

ANTI★CAPITALIST RESISTANCE

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

What is Ecosocialism?
Trump and the Middle East
Moves towards a new left party
Cumbria coal mine legal victory

Politics in the age of Trump



Statement by the ACR Council

Donald Trump won a second US presidency on 6 November 2024. The Republican Party is now in almost total control of US establishment politics – the entire legislature, the presidency and the Supreme Court. It is a victory for the US Plutocrats and Oligarchs, Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, the crypto-fanatics and west-coast Tech Bros. Trumpism is part of the global counter-revolutionary wave we see with far-right populists, authoritarians, semi-fascists and libertarians taking power in countries around the world.

What we are seeing is a process of a general shift to the far-right caused by neoliberalism and the collapse in the post-war liberal consensus that it has brought about. Trumpism is the same trend that produced people like Modi in India, Milei in Argentina, Duterte in the Philippines, Meloni in Italy and so on.

But this victory, in particular, is a disaster for billions around the planet. The power of US imperialism to act or not act is still a decisive factor in global politics. A second Trump presidency will be as chaotic

and vile as the first. Only now his key intellectual backers will be much clearer on what they want to get out of it. Project 2025 is a blueprint for an authoritarian USA; it includes the proposals to sack thousands of government employees and place the rest of the US government bureaucracy under central presidential control. Elimination of the Department of Education to allow state-level control of curricula. It involves Rolling back transgender healthcare and social rights, making trans existence almost untenable in some states. It means the elimination of federal protections for gender equality, sexual orientation and reproductive rights. It will almost certainly prevent abortion pills from being sent through the post, which is the number one way people get abortions in the USA. We will see the mainstreaming of “conversations” about disenfranchising women. It also involves slashing funding for renewable energy research and development, increasing energy production and scrapping targets for carbon reduction.

Whether Trump’s promise to be a dictator on day one and use the military against political opponents was hot air for electioneering or not is unknown. But that he ran such a reactionary campaign and got

Continued on page 2

Palestine: Islamophobia and resistance to the Israeli occupation



By Louisa D

Anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia in the imperialist North, an ally of Israel, explains not only how consent to the genocide was created but also why the solidarity movement has in many countries not been on a mass scale. Anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia structure the consent to genocide.

Genocide requires the dehumanisation of its victims. Israeli society is deeply racist towards Palestinians. Adherence to the Zionist project of colonisation requires this dehumanisation, which today is evolving into a widely shared feeling of genocide.

The signs of this were visible before October 2023. Even since 7 October, expressions of support for the Palestinians have been only very marginal in the demonstrations that began against Netanyahu and a reform of the Supreme Court and have continued for the release of the hostages.

In the view of the ruling classes, the struggle of the Palestinians is described as an expression of religious fanaticism associated with international Islamist terrorism. The internalisation of a racial hierarchy enables Western countries to identify with the Israeli victims and, at the same time, make the murder of Palestinians invisible.

In this respect, Israeli bi-nationals benefit from repatriations and tributes for those who died on 7 October, while Palestinian bi-nationals have the greatest difficulty escaping the massacres and repatriating their loved ones. Israel, and above all Netanyahu, are supported not only by extreme right-wing regimes and far right parties, but also by all governments that see themselves in this culturalist interpretation of the ‘war of civilisations’, which is code for

Continued on page 5

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Understanding Trumpism and mobilising the global fightback



Continued from front page

such a decisive vote reveals something about the growth of far-right populist ideas. We know that both he and his Vice President JD Vance recently endorsed a book called *Unhumans*, a manifesto for the mass murder of left-wing activists along the lines of Pinochet in Chile. This reveals the fascist kernel of neoliberal politics, which has come full circle.

Democrat's failures

This defeat largely rests on the wretched politics and failed strategy of the Democrats. It is clear that the Democrats are not even a dented shield against the growth of the far right; they actively feed the problem. They were business as usual in a period of anxiety and division.

They ran a campaign against a populist who was appealing to 'the common people' by instead focusing on the virtue of the establishment – constantly repeating that Trump was a felon as if there are not millions of felons in the USA in a corrupt and unfair judicial system who might see in him a persecut-

ed martyr. The Democrats' fixation on the law courts to undermine him before the election failed utterly and added to his populist credentials. They preferred a campaign from the centre, focusing on celebrity endorsement, winning over middle ground Republicans, and parading with Liz Cheney. They appealed to the belief that the US is a country of equal opportunity and post-racism when it palpably isn't.

Trump and his supporters see through this. They know it is a lie. They prefer bullish, macho posturing, might makes right, freedom from consequence. The Democrats focussed in the last few weeks on labelling Trump a fascist – the response from his supporters was either a shrug or to embrace the fact that he wound up the liberals so much. Trump is a cypher for all the most selfish and reactionary views in US society, but the Democrats were no alternative. His movement crystallised a view of the USA that rejects equality and embraces domination. His movement is not foreign to the US body politics; it is rooted in it.

The global counter-revolutionary wave is largely a reaction to the gains of the post-war era – the advances

made by women, Black people, the LGBTQIA+ community and others. Trump appealed especially to white people and young men, to Christian nationalist far right and tech bro supporters of Elon Musk. He also picked up votes from the Arab American community that turned on the Democrats for their funding of Israel's genocide in Gaza (although Trump will pursue the same policy). But he also drew support from a significant number of Black people (meaning people of colour) and women, those who reject the liberal establishment and want to resolve the contradictions of American society by embracing its supremacist values. Some of the US Black population also backs mass deportations of recently arrived immigrants if it drives down prices and improves wages (as Trump claims). That is the point of populism; it combines contradictions and appeals to different people in different ways while claiming to provide simple answers to complex questions and denying meaningful change.

Contradictions

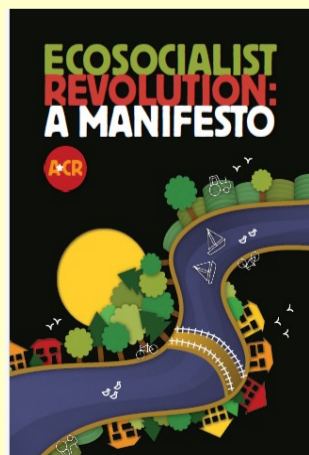
There will be considerable contradictions in his populist programme. Trump promised a carbon fossil fuel bonanza to drive down energy bill costs and tackle inflation, but he also wants tariffs on imports to strengthen US industry, which will drive up prices. He seems unlikely to deliver better living standards and more jobs for US citizens, especially with massive public sector cuts. But we also have to be wary of assuming that people primarily vote on economic grounds – the modern political landscape is far more complicated and riven by ideological divisions rather than simple financial calculations.

His indication that he will withdraw support from Ukraine almost certainly means

that Russia's imperial annexation will be allowed to proceed. What this means for the broader region as Putin continues his expansionist project remains to be seen. Certainly, the emergence of a more multipolar world will propel us closer to a third world war at some stage. For the Palestinians, it also means more slaughter and defeat, Trump has been clear with Netanyahu that the far right leadership of Israel can "do whatever they need to do" to win.

The need for continued resistance goes without question. There will be many people feeling hopeless or full of despair right now, and that is exactly what the far right and fascists want. They take sadistic pleasure in the defeats they inflict on the 'woke' and on the left. But politics is determined by struggles for power and counter-power, building mass coalitions of resistance, identifying the weak points in the enemy's side and mobilising forces to shatter their strength.

ACR is in total solidarity with those in the USA who reject this authoritarian turn and want to fight for a better world. We know the next few years will be difficult, but our movement has faced difficult times before. We know things will get worse before they get better. But we also know that we can argue for a world beyond capitalism, imperialism, and militarism, based on a society that provides for everyone and is sustainable with the environment. Runaway global warming is already with us, as is the worldwide strengthening of the far right; the two are linked. And politics does not end at the ballot box – that is another lie the Democrats relied on. Power comes from our organisation and resilience. We fight for a revolutionary change. Our role is to be part of the international fightback to change the world, to reclaim the future and build a better society for everyone!



Ecosocialist Revolution: A Manifesto

ACR's manifesto agreed at our 2024 conference

is now available for free on our website or you can listen to the audio version available at AntiCapitalist Radio. You can also get a 48 page printed pamphlet. Speak to an ACR member to get a copy or you can get one from Resistance Books.

www.resistancebook.org

Are you a trade unionists?

ACR is organising ecosocialist networks across the trade union movement to fight for a green transition. If you would like to be involved or to find out more please get in touch info@anticapitalistresistance.org

Trump and the Middle East: What Lies Ahead?

For more international coverage from ecosocialists around the world visit the International Viewpoint website internationalviewpoint.org

What awaits us now that Trump's return to the White House is confirmed, asks Gilbert Achcar.

Trump's victory in the US presidency race is a major catastrophe for the peoples of the Middle East, on top of the Nakba that has been raging since the Hamas-led 7 October 2023 operation. Benjamin Netanyahu had been eagerly hoping for this victory and did everything he could to contribute to its achievement, whether by inciting his right-wing US allies or by refusing to grant Joe Biden and the Democratic presidential campaign the Gaza truce they had been hoping for in order to provide them with an electoral argument they desperately needed. So, what awaits us now that Trump's return to the White House is confirmed?

The available information – considering Trump's behaviour during his first presidential term, the positions he expressed during his recent campaign, and what has leaked from his circles – indicate that he is keen to appear as a leader who achieves “peace” in contrast to his portrayal of Biden as a perpetuator of war unable to resolve it. While Trump seeks to end wars which he does not see as in America's interest, he remains keen to achieve pursue other goals. Thus, while he negotiated with the Taliban during his previous term in preparation for the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan and wanted to withdraw the US military cover for the Kurds in Syria at the request of Turkish President Erdogan, he supported the continued presence of his country's forces in Iraq, brazenly expressing his interest in that country's oil wealth.

Peace in Palestine?

And while he expressed his ambition to conclude the “deal of the century” on Palestine, the “peace” he proposed was so unfair that Mahmoud Abbas himself rejected it, while Netanyahu welcomed it, realizing that no Palestinian side was capable of accepting the terms of such a “deal”. Netanyahu hence hoped that the Palestinian rejection of that “generous” offer would legitimize the Zionist state's further grabbing of the land of Palestine west of the Jordan River. This was in addition to the fact that Trump discarded long-standing official US policy regarding the regional conflict in favour of Israel, from his



official approval of the latter's annexation of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights to his transfer of the US embassy to Jerusalem and his closure of the US consulate for the 1967 occupied territories, all of which indicate support for Zionist expansionism. Trump's backed Israel's position towards Iran, tearing up of the nuclear agreement that his predecessor Barack Obama's administration had concluded after long and difficult negotiations, and his escalation of military provocation by assassinating Iran's military leaders.

Trump has no interest in supporting Ukraine and would rather reach an agreement with Vladimir Putin that would satisfy the Russian president, whom he admires for his reactionary personality while desiring to invest in his country. He sees no interest in the alliance with European countries unless they make more economic concessions to the United States and augment their military efforts to get increasingly involved in the US confrontation with China, which Trump sees as America's main competitor (while hostility to China is a fundamental pillar of the ideology of the US imperialist right that he leads). At the same time, it is no secret that Trump sees the Arab Gulf monarchies' oil and oil money as a supreme US interest and the Zionist

state as an invaluable ally for its role as watchdog of that supreme interest. For interest in its crudest sense – in which personal and family self-interest prevails over any other consideration.

Lebanon and Iran

On Lebanon, he will likely continue Biden position seeking to end the ongoing war on terms that satisfy Israel, based on the withdrawal of Hezbollah forces from the south and the gradual replacement of the party's forces there as well as of Israel's occupying forces by the regular Lebanese army. This would be accompanied by a reinforcement of the Lebanese army so the balance of power in Lebanon would change, allowing the US-dominated state to prevail over the Iran-dominated party. Of course Tehran prefers to keep Hezbollah in the fray to allow it to take part in the upcoming confrontation between Iran and the US-Israeli alliance.

Netanyahu is confident that Trump will be more willing than Biden to engage in this confrontation. He has already sent a representative to negotiate with the president-elect on the next steps towards Iran. The likelihood of a joint US-Israeli attack on Iran has become very high indeed with Trump's return to the White House. He will certainly seek to re-establish firm US hegemony over the Gulf region after it was weakened

during the Obama and Biden eras.

As for Palestine, Trump is likely to support Israel's official annexation of a significant portion of the West Bank and Gaza (the northern part of the Strip in particular, where “ethnic cleansing” is presently carried out by the Zionist army) for the expansion of its West Bank settlements and the resumption of their build-up in Gaza. Israel will keep its hold over strategic corridors that allow it to control the remaining Palestinian population concentrations in the two occupied territories. As in the Deal of the Century elaborated by Trump's son-in-law Jared, the transaction will probably include “compensation” for the Palestinians loss of land and offering them areas in the Negev Desert. Eight months ago, Kushner expressed the opinion that Israel should seize the northern part of the Gaza Strip and invest in developing its “waterfront”. Once again, this “deal” takes the Palestinian people for fools will find no Palestinian with the slightest credibility willing to accept it. Israel will thus feel allowed to unilaterally impose it by force, while the Zionist far right will keep increasing its pressure for the completion of the 1948 Nakba by annexing all Palestinian land between the river and the sea and uprooting most of its inhabitants.

Why ACR are revolutionary ecosocialists

CAPITALISM is driving us towards serious environmental disaster. Every day, the news seems to get worse. It is not just global warming, but deforestation, 'forever chemicals', plastics in our blood, acidification of the oceans and biodiversity loss.

It is clear that the continued existence of capitalism is incompatible with sustaining life on Earth. Capitalism is 'developing' our global economy but at a huge cost to the environment and indigenous communities. The ideology of growth no matter the cost would be the ideology of a cancer cell.

Ecosocialism is a response to this. It starts from the way that capital exploits both people and planet, how it extracts value from us and resources from the earth in ways that are unsustainable.

Ecosocialism is a new way of thinking because it is a criticism of previously 'productivist' socialist economics. Productivism is production for the sake of capital accumulation and wealth—as ends in themselves. Post-capitalist societies like the Soviet Union prioritised expanding production without regard to the environmental consequences. This had devastating results of which Chernobyl and the destruction of the Aral Sea are the most obvious.

Social Democratic parties also adopted the productivist approach, often alongside post-colonial exploitation of the global south's resources. Labour's environmental policy has always been subservient to the interests of capital. The recent U-turn by Starmer's Labour over the £28bn green investment is an example of how these parties cannot even consistently advocate for a 'greener capitalism' (if such a thing is even possible).

Ecosocialism challenges the Promethean thinking of some on the left. This is the idea that humanity should conquer nature, 'master it'. In this view, nature is just an object for our manipulation and we have seen how such attitudes lead to the precipice of disaster

There are debates about on how to tackle the environmental crisis. Some people advocate replacing fossil fuels with renewables to maintain the consumption habits of many people in the West, others argue for a 'degrowth' strategy, reducing economic activity to keep within planetary boundaries. These discussions are important and raise both issues about what the sort of society we want might look like and

how to get there (our strategy), A whole session at the recent Ecosocialism Conference was dedicated to them.



"We fight to build an economy based on democratic participatory planning which aims to bring human economic activity into alignment with a sustainable relationship to nature"

Our strategy

An ecosocialist strategy has to involve a fight in the workers' movement to win our trade unions to the idea of a green transition away from extractivist and armaments work. It focuses on campaigns that expand public services and the social wage to shift away from individual consumption towards more collective provision. This doesn't mean finger wagging at individual workers for buying things but focusing on a relentless criticism of the consumption habits of the very wealthy, the environmental destruction of multi nationals, the sickening waste of the imperialist war machines. Free public transport campaigns are an example of expanding universal services.

We fight to build an economy based on democratic participatory planning which aims to bring human economic activity into alignment with a sustainable relationship to nature. That planning will involve not only those involved in different types of production but the citizens and communities who need what is produced.

This means producing things because they are useful rather than because they can be sold for profit (abandoning exchange value for use value, to use Marxist terminology). That means more emphasis on things like housing, health, child care, libraries, artistic and recreational activity and education. The environmental impact of every-

thing we produce will be a crucial consideration.

We will plan to make things that last – ending the built on obsolescence of modern consumerism. The conditions of those involved in the production will be a vital factor as will the idea of everyone working far fewer hours (and weeks and years) so that people have time to devote to other things – not just being really involved in the democratic decisions over the economy but fully living and enjoying our humanity.

An ecosocialist movement in Britain must also build international ties across borders to fight for a revolutionary change which abolishes the distinction between the poorer countries and imperialist countries. The north can't keep the global south in the economic chains of subordination, seeing their resources as 'ours' to plunder. Likewise the climate crisis cannot be solved in one country.

Building a revolutionary ecosocialist movement means a relentless fight against the growing conspiracy theories that climate change is a 'woke issue'. These arguments present themselves as radical anti-establishment positions, but they are in fact just supporters for the polluters threatening our future. We reject eco-fascism which recognises an environmental crisis but seeks to divide us by nationality and militarise borders to keep out refugees or even advocates mass population culls as if humans are vermin to be exterminated.

Any chance at achieving this kind of future requires mass action by millions of people and a fight for political power – this cannot be done by social movements alone. Only removing the capitalist class and their allies from power can offer any serious hope at making the radical changes we need.



You can read more on Ecosocialism in a useful article by the revolutionary Michael Löwy called 'Why Ecosocialism: For a Red-Green Future' using the QR code above

COP29 in Azerbaijan: More talk... more gas

This year's conference of Parties (COP) is being held in Azerbaijan. This is the 29th time that politicians, NGOs, business leaders and lobbyists have met to try to hammer our agreements over carbon reduction and environmental sustainability.

But the COP process is mired in scandal and criticism now. Last year the hosts in Doha were caught using the meeting to arrange new oil deals. The same has happened this year with the Azerbaijan government securing new agreements for trading carbon fuels. So far in 2024 The State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR) made a slew of deals worth more than \$8 billion.

Global energy-related CO₂ emissions grew by 1.1% in 2023 despite constant agreements to reduce. Other key issues see similar patterns. Deforestation – which COP agreed in 2021 to end by 2030 – has accelerated globally since the agreement.

This isn't just an issue of hypocrisy. The institutional capture of COP by oil and gas companies and governments that prioritise carbon fuels money only exposes the deeper problem. The business leaders don't want a green transition and the politicians – even if they wanted to – will not force them to.

No Green Capitalism

The problem goes to the heart of global capitalism. It functions on extraction, on exploitation and profit driven decision making. Companies cannot 'afford' a green transition as it eats into profits that shareholders demand and directors are legally required to deliver.

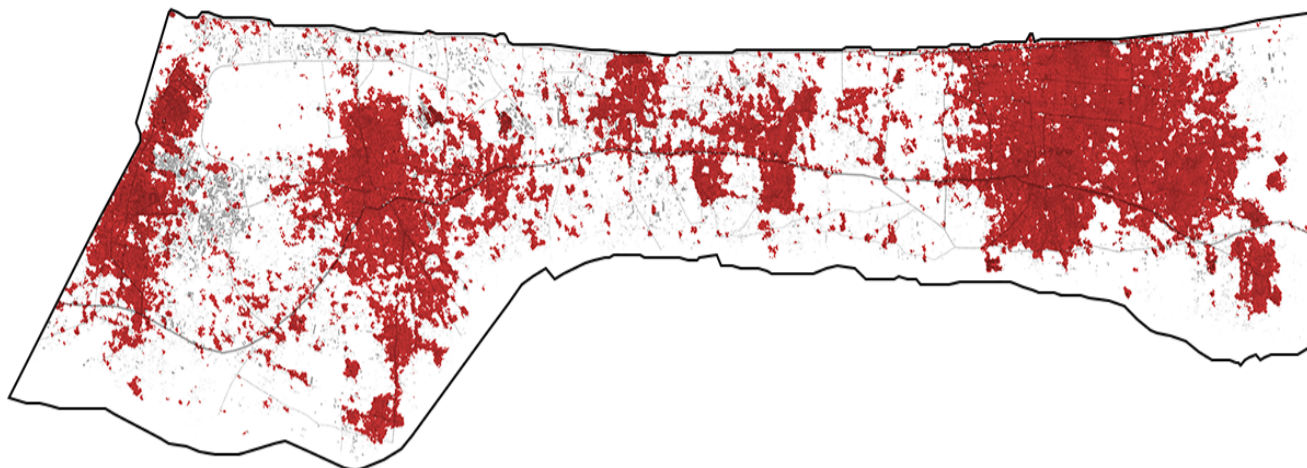
Even the Paris Accords agreed at COP21 in 2015 – which government leaders are fighting to defend in the wake of Trump's re-election – only commits to making green energy 'competitive' within the global economy. If they can make profit from it then they will implement it, but there isn't as much profit to be made from renewables as there is for carbon fossil fuels.

The fight is still on at COP to get limited reforms from those in power, but ultimately COP cannot fix the root cause— global capitalism is based on accumulation, expansion and exploitation which puts it in direct conflict with the needs of both people and planet.

This is why we need a fight for ecosocialism on a global scale.

Palestine: Islamophobia and resistance to the Israeli occupation (cont. from front page)

Scale of destruction in Gaza as of 24 September 2024



hostility towards Arabs and Muslims. Systemic racism and a rise in Islamophobia common to the imperialist North have allowed this alignment.

Finally, the picture would not be complete without the Zionist government's misuse of the fight against anti-Semitism, which maintains that the resistance of the Palestinian people is not motivated by their persecution as a colonised people but by anti-Semitism. In serving as a blank cheque for other racist regimes, Israel exonerates each of them of any anti-Semitism and in return allows them, under the pretext of fighting anti-Semitism, to target Muslims. Moreover, following the theory of the 'new anti-Semitism', contemporary anti-Semitism is said to emanate from Arabs and is therefore 'imported'.

This discourse immediately places supporters of the Palestinian people in the camp of the enemies of the state, with the following fallacy: to support the Palestinian people would be to support terrorism against the Jews.

The erasure of the colonial dimension in favour of a civilisational discourse is echoed in the mainstream media. The media treatment has dehumanised Palestinians, with the number of deaths downplayed and the brutality of the Israeli offensive euphemised. Newsrooms have been forbidden from using terms that make visible the colonial context in which it

takes place. The media also played a major role in demonising of the solidarity movement. It was accompanied by unabashed racist and Islamophobic expression.

Abroad, mobilisation constrained by racism

This observation of an increase in the level of repression against the pro-Palestinian solidarity movement can be extended to most of the imperialist countries allied with Israel: obstacles to the right to demonstrate, harassment and defamation of supporters, control of public expression, cancellation of cultural events, dismissals, criminalisation, stigmatisation of foreigners and so on. Palestinians in the diaspora have been particularly targeted. There were similar dynamics: a link with anti-racist and anti-colonial struggles, in particular due to the strong participation of racialised people, and pro-Palestinian activism perceived as threatening and, by default, anti-Semitic. Above all, there has been a sharp increase in Islamophobic acts (hate speech, stigmatisation, attacks on places of worship, but also physical violence and murders).

In Germany, censorship of the solidarity movement is very strong because of support for Israel. State racism has developed around the belief that anti-Semitism is imported by for-

eigners of the Muslim faith. Spain and Britain are exceptions, with a high level of mobilisation due to widespread public support for Palestine. The unconditional support of the British political class for Israel was offset by the strong mobilising role of Muslim and Palestinian community organisations. The university occupation movement that began in the United States had the potential to change the balance of power. Here too, the students mobilised were intimidated and defamed, accused of anti-Semitism and complacency towards Hamas.

While these mobilisations have been significant in places, they have not been able to sufficiently influence the support of the ruling classes for Israel, even if 'unconditional' support is now more timid. By importing the rhetoric of a civilisational conflict in which Israel is seen as a Western bastion against the Islamic threat, the ruling classes are using the expression of support for the Palestinian resistance to target Arabs and Muslims.

In the space of a year, we can see how unconditional alignment with Israeli propaganda has marked acceleration in general trend towards fascism, fuelled by a normalisation of the dehumanisation of Arabs and a deepening of authoritarianism. In this, we bear a collective responsibility to look into the mirror held up to us by Israel.

UKRAINE'S RESISTANCE The challenges of the war for independence

By Fred Leplat

Ukraine's war for independence is a struggle for national liberation and self-determination, with the Ukrainian people facing Russian aggression, Western ambivalence, and internal challenges as they fight for their future.

The Russian invasion in eastern Ukraine is now into its third year. Putin ordered the invasion on the 24 February 2022 with the explicit intention to "demilitarize and denazify" this independent country. It is a war for regime change and to annex at least part of the country, the Donbass which is the industrial heartland of Ukraine. Putin used the pretext of NATO expansion to bring Ukraine back into the Russian imperialist orbit, just like Georgia, Belarus, or Kazakhstan. There was no threat of invasion of Russia by Ukraine or NATO, but Putin did not want Ukraine joining the EU or NATO.

The war has inflicted an enormous toll: 615,000 Russian casualties of which 115,000 were killed, and Ukraine has suffered 250,000 wounded and over 35,000 dead. In addition, there is destruction of infrastructure, the devastation of cities like Mariupol, and the ecocide of the country. Russia is prepared to throw tens of thousands of soldiers to their death in a long war of attrition against Ukraine. But two years after the invasion, Russia has not won and Ukraine has not been defeated. For the Ukrainians, it has been from the beginning a war for national independence and self-determination. Their armed resistance is legitimate now just as it was in February 2022. The Ukrainian people should be supported in their aim to force the Russian troops to withdraw, regardless of the Zelenski government or its support by Western governments.



The rest of this article is on our website—use the QR code to read it



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Debate on the Left in Britain

– towards a new broad Party?

With Labour in government pursuing its pro-business pro-genocide agenda, there are growing calls for a new left party. Dave Kellaway looks at the debates and lessons from past attempts

British politics has become much more volatile and the hold of the two mainstream parties, Labour and the Conservatives, over the electorate has become weaker. The recent July general election reflected this. Labour won a landslide 163 seat majority with a lower vote (33%) than Jeremy Corbyn received in his 2017 election defeat. Parties like the Greens got 4 MPs but won 6.7% of the popular vote, if it was a proportional representation system like in Portugal it would have over 40 seats. The far right Reform got 5 seats on a 14.3% vote share. The Scottish National Party controls the devolved parliament.

The restructuring and decline of British industries have meant working class communities are disaggregated and the tribal adherence to always voting Labour has much diminished. Social media plays a much greater role too in disrupting traditional voting patterns. Voters have a more individualistic and transactional attitude

The Labour party under Tony Blair decisively broke even with its tepid social democratic posturing. He refused to roll back most of Margaret Thatcher's anti working class policies – the anti-trade union laws, the privatisation of practically all the publicly owned sectors of the economy like telecoms, energy, water, transport and so on and the destruction local authority services, particularly housing.

Rise and fall of Corbynism...and the Palestine effect

Following the huge opposition to Blair's war in Iraq and the failure of Ed Miliband to oppose Tory austerity there was a mass campaign of support for a real left social democratic leader like Corbyn. Corbyn's victory was ensured by thousands of people joining the Labour Party to vote for him in the leadership campaign. After a vicious counter attack by the establishment, the right and centre of the Labour Party, including most of its MPs, and the divisive issue of Brexit and antisemitism, Corbyn lost. Starmer, the current Labour Prime minister, completed the clean out of the Corbyn left supporters and won the recent election on a very moderate programme. Over 250 thousand members have left the party in disgust and internal democracy has been crushed. The left caucus of Labour MPs (Socialist Campaign Group) is a shadow of its former self and very few of them are really standing up against the leadership. When they do they are expelled from the Parliamentary Labour Party – seven suffered this fate for voting to remove the Child Benefit cap.

Outside parliament we have seen the biggest movement of solidarity with the Palestinian people anywhere in the world. There have been 21 national demonstrations since October 7th 2023 and the police have estimated 2700 protests have taken place. The national demonstrations oscillate between a 100,000 and 500,000. Local initiatives are still taking place all over the country. The people mobilising are coming from way beyond the normal audience of the radical left. In particular the Muslim communities have come out – particularly the youth but whole families attend these protests. Four independent MPs were elected from these communities who mostly mobilised their vote around solidarity with Palestine.

Another feature of the last election was the success of Jeremy Corbyn in retaining his seat in London. In response to Labour's first big budget in October he organised a critical statement signed by the independent pro-Palestine MPs, the Greens, some Welsh nationalists and hundreds of local left councillors. A minority left/Green parliamentary opposition is emerging.

Starmer's purge of the left and the rules changes on leadership elections now means it is highly unlikely that there will be a repeat of the Corbyn surge. Not many radical left activists think that a socialist alternative will emerge from inside Labour.

In this political situation there has been a growing discussion about setting up a new left party. The debate is currently mostly dominated by people who were closely involved in the Corbyn project. Other organisations such as Transform which set itself up to promote the idea of a new left party are involved as well as some of the established left groups. It is unclear exactly where Corbyn stands on setting up a new party and whether the left pro-Palestine MPs would be involved.

What are the key considerations about setting up a new left party?

We have some lessons we have learnt from the experience of Podemos, Bloco, Rifondazione. Respect, Left Unity and the French NPA.

1. A top down party directed by personalities or a cartel of existing left currents is not a recipe for success. Any new party must be formed of members based in their communities, those members must be the people who decide policy and elect the leadership – this accountability should not be postponed while a personality group or currents embed themselves in the leadership.
2. Any fake democratic structure where leaders use internet/referendum systems should be avoided. This is what was done in Podemos in Spain to sideline critical currents like the Anticapitalistas.
3. Caucus rights for LGBTQ and Black, Women and disabled members should be recognised. A false counter-position of identity versus class politics needs to be avoided. A party which is not inclusive will fail.
4. The programme and policies of the new party should reflect a broad class struggle party. The lack of definition of this status caused the French NPA to stall as well as Left Unity in Britain. There is no need for everyone to agree on the need to destroy the state and replace it with council democracy or for the need for armed workers to defend gains against the bosses.
5. A broad acceptance of ecosocialism – integrating the class struggle with the ecological one is essential.
6. Solidarity with Palestine against the Israeli state and a right to resistance, an end of occupation and the right to return would need to be the minimum agreement. But a new party could remain open about a two state or one state solution. On Ukraine we would need to agree on Russia withdrawal, a ceasefire and self-determination.

The Green Party

In 2024 the Greens membership grew significantly and they gained the most MPs they have ever had. A new left caucus has emerged called Green Organise involving many ex Labour members from the Corbyn era. Understandably the Green look like a credible alternative to Labour.

ACRs main criticism of the Greens would be their fixation on parliament—we urgently need mass radical movements built before 2030. What is being done between now and the next General Election?

When Greens have been in power in Germany and Ireland they also ended up implemented reactionary politics under pressure from the capitalists and the state bureaucracies. So we need a serious discussion about how a really revolutionary change can happen.

The Green's manifesto is also not clearly anti capitalist, it advocates for a return to the mixed economy and more regulation on the private sector, but we need to abolish capital and socialise the economy under a democratic plan to have any hope of building a sustainable relationship to nature. We need to debate more thoroughly what 'ecosocialism' means and how to get it.

Working with activists in the Greens and Labour will be central to any mass climate movement so building working relations and connections with people is a priority for any ecosocialist movement.

7. Any new party should allow tendencies to exist and have the right to express their opinions openly, including in any press. You have to make sure there is enough of a genuine mass base and healthy local groups that have a majority who are not already members of organized groups.

8. Setting up a new broad party is not a guarantee of future success – the experience of Podemos, Respect or Syriza shows this. The danger of leaders and members being captured by the mass media halo and the institutions is very real. As we have seen if these parties achieve some success there are lots of jobs and even careers available for activists to take up.

9. While the strategy of a new broad party means confronting Labour in elections this does not mean taking a sectarian line against the remaining Labour left MPs. Any new mass party will need to win thousands of socialists currently in Labour if it is really going to become a contender for power. So a new party needs to work creatively with any Labour lefts in united actions.

10. For a new left party to have mass impact it has to win support inside the trade unions. Antagonism between the unions and Starmer's Labour is likely, so building class struggle currents inside unions should be a priority for any new party.

11. Support for the right for self determination for Scotland and Wales should be integrated into any new formation.

12. A new party should be intervening culturally too – this may be one way of reaching a younger demographic but a new party needs to reject a narrow, over politicized look, it should relate to all of life – culture and sport. It should be joyful and fun to be a member. Party life and culture should prefigure to some extent the sort of socialist society we wish to build.

Anti-Capitalist Resistance is a revolutionary Marxist organisation in England & Cymru/Wales.



The world faces unprecedented, related crises of economic collapse, social decay, inequality, mass impoverishment, militarisation, and creeping authoritarianism. Capitalist liberal institutions and parties no longer sustain the status quo as the profit drive eats at society and deepens a metabolic rift between

people and planet. Change is urgent. We need mass movements to win victories for democracy and social, climate and economic justice. We support expanding democracy under capitalism, Proportional Representation and abolishing the monarchy and the Lords. We organise for action and reforms now, but also for a global reorganisation of society.

Ecosocialism

ACR is ecosocialist; the ecological crisis redefines the socialist project. We are engaged not just in a socialist struggle to end capitalism, but for a viable planet. We fight for a society consistent with human needs and a sustainable relationship to other life and the environment.

Internationalism

We are internationalist and oppose imperialism, nationalism and militarism. Capitalism is international, so the struggle for socialism must be too, uniting workers of all countries. We oppose imperialism – the subjugation of weaker nations by stronger ones – and support the self-determination of oppressed nations and national liberation. Anti-Capitalist Resistance supports the right of people to challenge colonialism, apartheid and to demand self-determination, including for the people of Palestine. We support a united Ireland, and Scotland and Cymru/Wales's right to self-determination, up to and including independence.

Liberation for the oppressed

Capitalism divides working class people along sexual, gender, ethnic, national and other lines. The labour movement and socialists must champion liberation struggles, recognising the right of the oppressed to lead these struggles and formulate their own demands. We support the self-organisation of women, Black people, disabled people and LGBTQ+ people to combat all discrimination, oppression and bigotry. We are against racism from the state and in any other form, immigration controls and borders, and support migrant rights.

Ecosocialism

Poverty, exploitation, oppression and war are products of capitalism, in which a minority ruling class benefits from the majority's labour. The alternative is socialism, where wealth is owned in common, assets such as industry and finance are socialised and democratic planning meets society's needs.

Social-democratic parties like Labour no longer refer to socialism and, in practice, support capitalism, with occasional minor reforms to offset the worst effects. Neither the USSR nor China under Mao was socialist. Participatory democracy is central to any socialist society and this was utterly lacking.

We are pluralist and internationalist; we learn from struggles across the world. We are democratic revolutionary socialists and oppose the top-down model of 'democratic-centralism'. We encourage convergence with other revolutionary Marxist activists and organisations and we aim to be rooted in working class and oppressed struggles. ACR is committed to debate, initiative, and self-activity. In the spirit of internationalism we are an observer organisation to the Fourth International.

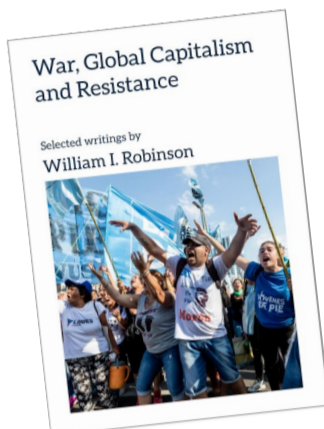
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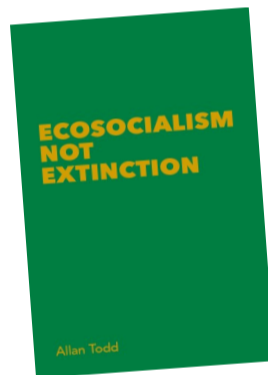
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ANTI★CAPITALIST RESISTANCE

December 2024

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“Don’t
mourn,
organise.”
Joe Hill



Now for a Green Cumbria!

The High Court's ruling on 13 September 2024, declaring the new proposed coalmine in Cumbria illegal, marks a major victory for climate activists and sets the stage for a green future focused on renewable energy and job creation in the region, writes Allan Todd

While the superstitious may see Friday the 13th as an inauspicious date, Friday 13 September 2024 will certainly go down in the history of the climate movement as a great day. On that day the High Court ruled that the approval given by the Tory government in 2022 for the opening a new coalmine near Whitehaven in west Cumbria, was illegal. Had it gone ahead, this mine would have been the UK's first new coalmine in 30 years! Significantly, the Tory government had held back from announcing its decision until *after* COP26 in Glasgow – as the government's own climate adviser had said it would increase CO2 emissions.

Yet any increase in CO2 emissions was ignored by Michael Gove when he gave his approval just after COP26 had ended. The Chair of the government's advisory Climate Change Committee immediately condemned the decision, saying it was “*absolutely indefensible*.” While Ed Miliband, then Labour's Shadow Climate Secretary, said that the proposed mine was “*no solution to the energy crisis*”, and stated that – despite claims by West Cumbria Mining – the mine would “*not offer secure, long-term jobs*.”

Once Gove's decision had been announced, local climate activists wasted no time in making it clear that opposition to this climate-busting coalmine would be stepped up – regardless of the Tories' decision. So, on Saturday 10 December, 2022 – just days after the government had approved the mine – a large group gathered at the site of the proposed mine to show their determination to resist this climate crime. Amongst those present were members of XR North Lakes, XR South Lakes, Coal Action Network, South Lakes Action on Climate Change (SLACC), and Friends of the Earth (FoE).



However some activists had been busy preparing the scientific case against the mine ever since 2019 – especially members of SLACC who gathered and presented detailed scientific facts to challenge the mine – including the ‘misinformation’ issued by the Australian hedge fund behind the mine. As time went on, SLACC and FoE gathered the evidence necessary for mounting a legal challenge because the approval broke the government's own climate change legislation on emissions.

In the meantime, other activists began organising monthly Speakers' Corners, at the site of the proposed mine. At these events – which took place throughout 2023 – activists gathered to hear a range of speakers present convincing arguments against the mine. At the same time, others regularly used the Letters' columns of local papers to challenge the ‘mine myths’ constantly being spread by Tory supporters of the mine, such as stating that the coke would be used by the British steel industry and would thus cut down on imports – a ‘myth’ they continue to peddle to the present day, even after both British Steel and Tata Steel stated

early on that they wouldn't be using it. Local door-knocking and canvassing also often took place after the *Speakers' Corners*; others arranged banner-drops, along motorways and other main roads, to get across to incoming tourists the clear message that this was definitely ‘*No Time for a Coal Mine!*’ Others ‘decorated’ the offices of hard-right Tory Mark Jenkinson (at the time the MP for Workington – now fortunately unemployed since 4 July) who remains a vociferous (though dishonest!) supporter of the mine. Sadly, court cases are currently pending against the activists who allegedly stuck posters on the windows of Jenkinson's office.

Finally, after five years of painstaking work, fundraising, hearings, and court dates, SLACC and FoE won their cases, with the result being that the mine is almost as “*bereft of life*” as Monty Python's famous dead parrot. The mining company could appeal to the Supreme Court – if only to force SLACC and FoE to spend more time and money defending their case against the mine. Plus, there's the very remote possibility that Starmer's government might grant

approval to a new proposal, if the CO2 emissions are factored in. However, given the Labour government's early decision to drop any legal defence of the coalmine, and its other recent climate decisions, this is unlikely.

Stopping the coalmine was only ever one part of a campaign for green jobs for Cumbria. What campaigners now want are renewable and cheap energy projects, and a massive home insulation programme: both hugely important in an area that has a level of fuel poverty higher than the national average. On the day the High Court announced its judgement, an ‘Open Letter’ was sent to Cumbria's newly-elected Labour MPs, and to the local media. The Open Letter called on Cumbria's MPs to start putting pressure on the government to take immediate steps to put GB Energy funding into Cumbria to

- *enable a rapid transition to clean and cheap energy*
- *the creation of thousands of good local jobs that would come with that transition, and*
- *investment in training programmes that will equip local workers with the skills needed to grow those green sectors of the economy”*

As is becoming increasingly obvious, solar seems to offer the best and quickest hope for dealing with global boiling.

ROSEBANK AND JACDAW LEGAL FIGHT

A similar court battle is currently happening against the proposed drilling of oil fields in the North Sea at Rosebank and Jackdaw, with campaigners arguing that the approval was granted unlawfully because the full impact of burning 500 million barrels of oil on the climate was not factored into the decision making.