

ISRAEL: NETANYAHU/BEN-GVIR/ SMOTRICH GOVERNMENT

OUT!

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סמוטריץ'!

- למען ארגוני עובדים דמוקרטיים בישראל ובפלסטין,
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- בניית אלטרנטיבה סוציאליסטית לחיסול העוני, האפליה,
הדיכוי והכיבוש.
- בעד ישראל סוציאליסטית לצד פלסטין עצמאית
וסוציאליסטית, כשלב בדרך לפדרציה סוציאליסטית של
המזרח התיכון על בסיס הצטרפות חופשית ומעמד שווה.


- For democratic workers' organisations in Israel and Palestine,
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- Build a socialist alternative to end poverty, discrimination,
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- For a socialist Israel and a socialist Palestine, as part of a
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Some of the largest protest demonstrations in Israel's history have erupted in response to the Netanyahu government's attack on the independence of the judiciary.

A mass rally in Tel Aviv was attended by 180,000 people. They are outraged by the acts of the most right-wing coalition government ever in Israel to give itself greater powers to carry out its ultra-right agenda. Its aims include increasing religious constraints, attacking trade union rights and LGBTQ+ rights, reducing the rights of Palestinians and other non-Jews in Israel and pushing ahead with more Jewish settlements in the West Bank, leading to a goal of entirely annexing it.

It's significant that hundreds of reservists in the military have joined the opposition movement by limiting their volunteer duties.

As well as stepping up brutality in the Palestinian territories - driven by far-right ministers who have been handed key positions to do so - the government has presided over the use of tear gas, stun grenades and water cannon against Jewish protesters involved in the mass movement in Israel, creating even greater anger.

Democratic rights are being undermined and need to be defended in virtually every country of the globe as capitalism moves deeper into crisis - including in Britain, with the Tories further restricting the right to strike and protest.

Socialists call for the judiciary to be elected and under democratic control rather than appointed. Using appointment is one of the many limitations of capitalist 'democracy' in Israel, as too in most countries of the world.

However, it is clear that Netanyahu's new coalition is reducing the power of the judiciary in order to prevent it from being a check on the acts of his government. The judges attempt to base their decisions on Israel's 'Basic' and other laws that have been accumulated during the country's 75 years of existence, so they are seen by many people as a resort for stability. This is especially the case with the background of five general elections and changes of government in less than four years, and now with the far-right being part of the government.

There's also considerable anger that Netanyahu is personally motivated to counter the judiciary, as he himself is under trial for bribery, fraud and breach of trust. Over 2.6 million Israelis live in poverty and with inflation now over 5% more and more are sinking into financial hardship. Insecurity and bloodshed are increasing, provoked by the government's stance, as terribly indicated by the pogrom carried out by Jewish settlers in Hawara on 26 February, the worst ever. Over 60 Palestinians have been killed in the conflict this year so far, and 14 Israelis. Fears are gripping Israeli society of a descent into greater turmoil, economic instability and insecurity.

However, the mass movement is up against a government that is in reality very weak. A majority of people who voted in November's general election didn't choose Netanyahu's bloc, and it only received the votes of a third of the total electorate. Polls show even that a majority of Netanyahu's own party, Likud, don't approve of the attack on the judiciary.

Also, the government coalition is highly unstable, being made up of parties with different interests, with Netanyahu making rapid

shifts to try to appease their demands and hold it together. It could be removed from power by an organised opposition movement, but the crucial question is: What type of movement?

The present opposition is coming from within all classes and sections of society, expressing different class interests. The figureheads of the opposition are pro-capitalist politicians, tech industry capitalists and leaders of Israel's military and security apparatus. Yet none of them have any solutions to offer, whether regarding the cost-of-living and housing crisis or the national conflict. The pro-capitalist 'anti-Netanyahu' parties have already amply illustrated this; the collapse of their own coalition government last year and low support in the last general election show their unattractiveness and failure to counter support for the far-right.

Israel is one of the most unequal high-income countries in the world. Just 100 people have wealth equivalent to more than half the country's GDP. But - as with other countries - it lacks a political party that can take forward the interests of working-class and middle-class people. In Israel this needs to be a party based on the interests of working-class Jews and Palestinians, religious and secular, independent of capitalist interests, and with a socialist programme.

Why socialist? Because the only route to permanently raising living standards for all and ending the conflict is through public ownership of the top companies, socialist economic planning, and defending the right of both Palestinians and Israelis to have their own states, with full defence of the rights of minorities within those states. Only in that way can the necessary cooperation and trust be developed to arrive at societies with a decent future for all and an end to the unrelenting bloodshed forever.