Building Internationalism from Below in a Multi-Polar World – afternoon school 27 April 2024 Glasgow

A day conference organised by the Republican Socialist Platform on 2pm-5pm , Saturday 27th April 2024, Renfield Centre, 260 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4JP

Building Internationalism from Below in a Multi-Polar World.

Book here: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/building-internationalism-from-below-in-a-multipolar-world-tickets-858894254837

Please note this event was rescheduled from 23 March due to speaker illness

Hear from Prof Gilbert Achcar, author of 'The New Cold War', and speakers from the Palestinian, Kurdish and Ukrainian solidarity movements.

The **Republican Socialist Platform** invites friends to discuss 'Building Internationalism from Below in a Multipolar World' in Glasgow on **Saturday 27th April 2024, 2pm-5pm**.

Our main speaker is **Professor Gilbert Achcar**, professor of development studies and international relations at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.

His many books, published in a total of 15 languages, include:

- *The Clash of Barbarisms: The Making of the New World Disorder* (2002, 2006);

- *Perilous Power: The Middle East and U.S. Foreign Policy*, co-authored with Noam Chomsky (2007, 2008);
- *The Arabs and the Holocaust: The Arab-Israeli War of Narratives* (2010);
- *Marxism, Orientalism, Cosmopolitanism* (2013);
- *The People Want: A Radical Exploration of the Arab Uprising* (2013); and
- *Morbid Symptoms: Relapse in the Arab Uprising* (2016).

Most recently, Professor Achcar is the author of *The New Cold War: The US, Russia and China – From Kosovo to Ukraine*, which was published in 2023.

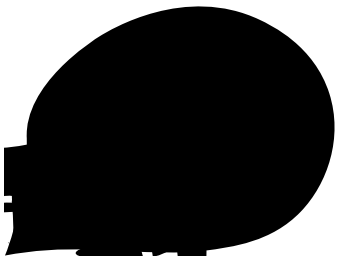
On the day, we will also be joined by speakers from the Palestinian, Kurdish and Ukrainian solidarity movements to provide an update on the current state of these struggles and what we can do to support them.

This event is free to attend, but we welcome donations to help us cover the costs of arranging speakers and the venue.

This public event will be governed by the RSP's comradely conduct and care policy.

To join the Republican Socialist Platform, visit: https://join.republicansocialists.scot/

Heckle is an 0nline Scottish publication overseen by a seven-person editorial board elected by members of the Republican Socialist Platform.



Rising Clyde Episode 18: Scotland's Circular Economy Bill

The latest issue of Rising Clyde, the Scottish climate justice show hosted by Iain Bruce is now available on YouTube thanks to Independence Live.

The Show looks at the Circular Economy Bill now under discussion in the Scottish Parliament at Holyrood. Iain talks to the Scottish Government's Circular Economy Minister, Lorna Slater, MSP for the Scottish Green Party, as well as Kim Pratt of Friends of the Earth Scotland (FOES) and Franciele Sobierai of Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC).

Rising Clyde Show – the Scottish climate justice show.

Rising Clyde examines the key issues and the big challenges facing the struggle for climate justice in Scotland. After the surprisingly big and hugely diverse protests in Glasgow during COP26, how can the breadth of that movement be held together, how can we build on its energy?



- After the suspension of Cambo, can the movement stop any more new oil or gas projects in the North Sea?
- How can we wind down the whole oil and gas industry in Scotland in this decade, while ensuring no layoffs and decent new jobs for all those affected?
- Was the Scotwind auction a major step on the transition to renewable energy, or a sell-off of the family silver?
- How can an independent Scotland tolerate one of the most unequal and damaging systems of land ownership on the planet

For half an hour on the first Monday of each month, we'll be talking to activists and experts about these and many other issues that will shape this country's future.

The host of Rising Clyde, **Iain Bruce**, is a journalist, film maker and writer living in Glasgow. Iain has worked for many years in Latin America. He has worked at the BBC and Al Jazeera, and was head of news at teleSUR. He has written books about radical politics in Brazil and Venezuela. During COP26, he was the producer and co-presenter of Inside Outside, a

daily video briefing for the COP26 Coalition.

Playlist…. To see previous episodes, start the video below, then click on the top right icon.

https://youtu.be/0qK7olrAtvk?list=PLxc3IWpJ3vJZLQg9hFjnGWvvfSHdIrnxG

Main picture: Friends of the Earth Scotland/Government-wide Programme for a Circular Economy, Netherlands, 2016

Better Buses for Strathclyde People's Rally, Friday 15 March 9am, Glasgow

Better Buses for Strathclyde are holding a People's Rally to campaign for publicly controlled and publicly owned bus services across Strathclyde Region and demanding the public body, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, begin the process of using new powers under Scotland's Transport Act 2019.

Join them outside SPT headquarters

Friday 15 March 2024, 9am

SPT Offices, 131 St Vincent Street,

Glasgow, G2 5JF

Facebook event: Better Buses for Strathclyde People's Rally

We need a really strong turn out. It's the people of Strathclyde vs. the private bus company bosses in the fight to take back our buses!

BETTER BUSES FOR STRATHCLYDE RESOURCES

- Better Buses for Strathclyde Campaign Leaflet
- Campaign Briefing for SPT Board Members
- Campaign Timeline

Republished from: https://www.getglasgowmoving.org/campaign/petition/

A Fine Step Forward: The Scottish Socialist Youth's First Conference

Jennifer Debs reports for Heckle.scot on the first conference of Scottish Socialist Youth.

The morning of Sunday 28th January saw a number of us gathered in Glasgow's Civic House, thankful to have the walls of the old printworks between us and the dreadful weather. Members, for the most part, of the Scottish Socialist Youth (SSY), we were there for the organisation's 2024 national conference –

the first such that the SSY has ever had.

As the SSY is a fairly new organisation, I will give a sketch of the group's development before discussing the conference. Born in 2021 of the familiar process by which the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) disappoints, frustrates, exhausts and then emits eager young members, the SSY stems from a disaffected student branch of the SSP which decided to go it alone. Stirling University was ground-zero, and it still remains the SSY's main centre, boasting the majority of members.

In the last year however, the SSY has been striking out in new directions and expanding, with the greatest success in Glasgow so far. There are growing links with comrades in Dundee and Edinburgh, and working groups in Falkirk, Fife and East Lothian, which look promising for the year ahead.

This growth is a result of the SSY's campaigning work in the course of 2023, on issues like drug deaths, public transport, republicanism, Palestine solidarity and Scottish independence. This has brought the SSY beyond Stirling more and more, and has been winning it supporters and new members from across Scotland. I am one of them, and I am not alone in being attracted to the SSY by the fact that it is an autonomous youth organisation with a broad variety of ideas and perspectives, not beholden to any political party or sect, nor to the leaden decree of some wizened leading comrade who has been in control for roughly thirty years. What a fresh breeze in comparison to the usual sort of lefty youth wing!

This increasing national scope is what spurred the conference in January. The key theme of the day's political content was that of campaigning beyond parliamentary activity. We are soon headed for a general election of course, but with the outlook so grim and the left being as puny and irrelevant as it is, the prospects for a meaningful intervention are pretty much nil. So, it's crucial that a group like the SSY directs its

limited resources in directions that will actually make a difference, and which will help to cohere a stronger and more vibrant socialist movement at a national level.

In that spirit, there were contributions by guest speakers from Living Rent, This is Rigged, and Palestine Action, who each in their own way elabourated on the role of youth in organisational activity and direct action, whether in challenging the encroaching creep of bureaucracy that plagues every union, in building community solidarity amid climate chaos and austerity, or in breaking up the war-machines of imperialism.



To see these groups brought together on a single platform was an encouraging sight, and it is hoped that the SSY will not only continue to connect militants from such varied ends of the movement, but also that it will lend an active and useful hand to their struggles. Tenants' unionism, environmentalism, anti-imperialism, and more – the SSY must aim to be the kind of socialist group that can integrate these perspectives and organisational "spheres" and give a unified expression to all of them.

But this cannot be done in a dogmatic or opportunistic way, by entryism and ultimatums, by take-overs and smash-and-grab recruitment tactics. Instead, the SSY needs to be honest and helpful in its relations with other campaigns, rendering

concrete, disinterested assistance to them, and, by being a genuine friend to the cause, demonstrating the utility of our socialist analysis, politics and practice. This will do a great deal more good than turning up with newspapers, wagging an all-knowing Marxist finger, and wishing other campaigns could just see that capitalism is the main problem already, simply because we say so.

This puts me in mind of the role that a good socialist group *should*, and indeed must, play as a co-ordinating centre for all the struggles, democratic and economic, domestic and global, in which the working class has an interest. A place where the working class in all its variety of identity can find a political home, because the group stands tall as an authentic tribune of the people, capable of championing everything from the fight for increased wages to the civil rights of transgender people.

There is an old conception that the memory of the working class is its party – that is to say, that a revolutionary organisation can serve as the "historical memory" of the proletariat, a living store-house of lessons and knowledge taken from the experience of the class struggle in its widest sense, and therefore a guide that can prepare and organise the working class for future battles. The task of becoming a group like this is one that confronts every socialist organisation, whether it is conscious of it or not, whether it calls itself vanguardist or anarchist, whether it tries and fails or just reneges on the responsibility immediately.

To build a truly revolutionary organisation, to achieve and maintain principled unity, to carry forward and generalise all the struggles of the people – all of this is certainly a very difficult task, and there is absolutely no guarantee the SSY will succeed where most have failed. But we're still new and fresh, and up for trying. At the very least, by bringing together different social movements to discuss and share ideas as it did at the conference, the SSY is off to a good start.

As to the democratic content of the conference, this consisted in votes on a battery of motions for SSY policy, and in the presentation of candidates for the national committee elections. The motions spanned a variety of causes, including policy on the de-commercialisation of housing, advocating for rural and island areas of Scotland, universalist urban planning, diversity and inclusion within the SSY, and the preservation of small music venues. These motions give a good view into the diverse interests that animate the SSY's membership, and it is exciting to see that there is a sense within the organisation that it has a lot of potential to tackle many different social issues.

Unfortunately, one area where the conference could be criticised is around the national committee elections. Of all the positions, only the national chairperson was contested, the rest just seeing an incumbent up for re-election. This is never an ideal situation to be in, but for the moment it is also an understandable one, given the SSY is only really beginning to grow and establish new branches. However, for the good of the democratic health of the organisation, it is very important that the SSY encourages more members to stand for positions in the future. From what I have seen so far, I am hopeful that this will be done.

All these matters finished and the conference concluded, we repaired to the pub for the obligatory post-event pints, and there's not much that you need to know about that. In any case, I drank a toast to the SSY, and so should you!

Look out for us in 2024!

Photos courtesy of the Scottish Socialist Youth.

Ukrainians Haven't Been Forgotten

Connor Beaton writes for Heckle.scot, publication of the Republican Socialist Platform, on the recent day school in February 2024 organised by Ukraine Solidarity Campaign Scotland.



A landmark seminar organised by the Ukraine Solidarity Campaign Scotland (USCS) began on Saturday *[3rd February 2024]* before last with the uplifting news that public service union UNISON's Scottish council had just voted unanimously to affiliate to the relatively young organisation. With the war featuring less and less prominently in the media, this was welcomed as an encouraging signal that Scottish trade unionists have not forgotten about their Ukrainian counterparts as the second anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine looms.

Taking place under the title 'Ukraine's fight is our fight', the four-hour-long event in Edinburgh's Augustine United Church – which was live-streamed in its entirety – boasted an impressive range of speakers, many of whom were Ukrainian socialists, trade unionists and environmentalists. This made the event a refreshing departure from many other left-wing forums in Scotland and the rest of these islands in which the

war has tended to be discussed with very little, if any, input from or reference to the views of Ukrainians.

USCS was established in the immediate aftermath of the all-out invasion in February 2022, initially as an outgrowth of the longer-running London-based Ukraine Solidarity Campaign (USC) but increasingly functioning as an independent organisation in its own right.

It rejects the argument advanced by some sections of the left, particularly those in and around the Stop the War Campaign, that the war in Ukraine should be understood principally as a conflict between Russia and NATO in which socialists should be neutral; instead, taking its cue from left-wing Ukrainians, it recognises that Ukraine is fighting a defensive war against Russian imperialism in which it deserves support from those who uphold the right of nations to self-determination.

This event, by far the most substantial and successful event organised by USCS in its short existence, served two purposes: firstly, to aid socialists in Scotland in better understanding the current situation in Ukraine and the impact of the war on Ukrainian workers, the economy and the environment; and secondly, to focus minds on how we can organise the most effective and practical solidarity from Scotland to Ukraine.

Pictured: Dr Taras Fedirko speaking at the USCS seminar in Edinburgh.



Radical perspectives

The day suitably began with a harrowing report from Olesia Briazgunova, international secretary of the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine (KPVU), who joined the event remotely from Kyiv. She set out a now-familiar description of the dual role of Ukrainian trade unions in supporting their members on the frontlines while also defending their interests against employers and the state, all against the backdrop of martial law which has made strikes and union rallies illegal. The KPVU has called on western governments to continue to provide economic, humanitarian and military aid to Ukraine (not an uncontroversial demand in trade unions here), to impose stronger sanctions on Russia and to use frozen Russian assets towards a "just reconstruction".

Solidarity greetings were subsequently heard from Labour MSP Katy Clark, SNP MP Tommy Sheppard, Green MSP Ross Greer and PCS assistant general secretary John Moloney – a reflection of the broad nature of USCS, whose members consciously decided not to have a narrow focus on the trade union movement but to instead build support for Ukraine across Scotland's trade unions, political parties and social movements.

An exceptionally good, if sobering, presentation was given by Dr Taras Fedirko, a political and economic anthropologist at the University of Glasgow. He explained in clear terms the extent to which the Ukrainian economy is now overwhelmingly dependent on western aid. Ukraine's defence spending alone was greater in 2022 than the entire state budget in 2021; the country's annual tax revenue just about covers military salaries.

Even the International Monetary Fund (IMF), alarmed by this unsustainable reliance on other countries, has encouraged the previously libertarian Zelenskyy government to pursue progressive taxation (an irony observed by LSE's Luke Cooper

in a recent article which Fedirko mentioned and endorsed).

Fedirko's presentation left an impression of two distinct paths open to Ukraine: one in which the massive labour shortages created by the war, combined with the expansion of the state and a turn towards progressive taxation, provides enough leverage to organised labour to push for a social-democratic reconstruction; or one in which Ukraine becomes an "Eastern European Israel" with a powerful military-industrial complex orienting the entire economy and society around confrontation with Russia. With well-paid British consultants among western experts deployed to Ukraine to shape economic strategy, there is an acute danger of the British and European left leaving the question of Ukraine's economic future uncontested and allowing the right to exclusively shape it.



Pictured: Iryna Zamuruieva speaking at the USCS seminar in Edinburgh.

Environmental crisis

A similarly thorough presentation by Iryna Zamururieva, an ecological activist based in Edinburgh, highlighted the scale of the environmental damage caused by the war, much of which will have a cross-generational impact. For example, up to 40% of Ukrainian land is now mined.

While the full extent of the damage can understandably not be

determined until areas which are either occupied or the site of active conflict become safe for researchers to access, it has already been established that hundreds of species of animals and plants are at risk of extinction (alarming not least because biodiversity is recognised as a bulwark against climate change) while fresh water, already in short supply in Ukraine as a result of climate change, has been widely contaminated by destructive actions such as the flooding of coal mines.

The destruction of the Kakhovka dam last June, leading to devastating flooding in the Kherson region, is perhaps the best known environmental disaster arising from the war in Ukraine. Zamuruieva pointed out, however, that the construction of the dam in the 1950s was also an environmental disaster, motivated in large part by the need for fresh water in Crimea during the deportation of the Tatars – a Russian colonial crime. She also highlighted other environmental disasters; in one case which received remarkably little publicity, more than four million chickens died at Europe's largest poultry farm after the occupation made it impossible to feed them.

With fossil fuels playing a significant role both in driving and funding the war, the Scottish climate movement forms a critical part of global anti-imperialist struggle, Zamuruieva put across. She encouraged USCS supporters to attend Climate Camp Scotland this summer, as well as to pressure the Scottish Parliament to take more action; opportunities include Labour MSP Monica Lennon's proposed bill on ecocide, and the Scottish Government's ongoing consultation on a national adaptation plan that also encompasses international action.

A more technical presentation on Ukraine's major environmental challenges was separately given by Ecoaction, a Ukrainian NGO which is to receive a £400 donation from USCS – the group's first international donation.

A divided left

Very little of the day was dedicated to discussing the way in which the war has divided the left internationally, but where these came to the fore most clearly was in a session on self-determination led by Irish writer Conor Kostick, who has previously written and delivered talks about Ukraine and the politics of James Connolly.

Though at times veering too close to a speculative exercise along the lines of 'what would Connolly say if he were here today?', Kostick correctly pointed out that Connolly was prepared to accept arms from a rival imperialist power, i.e. the German Empire, in order to wage a struggle for national liberation against the British Empire. Condemning Ukrainians for soliciting and accepting arms from NATO countries may be a legitimate political position, he said, but those advocating for it can't claim they've derived their analysis from Connolly.

Neither can they claim to stand in the tradition of Lenin, added Mike Picken of Ecosocialist.scot, highlighting the Bolshevik revolutionary's writing on self-determination and in particular his opposition to annexations ("because annexation violates the self-determination of nations, or, in other words, is a form of national oppression"). This did not appear to convince Graham Campbell, now an SNP councillor, who said he had been a Leninist for almost all of his life but had since come to believe that the Soviet project was imperialist from the very beginning, owing to its suppression of Ukrainian self-determination and the subsequent Holodomor.

Leslie Cunningham, national organiser for Scotland in rs21, put across their position that Ukraine has a right to obtain weapons from whoever is willing to supply them, but also that the UK should not provide them. Everyone in the room, including the rs21 comrades, seemed to accept this was a bit

of a fudge.

Most socialist opponents of western arms supplies to Ukraine rely on the specious argument that these supplies are prolonging the war, and that ending these supplies would quickly result in peace. USCS's persuasive counter-argument, which could have been more clearly articulated from the platform on the day, is that it is up to Ukrainians to decide the extent to which they resist the Russian invasion and occupation, and when to pursue peace and on what terms. This argument was recently and very coherently made by Colin Turbett in the *Scottish Left Review*.

Allan Armstrong, a member of the Republican Socialist Platform who has incidentally written extensively about Connolly and his politics, said a withdrawal of western support for Ukraine would inevitably lead to something resembling the Munich Agreement. Ukrainian independence is vastly preferable to the alternative seen in Donetsk, Luhansk or Chechnya, he said – fascism of a far more aggressive kind than is seen in the core of Russia.



Pictured: Ukrainian students and refugees carry a flag through Dundee city centre to mark the first anniversary of the

Russian invasion in February 2023.

Building the movement

The biggest takeaway from this event is that USCS is capable of organising discussions of a remarkably high calibre, a great achievement particularly in the context of wider post-pandemic organisational challenges being faced by virtually all of the left in Scotland. There was a welcome sense of comfort with USCS's political breadth and good-natured debate flowed easily from this. It was great that printed materials from Ukrainian writers, including English editions of the Ukrainian left journal *Commons/Spilne*, were on offer.

The second anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, landing on Saturday 24th February, will overlap with Palestine solidarity demonstrations in towns and cities across Scotland. There is a valuable opportunity here to connect the Ukrainian and Palestinian peoples' struggles through a self-determination framework, which USCS is uniquely positioned to do. USCS has already rightly supported Palestine solidarity demonstrations in Scotland and distributed copies of the Ukrainian letter of solidarity with Palestinian people. Efforts to place Ukrainian and Palestinian solidarity in competition with each other should be fiercely resisted. Demonstrations organised by Ukrainian communities in Scotland should be given whole-hearted support.

Looking further ahead, the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) and various trade union conferences will provide more opportunities for USCS to win affiliations from trade unions, which – while representing only one aspect of its work – will boost its capacity to organise political and practical support for Ukrainians.

There is a positive sense of momentum building in USCS. It is virtually alone on the Scottish left in answering the call for internationalist solidarity with Ukraine. Its success or

failure will reverberate for a long time to come.

CONTRIBUTOR
Connor Beaton is a republican socialist based in Dundee, where he works as a journalist. He was one of tens of thousands of young people drawn into politics by the 2014 independence referendum campaign. He is now the secretary of the Republican Socialist Platform and a local organiser for the Radical Independence Campaign.

Republished from: *https://heckle.scot/2024/02/ukrainians-havent-been-forgotten/*

Main photo: USCS activists supporting Ukrainians in Glasgow's George Square on the 2nd anniversary of the Russian invasion 24 Feb 2024 (Mike Picken for ecosocialist.scot)

Other photos: Connor Beaton for Heckle.scot

Scottish Kurds protest against Erdoğan invitation

Kurds in Scotland and their supporters have protested at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh against any invitation to Turkish state President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to visit Scotland, reports Mike Picken for ecosocialist.scot.

The apparent invitation arose after Scottish First Minister, and leader of the governing Scottish National Party (SNP), Humza Yousaf met briefly with the Turkish state President while they were both in Dubai in December 2023 for the COP28 summit. Kurds are angry that Erdoğan is using the Gaza crisis to launch military attacks on Kurdish populations inside both the Syrian and Iraqi state and continue his persecution and

murderous policies towards the 10 million Kurds inside the Turkish state. In the Kurdish-led liberated region of Rojava in neighbouring Syria, Erdoğan has committed exactly the same sort of brutal bombing and attacks on civilian infrastructure that he accuses Israel of in Gaza.



Damage caused by Turkish air attacks on civilian electricity infrastructure in Suwaydiyah North & East Syria. Photo: Rojava Information Center

So when news that Yousaf had invited Erdoğan to Scotland came out in the media in January 2024, Kurdish and solidarity organisations such as Scottish Solidarity with Kurdistan, alongside trade unionists Mike Arnott of the Scottish TUC and Stephen Smellie of UNISON Scotland, moved swiftly to condemn the invitation by issuing a public letter of protest. The Kurdish community in Scotland organised a demonstration at the Scottish Parliament on 25 January to demand the SNP refuse to invite Erdoğan and instead condemn his regime's murderous policy against the Kurds. The protestor's views were recorded by progressive media outlet The Skotia on Instagram (video below) and the open letter of protest received wide media coverage.

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by Media for a better Scotland. (@theskotia)

Prominent Glasgow SNP councillor Roza Salih, herself a refugee from Iraqi Kurdistan, had previously drawn attention to the matter in a post in December on Twitter/X in December, covered by The National daily newspaper:

> *“Humza being friendly and laughing with Erdogan is an offence to the Kurdish people”*

> *Roza Salih, Scotland's first refugee councillor, has criticised Humza Yousaf for shaking hands with the Turkish president https://t.co/XHu2iH28P0*
>
> *— The National (@ScotNational) December 2, 2023*

International Movement demands release of Öcalan on 25th Anniversary of his incarceration

Meanwhile the Kurdish movement internationally is organising a global mobilisation to demand the release of Kurdish political leader, **Abdullah Öcalan**, with demonstrations across Europe up to the **25th Anniversary** of his unjust imprisonment and solitary confinement by the Turkish state. An Internationalist Long March is poised to spotlight this anniversary, beginning in Basel-Switzerland on 10 February, and will include key events such as a conference in Strasbourg on 15 February and a pan-European demonstration in Cologne and Düsseldorf, Germany, on 17 February. SNP Westminster Member of Parliament, Tommy Sheppard, recently met with Öcalan's lawyers at the Council of Europe meeting and has written to UK government foreign secretary to call on him to take up Öcalan's incarceration by the Turkish government and demand his release (text below).



Text of Open Letter by Kurdish

solidarity organisations and individuals on the invitation of Turkish president Erdoğan to Scotland

STATEMENT:
We, the undersigned, condemn the invitation that the First Minister of Scotland, Humza Yousaf, has made to Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The Turkish state's record on human rights abuses is well documented, both internally and externally. Women, ethnic minorities and migrants bear the brunt of its oppressive policies. In particular, the Turkish state continues a policy against the Kurdish people that seeks to suppress basic human rights and political autonomy through military force, legal repression, and assimilationist policies.

Erdogan's party destroys civilian infrastructure beyond Turkey's own borders for political leverage and to disempower an already economically disadvantaged population in Syria and Iraq. Yousaf's response to journalists was dismissive when challenged on this. We condemn the cooperation between Erdogan and any segment of the British state. The First Minister's response to press questioning whether the invitation was "a good idea considering his treatment of the Kurds" was that "as a NATO ally", it was a legitimate invitation "if he was visiting the UK". This is hypocritical: The SNP positions itself as distinct from Westminster and with a more discerning eye towards human rights abuses and regional autonomy.

While Erdogan has been vocally supportive of Palestinians, 40% of oil imports to Israel come via Turkey, and the two governments have a long term and high value arms industry relationship that has been ongoing throughout the periods of

intensification in Israeli attacks over the last decade. Erdogan does to the Kurds everything that he accuses Netanyahu of doing to the Palestinian people. Both Israel and Turkey have been crafting a Middle East where business and trade with western countries are more valuable than justice or freedom. The power to define terrorism and the legitimate use of violence are now highly developed tools to repress even the most basic self-determination of peoples.

From January 13th – 16th 2024, Turkish military forces carried out 224 ground and air strikes in north-eastern Syria, targeting agricultural and energy infrastructure such as oil fields. In nine locations, electric power stations were struck, which led to power outages and water supply issues that are currently affecting millions of people. This type of attack is a frequent but under reported reality and Erdogan is exploiting this moment when the world media is rightfully watching Gaza. The targeting of vital infrastructure is itself a war crime and these attacks are also an unprovoked act of aggression.

BAE Systems, Thales, Leonardo and other weapons manufacturing companies that have factories in Scotland supply both Israel and Turkey. In 2019, white phosphorous – banned for use as an incendiary chemical weapon – was reported to have been used by the Turkish military in north-eastern Syria. An investigation at the time showed 70 British export licenses for phosphorous.

Domestically in Turkey, the political repression of the left-wing parliamentary party HDP has led to more than five thousand of its members being arrested, the stripping of MPs' parliamentary immunity and their imprisonment, and widespread implementation of the "trustee" system by Erdogan's party that forcibly removed all elected HDP mayors from office and replaced them with government-appointed officials. This has disproportionately affected the Kurdish people in Turkey, where attempts at democratic expression are crushed, and more

than eight thousand Kurdish political prisoners are languishing in Turkish prisons. Kurdish language musicians, teachers and campaigners are often met with criminalisation – the Kurdish language is unrecognised by the Turkish parliament despite being the second most spoken language in the country, and language rights are linked to terrorism as a method of delegitimisation.

The UK government and the European Union countries have shrewdly wedded themselves to facilitating Erdogan's AKP government in exchange for the policing of Europe's land and sea borders and its imprisonment of displaced peoples subject to these "push-backs".

As residents of Scotland and members of human rights organisations, we request that the First Minister and the SNP condemn Erdogan and the AK Party for their actions. The targeting of civilian infrastructure and use of chemical weapons are war crimes, regardless of whether the state that does so is a NATO member.

We request Mr Yousaf's support in condemning these attacks on north-east Syria. We also ask him to assess the human rights abuses that the Kurdish peoples are subject to within the state borders of Turkey and that he supports the struggle for the freedom of political prisoners in Turkey.

We are in a moment that requires brave leadership on myriad human rights abuses, the repression of the self-determination of peoples and the destruction of the earth, happening across the globe. We implore the First Minister and Scottish government, particularly in this moment, to resist shallow alliances that fail to look at the geo-political situation holistically. The moment demands an uncompromising acknowledgement of the colonial legacies of the current genocidal treatment of the Palestinian and Kurdish peoples.

We ask Mr Yousaf to meet with the Kurdish communities in

Scotland and campaigners to discuss this issue. We believe that Scotland can do better and we would like to talk about how.

LIST OF SIGNATURES

Scottish Solidarity with Kurdistan
Kurdish Community Scotland
Zagros Community Scotland
Women's Rights Delegation from Scotland to North and East Syria, May 2023
International Human Rights Delegation on political prisoners in Turkey, December 2023
Edinburgh University Justice for Palestine Society
Mike Arnott, President of Scottish Trades Union Congress
Stephen Smellie, Depute Convenor UNISON Scotland
International Solidarity Movement (ISM) – Scotland

Text of Letter from SNP Westminster MP Tommy Sheppard to UK government foreign secretary David Cameron



The Rt Hon Lord David Cameron
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
King Charles Street
London

SW1A 2AH
26th January 2024

Dear David

I am writing on behalf of several constituents to ask you to make representations to the Turkish Government in the case of Abdullah Ocalan.

You will know that Ocalan is regarded by millions of Kurds throughout the world as their leader and he is key to achieving a permanent and peaceful solution which respects the rights of the Kurds in Turkey and neighbouring countries.

He has been held in solitary confinement on the island prison of Imrali for almost 25 years. This is contrary to several judgements of European Court of Human Rights which have found the manner of his detention to be in violation of the statues to prohibit torture.

As a UK member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I met with Mr Ocalan's lawyers earlier this week. They tell me that he has been denied any communication with the outside world and any visits from his legal team for almost three years now.

This case does great damage to Turkey's reputation and is an egregious breach of international human rights law. It is also a running sore and an insult to the many thousands of Kurdish people who have made this country their home.

I would ask you to take up this case with the Turkish authorities, demanding that Mr Ocalan be allowed access to his lawyers, that his isolation end, and that after a quarter of a century in solitary confinement, his case is reviewed, and plans made to end his incarceration.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Tommy Sheppard
Member of Parliament for Edinburgh East

Gaza: Support the New Hetherington Occupation at Glasgow University

Students have occupied a building at Glasgow University to demand divestment from arms industries in the light of Israel's genocidal war in Gaza. Jennifer Debs reports for ***Heckle*** *– online journal of the Republican Socialist Platform.*

Almost thirteen years have passed since Glasgow University's Hetherington House was last alive with student protest, but as of Monday 22nd January, that long dry spell has come to an end.

Once again, the windows of the building are brightened by flags and protest signs, and once more the halls are filled with political chatter and radical demands. Nearby, university security guards hover uneasily, keeping an eye on the front door and everyone that comes and goes. Looking at the scene, you might think it was 2011 again.

But this is a new generation of student activists, even if the causes they fight for, like that of Gaza, were also upheld by a previous generation. The new occupiers are part of the Glasgow Against Arms and Fossil Fuels (GAAF) group, and they have taken over Hetherington House with the demand that the University of Glasgow divests from its investments in the arms industry.



Credit: @gaafmovement on Instagram

Inflamed by the brutal invasion of Gaza, the latest chapter in Israel's campaign of genocide against the Palestinian people, GAAF are taking action to pressure university management into taking a decision that would have a concrete impact on the funding of murder in the Middle East. GAAF argue that the university has blood on its hands, and that it profits by the shedding of that blood – something that must be stopped as soon as possible.

The occupation is aiming to put specific pressure on the university's finance committee, ahead of its next meeting in February, to make a decision in favour of divestment. GAAF has reason to believe its goal is feasible, given that Glasgow University previously made commitments to divest from fossil fuels in 2014 after a successful campaign by student activists.

Of course, any commitment the university makes will be one that it must be held to, and that will doubtless be a part of GAAF's work should they win the current struggle. The university cannot be allowed to kick this issue into the long grass, not when so much is at stake in Palestine, Yemen, and

other sites of imperialist slaughter in the world today.



Credit: GAAF

For now, the occupation is focused on its first goal of winning a commitment to divestment, and on keeping itself running. Yesterday, Wednesday 24th January, a solidarity demonstration of students and supporters rallied outside Hetherington House before marching to the main building of the university. There were speeches about the goals of the campaign and the necessity of arms divestment, and the crowd made plenty of noise to let the university management know they aren’t going anywhere.

This is only the beginning. GAAF intend to keep the occupation going until they win their goal, and they naturally need as much support as possible. With this action, these brave students are striking a blow at the imperialist war machine, and lending a hand to the people of Palestine in their hour of need. Every socialist in Scotland should support this

occupation.



Credit: GAAF

If you live nearby, go along to 11 University Gardens, have a chat with the students guarding the door, bring them some snacks and fruit, and let them know they are not alone. Occupations always need food and supplies, so find out what they need, and help them get it if you have some cash to spare. If GAAF call a demonstration, get along and show your support. The university and the broader public must know that these occupiers are backed up by a great well of support from the working class.

If you live elsewhere, why not think of organising a solidarity action through your trade union branch, your student union, your tenants' union, or your group of friends? And if the university management attempt to punish the occupiers with disciplinary action like suspension or expulsion, then we as a movement must help GAAF resist and

overturn any such decisions. Any victimisation of the occupiers must be confronted with a firm response: nobody left behind!

When the original Hetherington occupation took on university management all those years ago, they had a network of student groups and anti-austerity collectives at their side, supporting them and taking action in Glasgow and further afield. If the new Free Hetherington is to survive – and not just survive, claim a victory too – then it cannot be a single event. It must be answered in all the rich variety of action and expression the student and workers' movement is capable of.

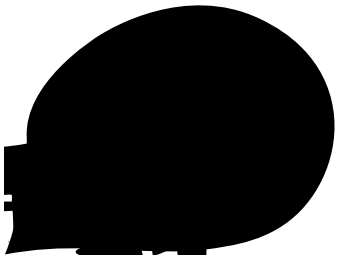
There are many more institutions that fund genocide in Palestine, and this cannot be allowed to continue. But take heart – today we are seeing a new era of student militancy, and hopefully there will be many more occupations to come, not just in Glasgow, but also Dundee, Paisley, Stirling, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. The arms economy needs a good beating. Let the second Free Hetherington be a kick in the teeth, but not the last!

All together – defend and extend the Free Hetherington!

Books not bombs!
No profit from blood!

You can keep informed about GAAF and the occupation on their Instagram page. The occupation is located at 11 University Gardens, Glasgow G12 8QH.

Originally published on **Heckle**: https://heckle.scot/2024/01/support-the-new-hetherington-occupation/



To join the Republican Socialist Platform,
visit: https://join.republicansocialists.scot/

Ukraine’s Fight is Our Fight – Seminar in Edinburgh Saturday 3rd February 1pm-5pm

https://bit.ly/USCScot24

UKRAINE'S FIGHT IS OUR FIGHT

Perspectives from social movement and trade union activists

Edinburgh's Augustine United Church, Saturday 3rd February 2024, 1pm-5pm.

Free seminar with guest speakers including:

- Tommy Sheppard MP & Katy Clark MSP
- Chris Ford of Ukraine Solidarity Campaign
- Dr Taras Fedirko on the Ukrainian economy
- Iryna Zamuraieva on the environmental crisis
- Irish historian Conor Kostick on self-determination



More info & registration: bit.ly/USCScot24

Organised by Ukraine Solidarity Campaign Scotland

Ukraine Solidarity Campaign Scotland sponsors include: Tommy Sheppard MP, Ross Greer MP. Affiliations include Edinburgh TUC, Dumfries and Galloway TUC, N Lanarkshire Unison.

uscscotland@gmail.com

https://twitter.com/USCScotland

John Maclean’s Legacy – 100 Years On. Talk by Henry Bell to a Scottish Socialist Party Event

On 24 January 2024 at Townhead Village Hall, Glasgow, **Henry Bell**, author of the biography “*John Maclean – Hero of Red Clydeside*”, gave the Jim McVicar Memorial Lecture for the Scottish Socialist Party. Bell examines some of the life, times and core principles that the revolutionary marxist John Maclean represented. He asks if these still relate to the world today – a century after Maclean’s tragic and untimely death.

Independence Live recorded the lecture and will be making it available on YouTube below

Find author Henry Bell’s website https://henryjimbell.com/

John Maclean – Hero of Red Clydeside is available from Pluto Press: https://plutobooks.com https://www.plutobooks.com/9780745338385/john-maclean/

Find more info and publications etc from Scottish Socialist Party: https://scottishsocialistparty.org/

The **Jim McVicar Memorial Lecture** is an annual event organised by the Scottish Socialist Party to commemorate the life of Jim McVicar, founder member of the Scottish Socialist Party and its Treasurer at the time of his untimely death in 2020

(Obituary by Scottish Fourth Internationalists here: https://socialistresistance.org/jim-mcvicar-1958-2020/21311)

Women's Delegation from Scotland to Rojava

On Christmas eve as bombs dropped on Palestine, Turkey began a fresh assault on Rojava, the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, destroying critical infrastructure, like power plants and grain storage, and killing civilians. Like Palestine, the ongoing struggle in Rojava is a decades (if not centuries) long fight for collective liberation and self-determination. The ongoing revolution has established a region-wide system of grassroots democracy led by women's liberation. Such liberatory realities will always be a threat to established power structures and the most recent escalation is no coincidence. Turkey's president Tayip Erdogan has already made two full ground invasions of Rojava, annexing the Afrin region in 2018, and Serekaniye in 2019. Now, he undertakes another aggression knowing that attention is elsewhere. As the events of the past few months have made visible the necessity and reality of anti-imperial struggle for so many, a group of women from Scotland who visited Rojava in 2023 reflect on the lessons from what they witnessed there for anyone interested in anti-colonial movements.

Why did we go?

We travelled to Rojava in spring 2023, where we met with women's groups under the umbrella of the confederal women's organisation, Kongra Star. We are all organisers or activists at home, with diverse backgrounds both culturally and in

struggle: such as migrant justice, feminism, anti-capitalism and campaigns against the arms trade. In different ways, we could all see ourselves reflected in the struggle and the achievements of the Rojava revolution. We all have questions, now more than ever, about how we can change the world we live in for the better, and we felt we could learn a lot from the political process there.

The Kurdistan Freedom Movement has a tradition of grassroots organising and challenging oppressive power structures instead of recreating them. The revolution has followed this philosophy, not basing the organisation of society on nationalist or ethnic lines. Kurds, Arabs, Syriacs, Ezidis and all the people of the region self-organise and develop their own strengths, coming together in structures that treats diversity as strength. Together they have created the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria and are transforming their society at all levels. The philosophy of Abdullah Öcalan, with its proposals for Democratic Confederalism (the organisation of society through democratic self-organisation not state institutions) and women's liberation, is the beating heart of a revolution which has been going on for over a decade. Kurdish women had been organising for many years when opportunity for revolution arose in 2012, at which point the people of Rojava, because of this committed long-term work of organising and education, were prepared to build up a society based on women's freedom and gender liberation, pluralism, ecology, grassroots democracy and self-governance.

What was our ex



The special cemetery in Kobane for those who were lost in the war. Photo Credit: Jennifer Clapham

perience there?

It was one thing to read about it all and another to see it—an

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several times a day, bouncing on dusty uneven roads to one meeting after another

r. We filed in and out of offices, halls, yards and canvas tents, to sit on plastic

chairs, colourful sofas, or cushions on the floor. We met with dozens of organisers

, most of them women, who explained their stories to us with a dignity and a sens

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rily tried to imprint everything on our memories. In between meetings, we were ho

sted in family homes, fed more than we could eat, and made friends despite language

and cultural barriers.

On our first day, we visited a Jineoloji Academy, Washokani refugee camp and Jinwar village. We learnt about the work and research of Jineoloji in the first meeting: it is a science of life, society, and the creation of a new world based on women's and ecological liberation. The aim of their analysis of oppression is to solve social problems, rather than merely theorise about them. In our discussion, we compared the Western rhetoric of "rights" to the concept of "freedom" in Rojava. In our organising in Scotland, we often come across tendencies to rely on governance structure to grant rights and solutions – e.g. by lobbying for laws or asking for grants. Freedom, as the women from the Jineoloji Academy explained to us, consists in autonomy and self-empowerment. It needs to be built from the ground up and cannot be granted from above. This encouragement of the flourishing of autonomy through collective action showed us how Rojava is a microcosm of all the world's social problems and provides inspiration for women's struggles in Scotland as well.

When we visite



Arriving at Washokani refugee camp. Photo Credit: Jennifer Clapham

d th e Wa sh ok an i re fu ge e ca mp , we sp ok e to th e wo me n’ s gr ou p th er e. Th e in ha bi

tants of the camp were displaced by Turkey’s 2019 invasion of Serekaniye, and their

aim is to return to their homes. In the meantime, despite the difficulties of livi

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l NGOs, they are also autonomously organised as women. The camp is run through co

llective decision-making with a system of communes and assemblies, and their gr

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Crescent, had a strong presence on site, as the only group providing medical su

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from plastic bags and playing ball – we had no choice but to join in, moved by thei

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The women-led aspect of the revolution goes beyond autonomous women’s organising and encompasses the liberation of children and families as well. At Jinwar Women’s Village, which started 6 years ago as one of the only women’s villages in the world, we learnt about how they also organise a regular children’s assembly. Its purpose is to extend democracy to the youth by

encouraging them to self-organise, solve their problems, and share skills, ideas and culture. The village also embraces herbal medicine and deepens the connection to the land through growing their own food; a testament to the administration's aims of caring for the environment and sustainability. After the discussion, we shared a delicious meal made with local nutritious ingredients, and it was easy to agree with the following message, voiced earlier in the day by one of the village's inhabitants: "Women are the heart and driving force of democracy – when we come together and feel together, no one can defeat us".



Jinwar women's village. Photo Credit: Jennifer Clapham

We had all these experiences in just one day and met

with many more dedicated revolutionaries over the course of the delegation; wome

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mblies, councils and offices in different regions, groups supporting disabled pe

ople, and women's self-defence forces like HPC-Jin (Women's Neighourhood Defe

nce Forces) and YPJ (Women's Defence Units).

Messages to Scotland and learnings for us



Meeting with the women who run domestic

It was clear how much we were learning and what we were getting out of the experience. We had to ask ourselves what they felt they were getting out

of giving us soviolence resolution centres. Photo Credit: much time fromJennifer Clapham
their busy
lives. Usually,
the answer came
in the form of a
smile and asking
us to build our
own revolution
at home. We
shuffled
awkwardly,
asking if there
were key
messages, they
wanted us to
bring out to the
world, while we
work on that
one.

Spreading the word about the revolution, and the Turkish state's attempts to destroy it is a start. Rojava is a living example of how we can organise ourselves and society differently. It is direct democracy, with women involved at every level of organising, a new society with communal living at the centre. It is messy, imperfect, and still not complete – but it shows it is possible. At a time when it is hard to find any light, we must hold onto and know that a better world is possible.

The women of North and East Syria are not asking for anyone's help and are more than capable of changing their own world. Still, we were reminded many times of the UK's responsibility in the arms trade that leads to the bombs dropping on Rojava, and the complicity of global powers in the Turkish state's attacks on infrastructure. The neighbourhood communes and

assemblies there lamented the shortages of water and resources, which are problems with material roots in the UK. For example, BAE systems – who have multiple sites in Scotland – are helping Turkey develop their own aircraft.

In addition to drone strikes and shelling of infrastructure, Turkey also targets political organisers, particularly women. We have already looked on, horrified, as Yusra Darwish, a friend who welcomed us with tea and discussed neighbourhood organising with us, was killed in a Turkish drone strike in June. Now we are watching as power stations, water supplies, hospitals and even the region's only oxygen factory, are targeted in an effort to break the will and the ability to survive of the people of the region. The fabric of everything that made such an impression on us, that has become an inspiration for radicals all over the world, is under attack.

Call to Action

States that destroy infrastructure, kill civilians and deny people the right self-determination are a threat to democracy and liberation everywhere. And if we believe in a fairer, just world for everyone, then we need to stand up and fight against it. We can start by breaking the silence. Share your knowledge of these attacks with your friends, discuss it with your family, and post about it online. Follow news sites like the ones detailed below.

You can also donate to Heyva Sor a Kurd (Kurdish Red Crescent) who are on the ground in North-East Syria providing vital humanitarian and medical assistance (details at end).

Lastly, join, support, or set up a local solidarity group, such as the Kurdistan Solidarity Network or Scottish Solidarity with Kurdistan.

Stay up to date on events in the region:

ANF News (https://anfenglishmobile.com/) or Medya News

(https://medyanews.net/). As well as groups such as the Rojava Information Centre (Twitter: @RojavaIC) or Riseup 4 Rojava (https://riseup4rojava.org/).

Solidarity networks:

https://kurdistansolidarity.net

Scottish Solidarity with Kurdistan | Facebook Look on Facebook: “ScottishSolidaritywithKurdistan”

DONATE TO HEYVA SOR HERE

Bank account
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Kreissparkasse Köln
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BIC/SWIFT: COKSDE33XXX
Reference: Rojava

PayPal: paypal.me/heyvasorakurdistane
Contact and further information: www.heyvasor.com
E-Mail: heyvasor@web.de
Phone: +49 (0) 2241 975 25 83
Instagram: heyvasor
Twitter: @Heyva__Sor
Facebook: Heyva Sor a Kurdistanê e.V.

Originally published 7 January 2024 on Bella Caledonia: https://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2024/01/07/womens-delegation-from-scotland-to-rojava/

Main Picture: Arin Mirkan square in liberated Kobane, pivotal in the fight against ISIS. Photo Credit: Jennifer Clapham



Originally published by Bella Caledonia, a Scottish-based online magazine combining political and cultural commentary. You can support Bella Caledonia and Scottish independent media by donating here: https://bellacaledonia.org.uk/donate

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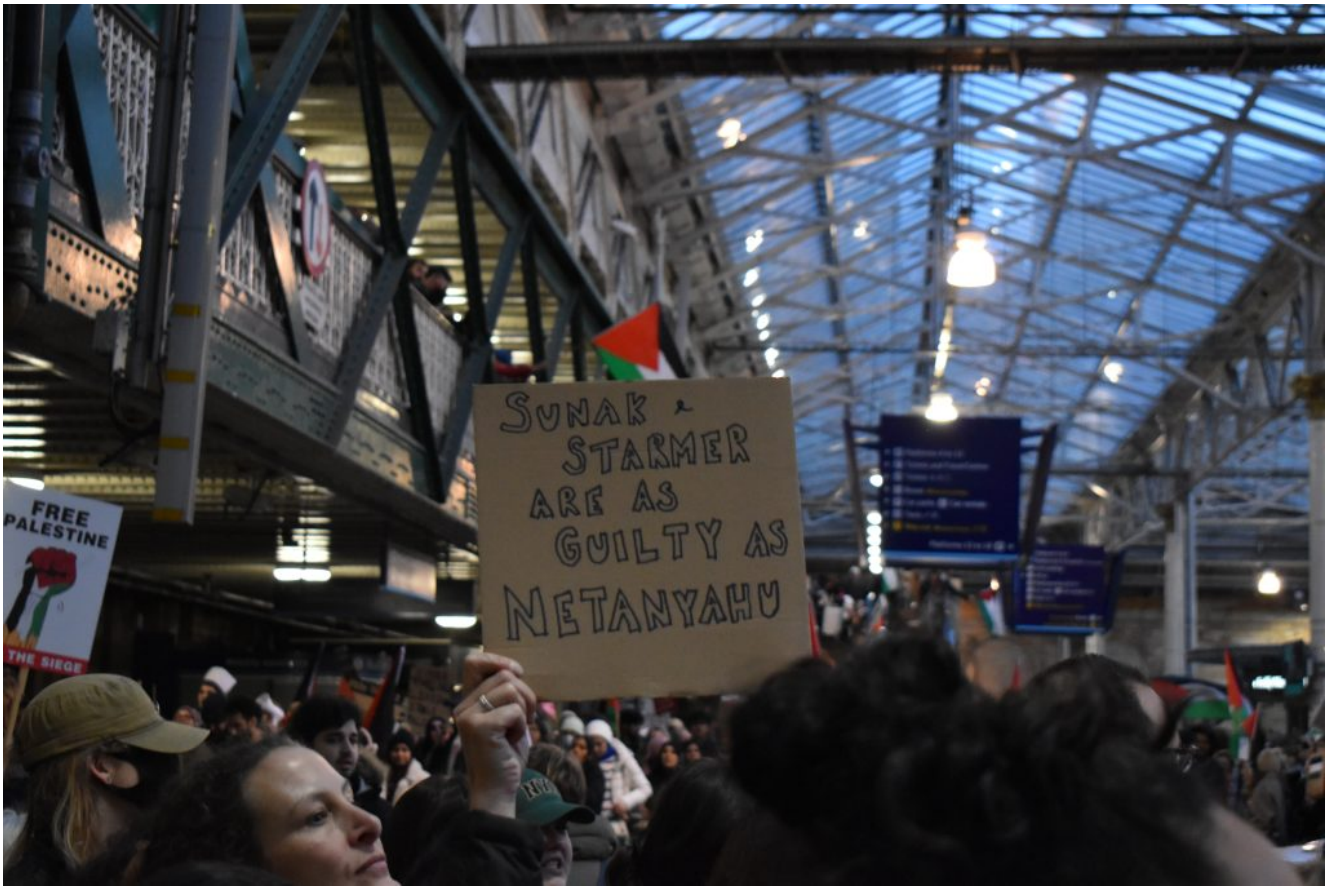
Fight the Racist Campaign Against Palestine Solidarity by Heckle Editors

Suella Braverman's smearing of the huge and diverse Palestine solidarity movement as "hate marchers" bringing violence to the streets of cities like London and Edinburgh is not merely, as some have suggested, a provocative preamble to her future Conservative leadership campaign – it is yet another example of a wider turn to authoritarianism in the UK and other European states in order to forcibly suppress democratic and progressive challenges from below.

It is significant and welcome that those organising marches and rallies for Palestine in towns and cities north and south of the border have so far refused to be cowed. They have maintained their determination not only in defiance of the Westminster government and virtually all of the mainstream media, but also frivolous arrests and violent threats from police and far-right networks.

The sheer size of these demonstrations over the past month, across these islands, Europe and the world, has already succeeded in greatly amplifying the voice of the occupied and blockaded Palestinian people and robbing the extremist Israeli government of the moral authority it claims in its military campaign against Gaza. We should recognise this enormous achievement.

Still, it is clear that these massive mobilisations alone will not be enough to stop the bombs falling on Gaza and the tanks rolling in, much as millions taking to the streets just over two decades ago could not stop the criminal Iraq War. This is why large parts of the renewed movement have embraced radical tactics including civil disobedience – as seen in train station occupations, university student walk-outs and trade union boycotts – as well as direct action targeting arms manufacturers and other institutions complicit in Israeli apartheid and genocide. These bold actions are justified and must continue. The Palestinian call for boycott, divestment and sanctions also remains extremely relevant (even if regularly misrepresented).



That this movement is so large, broad, increasingly militant and willing to break the law to prevent a greater injustice is a powerful combination. This is why there has been such a sharp state response from western governments who have, for 75 years, ranged from sponsors to allies of Israeli settler-colonialism for their own economic and geopolitical advantage. This is another expression of the same anti-democratic impulse which has seen, for example, the criminalisation of the climate justice movement. The blocking of a Scottish independence referendum by the UK Supreme Court is also, in fact, part of this campaign against popular sovereignty.

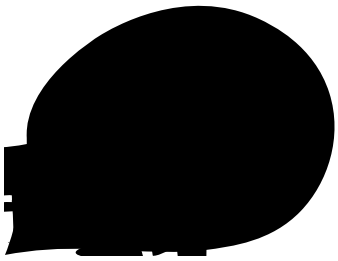
The suppression of Palestine solidarity, however, has a unique racialised character. Across Europe, ostensibly liberal and right-wing governments alike have smeared millions of Palestine supporters as 'Islamists' to justify harsh restrictions on immigration, weaponising citizenship against protesters. The UK is far from an outlier in this regard; a looming threat is a likely expansion of the racist Prevent programme. Building strong community networks to protect our

neighbours from all forms of racism, including Islamophobia and antisemitism, will be a crucial challenge in coming months.

Overcoming all of these obstacles necessitates unity and bravery. We saw an extraordinary example of this last week when the Ukrainian left journal *Commons* published its statement of solidarity with Palestinians, rejecting those – including the Ukrainian government – who have counterposed solidarity between one of these peoples and the other. We will need many more principled initiatives like this, that forge links between all those asserting the power of people against the power of states, to eventually win a democratic, peaceful and free world.]

Originally published by Heckle: https://heckle.scot/2023/11/fight-the-racist-campaign-against-palestine-solidarity/

Heckle is an 0nline Scottish publication overseen by a seven-person editorial board elected by members of the Republican Socialist Platform.



To join the Republican Socialist Platform, visit: https://join.republicansocialists.scot/

Main photo: Edinburgh Gaza demo 11 November 2023, ecosocialist.scot, other photos and graphics, Heckle and

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Radical Independence Campaign announces conference on impasse in independence movement

The Radical Independence Campaign invites supporters to join a conference aimed at finding a way through the movement's current impasse.

Break the Impasse: Towards Independence

Saturday, 21 October 2023 11:00 – 16:00

Location: The Renfield Training and Conference Centre Glasgow

260 Bath Street Glasgow G2 4JP (Journey Planner here)

The movement for Scottish self-determination is at an impasse – we are stuck. The Radical Independence Campaign invites independence supporters and the wider Scottish left to join us at a conference in Glasgow on Saturday 21st October to help find a way to break the impasse.

This grassroots-focused event is the first in-person RIC conference since the pandemic and follows an online conference in 2021 which attracted hundreds of participants.

Programme

The conference will begin with speakers from a range of invited organisations, including the Scottish Greens and SNP Socialists, offering their views on the way forward, followed by breakout discussions in which participants can discuss their response to the speakers.

After lunch, there will be a series of participatory workshops on issues including climate justice, trade unions and independence, and how we get organised at a local level.

The day will conclude with a plenary session aimed at establishing concrete next steps.

More information about the programme, including speakers and workshops, will follow.

Get involved

We wish to create a friendly forum to contribute to a discussion on where Scottish politics and the independence movement finds itself now, and to explore the options and strategic implications of the proposals coming from different parts of the movement.

We want to have a good conference with lively discussions that produce clear decisions and commitments – in other words, a well thought-out strategy and plan of action to take forward RIC and the movement for Scottish self-determination.

For more information or to help us organise the conference, please email contact@ric.scot.



Radical Independence Campaign on the march at COP26 in Glasgow, November 2021

BETTER BUSES FOR STRATHCLYDE Campaign Launch – Glasgow Friday 29 September

*Get Glasgow Moving are launching **BETTER BUSES FOR STRATHCLYDE** – a campaign focused on winning an improvement to bus services in the greater Glasgow/Strathclyde region. They are holding a launch in Glasgow on Friday 29 September, details from Get Glasgow Moving's news release below.*

JOIN THE LAUNCH RALLY

> ***Friday 29 September 2023, 9:30am***
> *SPT Head Office, 131 St Vincent St, Glasgow, G2 5JF – Journey Planner here*
>
> *Please share details on Twitter, Facebook & Instagram to help spread the word.*

The next year is crucial in our long-running fight to **take our buses back into public control**. So we're joining forces with

trade unions, community councils, environmental groups, students and pensioners associations and more, to launch a new region-wide campaign.

Better Buses for Strathclyde is inspired by the success of the Better Buses for Greater Manchester campaign, which pushed their transport authority, TfGM, into bringing their region's buses back into public control in order to deliver a fully-integrated, accessible and affordable public transport network called the Bee Network:

By bringing together bus users and employees from across Strathclyde's 12 council areas, Better Buses for Strathclyde will put pressure on our regional transport authority, SPT, to utilise the new powers in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 to deliver a similar fully-integrated, accessible and affordable system for us – and on the Scottish Government to provide the necessary funding and support.

THE NEXT YEAR IS CRUCIAL

From September 2023 – March 2024, SPT is developing the new 'Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy' which will set the direction of bus policy in our region for the next 15 years (until 2038).

This offers us **a once-in-generation opportunity** to end the chaos caused by bus deregulation (introduced by Thatcher in 1986), which has seen millions of miles of routes cut and fares hiked well above inflation.

We must ensure that SPT's strategy sets out ambitious plans to:

- re-regulate the all private bus companies in our region (through 'franchising') so that it can plan routes to serve communities' needs and connect seamlessly with trains, ferries and Glasgow's Subway, with one simple, affordable ticket across all modes.

- And to set-up a new publicly-owned bus company for Strathclyde (like Edinburgh's Lothian Buses) which can start taking over routes and reinvesting profits back into expanding and improving our network.

And we must ensure that the Scottish Government provides the funding and support necessary for SPT to deliver the world-class public transport system that the 2.2 million people living across Strathclyde need and deserve.

Please join the Better Buses for Strathclyde launch rally on Friday 29 September 2023, 9:30am at SPT Head Office, 131 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5JF – as we get ready to build the campaign over the next year.

The launch rally takes place as part of the Better Buses National Week of Action and Scotland's Climate Week.



Bus Campaigners including

Get Glasgow Moving protest at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh

Republished from: https://www.getglasgowmoving.org/campaign/betterbuses/

Rising Clyde: Climate Camp vs. Scotland's biggest polluter

This month's Rising Clyde programme was recorded at Climate Camp Scotland in Grangemouth.

The year's most important gathering of climate justice activists from different movements across the country, took on the giant INEOS oil refinery and petrochemical plant which spews out close to 3 million tons of CO2 equivalent every year.

We talked to Kenny Alexander, a former oil worker who is from Grangemouth, Jessica Gaitan Johannesson, an organiser with Climate Camp, and Duncan Harbison from the Stop Rosebank campaign. about the aims of the camp and the challenges ahead for the climate justice movement in Scotland.

(581) Rising Clyde: Climate Camp vs. Scotland's biggest polluter – YouTube

Rising Clyde is the Scottish Climate Show, presented by Iain Bruce, and broadcast on the Independence Live Channel. Previous editions can be found in the embedded video below by clicking in the three lines in the top right hand corner and choosing from the video list.

A report on Climate Camp Scotland by RS21 members is here: https://www.ecosocialist.scot/?p=1898