

Editorial

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War, famine and genocide, but that's not the whole story...

The long shadow of genocide

2025 opened and ended in the shadow of ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. The concept of “ceasefire” has come to mean “temporarily less fire”, and the US – Zionist alliance – the Israeli occupation and its global arbiters – envisages the conclusion of this genocide not to be the guilty to stand trial in The Hague or a Nuremberg trial equivalent, but instead ethnic cleansing of Gaza and the West Bank to make way for perversely profitable reconstruction and real estate projects. There is no guarantee that this is where the violent appropriation of land and people will end, and Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Syria are suggestive in this regard.

2026 began with a major violation of international law and incursions by a super-power. Trump’s US administration decided to bomb Venezuelan territory and kidnap its elected president, Nicolás Maduro to stand trial in the US for alleged drug trafficking charges. The real crime seems to be rather that Venezuela, under Hugo Chavez, had nationalised its own oil resources to use the revenue for its national agenda and provided substantial economic support to Cuba, which has been blockaded by the US for decades. It is ironic that the ‘land of freedom’, the United States of America’s capitalist class, as the most vociferous proponent of the free market is the world’s single largest issuer of economic and trade sanctions (blockades) in sheer contradiction to both concepts. But of course, it should not go amiss that Trump announced he will take over the running of Venezuela in the meantime and sell its oil, while standing right next to the master-chief of genocide, Netanyahu, who smugly smirked. The remaining leaders of the “West” responded ignominiously at best. The message is clear: if the US administration can do this to Venezuela, then they can do this to any Latin American country and elsewhere. But they forget that it also opens the floodgates to retaliation and increasingly dressing the US-China competition over natural resources in Latin America, for example, in warrior clothes. It is buttressed by Milei bragging on the first day of this year that he was building a Far-Right front to “stand up to socialism”, by which he means any form of social responsibility by the authorities and capital, to which 10 countries in the region had already signed up, all subordinated to their supreme chief: Donald Trump.

Bomb-shelled lay before us the remnants of inclusionary and diversity oriented policies, fiercely trampled upon by UK’s current Labour PM, Starmer, whose fear-mongering about becoming an “island of strangers” attack on immigrants was called out by The Guardian as echoing the racist Enoch Powell’s 1960 “rivers of

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blood” speech in parliament. Just as it immediately served then the political legitimization for Fascist groups such as the British National Front (NF), today it empowers the Far Right’s efforts to build its base, electorally and ideologically made to look presentable by the Reform Party, through racist mobilisations against immigrants. The Reform Party is bolstered also by the decimation of the Tories, whose place Starmer’s disfigured Labour Party has since taken. The Far Right feeds off the resulting despair and hopelessness that characterises years of austerity and the dismantling of social and political rights of the working-class. And just as it was then, in 1970s Britain, successfully pushed back not by government or state institutions but by a broad anti-Nazi social movement, it is currently being fought in much the same way, local communities led by the country’s Left who created *Rock against Racism* and the *Anti-Nazi League*, combining clear-cut anti-fascist politics with cultural intervention ‘from below’.

As the Starmer-led government clumsily stumbles through the existing minefields of systemic crisis and opts for the easy, anti-immigrant route, this growing death toll has been eclipsed from the headlines by Zionism’s genocide but is yet another consequential marker of this bloodthirsty era: migrants swallowed up by the sea. Last year, 46,843 people reached the Canaries on the increasingly perilous Atlantic route, up from 39,910 in 2023. According to a recent report from the Caminando Fronteras migration NGO, at least 10,457 people died or disappeared while trying to reach Spain by sea from 1 January to 5 December 2024.

The large pro-Palestinian movements around the world at last succeeded in pulling the mask of victimhood off the Zionist colonial project and have made strides ahead crucially with the general strike in Italy on 3 October this year, forcing the right-wing Meloni government hands to send war ships in support of the Global Sumud Flotilla seeking to break the Israeli siege on Gaza by sea. The European establishment is getting cold feet with Netanyahu’s ethnic cleansing, and many of Israel’s allies, including France, the UK and Canada among others were forced to recognize the Palestine state. Following the fiercely violent police repressions of pro-Palestinian demonstrations in Germany, the country’s pro-Israeli Chancellor Friedrich Merz now criticizes the Israeli army’s actions in Palestine as no longer justifiable. Yet, they silently watch on as Israel continues to bomb Gazans despite the ‘peace deal’ and supposed ‘ceasefire’ for which Trump eagerly wants to take credit and absurdly thinks he should gain the Nobel peace prize. But more preposterous even was the Nobel Peace Prize committee’s response. Did its esteemed members stand up to Trump’s irrational pressure and give it to genuine peace activists, individually or collectively? Many potential contenders come to mind: from a young courageous and consistent Greta Thunberg, or Francesca Albanese, ‘the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967’ for articulating a clear UN peace position, or indeed the Irish MEP, Clare Daly, for her persistent hard work in the European Parliament to lobby effectively for peace, or any of the heroic press workers and journalists reporting from Gaza and Palestine, who in most cases would receive the honour posthumously; more than 240 of these professionals have been killed by the Israeli occupation, many of whom were

targeted both as individuals and specifically as members of this profession. Instead, the Nobel Peace Prize was handed to María Corina Machado, Venezuela's opposition leader who works tirelessly to bring down a democratically elected government there, with a little help from her friends in the White House. The farce has surely reached its zenith.

The 'good citizen's' wars and genocide

The 'good citizen' is hailed by the current wave of extreme right-wing governments as the objects of their desire for legitimization. The ideal of 'the good citizen' has historically penetrated right-wing discourse, which seeks to drive a wedge between the law abiding, apparently non-deviant from norm and accepting of their condition and subordination hard working men and women, from the trouble-makers, the rebels, the trade union and social movement activists, the 'outsiders', the 'downtrodden' whose shabby condition the 'good citizen' shuns for fear of social contamination and being reminded that "the good citizen" is not, after all, an innate genetic quality but an unreliable social and political construct.

After the defeat of fascist rule in Germany there were those "good citizens" who claimed lack of knowledge of the extermination mostly of Jews, but also Roma and Sinti, disabled people, and anyone who didn't put their head down during the Nazi onslaught on the working-class and on progressive thought. In post-war reckoning, few believed those living within the vicinity of the concentration camps when they insisted that they didn't know how to interpret the smoke and stench of burning corpses descending onto the villages from the gas chambers. Then, the silent complicity was difficult to prove.

In today's world of visual and textual interconnectedness, however, there is no such doubt. For two years, everyone has witnessed directly the genocide committed against the Palestinian people as it was streamed live on social media by courageous media and volunteer emergency workers from or present in Palestine who became key targets of Zionist bombs and terror. One would have to claim to be physically blind, illiterate and deaf all at once to tune out the bombs falling on Palestine, to unsee the horrifying mutilation of a people's existential right to exist and build its future on this planet and their ancestral lands they have cultivated for centuries. The ecological obliteration, which the environmental journalist George Monbiot calls 'holocide', is the eradication of any potential Palestinian sustenance from the land.

When the Vietnam war was televised into the "good citizens'" living rooms in the US in the 1960s, the first war to be witnessed directly at long distance, it had a traumatic impact on subsequent national political processes, eventually contributing to President Nixon's downfall triggered by the Watergate scandal. Today, we are not yet able to contemplate the long-term political impacts of this genocide against the Palestine people for the future of a much more integrated world than it was then. However, one effect that does already crystallize is the normalisation of such brutality, rendering less visible other massacres and wars

(from Sudan to the Democratic Republic of Congo among a growing number of cases) as wars and terror increasingly erupt from capitalism's nervous system.

In Argentina, the 'good citizen' is invoked by Milei and his party, La Libertad Avanza (LLA), as having long suffered at the hands of the state, taxation, regulation of capital and financial activities, inclusive politics, territorial communal and environmental protection, labour rights, price regulation among many such alleged ills that limit ever so slightly profiteering. The libertarian 'chainsaw' aims to dismantle the public sector, with the exception of the armed forces, the police and all those that further the concentration of power in the presidency. Similar efforts are under way to a greater or lesser degree in the US and elsewhere. Milei's rant against Woke in his Davos address earlier this year made clear an ideological attack on anything deemed to be on the Left, including Social Democracy. Milei, before taking over the presidency, had dedicated a book to criticizing Keynesianism as laying the foundations for theft by the state in favour of the delinquents, his favourite opposition to the "good citizen". Those designated as "delinquents", however, might well believe themselves to be hard-working and generally law abiding "good citizens" and until they find out differently, faced with social democracy's failure to meet its promise of inclusion and equity, Milei speaks to them.

Nevertheless, a spectacularly failing economy and two severe corruption scandals directly implicating the Milei family have resulted in a harsh bashing of the LLA in the provincial legislative elections held in the country's most populous province, Buenos Aires in September this year. In response, and as he has done throughout his presidency, Milei went begging to Donald Trump. The result: in an extraordinary move by the White House, Trump blackmailed the Argentine electorate offering a \$40 billion bailout of the economy but only if Milei was to win the legislative elections six weeks later, leaving Argentineans to wonder what would happen if he didn't win. Nevertheless, as so often, this was not the whole story, taking on board that over 30% of the electorate did not vote in that election on 26 October, the highest rate of abstention for mid-term elections since 2001, albeit the nature of the abstention then felt more like collective defiance, whereas today seems to be more a case of alienation and powerlessness that underpins abstention. This surprising turn-around victory for Milei is not as solid as it might seem.

The government lost its vetoes on the budgeting of the universities and the Garrahan hospital, one of Latin America's most important children's hospital, where striking staff won a 61% increase in their basic wage despite Trump's intervention. Defensive mobilisations in the streets against government attacks on the public good and social, political and human rights are ongoing. The Argentine case highlights the limitations for far-Right governments to become hegemonic in today's world. Nevertheless, the costs of their duration will be far-reaching in terms of depressed wages, an ever-increasing gap in purchasing power, and the undermining of social, political and human rights. Wealth disparity within countries has skyrocketed. These elite "good citizens" don't offer

any solutions to resolving poverty as mainstream media outlets want us to believe, instead they generate it.

Justifying the unjustifiable doesn't come cheap

How are the atrocities justified? The emergence of Far Right capitalist leadership, infused by technological dominance and manipulation, employs the well-funded “art” of deception by projection and denial as a tool for achieving and sustaining legitimacy. It is how Netanyahu justifies one of humanities’ worst genocides since records began by claiming those seeking to defend their people from invasion and occupation are genocidals and terrorists despite the death count’s spectacular failure to attest to such an eye-for-an-eye fable.

Similarly, this is how Argentina’s extremist right-wing government officials, like Vice President Villaruel wanted (against powerful resistance) to overturn the pages of human rights’ achievements by insisting that the military torturers who stood trial were the real victims of left-wing guerrilla warfare, again without the numbers adding up, unless we begin to believe that those in power are weaker than those who are dominated by those in power. Examples of such claims are numerous and could become a collected works of fiction. They turn Hegel’s theory of the unity of opposition on its head and with it, any notion of common sense.

But in a world where vast sectors of society are alienated from their own agency, deprived of access to power, subject to fake news and rumours that pervert the facts, whose consistent experience is that of exploitation and being taken advantage of, it seems like a herculean effort to interrogate such distortions, never mind challenge them on a regular basis, when most energy is increasingly expanded in everyday strategies of survival at the expense of a broader horizon of alternatives. But that does not mean that these regimes of oppression will indefinitely endure without facing a challenge to their crippling short-sightedness and unsustainability. The key question is not “if” they fall, but “when” and “how”.

The end of neoliberal capitalism: appearances and real tendencies

Mamdani’s election, among others, in the US and the emergence of Left electoral alternatives in Britain and in France for example, shine a light onto a more hopeful horizon. They are the product of the intermittent surges in important popular struggles: uprisings in Argentina and Bolivia 2001, followed by collective governance in Porto Alegre and the rise of the *Sem Terra* movement in Brazil, an aurora of popular defiance in Greece, the Gezi Square in Turkey, the ‘Arab Spring’, the M15 in Spain, the Gilets Jaunes and the rise of *La France Insoumise (LFI)* in France , advances by global women’s movements, among others. More recently, the reaction (Far Right challenges in many parts of the world, authoritarian turns, attacks on a broad range of rights and progressive thought) confronts, in a tug of war fashion, more social movement challenges and working-class re-organisation from the bottom up, examples of which include India’s huge farm law protests and anti-CAA movement (against the explicit discrimination

regarding Citizenship Amendment Act 2019), the Sri Lankan uprising, two waves of Hong Kong protests, two waves of the Movement for Black Lives Matter, #EndSARS, the Myanmar resistance, Rojava, the uprising in Madagascar among many others smaller and larger movements. Examples are the current mass protests in Mendoza (northern Argentina) in defence of the water reserves and the 'Glacier Law' which Milei wants to flexibilise to benefit extractivist capital. Indigenous communities, frequently women led, are often at the forefront of today's multitudinal struggles opposing extractivist capital across Latin America

Esteemed readers of *Interface*: we are reaching the conclusion of the crisis of the neoliberal era and it doesn't look pretty. Increasingly more countries are dragged into the wars of the twenty-first century. The "never again" slogan *appears* to not have made it past the twentieth century, pushing humanity to an abyss of evil and catastrophe worse than what went before it. It is not just a repeat of earlier times; there are new ingredients in this explosive stew and hence, despite appearances, this chapter has not yet been written. Some of these ingredients include weapons of mass destruction, the robotification of the front lines of military aggression, and the accelerating climate crisis among others. Wars, genocide, poverty: none of these ills are inevitable as such, but they are intrinsic to capitalism. The main oppositional force to capitalist competition is the cooperation and the solidarity of the working class. It is noteworthy that despite the attacks on it, its traditional organ of class-based organisation, the trade unions, have failed to set the agenda, and it is uprising and popular cross-section social and political movements that are trying to fill that space. It does not mean that trade unions are absent or obsolete: their historical task is to rekindle their rank-and-file combative organisation apt to defend their members' interests in the world today. Social movements are showing the way and growing strike waves in various European countries, especially Italy in solidarity with the Palestinian people, the coordinated industrial action by air traffic control staff across major European borders, the Bharat Bandh general strike involving millions of workers from diverse productive and service sectors in India in July this year, to strikes by university employees, junior doctors and more recently, transport and public service sector strikes in Britain to ongoing labour conflicts in South Korea and Amazon warehouse workers in the US among others, indicate an awakening. These struggles drive the push for new political articulations.

In an anticipated response to these pressures, Trump's trade war is about disciplining his own capitalist class to return to the United States and reignite the local production line: his election promise. Immigrants are scapegoated. Industrial and manufacturing capitalists had shifted their business to Asia in droves at the end of the Cold War when triumphant Western capitalisms sought to appropriate much cheaper labour to nurture the rise in profitability of the 1990s, scattering the Global North with industrial wastelands and their structurally unemployed communities, only in part absorbed by the growing service sector. Yes, this is the juncture of contradictions where social movements forge a way out of this grim hole, and in today's world, these social movements have no options but to directly oppose capital.

Kenya's #RejectFinanceBill2024 uprising illuminated the structural violence of neoliberal austerity and its entanglement with authoritarian state repression. The bill, drafted under IMF pressure, sought to expand taxation on basic commodities in order to service debt accrued through elite accumulation and global financial dictates. Youth organisers translated its technical language into accessible terms, politicising the act of reading and exposing the bill as an instrument of recolonisation through debt. This process generated a consciousness that linked everyday hardship to the demands of global capital. Online mobilisation merged with mutual aid, which ensured that demonstrators had food, water, and medical support while facing state violence. Police repression was ferocious: live rounds fired into crowds, mass arrests, and dozens upon dozens of deaths. The storming of parliament was clearly an expression of class antagonism in a society squeezed between external creditors and a comprador elite. The partial retreat of the state did not resolve the contradictions; it merely bought time. The future of this movement depends on whether youth insurgency can converge with organised labour, informal-sector associations, and neighbourhood committees to build structures resilient enough to endure repression and wage a protracted struggle against neoliberal domination.

Similarly, Nepal's wave of Gen Z youth-led protests exposes the hollow character of its republican order and the unfinished work of dismantling oligarchic patronage. The attempted ban on TikTok and other platforms revealed the political class's fear of digitally networked mobilisation. Young protesters recognised the ban as a strategy to choke dissent, linking it to decades of graft in which state resources were siphoned into party-business networks. Tens of thousands filled the streets, reframing "anti-corruption" from a technocratic slogan into a structural critique of class rule. The demand was not for cleaner management but for the dismantling of cartels that treat state power as a vehicle of private enrichment. The state responded with curfews, arrests, and smear campaigns, demonstrating its authoritarian reflex when challenged from below. The revolt marks a generational rupture with the settlement that replaced monarchy with parliamentary oligarchy while leaving intact systems of accumulation. Its long-term trajectory arguably depends on whether the righteous indignation of the youth connect with peasant struggles and labour movements to build organisations capable of contesting the entrenched elite. Otherwise, the energy risks being absorbed into surface reforms that preserve the dominance of *comprador* capitalism.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the persistence of warfare demonstrates the logic of imperial accumulation by dispossession. The M23 rebellion, openly backed by Rwanda, serves as a proxy mechanism that fragments Congolese sovereignty while ensuring uninterrupted flows of cobalt, coltan, and other strategic minerals to Western and Chinese markets. War functions here not as breakdown but as governance, structuring labour regimes, displacing populations, and facilitating the penetration of global capital. The systematic uprooting of rural communities clears the way for resource corridors under armed protection, thereby commodifying land and labour for export. Villages are razed, farmland appropriated, and miners forced into hyper-precarious work

under the supervision of militias. Yet within this devastation, popular organisations continue to resist. Women's associations sustain food production, cooperatives regulate access to markets, and churches provide both relief and political education. These practices preserve life by forming emergent alternatives to the extractive state and its international patrons. Western policy discourse frames Congo as a humanitarian tragedy, yet this masks the continuity of colonial plunder now pursued under the sign of humanitarian intervention and peacekeeping.

Sudan's civil war reveals the brutal mechanics of counter-revolution and the militarisation of famine as an instrument of social control. The Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, heirs to colonial militarised governance, target the remnants of the 2018–19 uprising by encircling entire cities and weaponising scarcity. In El-Fasher, humanitarian corridors have been blocked for months, transforming hunger into a political weapon aimed at dismantling neighbourhood committees. Epidemics surge as hospitals are bombed and sanitation infrastructure is destroyed. Such practices of annihilation represent a deliberate strategy to break the back of revolutionary Sudan. International mediators stage diplomatic theatre while maintaining arms transfers and geopolitical alliances that perpetuate the violence. Yet amid this devastation, neighbourhood committees persist. They operate clandestine kitchens, underground health clinics, and systems of information exchange that refuse to surrender the terrain of everyday life to the state or paramilitaries. These infrastructures of care embody the survival of emancipatory politics under siege and sustain possibilities of dual power even when confronted with starvation and terror.

The Philippines offers a textbook case of authoritarian governance as the backbone of corruption. Revelations of vast kickbacks in flood-control projects exposed how the state transforms (not so) "natural" disasters into opportunities for accumulation. Contracts were deliberately inflated, infrastructure was left dangerously weak, and profits were shared across legislators, contractors, and military actors. Communities devastated by typhoons faced a violent one-two punch defined by ecological destruction and elite profiteering. Protesters named the system for what it is: a politico-contractor bloc that converts disaster into profit. Demonstrations connected these revelations to broader demands for wage justice, housing rights, and climate resilience. State repression was swift, with arrests and intimidation deployed to protect the interests of ruling elites. Yet the exposure of these networks has politicised corruption as a structural class relation rather than an administrative aberration. The protests echo an anti-imperialist politics that links climate justice with the dismantling of authoritarian capitalism across the islands.

On the front of geopolitics across West and South Asia, Saudi Arabia's defence pact with Pakistan illustrates the regionalisation of authoritarian security regimes. For decades both states depended on U.S. militarism, yet they are now consolidating their own counter-revolutionary bloc. The agreement deepens arms transfers, intelligence sharing, and surveillance technologies, which ensures

that labour movements, democratic uprisings, and dissident voices face a coordinated system of repression. Amidst the headlines, what is being left out is the sobering fact that migrant workers across the Gulf will continue to experience intensified exploitation under the arrangement. Their political activity is being further criminalised while their livelihoods become more deeply bound to coercive regimes. Popular uprisings in South Asia face a strengthened wall of state violence equipped with Gulf finance and military technology. For movements resisting exploitation, this pact demonstrates that authoritarianism no longer functions in isolation but as part of transnational alliances. Effective resistance must therefore be internationalist, building solidarities among workers and activists that match the geographic reach of authoritarian power. See below our call for papers for our next Special Issue on this topic.

At the same time, the Guyana—Venezuela dispute over Essequibo has transformed the Caribbean into a site of renewed imperial contestation. ExxonMobil's oil discoveries placed Guyana at the centre of U.S. strategy, with Washington deploying its military and diplomatic machinery to guarantee extraction. This intervention pits neighbouring states against one another, deepens militarisation across the region, and heightens the risk of proxy conflict. At the same time, the discovery locks Guyana into a petro-economy that reproduces dependency and accelerates ecological devastation. Indigenous communities and grassroots organisations resist by defending land rights, challenging oil contracts, and linking extractivism to colonial domination. Left movements across the region recall the history of Caribbean federation and the need for unity against external control. Essequibo thus stands as both a territorial conflict and a struggle over the region's future. The choice is stark: remain subordinated to imperial oil capital or reclaim sovereignty through collective, anti-imperialist resistance.

Markedly, Palestine remains the clearest demonstration of colonial domination and global complicity. European governments have extended symbolic recognition to a Palestinian state while continuing to arm, finance, and defend the Israeli apartheid regime as it wages genocide in Gaza and ethnic cleansing across the West Bank. Recognition without sanctions and material divestment functions as a mask for complicity and legitimises the very structures of colonial occupation it claims to oppose. Palestinians persist in organising survival under siege: schools operate in tents, farmers return to scorched fields, and mutual aid networks deliver food and medicine under bombardment. These practices embody a politics of steadfastness that refuses erasure. International solidarity from below advances through student encampments, trade union port blockades, the freedom and *sumud* flotillas, and protective presence in villages under threat, even as activists face repression for standing with Palestine. Indeed, the struggle for Palestinian liberation exposes the bankruptcy of liberal diplomacy and the humanitarianism industrial complex, not to mention affirms that self-determination will not be granted by states but forged by struggling from below and solidarities rooted in unity and resistance.

Across these diverse geographies, the lasting legacies of empire continue to echo with remarkable consistency. Debt, famine, militarisation, and ecological collapse are deployed as tools of governance, while authoritarian states enforce an ongoing imperial world order through censorship, surveillance, and naked violence. Corruption is revealed not as a deviation but as the organising principle of the ruling class, binding capital, racist dehumanisation, gender-based violence, and coercion into a unified system. Critical analysis makes plain that these dynamics reproduce colonial relations in updated form by preserving a world economy premised on plunder and repression.

Yet growing and increasingly inter-connected movements across the Global South and North continue refuse to accept this fate. They are building infrastructures of care, consolidating grassroots organisations that endure beyond moments of spectacle, and weaving solidarities across borders in defiance of the powers that be. From Nairobi to Kinshasa, Khartoum to Kathmandu, Manila to Riyadh, Gaza to Georgetown, the pattern is one of counter-power rooted in daily life and prepared for rupture. Liberation is no longer a deferred aspiration but an immediate necessity being demanded by movements who refuse to remain subjects of empire and who are prepared to transform the conditions of history itself.

The US – China-competition reduces social democracy to rubble

Trump's announcements that he wants to seize Greenland and the Panama Canal and his dismissal of the national border with Canada as an imaginary line could have been interpreted as a declaration of war, and that would have been the case had this been announced by heads of state in North Korea, Venezuela, Russia or perhaps even China. In response, somewhat pathetically, the existing European leaders wavered between dismissing Trump as a theatrical act and scrambling to peddle up to him to "negotiate" allegedly genuine US security interests. All of this occurred even before he officially had stepped back into the White House. Reality has forced him to backtrack slightly on his trade war as the US economy looks increasingly shaky and alternatives to US dollar dominance are now being actively sought, but the trade war hasn't gone away as arguably he was able to re-write some more favourable terms of international exchange: but will it lead to an economic recovery? With the threat of the AI bubble and the housing market in the US bursting, there aren't many signs to believe that.

Trump's peaceful record in international politics from his first term in office that underpinned his "Make America great again" by avoiding conflicts threatens to turn dangerously violent in his second term, untamed by an establishment of representative democracy in shatters. Nevertheless, it was the previous governments in office, including the Democrats and their duplicity and culpability in genocide of the Palestine people that paved the way for the unabashed Israeli ethnic cleansing of Gaza and its growing threats to the entire region, with Trump envisioning redevelopment complete with Trump towers in a Gaza and without Palestinians.

For now, irrespective of the names of the presidents in power, capitalism is edging closer to a Third World War in a nip and tuck way driven by the US – China competition for global dominance. Bit by bit, conflicts erupt across the Middle East, the African continent, countries in Latin America are facing US pressure and even the threat of direct military intervention, East Asia is holding its breath confronted with the threats and pressures of a powerful China reclaiming the region as its unquestionable sphere of influence, while war between NATO-backed Ukraine and Russia heats up the arms race and entices appetite for war amongst government leaders in Europe, especially in Britain. So where do the social movements today fit into this picture? What are their historical legacy and prospects? These are the questions that our journal is dedicated to exploring through committed and critical research.

The new polarising processes shaping up reveal the fragility of representative democracy, its institutions and the social, human and economic rights that had been won by the working-class since its emergence. What will decisively shape the Trump administration will be the agency of the working class in its broadest forms to generate social movements with a vision for the future. When humanity is in its darkest hour, such vision might seem impossible, but at the same time it turns indispensable. Arguably, Mamdani's electoral success is in part the consequence of the local communities that have responded so powerfully to the authoritarian crack-down on immigration giving rise to large in many US cities, and we all have seen footage of citizens' interventions against ICE abductions on the streets. The growing pro-Palestine protests mobilised sections of US based Jewish communities against genocide. It is this agency on both counts that ensured Mamdani's electoral success and that frightens Trump into lowering his tone for now.

Argentina also reveals general tendencies. For much of the twentieth century Peronism was a Latin American equivalent of Social Democracy par excellence, articulating a "Third position" in the Cold War era based on 'social justice', while relinquishing anti-capitalist alternatives to the status of an unlikely dream. Left-wing and working-class demands to enact that social justice met with deadly military coups. Extreme conditions nurture extreme outcomes.

In the midst of the 1990s' failing neoliberal adjustment policies backed by the IMF and other multilateral financial institutions, unprecedented mass social movements of the unemployed began to challenge austerity, rapidly expanding employment flexibilization and unemployment. Workers from across productive and service sector rubrics in the SME sector (Small and Medium Enterprise), often owed months and in some cases years of wages, took over their companies when faced with asset stripping and bankruptcy declared by their greedy owners. Uniquely, these workers, usually after lengthy occupations of the company premises, created a political and productive movement of workers' cooperatives that achieved the legal expropriation of the enterprises into the workers' hands. Most of them are still operating today as enclaves of workers' defiance and are educators to the working-class in the actual sense of the word. They championed popular education schools, *Bachilleratos Populares*, targeting young adults to

return to complete their secondary schooling and developing novel pedagogies in the process. They are supported by others, such as teachers, university students and staff. The workers opened the companies to the society that had helped them to resist police evictions and to re-start production under workers' control. Thus, the workers' cooperative is not just a productive but also a social and politically significant entity. It is important to stress that despite the long, democratically elected duration of the progressive Kirchner governments (2003-2007; 2007-11; 2011-1015), the workers' demand for the universal application of the expropriation law across all provinces was never granted. Today, with the financial strangulation of the Small and Medium Enterprise sector in particular, these workers' cooperatives are facing very harsh conditions of survival.

Not surprisingly then, today's right-wing capitalist counter-offensive in Argentina is obsessed with re-affirming the dominance of private property. But these workers' movements have done their historical task and sown the seeds for a future post-capitalist society, one that is based on the socialisation of production where collective and direct democratic decision-making is the central building block for the society as whole, organised not "from above" but collectively "from below". Sprouted from the actual lived conditions under austerity capitalism, that perspective has already proven in praxis to be a lot more sustainable than anything the capitalist elites can muster. More importantly, we no longer lack the vocabulary to describe key economic organising principles for a future post-capitalist society.

The editors apologize for this unusually long editorial. It is a reflection both of recent interruptions in publications of *Interface* due to volunteer staff turnover and re-making it fit for purpose, and also of the multitude of massive changes, shifts and movements that crystallize from the deepening crisis of capitalism, only some of which we were able to capture here as a contribution to debate and food for thought.

This issue

The items in this issue attest to diverse aspects of the actualities and tendencies already highlighted above. Firstly, however, readers will find our most recent call for papers, *Transnational repression and social movements*, which explores the ways in which transnational repression has become a defining challenge of global activism. The special issue invites empirical, theoretical, and practical contributions on how authoritarian and liberal regimes deploy cross-border repression, how movements adapt and resist, and how media, digital technologies, and global power shifts reshape contemporary repression.

Burcu Binburga's *The struggle for 'life': anti-mining mobilization in Turkey* shows how, faced with the growing erosion of representative democracy, social environmental movements opposing mining in Artvin in Turkey are responding with deepening democracy within their movements.

Gino Canella, in *Contested terrain and the distribution of social movements*, explores the how social movements navigate and adapt to the new contexts of political and class conflicts that articulate in communications and online media.

Madeline Lord, in *Transforming the statist domination of society: Radical democracy in Mexico and Kurdistan*, draws from interviews and archival research to compare *Cherán* (Mexico) and *Mexmûr* (Kurdistan). The paper illustrates how radically democratic societies are transforming statist domination through women's liberation, ecology, and stateless self-government. Despite divergent paths, both places reveal the emergence of a communal subject as the key agent of democratic transformation.

In *Spontaneity during moments of the whirlwind: Airport protest to President Trump's original Muslim ban*, Thomas Piñeros Shields explains how apparently spontaneous mobilisations combine rapid improvisation with pre-existing organisational routines and established principles. The case demonstrates how *Movimiento Cosecha* quickly decided to act and leverage a crowd to gain legitimacy with police, politicians, lawyers and media, which underscores how organisational capacity underpins seemingly "spontaneous" protests.

David Purucker, in *Reviving the mass organization for social movements? The meaning of membership in the Democratic Socialists of America*, traces the history of ups and downs of the mass membership party and what the author argues to be its reinvention in new, more democratic clothes.

Taura Taylor, in *Daughters of the comb: exploring consciousness-raising, anchored consciousness, and micro-resistance in the natural hair movement*, explores how the natural hair movement constitutes a form of micro-resistance, and which arguably contribute to a broader generalization of a consciousness of resistance of the oppressed.

In a similar vein regarding subtleties in social movement building and impacts on the larger fields of political articulations of resistance and struggle, *A quiet revolution — transcending and transforming political engagement in the transition movement for community climate resilience* by Anna Willow explores forms of climate action that negotiate contemporary organizational and ideological complexities by opening up novel spaces for activism and action.

The issue concludes with Alexander Brown's review of Sabu Kohso's *Radiation and Revolution*.

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