

Yes

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Scottish Socialist Voice

Labour, Tories:

BITTER TOGETHER



DAVID CAMERON: master of cuts



ALISTAIR DARLING: 'UK OK'

AS bankers' pal Alastair Darling wooed the dwindling band of Scottish Tories in Stirling, Labour unionist splits - led by Gordon Brown - widened.

A growing revulsion at sharing a platform with the Tories and Lib Dems behind the savage austerity cuts saw the first No camp split, with 'United With Labour' going their own way.

Former Labour MP and MSP John McAllion lifts the lid on the murky stew - see page 3...



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Labour and Tories: bitter together

by Ken Ferguson

As the latest round of benefit cuts slash the income of the disabled and Bedroom Tax horror tales grow anybody looking for relief from Labour had their hopes dashed by shadow chancellor Ed Balls who warned of "iron rule" and cuts in winter payments to wealthier pensioners under Labour.

The latest stage in the auction to prove who can be toughest on the poor, ConDems or Labour, came as it was revealed that former Labour Chancellor Alistair Darling is speaking at the conference of that isolated fringe group, the Scottish Tories, as Better Together chief. Of course while there is growing unease in Labour ranks at the prospect of sharing a platform with the hard liners in the Westminster coalition in the anti independence front, which we look at



BALLS! shadow chancellor warned of 'iron rule' and more cuts

elsewhere in this *Voice*, the brutal truth is that beyond the national question there much agreement between the threesome.

At the heart of this is the fact that all the Westminster gang are working to a common belief that, to rescue the greedy rich who wrecked the economy, everybody else it to face cuts, sackings, soaring prices and austerity stretching to the far horizon.

This is the source of the endless media drum beat about scroungers and benefit cheats and almost daily announcements of "crack downs" on what must be - at least in *Daily Mail* land - the laziest population on the planet. In turn this helps generate increasingly vicious ConDem attacks which are gathering pace and backed up by

assaults ranging for plans to privatise Royal Mail to proposals to further weaken trade unions.

Not to be outdone Labour joins the auction with Scottish leader Johann Lamont attacking the provision of free prescription under a thin smoke screen of needing the money for cancer sufferers and re-treating wholesale from other keynote policies dressed up as an attack on "Freebie Scotland".

And nobody should swallow the Balls spin that the attack on winter fuel allowances is just to tweak things and deprive the rich of their payments. The key part of the Balls announcement was the promise of an "iron rule" on finance if they win in 2015.

This clearly opens the door to a wholesale dismantling of key

achievements in benefits, health and social provision - all accompanied by crocodile tears and hand wringing about "hard times".

The truth is that Labour is in the midst of a wholesale break with its historic past achievements under the cloak of making "communities" responsible for services and sub letting key services to the voluntary sector in what will amount to back door privatisation.

Fault line

Anyone with illusions about being saved from the wicked Tories by valiant Labour needs urgently to read the not so small print and understand that Red Ed, Johann and her key backers long ago dropped Labour's social democratic past and are now entirely prisoners of the idea that markets are the answer. It is this reality - that markets, global finance and war for resources are shared values of the Better Together threesome - that is the key fault line in the debate about independence.

There must be no stone left unturned to drive home the message that a No vote is a vote for dramatic cuts, sackings and in favour of private greed over public need.

Only a Yes vote can break with the pro-war, market-worshipping, job and service-slashing market and money dictatorship backed by the No parties and open a prospect of a society which put people before profit.

**Edinburgh
People's Festival
BENEFIT NIGHT
Tues 11 June**



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CRACKS IN LABOUR'S SUPPORT FOR BETTER TOGETHER ARE WIDENING

John McAllion reports

THE three opinion polls taken in May on voting intentions in the independence referendum show an average No vote of 53 per cent as compared to an average Yes vote of just 32 per cent.

A year on from the launch of the Yes campaign these figures should have been music to the ears of "Better Together" campaigners. We might have expected plaudits for the campaign's chair Alistair Darling and all round satisfaction with a job so far well done.

Instead, we have seen the first serious split in the "Better Together" campaign.

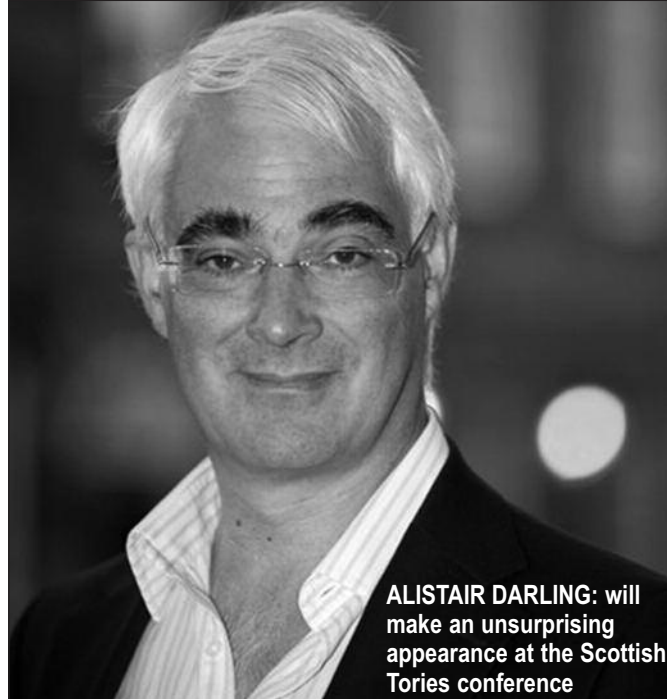
The launch of "United with Labour" to make the Labour Party's case for the UK and to operate separately from the cross party campaign is a clear sign that all is not well inside the unionist camp. It was no accident that Gordon Brown, once likened by Darling to the Labour Government's mad woman in the attic, was the star of the Labour launch.

Split

It was also no accident that the most significant Labour absentee at the high profile launch in the Commonwealth Arena was none other than Alistair Darling himself.

Brown and Darling disagreed over the economy when they were in government together and now they clearly disagree with each other on how the referendum will be won. Yet the split inside the unionist camp runs deeper than the personality clash between these two neo-liberal politicians.

At Scottish Labour's conference in Inverness there



ALISTAIR DARLING: will make an unsurprising appearance at the Scottish Tories conference

was widespread unease among rank and file party members about sharing a no platform with the Tories. Dave Watson, a senior figure in UNISON, made it clear that many unions also "had difficulties" about campaigning with Tories.

This rank and file revolt demanding that their party distance itself from the "Better Together" campaign is easy to understand. Labour's two main partners in "Better Together" are the two parties who together form the ConDem Coalition currently waging class war against working people across this island.

It is bad enough that Labour councils have already started eviction proceedings over the hated bedroom tax, without Labour leaders then being caught on camera in a unionist embrace with the Tory authors of that tax.

So Gordon Brown's appeal at the launch to ditch the Tories and not the Union was

undoubtedly an attempt to pacify a restive rank and file.

Likewise, his verbal onslaught against a Powellite Tory party spinning off to the right for fear of UKIP was meant to put as much distance as possible between Scottish Labour and Cameron's Tories.

It was factually wrong – since 1945 Scotland has only once voted Tory (1955) but has suffered 9 Tory governments thanks to English voters.

It is because of the Union that we can't ditch the Tories. But Brown here wasn't dealing in facts. He was telling the party faithful what they wanted to hear regardless of the facts.

Unfortunately for him it didn't work. Within a week of "United with Labour" being launched Alistair Darling announced he would be sharing a platform with Tories at their Scottish party conference in Stirling. As thousands gather outside of the conference to protest against the bedroom tax, Labour's

former Chancellor will rub shoulders with the authors of the tax inside and join with them in setting up a military wing of the "Better Together" campaign to be called "Forces Together".

Darling, one of Labour's most senior figures in Scottish politics, appears determined that "Better Together" will continue to lead and to dominate the No campaign.

This will cause Scottish Labour no end of problems. It is now clear that the general secretaries of Scottish trade unions are failing to deliver their unions official backing and support for the No campaign.

The general secretaries of the Labour affiliated unions are themselves already on board the No campaign but are unable to deliver their members who look at "Better Together" and see only the Tories and the Lib Dems.

Key battles

So far only ASLEF has backed the Better Together campaign while the STUC refused an invitation to join the cross party campaign.

It is inside the trade union movement that one of the key battles over the referendum is now being fought. While the Tories and Lib Dems are a total turn off for most trade unionists, so too are Labour's continuing support for anti-trade union laws along with the leadership's acceptance of austerity and its ditching of universal benefits.

"United with Labour" is a feeble attempt to cover over these cracks and to con grass roots trade unionists into believing that the Union will deliver for them. Like all cons, it is destined to fail.



'WHY SHOULD WE IDLY WASTE OUR PRIME REPEATING OUR OPPRESSIONS...?'

by Campbell Martin

THE suppression of the Scottish clan system by the British Government in the aftermath of the 1745/46 Jacobite uprising was not the only issue that still impacts on Scotland. A song of the day had a verse added to support British troops under the leadership of Marshal Wade and the Duke of Cumberland as they made their way to confront, and defeat, the Jacobites at Culloden. The song was *God Save the King* and the additional verse reads:

*Lord, grant that Marshal Wade,
May by thy mighty aid, Victory bring.
May he sedition hush,
and like a torrent rush,
Rebellious Scots to crush, God save the King*

Today, the song - *God Save the Queen* - is the official 'national' anthem of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and although the above verse is not normally sung, many Scots have a problem standing for a national anthem that once exhorted an army to crush the rebellious people of Scotland.

The latter part of the 18th century and early years of the 19th century saw an ever-widening gulf between ordinary Scots and the country's ruling elite. With the Scottish line of monarchy having been replaced by the preferred English option (albeit of Dutch and German birth), and the Scottish parliament entirely subsumed into the English legislature and firmly located in London, Scotland's landowning aristocracy became increasingly anglicised.

Many 'noble' Scots joined the Anglican Church and sent their children to be educated at English public schools and universities. Increasingly the vast tracts of Scottish estates were used to fund the London social life of absentee Scottish Lairds. In fact, members of the ruling class were so immersed in their desire to rid themselves of their 'Scottishness' that they dropped the name Scotland and referred to the country as North Britain.

In order to maximise profits, farmers and crofters were forcibly driven from the land: it having been found that sheep were more profitable than the labour of people. In what become known as the Highland Clearances, families and often entire communities were forced to move, some to unworkable land on the coast, others to

Scottish lowland cities, while many were put onto ships sailing for the Americas.

The actions of Scotland's absentee, ruling elite constituted little more than ethnic cleansing, with the traditional Highland way of life all-but eradicated as the 'nobility' sought to generate ever greater wealth for themselves, while ordinary Scots died of hunger.

By the early 1800s, thousands of families had been evicted from crofts and farms, with the Duke of Sutherland being one of the worst offenders, in terms of numbers thrown off the land and the brutality used in the process. The uncaring nature of the landowners was encapsulated in a letter written to a friend in London by Elizabeth Leveson-Gower, the Duchess of Sutherland, who referred to starving Scots, saying, "Scotch people are of happier constitution and do not fatten like the larger breed of animals."

The devastation of agricultural labour, and the emerging mechanisation of production in many industries, coupled with a labour-force in-



DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND:
Elizabeth Leveson-Gower said "Scotch people do not fatten like the larger breed of animals"

creasingly concentrated in towns and cities, coincided with the emergence of working class radicalism in Scotland.

In the early 19th century, Scotland had one of the most literate populations in the world, partly a consequence of the insistence by the Presbyterian Church that one of the rights of common people was that they should be free to read the bible in their own language, as opposed to the Latin version favoured by the Roman Catholic Church. This resulted in many working class Scots being able to read the works of Scottish writers and poets, not the least of whom was Robert Burns.

Burns, an Ayrshire ploughman, wrote in the Scots tongue and from the perspective of the poor, working class Scot. There is no doubt that

the poems and prose of Burns inspired the early Scottish radicals to agitate and protest in support of better pay and conditions in the workplace and improved social conditions for ordinary Scots. It is easy to see how one poem by Robert Burns - *Why Should We Idly Waste Our Prime* - would have had particular relevance to Scots radicals of the early 1800s:

*Why should we idly waste our prime
Repeating our oppressions?
Come rouse to arms! 'Tis now the time
To punish past transgressions.
'Tis said that Kings can do no wrong -
Their murderous deeds deny it,
And, since from us their power is sprung,
We have a right to try it.
Now each true patriot's song shall be: -
'Welcome Death or Libertie!'*

*Proud Priests and Bishops we'll translate
And canonize as Martyrs;
The guillotine on Peers shall wait;
And Knights shall hang in garters.
Those Despots long have trode us down,
And Judges are their engines:
Such wretched minions of a Crown
Demand the people's vengeance!
To-day 'tis theirs. To-morrow we
Shall don the Cap of Libertie!*

*The Golden Age we'll then revive:
Each man will be a brother;
In harmony we all shall live,
And share the earth together;
In Virtue train'd, enlighten'd Youth
Will love each fellow-creature;
And future years shall prove the truth
That Man is good by nature:
Then let us toast with three times three
The reign of Peace and Libertie!*

In what was to be the first tentative steps of a radical socialist movement in Scotland, many Scots came together in workers' groups to protest against poverty-wages and appalling social conditions. Significantly, from the very beginning of such agitation, that Scotland should break-free from the British Union was identified as a prerequisite to improved wages, conditions and living standards.

Yes Scotland - one year on

PHOTO: Craig Maclean

by Colin Fox, SSP co-spokesperson and Yes Scotland Advisory Board member

IT'S been a year since Yes Scotland was launched amid the glitz and glamour of an Edinburgh multiplex cinema where Independence activists mixed with Holyrood politicians, Hollywood stars and lottery millionaires.

Blair Jenkins, the Yes Scotland CEO, announced in his Annual Report last week that 375,000 people had signed the 'Declaration for Independence' adding 'we are on schedule for our target of one million'. He also pointed out that after 3000 people attended the 32 local authority based launch meetings more than 1100 Yes groups have subsequently been established across the country. And he noted that his since his early objective was to get Scotland talking about independence this was another target being reached. Moreover his pledge 'to build the biggest grassroots political campaign Scotland has ever seen' is also on schedule for 2014.

Successes

And yet for all these successes the polls stubbornly suggest only 35 per cent of Scots are in favour of Independence. And here Blair Jenkins put the best spin on this unwelcome fact he could by saying 'we never expected to be ahead at this stage.' Maybe, but we would all have welcomed it!

Notwithstanding the polls 'Yes Scotland' has been an undoubted success. This alliance between social democrats and socialists, between businessmen and trade unionists, between supporters of Independence on the left, and right has grown and grown. Its role is not to develop policy but to maximise support for Independence. It rightly states that the kind of Independence Scotland opts for will be



EYES ON THE PRIZE: the year ahead is crucial to win a Yes vote

determined by the Scottish people themselves in the 2016 Elections.

And it is clear the public understands the distinction between this coalition and a party. Indeed many have suggested its 'divisions' emphasise the plurality of opinion behind Independence. The SSP for example has made it perfectly clear from the beginning that we favour an Independent socialist Scotland that is a modern, democratic republic.

On the other hand there are those who dismiss 'Yes Scotland' as 'a front for the SNP'. And whilst it is true the Nationalists are its most powerful constituent part, this claim foolishly ignores the crucial role the SSP and Greens play both in broadening the organisations appeal and in counter-posing the type of independent Scotland we prefer. Notwithstanding these differences we are all agreed that Scotland's social democratic values are more likely to be advanced within an Independent settlement.

And it might be argued that in the year ahead it is incumbent on

all of us to make clear that Independence is the progressive option in this debate. The SNP's emphasis on the civic case for independence that 'those best able to make decisions about Scotland's future are the people who live here' can be married to the Greens central belief that democracy works best when it is local and close at hand. And for our part the SSP highlights the democratic reality that Scotland's working class majority will be better off freed from the chains of the UK state.

Whilst our shared objective then is to win the Referendum we retain the right to debate tactics, centrally whether the 'softly, softly' approach favoured by the SNP - keep the Queen, keep the pound, keep NATO membership - is more likely to succeed than that message favoured by the Greens and the SSP that the Independence case is at its most potent when it stresses how much things will improve for the vast majority.

So how are we to turn the polls around in the year ahead? For me

there are two key challenges. There's the materialist one, as it were, where as people ask us 'What is Independence for?' we reply 'It is about your job, your wages, your conditions at work, your pension, your benefits, your NHS, your plummeting standard of living.' In other words we connect our cause with their anxieties and hopes for a better future.

The worst recession in 80 years hardly helps the No campaign stress 'the benefits of the Union'!

And secondly, we must all develop 'Yes Scotland' into a stronger force, one that takes the case for Independence to the movements against austerity and the cuts, against under-employment, against Trident and all allied to Scotland's social democratic core.

Crucial role

And here SSP members can play a crucial role in their local 'Yes' group. I have enjoyed speaking at many fantastic 'Yes Scotland' meetings this past year. I have been delighted by the warm welcome our socialist ideas have received in this mass movement. Our party is widely respected for our ability to raise the Independence message with passion and conviction within the trade union movement and in 'the schemes'. And we can show some important successes in both these regards throughout the past year.

Our essential message to all Independence supporters in the crucial year ahead is borrowed from Martin Luther King who famously said, at a similar time to this, 'Keep your eyes on the prize'. The polls can and will be turned around if we remember that we offer the people of Scotland the one commodity that appears to them to be in such short supply at the moment, hope. We offer them a powerfully attractive option and we say 'Come change the world with us on 18 September 2014'.

by Richie Venton

COUNTY Fermanagh, in the south west of Northern Ireland, is where I was born and brought up.

Visiting my family there is always a tonic to the senses: the lush green rolling hills, the back roads bursting with birdsong, the stillness and glittering tranquility of Lough Erne.

Of course the price is almost guaranteed and persistent rain: as the local saying goes, half the year Lough Erne is in Fermanagh, the other six months Fermanagh is in Lough Erne! And at many points in the agricultural cycle, you get used to a powerful aroma of the most natural of all fertilizers, spread by the farmers to enrich the grass!

Not last week though! The all-too-rare glory of sunshine vastly enhanced the spectacular scenery, but instead of boosting the smell of manure, it increased the smell of fresh paint! Especially so in the county town of Enniskillen, where every street railing had a new black gloss to it; shop fronts boasted bright new colours; you could hardly turn a street corner without walking into painters up ladders or on cherypickers. A family friend described in exasperation how he wanted to decorate his house but literally couldn't find a tin of paint for sale in any of the local shops!

To say a full-blown cosmetic exercise has been launched would be a gross understatement: empty shops, idle work sites and derelict buildings are literally covered up with giant posters of idyllic Fermanagh scenery, in several villages and many approach roads.

The G8 invasion

Why? The 'masters of the universe' are coming to town! David Cameron chose the luxurious Lough Erne Golf Resort hotel complex, on the scenic rural outskirts of Enniskillen, as the venue for this year's G8 summit of the leaders of eight of the capitalist world's biggest economies.

Local people are generally glad to see the town and parts of some surrounding villages getting a paint job. They welcome the intensive road

G8 SUMMIT: fracking furious in Fermanagh

resurfacing that has been conducted over recent months, especially on the main Belfast to Enniskillen A4 route. An estimated £11 million has been spent on road improvements, but mostly on the main routes that the G8 media circus might spot, not on rural roads most desperately in need of repair for those who live there.

The short burst of employment this has created is welcome in an area of chronic unemployment; a family friend, a skilled tradesman, has had to turn away painting and decorating work because he can't cope with the demand, whereas he'd previously had to drive a tanker for a living.

An English company has been handed the £450,000 contract by Fermanagh district council to mount vinyl pictures on shop-front shutters!

But behind this gloss lurks a stark reality that will remain when the G8 caravan moves on, captured in one example: the luxurious Lough Erne Resort chosen to host the G8 exploiters' deliberations has until recently been put into administration, only temporarily re-opened for the G8 event, with workers taken back on... but on lower wages!

Most Fermanagh people aren't fooled by appearances, however pretty. In fact they are downright resentful at the hypocrisy of years of being ignored in their pleas for road improvements and investment in jobs and small independent businesses by the government - with pleas of poverty from the Stormont and Westminster regimes - now suddenly transformed into bottomless pots of gold to spruce up the place

because eight capitalist heads of government and their entourage are descending on the county for a couple of days. But the G8 invasion of Fermanagh involves more than paint, pretty posters and pothole repairs.

It includes an appalling extravaganza of taxpayers' money being splashed out on a 'security' operation that has many of the hallmarks of a police state, of an occupied, militarised zone.

A massive ring of steel fencing round the Lough Erne Resort has cost over £4.2 million. The Shore Road, that runs from Enniskillen past the venue, has been blocked off to general traffic from 1-26 June, with local residents having to show special passes to get home. This is part of a vast water and air exclusion zone - not just on 17-18 June when these imperialist lords land for their discussions on the carve-up of the world's resources and war plans, but for the entire period from 1-26 June.

Armed occupation

School exams are being disrupted by the traffic exclusion zone, with students expected to get earlier buses on the days that heavily shape their futures. Non-emergency outpatient services are being suspended when Cameron's international cronies come. A massive police operation is already underway, several weeks before Cameron, Obama, Merkel, Putin et al descend on Fermanagh for two days. On a short journey you will encounter at least two or three police patrols, on foot, in cars, with random checkpoints, people frequently

stopped and searched, squads of motorbike cops on the streets, boats with police patrols on the lough, and police helicopters violating the tranquility of the county. CCTV cameras festoon every available lamppost or building.

Already 730 police officers from England, Scotland and Wales have been trained to drive armoured Landrovers - a 'privilege' normally restricted to police in Northern Ireland - as part of an overall drafting in of 3,600 'mutual aid' police from Britain. Police armed with machine guns are patrolling the streets weeks before the G8, as are British soldiers.

The local media repeatedly pumps out the line they are being trained on 'how to deal with public disorder' - part of a massive propaganda hype about impending violence that is designed to and demonise the trade unionists, environmentalists, socialists, and human rights campaigners seeking to exercise their right to peaceful protest against the G8 jamboree. Water cannons are in position. Unmanned police drones, costing over £1 million, have been bought to fly over and spy on people and protests.

The prestigious Killyhelvin hotel - normally reliant on weddings, family outings and tourists - has been literally taken over for weeks by a massive media horde there to report the G8, no doubt on the prowl for any incident of violence by protesters that they can exaggerate, but very little exposé of the bloodcurdling violence perpetrated by the G8 leaders and their system of ruthless



WHOSE STREETS? the scene in Auchterarder when the G8 came to Scotland PHOTO: Simon Whittle

exploitation of people and planet. By way of contrast, former British Army and RAF bases in Omagh and Enniskillen have been turned into 'custody facilities' for protesters - at a cost of £3.9million.

And the local council has declared itself unable to find a suitable camp site for protesters, whereas the bill for catering and cleaning alone at the G8 resort is £3million.

Government Ministers have coyly declined to answer questions about plans to shut down internet access and social media at the height of the G8 - in stark contrast to the Department of Environment's fast-tracking of seven temporary new telecoms masts in the G8 conference centre itself and the main police barracks.

The British army has arrived to give back-up to the police, and army helicopters will fly the G8 entourage to and from the Lough Erne Resort. The place is crawling with hundreds of secret service operatives.

The Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) is spending an overall £50million in policing and so-called 'security'. That is an obscene squandering of public funds against the backdrop of vicious public service cuts, where the likes of my mother's home help service has been cut to the bone, and where charity volunteers collect on street corners and at stalls in the bigger Enniskillen supermarkets for life-saving services that are not rendered by the state.

Bear in mind this super-sized police and military operation is being conducted in an area where the biggest town, Enniskillen, has a population just under 15,000, which is roughly a quarter the population of the whole of Co Fermanagh.

Much is being prattled about 'the G8 legacy' in Fermanagh. A crude reduction in people's civil rights is likely to be one actual legacy; they won't splash out on this monstrous 'security' exercise and then simply dismantle it. Long term job creation it certainly will not bring. Two private security firms, including the notorious G4S, have been handed the contract for 650 staff for the G8 jamboree, but they don't even intend to recruit locally.

Outrageous legacy

The local RNLI has just launched a public appeal for £60,000 to build a proper shelter for this vital, life saving service, run by volunteers; not for them the bottomless well of public funding afforded eight men and women who dominate our lives with their economic and social policies. Another local public appeal has just raised £15,000 for defibrillators, after a near-tragedy. Youth unemployment is officially 24 per cent, with low-paid retail jobs one of the few outlets.

One of the most outrageous 'legacies' of the G8, if they have their way, will be fracking in Fermanagh. The Fermanagh G8 Not Welcome coal-

ition that is marching through Enniskillen on 17 June has made opposition to fracking a central theme.

In 2001, the G8 endorsed High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing for shale gas, in support of the lobby of the oil and gas multinationals.

Shattering rock, this releases gas, but also brings to the surface numerous toxins, such as benzene, lead, mercury and radioactive material. Fracking also contaminates water supplies along new fault lines in the rock, reaching into streams and lakes.

As the lakelands of the north of Ireland, Fermanagh seems the last place on earth that fracking should be allowed.

But the capitalists who lord it over us mere mortals couldn't give a frack about the well-being of Fermanagh - or anywhere else on the globe.

The Belfast government has already granted permission to a company called Tamboran Resources to start work on two sites in Fermanagh, where they have plans for 60 'pads' - each a seven-acre site, concreted over, with heavy and noisy machinery, with air, water and noise pollution - a mere mile apart from one another. Scientists warn that more than half the water will be severely contaminated, with no means of decontaminating it. And the unusually shallow shale layers in the area - about a quarter the depth in other parts of the world - makes fracking in Fermanagh especially dangerous.

And it can't even be sold to the local population with the cynical offer of jobs in an unemployment blackspot: Tamboran initially promised 600 jobs north of the border plus 600 in the south, but have now reduced their pledge to three jobs per pad, a miserable total of 180.

Aside from the issue of dangerous and environmentally destructive jobs, that's hardly compensation for the 5,000 local jobs in farming or the 1,000 tourism jobs that will be jeopardised by this monstrous plan to frack Fermanagh.

The G8 summit epitomises all that is worst about the capitalist world we live in. Nauseating pomp and privilege for the powerful, alongside poverty, unemployment and outright hunger for the majority population.

Food banks and charity collections for desperately needed services in the local community, alongside obscene gluttony, publicly funded, at this gathering of eight capitalist puppets.

State forces

Over 3 billion people on the planet living below \$2 a day, whilst 358 billionaires and a couple of hundred multinationals have a grip on the world's wealth - 1.3 billion people subsisting on \$1 a day, and somebody dying of hunger every 3.6 seconds. Environmental destruction so that the giant energy corporations can make a fast buck.

And deployment of state forces, armed to the teeth, to block the right of peaceful protest to people genuinely committed to a decent life, a living wage, public services, peace, and protection of the planet from destruction for short-term profit.

Capitalism means world starvation, poverty and war. Capitalism means the dictatorship of the rich, with the backup of armed forces prepared to deny the right to resist to the majority.

The G8 occupation of Fermanagh is a brutal reminder of the world we need to change, of the need for socialism in Ireland, Scotland and around the globe these creatures are meeting to carve up.

Join that fight now, before they lay waste to millions more people and the planet we share.

Scotland's time to choose

Scotland's Road to Socialism: Time To Choose, edited by Professor Gregor Gall

by Bill Bonnar

THIS book is a timely contribution to the debate on independence taking place on the left. It brings together 22 contributors from a variety of political backgrounds and disciplines to ask the question, 'Is there a Scottish Road to Socialism?'

Five contributors, mostly from in an around the Labour Party reject independence while the rest, broadly speaking, are in favour.

Those arguing against outline some well-worn arguments. These include principled opposition to nationalism, a belief that the break-up of Britain will undermine the unity of the British working class and that the interests of workers in Scotland will not be served by the version of independence proposed by the Scottish government.

The first two have become tired arguments. The movement for independence in Scotland is very broad based and contain many forces who do not describe themselves as nationalists.

For them this is essentially a democratic issue. Do we want a Scottish Parliament with all the powers necessary for the effective governing of the country and do we want a parliament which is not subservient to Westminster.

Sovereignty

If the answer to both questions is Yes then what is being described here is independence and sovereignty. All that then has to be worked out is the detail of that sovereignty.

As for splitting the British working class this argument has become dated and does not take into account the changes in the organised working class in Britain as a result of de-industrialisation.

When Britain still had an industrial economy it had a large well organised working class with the industrial working class at its core centred on great national industries. Since de-industrialisation that core has vanished leaving a movement which is smaller, much more fragmented and overwhelmingly located in the public sector.

An independent Scotland will still have its own organised working class existing in

close relations with the working class in England and hopefully elsewhere. Independence does not diminish, in any way, the basis for solidarity.

More telling is the argument that the interests of the working class in Scotland will not be advanced by the government's proposals on independence. This is objectively true given the aim of maintaining as much of the existing social and economic status quo as possible. However, these commentators are left with a problem. How will the interests of Scottish workers be better by remaining in the Union even under a Labour Government? It also fails to recognise that the SNP

sheer lack of ambition. At the same time there appears to be common agreement as to kind of Scotland they want to see.

It would be a Scotland which abolishes the monarchy and becomes a modern, democratic republic.

It would be a Scotland which values, defends and extends public services. It would extend public ownership in to key strategic parts of the economy like railways and the energy industry. It would pursue fairness and equality as an integral party of social policy. It would reject militarism, abolish nuclear weapons and leave Nato.

It would be a welcoming home for all those who want Scotland to be their home and would place the protection of the environment and sustainable development at the centre of government policy.

These contributors are all united behind a further point. If the referendum is lost it will be because the Scottish Government has failed to inspire and mobilise the Scottish people behind the campaign for independence.

Left's vision of the future

If independence doesn't actually change very much; why bother? This debate and the campaign that flows from it cannot be left to the Scottish Government. The left need to be involved at all levels of the campaign and inject into it their vision of the future.

The contributions in the book from those opposed to independence also highlights a problem for socialists who adopt this position.

Progressive opinion in Scotland is increasingly coalescing round the Yes campaign. Facing them is an essentially reactionary alliance of right wing forces mounting a vigorous defence of the Union as it is at present and a negative and destructive campaign aimed at frightening the Scottish people into voting No.

If, when the referendum comes and this is the outcome it will mean that the Scottish people voted No in the ballot because they did not have the confidence to vote Yes. Is this really the side of history that those sections of the left want to find themselves on?

Professor Gall has to be congratulated for bringing these contributions together in a book which should be recommended reading for all the left in Scotland.

The debate is on-going with no doubt many other contributions to come. This, however, is a good place to start.

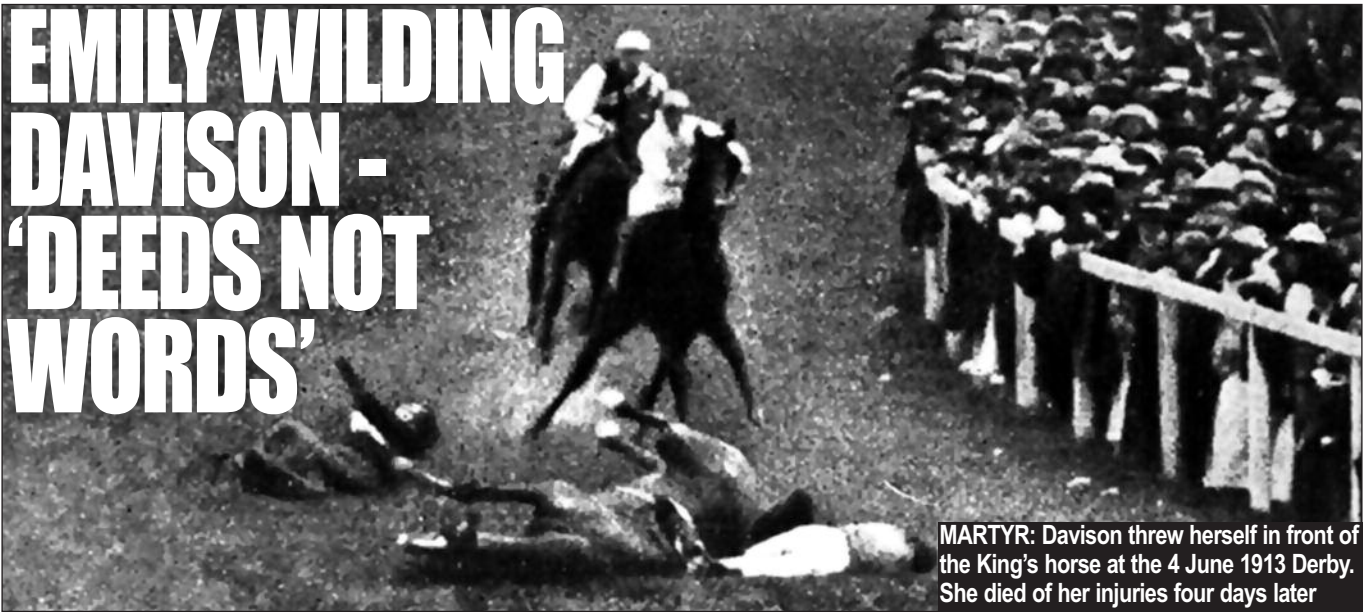


do not own the independence debate. There are many arguing for a left vision of independence and that if Scotland votes Yes in 2014 there will be an explosion of debate and struggle as to what the new Scotland will look like.

The majority of contributors argue in favour of independence and agree, to a greater or lesser extent, that there can be a Scottish Road to Socialism in as much as socialism can ever be contained within the borders of one country.

All are highly critical of the vision of independence put forward by the Scottish Government in its attempt to keep as much of the status quo intact as possible and by its

EMILY WILDING DAVISON - 'DEEDS NOT WORDS'



MARTYR: Davison threw herself in front of the King's horse at the 4 June 1913 Derby. She died of her injuries four days later

Denise Morton looks at the death of suffragette Emily Wilding Davison

THIS past week the media, newspapers, television and radio have remembered suffragette Emily Wilding Davison who, on Derby day 100 years ago, was killed whilst attempting to throw a sash or scarf over King George V's horse Anmer, when the race was well underway.

Much debate has been generated concerning whether she was deliberately courting suicide as a political act or if it was a tragic accidental death.

Her actions may very well have been the last desperate act of a women frustrated by the lack of progress to win votes for women, or it could have been a publicity stunt, albeit one where the risk of death or serious injury had been considered beforehand.

Determined

We cannot know for certain what was in Emily Davison's mind on 4 June 1913, except that she was determined that the cause for which she struggled would be brought to everyone's attention. In that, she succeeded.

Like many, many women, Emily Davison had been an active campaigner in the

Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), the organisation set up by the Pankhursts in Manchester in 1903.

For decades, women had been campaigning for the right to vote, with no success.

The WSPU were committed using direct action in pursuit of their aims, which included struggling to improve the social life of women. But with the advent of the First World War, their energies were directed towards supporting the troops who were fighting a war which was supposed to end all wars.

The British economy, which was still a huge global power, was already in relative decline. London was the financial centre of the world and like today it sucked in wealth and distributed it between a small financial elite.

The lives of the mass of people were marked by increased poverty and misery. But change was afoot - again, not unlike today where we are witnessing the growing and more militant demands for democracy in many parts of the globe.

For example, there had been demands for home rule in Ireland, Canada, Australia and Scotland. The established colonies were revolting and so were the women in Britain.

For 50 or more years, the campaign for votes for women

had used peaceful means to make the case for women's representation in the Westminster parliament. But success seemed to get no nearer until the WSPU adopted more direct forms of protest to achieve that aim.

Destruction of property, ranging from setting fire to letter boxes to bombing buildings, disrupting sporting events, such as racing and golf as well as rising vocal protests and demonstrations were the order of the day.

Many women were imprisoned and soon they began hunger strikes. Emily Wilding Davison herself was imprisoned almost 40 times. Not wanting to create martyrs, the government's response was the infamous Cat and Mouse Act.

Torture

Women had been forced, which today is considered torture. But as their health began to deteriorate they were allowed to go home, recover their health and sent back to prison to complete their sentence. Emily Davison was at one point locked in a cell which was pumped with water until she nearly drowned. Torture by water is not a modern day technique.

But Emily was not alone in her travails. Hundreds of

women experienced similar deprivations and their names are not remembered by many people today, except perhaps for the Pankhursts. But there is nothing unusual in that.

Women's history has been hidden many times only to be rediscovered by succeeding generations. Remembering Emily Wilding Davison gives us an opportunity to revisit women's history and our struggle for emancipation, liberation and equality.

That struggle goes on. Women all over the world are reaching out to each other, supporting each other's struggles, whether for an end to violence against women, for democratic rights, reproductive rights or for equality in the workplace. The struggle goes on.

We are determined our voices will not be silenced, our history will not be hidden and our complete participation in economic, social, political and cultural life will continue and advance. How will we do this?

Inscribed on Emily Davison's headstone is the phrase 'Deeds not Words'. Words worth remembering. So thank you Emily Wilding Davison, thank you Mary Barbour, thank you Angela Davies. Thank you all the women who have struggled and still struggle to make this world a fairer more just world.

OIL AND GAS ARE VALUABLE RESOURCES BUT OWNERSHIP IS KEY TO WHO GETS THE BENEFITS

Ken Ferguson sets the scene for two different approaches...

THE discovery of oil and gas in the North Sea in the 1970s has been a source both of vast wealth - largely for private firms and the London treasury - and political controversy.

However, what is not in

doubt is that the vast wealth was pumped from the North Sea and that that fact was deliberately hidden by both Tory and Labour governments to block any move towards independence, preferring the myth that Scotland would starve without London.

This was confirmed recently by former Labour

cabinet minister Denis, now Lord Healey.

The myth that Scottish oil isn't worth much is still a cornerstone of No campaign - composed of those same parties that lied about it for 30 years.

In contrast - and in direct contradiction of those spineless Westminster politicians who worship the

markets - in Latin America the socialist government in Bolivia has taken the key gas resources into public ownership and uses the revenue to slash poverty.

In the two articles below, we look at the contrasting approaches, and it is difficult to deny that the Bolivian approach has much to teach Scotland.

Bolivia: nationalisation puts wealth in hands of the people

by *Federico Fuentes*

BOLIVIA is demonstrating to the world why nationalising natural resources is a crucial first step for any government seeking to put people and the environment before profits.

On May 1, 2006, less than four months after becoming president, Evo Morales decreed the nationalisation of the country's gas reserves. This move restored state control over the strategic resource.

In doing so, Morales followed through with one of his key election promises and met a historic demand of the Bolivian people. The people had overthrown successive presidents unwilling to take Bolivia's gas out of the hands of greedy transnationals.

Given the status of gas as Bolivia's key resource and source of wealth, it was no surprise — this resource came to be seen as a vehicle for lifting the poorest country in the region out of its misery.

Despite promises by neoliberal politicians and institutions such as the World Bank that privatisation and free market economics would lead to improved living standards, the num-

ber of Bolivians living in poverty had swelled to more than 66 per cent by the turn of the century.

The decline in state revenue due to the privatisation of the gas industry meant the Bolivian government was increasingly dependent on foreign loans to cover its shrinking budget.

This began to change with the nationalisation decree and subsequent re-negotiation of contracts with gas transnationals. Under the new contracts, transnationals no longer dictate what happens in the industry. Now, the Bolivian state sets the terms.

Claims that transnationals continue to dominate the sector and extract the majority of Bolivia's gas misrepresent the real situation. Under the new service provision contracts, the state not only owns the gas deposit but also extracted gas and the profits arising from its sale.

Given the almost complete dismantlement of the state-owned YPF gas company during the period of neoliberal privatisation, the state still requires the services of transnationals.

These private companies are hired and paid for their services. But the transnationals have no say over how

much should be extracted, nor what happens to the final product.

At the same time, the Bolivian government is working to strengthen YPF so that it can take full responsibility for extraction and processing.

Importantly, more than 80 per cent of all profits from the industry now go to the state via taxes, royalties and other means.

The difference is clear, as hydrocarbons minister Juan Jose Sosa noted recently: "Seven years before the nationalisation, from 1999 to 2005, the state received about US\$2 billion. After these seven years, the state received more than \$16 billion."

Despite headlines saying such actions would lead to foreign companies pulling out of the country and the collapse of the sector, Bolivia's gas industry remains strong. In fact, Bolivia's economy has registered record growth rates despite the global economic downturn.

Figures from Bolivia's National Institute of Statistics (INE) indicate that external demand made a negative contribution to growth. The real driving force behind Bolivia's growth was the explosion in internal demand, which averaged 5.2 per cent

a year during this period. This is the result of a dramatic redistribution of wealth to the benefit of the poor majority. With government spending on health and education grew almost fourfold between 2005 and 2012.

The government also began paying social security to pregnant women, families with children in primary school and pensioners. Today, 31 per cent of Bolivians benefit from these payments.

Rises in the minimum and average real wage, initiatives to cut unemployment and price controls on staple foods, these policies have made the poor richer and lowered wealth inequality have helped cut the gap between the richest 10 per cent and poorest 10 per cent was 128 to 1 in 2005, but by 2012 this gap was cut to 60-to-1.

Some environmental critics of the government argue that hydrocarbons nationalisation has done nothing to lower Bolivia's economic dependency on the extraction and export of raw resources, in this case non-renewable resources. The greater revenues, they allege, are simply used as handouts to the poor to quell popular discontent.



TAKING BACK CONTROL: Evo Morales nationalised Bolivia's gas reserves in May 2006, less than four months after taking power

However, as Bolivia's Minister of Economy and Finance Luis Arce noted in *Economía Plural*, the Bolivian government is promoting a "New Economic, Social, Communitarian, and Productive Model" to replace the neoliberal model.

Under this new model, the government now prioritises stimulating the internal market, an important step towards reducing dependency on foreign capital and global demand.

This requires not only wealth redistribution but also the transfer of wealth generated in extractive sectors (primarily gas, but also mining) toward the industrial processing of natural resources. Another task is stimulating the manufacturing, tourism, housing and agriculture sectors to meet this demand.

The redirection of wealth toward promoting other productive sectors has also had an impact. The phenomenal jump in the number of registered enterprises from less than 20,000 in 2005 to over 68,000 in 2012, contributed to a 2.8 per cent fall in unemployment (5.5 per cent in 2010). The government has also embarked

on a number of experiments with small state-owned enterprises in the area of food processing, gold and cardboard production. The plan is for these companies to be handed over to local communities to run as part of fostering the communitarian sector.

Viewed as a whole, the measures taken to recover sovereignty over Bolivia's economy have meant that the state has become the central player in the national economy. Today, more of Bolivia's wealth stays in Bolivia and is used to expand the internal market, promote industrialisation, and stimulate the communitarian sector.

If this is what a small, landlocked Andean country that has historically been relegated to the subordinate position of raw materials exporter can achieve, imagine what we could begin to do in Australia if we nationalised the mines and put our natural wealth back in public hands.

• *A longer version of this article first appeared in Green Left Weekly. See: greenleft.org.au*

The lie must die

by Ian Brotherhood,
Ayrshire SSP

IT'S bad enough lying to someone and then nicking their stuff. But to then pretend it didn't happen just adds insult to injury.

Margaret Curran has done just that by claiming to be unaware of the McCrone report, and the Labour Party's complicity in hiding it from the public for over 30 years.

Her unbelievable statement comes in the wake of Denis Healey's admission that the true value of North Sea oil remains a major concern for Unionists as the Independence referendum draws nearer - they're 'worried stiff about it'.

'Secret report'

Anyone who remembers the referendum debates of 1979 may recall whispered rumours of 'a secret report' which detailed how much oil remained - some said there could be another ten years' worth, others reckoned it might even last until the end of the century. But the implication was clear - it's running out, so don't get yourself in a lather about it.

We know (and have done since 2005, when it was released via Freedom of Information requests) that the report was real enough - written by economist Gavin McCrone and presented to the Cabinet in 1975.

We also know that it stated Scotland's right to the resources in its territorial waters was indisputable, and that the revenue generated would result in Scotland having an 'embarrassingly' large surplus for decades.

Now, the whispering has started again. George Galloway, interviewed by Max Keiser on RT, is the latest to peddle the old canard - 'it's running out', and he has the brass neck to do it at a

time when new fields are being identified, business is booming in Aberdeen, and most oil & gas workers confidently support independence.

The original McCrone report (and potted, print-friendly leaflet-format versions), are easily located online. But mention of it in the mainstream media is rare - ignoring a lie only emboldens the liar, hence Curran's ludicrous assertion that she 'wasn't around' in Healey's days and knew nothing of any such report. (Curran is a youthful 55, but it so happens that she was Chair of the Scottish Organisation of Labour Students at the time.)

Healey spoke the truth, and should be applauded for it, but the fact remains that he, and every other senior British politician throughout the Callaghan,



MARGARET CURRAN: told Radio Scotland "I know I'm getting on a bit, but I wasn't around in Denis Healey's days"

Thatcher, Major, Blair, Brown and now Cameron governments has lied to the people of Scotland. And they're still doing it.

The McCrone report was marked 'Top Secret' and stashed away in a Westminster filing cabinet for three decades during which Scotland's industries were decimated, but it can't be reburied - the truth is out, and the Labour Con/Lib Dem unionists should be slapped about the chops with it until their ears bleed.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND STANDS FIRM ON PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

by *Sofiah MacLeod,*
Campaigns Officer,
Scottish Palestine
Solidarity Campaign

LAST month Church of Scotland ministers and elders voted overwhelmingly to adopt a report by the Church and Society Council which challenged “claims that scripture offers any peoples a privileged claim for possession of a particular territory”.

The Council report argues that it is “doubly wrong to seek biblical sanction” given “the fact that the [Palestinian] land is currently being taken by settlement expansion, the separation barrier, house clearance, theft and force”. It is now the Church view that Israel’s blockade of Gaza and illegal military occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem has to end before reconciliation is possible.

Pressure

The General Assembly vote demonstrates the strong support for Palestinian rights within the Church and also a determination on the part of delegates that the Church would not submit to pressure from the Israeli government and pro-Israel organisations to bury the Council report.

Earlier in May, the Board of Deputies of British Jews called the report “an ignorant and tendentious document masquerading as a theological statement” while Israel’s ambassador to the UK Daniel Taub said “it not only plays into extremist political positions, but negates and belittles the deeply held Jewish attachment to the land of Israel in a way which is truly hurtful”.

The pro-Israel Anti-Defamation



TIME FOR CHANGE: Israel’s occupation of Palestine has to end

League (ADL) in the US denounced the Church and Society Council and called for the withdrawal of the report. The ADL has recently been exposed for spying on progressive, left-wing and Arab groups and individuals including Noam Chomsky.

In response the Church of Scotland held their position. The original report was amended with introductory remarks that included a reaffirming of the Kirk’s rejection of racism and religious hatred but its conclusion that scripture should not be used to claim exclusive rights to territory was unchanged. A motion to effectively remit the report until 2014 was overwhelmingly rejected by delegates who agreed instead to promote the widest discussion of the report and its conclusions throughout the local committees of the Church.

During the debate Church and Society Council convenor Rev Sally Foster-Fulton stressed that there was huge “inequality in power” between the state of Israel

and the Palestinians while delegates confirmed their position that the human rights of all peoples should be respected and that “this should include the right of return and/or compensation for Palestinian refugees”.

Dr Bernard Sabella of the Middle East Council of Churches, based in Jerusalem, a delegate to the Church of Scotland General Assembly, called the Church of Scotland report “a wake-up call”. Rev Na’el Abu Rahmoun of the Diocese of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East explained to the General Assembly how Palestinian citizens of Israel face systematic discrimination, and said “we are about 1.5 million, Christians and Muslims together” who are “considered maybe second or third class citizens”.

Ministers and elders attending the General Assembly were also encouraged by the Church and Society Council to debate the Iona Call 2012, a response to Kairos Palestine that endorses the Palestinian call for boycott, divestment

and sanctions (BDS) and other forms of non-violent direct action.

Iona Community member Eurig Scandrett said that the Church of Scotland “has not been afraid to speak truth to power - the truth that Israel’s claims to Palestinian land is unjustifiable theologically or ethically. Israel’s credibility has just been dealt a major blow”.

Fiona Napier, Chair of Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign, welcomed the General Assembly decisions, saying that “the Israeli government needs to know that Scottish civil society, including our trade unions and churches, refuse to be complicit in their crimes against the Palestinian people and, as we see the situation for Palestinians worsen, we will find and take more effective action in support of Palestinian rights”.

Groundbreaking

The Church of Scotland decision is groundbreaking and its members will continue to feel the pressure from the Israeli government, Zionist and pro-Israel organisations. It is important that the rest of Scottish civil society responds by engaging in conversations with members of the Church and to support the Church as they reject the hijacking of interfaith dialogue in the interest of the state of Israel.

And while Israel continues to demolish homes, expropriate land and destroy the lives of Palestinians by imprisonment and torture, it is long overdue for the rest of Scottish civil society to adopt and implement an effective campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions against the state of Israel and the companies and institutions that are complicit in their crimes.