Attacks on Jews massively increased and the government introduced anti-Semitic legislation, such as forcing businesses to carry the name of the owner on their sign (thus making it clear which

shops were Jewish).

Jabotinsky's supporters, who were strong in Poland, collaborated first with the Piłsudski regime and then the colonels' government. They believed that Poland could take over the Palestine mandate from the British. They also had cordial relations with Mussolini's fascists, training at the Italian naval station of Civitavecchia. In 1938 Mussolini introduced anti-Semitic racial laws and started persecuting Italian Jews. In 1943 during the Salò republic, Italian fascists collaborated in the deportation of 8,000 Italian Jews to Auschwitz.

It was in this situation of increasing anti-Semitism that Polish Jews turned to the Bund, an anti-Zionist socialist organisation. As Shmuel Merlin, a revisionist leader in Warsaw, told Lenni Brenner,

It was absolutely correct to say that only the Bund waged an organised fight against the anti-Semites. We did not consider that we had to fight in Poland. We believed the way to ease the situation was to take the Jews out of Poland. We had no spirit of animosity.

Priority

Heller quotes the notorious speech of Ben Gurion of December 9 1938 to the central committee of Mapai, the centre-left party (in response to the Krystallnacht, the British had offered to admit 10,000 unaccompanied Jewish children from Germany):

If I knew that it was possible to save all the children in Germany by transporting them to England, or only half by transporting them to Palestine, I would choose the second, because we face not only the reckoning of those children, but the historical reckoning of the Jewish people.

If Jews were to be rescued, according to their twisted logic, it had to be to Palestine. Otherwise what purpose was there to this "national museum", as Ben Gurion described it?

Whereas world Jewry viewed the rise of Hitler with foreboding, to the Zionist leaders Hitler's rise presented "unprecedented historical opportunities". Heller quotes Tom Segev's *Seventh million* as claiming that for Ben Gurion the extermination of the Jews was "above all else a crime against Zionism".

Heller's short section on 'rescue plans' skirts over three that were abortive - the rescue of 70,000 Jews from Transnistria in Romania, the delayed deportation of Jews from Slovakia and the 'Blood for Trucks' proposal to the allies from Adolf Eichmann in May 1944. Heller does justice to none of these proposals.

He follows in Brenner's footsteps in seeing the offer of a million Jews in exchange for 100,000 wintered trucks as genuine. That the Zionists took it seriously, when it was obviously designed to split the Allies, is entirely to their discredit - especially as they refused to publicise the plight of Hungarian Jews, who Eichmann had already started deporting from Hungary on May 15, two days before this so-called offer had been made.

Heller also makes the mistake of attributing the stopping of the deportation of 30,000 Jews from

What we fight for

Slovakia in October 1942 as due to a bribe. Slovakia was the first country in Europe whose Jews were deported. In fact it was Vatican pressure on the puppet leader, Josef Tiso, a Catholic priest, which was responsible for the calling off of the deportations.

Heller quotes Tom Segev as saying, "Only a few survivors owed their lives to the efforts of the Zionist movement." Not only is this true, but thousands more lost their lives because of the Zionist movement's campaign against rescue to anywhere but Palestine.

The author quotes Segev as saying that "the Jewish leaders of Palestine never made the rescue of European Jews into an overwhelming national priority". This was an understatement. The Zionist leaders focussed almost exclusively on building their state, to the exclusion of the holocaust. But this did not stop Zionism from using the holocaust as a propaganda weapon. Heller mentions the 32 members of Haganah, the Jewish paramilitary group in Palestine, who were parachuted into Europe in 1944 and accepts the story that they were sent to fight the Nazis. He writes: "All praise must be given to these heroes."

But this is not true. According to the memoirs of Yoel Palgi, the only Hungarian parachutist to survive, the aim was "to reconstruct the crumbling Zionist youth movements there after the war". Yechiam Weitz wrote: "While the parachutists outwardly defined theirs as a rescue mission, ... their primary goal was in effect to influence the survivors to choose Palestine as their ultimate destination."¹⁰

Heller mentions the Livingstone affair, when Ken stated that Hitler supported Zionism. Heller says that "Livingstone's wording was regrettable" and that "Hitler certainly didn't believe in Zionism: his agents only worked with Zionists in the 30s to get Jews out of Germany." Livingstone, who has been repeatedly misquoted by the bourgeois press, is misquoted again here. He said that Hitler 'supported', not 'believed in', Zionism.

And it is not true that Nazi agents only worked with the Zionists in order to get rid of Germany's Jews. There was also an ideological congruity, which was expressed in the Ha'ava agreement. The collaboration was wider. The Zionist leaders welcomed Hitler and the Nazis to power, believing that they would benefit. This was what became known as 'cruel Zionism'.

Zionism never hesitates to mention the collaboration of the mufti of Jerusalem, but omits to mention the "loathsome offer to collaborate with Hitler" of the Stern Gang - one of whose leaders, Yitzhak Shamir, twice became Israel's prime minister. The Stern Gang "under Stern's inspiration praised the Nazis extravagantly for locking the Polish Jews into the ghettos, contrasting this favourably with the conditions of Jewish life in Poland before the Nazi invasion". Was there any greater example of the madness of the Zionist fringe?

Heller gives us a taste of a number of subjects that require much greater in-depth study. He describes how the leadership of American Jewry betrayed the Jews of Europe. In the section, 'Arthur Goldberg whitewashes the passivity of the Jewish elite', Heller tells the story of the bad conscience of the leadership of American Jewry.

In the 1980s "the American Jewish Commission on the Holocaust" was set up, chaired by Arthur Goldberg. It was initially financed by Jack Eisner, a former Warsaw ghetto fighter. Part of its draft, which was leaked to the *New York Times*, stated:

In retrospect, one incontrovertible fact stands out above all others: In the face

of Hitler's total war of extermination against the Jews of Europe, the Jewish leadership in America at no stage decided to proclaim total mobilisation for rescue.

It said that the Zionists' "exclusive concentration on Palestine as a solution" made them unable to work for any other alternative.

Heller cites the dissident revisionist, Peter Bergson, who told Stephen Wise, the leader of American Zionists: "If you were inside a burning house, would you want the people outside to scream, 'Save them', or to scream, 'Save them by taking them to the Waldorf Astoria'?"

The Zionists literally sabotaged rescue to anywhere but Palestine. Not content with this, they spearheaded a campaign against those who *did* want to do something - notably the Emergency Committee to Rescue Europe's Jews. Stephen Wise and Nahum Goldman advised the Roosevelt administration to deport the committee's two leaders, describing them as "worse than Hitler".

Not surprisingly, the Zionists did not like the draft report of the Commission and it never saw the light of day. Eisner withdrew his financial backing when he saw that the vested interests would not allow the truth to emerge. Nahum Goldman, who was president of the Zionist Organisation, admitted that he and Wise received a telegram from Jewish Resistance in Europe exhorting "12 top American Jews to go and sit night and day on the steps outside the White House until the Allies are moved to bomb Auschwitz and Treblinka".

The US airforce had the capacity to bomb Auschwitz, because it was already bombing Buna/Auschwitz III, where the rubber factories were based. Indeed they bombed one of the gas chambers by accident. Yet the American leaders refused to do anything other than make polite requests. As Heller notes, on June 11 1944, the Jewish Agency executive committee refused to call for the bombing of Auschwitz.

Israel's Nazis

In chapter 5, Heller focuses on 'Israel - employing German Nazis'. This is the remarkable story of how the Israeli state employed leading Nazis after the war as agents. The most notorious was Walter Rauff, who had personally designed the 'Black Raven' mobile gas chambers that were first used between 1939 and 1941 to murder up to 100,000 handicapped Germans. These same gas trucks made their way to Poland, where they formed the first extermination camp at Chelmno at the beginning of December 1941. Thousands of Jews and gypsies from Łódź - the second major ghetto in Poland - were murdered there.

Rauff's *New York Times* obituary states: "Nazi hunters and governments that sought his extradition, however, estimated that as many as 250,000 people - most of them east European Jews - died in the vans." However, this did not deter the Israeli government from employing him. Israel not only paid Rauff, but also arranged for an Italian visa. Rauff and his family sailed from Genoa to South America courtesy of the Israeli state.

Another agent was the swashbuckling Otto Skorzeny. He was responsible for helping install the Nazi Arrow Cross regime in Hungary. Heller states that the result of this for Hungarian Jews was the resumption of the deportations, with the loss of 100,000 lives. I disagree. About 50,000 Jews were murdered, primarily as a result of gang attacks by Arrow Cross thugs and in the forced march of Jews to Vienna on November 8 1944.

It is untrue that deportations were resumed. I have seen no evidence of this. A report on the deportation

of Hungarian Jews to Austria by Eleonore Lappin confirms this. After the overthrow of regent Miklós Horthy and prime minister Géza Lakatos on October 15, Eichmann returned two days later to Budapest:

However, by this juncture in mid-October, the machinery of annihilation in Auschwitz had already been disrupted and shut down. On October 7 1944, prisoners in the Sonderkommando had destroyed at least one of the gas chambers. A short time later, gassings were halted and Himmler gave the order to tear down the gas chambers and crematoria. This was carried out in November and December 1944.

This is why, when SS *Brigadeführer* Hugo Blaschke, mayor of Vienna, begged for labour to help build anti-tank fortifications, Jews were forced to travel by foot until Arrow Cross leader Ferenc Szálasi halted the march. The rail network had all but collapsed.

Skorzeny had kidnapped Horthy's son, rolling him up in a carpet and threatening to execute him if Horthy did not resign. Skorzeny bore a major responsibility for the murder of Jews which followed, but this did not stop Israel from recruiting him as a spy. Although Israel made great play of its capture of Adolf Eichmann in Argentina in 1960, Heller shows how it was not interested in the capture of any other Nazis, such as Josef Mengele, the notorious SS doctor in Auschwitz.

Israel and anti-Semites

The final three chapters bring us up to date, beginning with chapter 6: 'Selling guns to Nazi-admiring juntas'. The Bolivian junta under Hugo Banzer was hiding Klaus Barbie, head of the Gestapo in Lyons:

In August 1973, Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban visited Bolivia and was asked at a press conference whether he had spoken to its dictatorial leader, Hugo Banzer, about Barbie. Eban responded that it was an internal matter of the Bolivian legal system, and that it would be up to Bolivia to decide whether or not to extradite Barbie to France.

What kind of 'Jewish' state refuses to call for the extradition of a Nazi responsible for the murder of at least 4,000 Jews?

When Luis García Meza seized power in Bolivia in 1980, aiming to create a Pinochet-style government, US president Jimmy Carter refused to recognise his regime. Israel, however, had no such scruples. As Heller observes, "The Carter administration applied sanctions against Meza. In contrast Israel gave Meza economic and military aid."

John Brown in *Ha'aretz* described how

Israel also armed Bolivia's military regimes, knowing that Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie was part of the regime. Legal documents used to convict the head of the junta also showed that Barbie's death squads used Israeli Uzis [submachine guns].

What was Israel's motive? A few million in arms sales! As Israel Shahak, the Israeli human rights activist and holocaust survivor said in 1984, it was "beyond shame". He added: "During this time the Israel of prime ministers Rabin and Begin did nothing - actually less than nothing - as they aided the fascist regime."

People should bear this in mind when they consider the 'anti-Semitism' attacks on Jeremy

Corbyn. Heller describes Israeli relationships with Paraguay under the dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner, an open Nazi admirer. Paraguay played host to Mengele. When the Israeli ambassador, Benjamin Varon was asked about Mengele, his standard answer was: "The Israel government is not searching for Dr Mengele - the Federal Republic of Germany is."

The seventh chapter, 'Modern-day collaboration with Jew-haters', includes Viktor Orbán, prime minister of Hungary, who is intent on rehabilitating admiral Horthy, the pro-Nazi leader of Hungary during the war, whom he described as an "exceptional statesman".

Heller says that Horthy set up the 'labour service system' for men considered 'unworthy' of being in the military, such as Jews. Heller says that 45,000 Jews served in it. My own understanding is that the figure was double this and that half of them survived. Ironically the labour service became a source of refuge and rescue.

Heller describes how in 2019 Netanyahu gave a warm welcome to the premier of Lithuania, Saulius Skvernelis. A year earlier Netanyahu had praised Skvernelis for fighting anti-Semitism despite the fact that Lithuanian schools make into heroes the anti-Soviet nationalists who were involved in the mass killing of Jews. 95% of Lithuanian Jews were exterminated - the highest proportion in Europe.

Israel has cultivated warm relationships with a whole series of racist regimes and figures, such as Austria's neo-Nazi leader, Heinz Christian Strache, and India's Hindu nationalist leader, Narendra Modi. Israel even supplies weapons to Ukraine's neo-Nazi militia, the Azov.

The final chapter is on 'Trump, Netanyahu and the eruption of US anti-Semitism'. Trump is an ideal example of how an anti-Semite can, at the same time, be the most ardent Zionist. The man for whom neo-Nazis at Charlottesville were "fine people" invited the anti-Semitic pastor, John Hagee, who believes that Hitler was a "half-breed Jew", to preside at the opening of the US embassy in Jerusalem.

In short, when Zionists talk about 'anti-Semitism', it is a camouflage to hide their own collaboration with genuine anti-Semites.

Heller has done us a great service in writing this all too short book. I can heartily recommend it as an *hors d'oeuvres*. However it is only a taster. The full story of Zionist collaboration with anti-Semites, the Nazis included, will take up a much larger volume ●

Tony Greenstein

Notes

1. J Schlosberg *Labour, anti-Semitism and the news: a disinformation paradigm*. www.mediareform.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Labour-antisemitism-and-the-news-FINAL-PROOFED.pdf.
2. www.marxists.org/history/etol/document/mideast/toi/chap3-11.html. In his diaries (p6) he wrote: "In Paris, as I have said, I achieved a freer attitude towards anti-Semitism, which I now began to understand historically and to pardon. Above all, I recognised the emptiness and futility of trying to 'combat' anti-Semitism."
3. T Herzl *The complete diaries of Theodor Herzl* New York 1960, p231.
4. *The Guardian* February 16 2015.
5. See my article, 'Zionist-Nazi collaboration and the holocaust - a historical aberration?' Lenni Brenner revisited' *Journal of Holy Land Studies* November 2014.
6. C Weizmann *Trial and error* pp90-91.
7. D Rosenthal, 'Chaim Arlosoroff, 65 years after his assassination' *Jewish Frontier* May-June 1998. In 1937 over 31 million Deutsche Mark were transferred (FR Nicosia *The Third Reich and the Palestine question* London 2000, p213).
8. E Black *The transfer agreement* Washington 2009, p253.
9. http://pdfs.jta.org/1935/1935-12-10_105.pdf
10. Y Weitz, 'Jewish refugees and Zionist policy during the holocaust' *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol 30, No2, April 1994, p359. Lenni Brenner in *Zionism in the age of the dictators* (1983) made the same mistake.

■ Without organisation the working class is nothing; with the highest form of organisation it is everything.

■ There exists no real Communist Party today. There are many so-called 'parties' on the left. In reality they are confessional sects. Members who disagree with the prescribed 'line' are expected to gag themselves in public. Either that or face expulsion.

■ Communists operate according to the principles of democratic centralism. Through ongoing debate we seek to achieve unity in action and a common world outlook. As long as they support agreed actions, members should have the right to speak openly and form temporary or permanent factions.

■ Communists oppose all imperialist wars and occupations but constantly strive to bring to the fore the fundamental question—ending war is bound up with ending capitalism.

■ Communists are internationalists. Everywhere we strive for the closest unity and agreement of working class and progressive parties of all countries. We oppose every manifestation of national sectionalism. It is an internationalist duty to uphold the principle, 'One state, one party'.

■ The working class must be organised globally. Without a global Communist Party, a Communist International, the struggle against capital is weakened and lacks coordination.

■ Communists have no interest apart from the working class as a whole. They differ only in recognising the importance of Marxism as a guide to practice. That theory is no dogma, but must be constantly added to and enriched.

■ Capitalism in its ceaseless search for profit puts the future of humanity at risk. Capitalism is synonymous with war, pollution, exploitation and crisis. As a global system capitalism can only be superseded globally.

■ The capitalist class will never willingly allow their wealth and power to be taken away by a parliamentary vote.

■ We will use the most militant methods objective circumstances allow to achieve a federal republic of England, Scotland and Wales, a united, federal Ireland and a United States of Europe.

■ Communists favour industrial unions. Bureaucracy and class compromise must be fought and the trade unions transformed into schools for communism.

■ Communists are champions of the oppressed. Women's oppression, combating racism and chauvinism, and the struggle for peace and ecological sustainability are just as much working class questions as pay, trade union rights and demands for high-quality health, housing and education.

■ Socialism represents victory in the battle for democracy. It is the rule of the working class. Socialism is either democratic or, as with Stalin's Soviet Union, it turns into its opposite.

■ Socialism is the first stage of the worldwide transition to communism—a system which knows neither wars, exploitation, money, classes, states nor nations. Communism is general freedom and the real beginning of human history.

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weekly Worker

CIA, FBI, Wall Street, courts and Congress would bring him down

Explosive contradictions

Daniel Lazare looks at America's primitive constitution, the Sanders surge and asks ... 'what if'

The big political news in America is that Bernie Sanders has taken the lead in the race for the Democratic Party presidential nomination. He does not have a majority following victories in Iowa and New Hampshire - merely a plurality. But, although a thousand pitfalls lie in the way, it may conceivably be enough for the rest of the party to fall into line. If so, 2020 could be the most momentous president election since Eugene V Debs won a million votes, while stuck inside a federal penitentiary, exactly 100 years earlier. Only this time a self-proclaimed "socialist" might actually win.

In order to understand what the Sanders upsurge means, it is necessary to know something about the peculiar political institutions behind it. One is the concept of the primary, while another has to do with idea of a political party, as refracted through the lens of 18th-century American constitutionalism.

Let us take them in reverse order. In most of the world, the idea of a political party is simple: it is what citizens form in order to fight for a certain programme or set of ideas. Whether their concern is drug legalisation or socialist revolution, the thing to do is to seek out co-thinkers, hammer out a programme, field candidates and agitate for support. In parliamentary democracies based on proportional representation, the barriers are not insurmountable, which is why micro-movements like animal rights have been able to gain footholds in places like Portugal and the Netherlands.

But the United States lacks anything remotely similar. America's 'founding fathers' shared a horror of 'faction' that was especially strong in a wing of 18th-century Anglo-American thought, known as the 'country opposition'. For James Madison - the Virginia planter who more than anyone helped craft the US constitution in 1787 - the very idea was synonymous with "violence ... instability, injustice and confusion", as he put it in the famous 10th Federalist Paper, not to mention "a rage for paper money, for an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property or for any other improper or wicked project". Parties were subversive, inimical to the public interest and dangerously democratic. The goal, therefore, was to neutralise them via a system of separation of powers, and checks and balances, that would divide the *demos* against itself, so that the mass of ordinary Americans would be unable to realise their common self-interest.

In terms of office-holders, the ideal was not that of a party loyalist, but of a proud and independent statesman who was contemptuous of riches, power and the mob, and beholden to no-one other than his own conscience. Parties were corrupt and demeaning, and therefore had no place in a stern and upright republic. Needless to say, the ideal did not last long in a country that would soon become famous for political venality. But enough of it survived to see to it that parties would remain in a permanent state of arrested development.

The upshot is that today's Republicans and Democrats are in no sense parties, as the rest of the world understands the term. No-one joins them, no-one pays dues to them and no-one attends monthly meetings to debate party policy or ideology. Instead of programmes, they have 'platforms' that are mostly for show and which candidate are free to ignore. When a neo-Nazi named Arthur Jones ran for Congress in 2018 in Chicago, shocked Republican officials could not expel him, since he was not a member and no such disciplinary procedure exists even if he was. All they could do was advise residents not to vote for him. The same thing happened when a white supremacist named Russell Walker ran on the Republican ticket for the North Carolina state legislature. "We can't stop him from running," one GOP official explained. Since they could not kick him out, they could not stop him from proclaiming that Republicanism and racism were one and the same.

Political parties in America are thus not something that citizens form, since 'Repocrats' have existed since time immemorial. They are not something that citizens employ to fight for certain ideas or beliefs, since they are devoid of programme.

So we have the odd spectacle of a self-proclaimed socialist seeking the nomination of a bourgeois party he has never belonged to, does not identify with and, by all appearances, does not like. If he wins, he will head up a ticket composed of hundreds of state, local and congressional candidates who think the same of him. ("Nobody likes him, nobody wants to work with him, he got nothing done," Hillary Clinton recently said of Sanders.) As for socialism, it is something that 99% of Democratic candidates positively abhor. If Sanders wins the nomination, he will thus find himself in the middle of an armed and hostile camp.

Primaries

Which brings us to that other peculiar institution: the primary. An outgrowth of the 'Progressive Era' of the 1890s and after, primaries were a reaction to parties that were viewed as more corrupt than ever, thanks to the rise of urban political machines, and hence even more at odds with the public interest. Cleaning up the cities meant bringing in jut-jawed prosecutors to go after 'bosses' who monopolised offices and elections. Among other things, this meant taking the nominating process out of their hands and placing it in



Bernie Sanders: it could conceivably happen

those of a disinterested public. Instead of 'smoke-filled rooms', nominations would occur in special, state-supervised elections. You still could not join a party. But you could register as a Republican or Democrat and thereby control whom they ran for office.

With that, politics grew more depoliticised, while parties became ever more superfluous. By the 1970s and 80s, the electoral process revolved around individual political entrepreneurs raising money and hiring a team of pollsters and consultants to craft an image that would hopefully appeal to the voting public. What followed was the stuff of a thousand satires about the empty-headed politicians with dazzling smiles, who sally forth to meet and greet, while avoiding any subject that might get them in trouble. The local party apparatus shrank to the role of umpire, as it enforced rules and saw to it that candidates played fair and square, but otherwise remained aloof.

Sanders is different, of course, which is the reason for his appeal. A cranky Jewish septuagenarian has emerged as America's most popular politician, precisely because he is abrasive and un-photogenic. His white hair is his trademark, because it is a mess. But Sanders is not just a candidate: he is the leader of a movement. A recent ad, set to the tune of Bob Dylan's 'The times they are a-changing', makes this clear: "I want you all to take a look around and find someone you don't know," he brays in a thick Brooklyn accent. "Are you willing to fight for that person who you don't even know, as much as you're willing to fight for yourself?"

Peace, land and bread it is not. But, however vague and sentimental, political solidarity of this sort is worlds apart from the fragmented, self-nullifying politics that Madison saw as the key to stability and the preservation of private property. "If you are willing to fight for a government of passion

and justice and decency," Sanders goes on, "not only will we win this election, but together we will transform this country." This is un-Madisonian as well. Bourgeois politicians do not transform: rather, their goal is to restore American greatness by returning the country to its roots. They also do not call on people to fight: instead, they ask for their vote, so they can fight on their behalf - which in reality means engaging in the corrupt, self-serving games that define politics on Capitol Hill.

Sanders has come out ahead by virtue of America's attenuated 18th-century political system. But, the more he does, the more at odds with the system he becomes. The contradiction is no secret; in fact, it is what gives his campaign its edge. But, while millions of impassioned supporters think they can overcome it through sheer force of will, they are mistaken. Centuries of accumulated institutional weight do not give way so easily, while behind America's peculiar party system - or, rather, *anti-party* system - lies a stultifying, pre-modern constitution that is even more intractable.

Pressure

So, while Sanders might win the nomination or even the election, the big question is, what happens next? At best, he will face a Congress controlled by timid Democrats who will panic at the thought of enacting any of his reforms. At worst, he will face angry Republicans eager to do to him what Democrats have done to Trump over the last four years: ie, investigate him to death, while bringing in the FBI and CIA to drive him out of office. If Democrats had a field day with a 20-minute meeting in June 2016 between top Trump campaign officials and a Russian lawyer named Natalia Veselnitskaya - a meeting that proved entirely innocuous despite thousands of

headlines to the contrary - imagine what Republicans will do with Sanders' long association with the Socialist Workers Party, the old Trotskyist party of James Cannon and Joseph Hansen; with his 1985 trip to Nicaragua, in which he attended a Sandinista rally, marked by chants of "Here, there, everywhere, the Yankee will die"; with his 1987 trip to the Soviet Union, in which he joined in a tipsy rendition of the Popular Front favourite, 'This land is your land', and so on.

If Trump is any indication, they will immobilise Sanders from the start. Meanwhile, he will come under intense pressure to get tough with Russia, to step up arms deliveries to the Ukraine and to confront Iran over its allegedly subversive activities in Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. He will meet with howls of protest if he tries to do away with economic warfare against Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela, and he will also have to deal with Binyamin Netanyahu (assuming he is still in office), who is a good deal more formidable than any Republican on Capitol Hill. If the economy crashes, Wall Street will issue marching orders to bail out the banks, which means another massive wealth transfer from the workers to the bourgeoisie. How will he respond?

Meanwhile, he will have no party behind him - just a loose circle of advisors and a disorganised mass of followers out in the hinterlands. 'Bernie Bros' will find that raging against the machine is one thing: toppling it quite another.

Besides, there is the fact that Sanders has shown himself to be constitutionally conservative in certain respects, refusing even to come out against the Senate filibuster - an obscure yet powerful mechanism that allows 41 senators representing as little as 11% of the population to block any government initiative. It is a monstrously anti-democratic relic that should have been abolished decades ago.² The fact that Sanders defends it to this day suggests that he will not have a clue what to do when the ancient machinery chews up his programme, as it surely will.

If so, will Sanders surrender or will his supporters demand a confrontation? No-one knows. The only certainty is that the contradictions can only grow more explosive •

Notes

1. The ad is available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=OythsfCi6JA.
2. See my article, 'Abolish the filibuster' *Weekly Worker* September 26 2019.

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