



THE FOG OF WAR

Unverified claims about the conflict in Gaza spread like wildfire

By Granville Williams

On 13 October the Israeli military issued an ‘evacuation’ order to 1.1 million Palestinians in northern Gaza including Gaza City, half the population of the Gaza Strip, with the impossible deadline warning of just 24 hours to leave their homes.

Israel was responding to Hamas’ attacks on 7 October against thousands of Israeli civilians living in towns near the blockaded strip and the holding of civilian hostages.

One of the most well-equipped military forces in the world will be deployed against the trapped Palestinian civilian population subjecting them to acts of collective punishment -

illegal under international law. Israel said it used 6,000 bombs against Gaza in the first six days of the conflict, more than the US used in a year during its operations in Afghanistan.

On 18 October Action Aid said 3000 Palestinians had been killed in ten days, 70% of them women and children.

Until the US President’s visit on 18 October two ministers in Netanyahu’s government vehemently rejected the idea of opening Rafah on the Egyptian border to allow aid in, with energy minister Israel Katz saying he ‘bitterly opposes’ such a step. “Our commitment is to the families of the murdered and kidnapped hostages - not to the Hamas murderers and those who helped them,” Katz

said. He also bizarrely accused the UN of becoming a ‘propaganda arm of a terrorist Isis organisation’.

Defence minister Yoav Gallant declared, “I have ordered a full siege of the Gaza Strip. No power, no food, no water, no gas, everything closed. We are fighting human animals and we act accordingly.”

As a catastrophe unfolds we are witnessing a battle in the media to control the narrative as more and more lives are lost. The dominant media message is that Palestinian life is cheap. It is one which Israel has become skilled and experienced in shaping.



Above: Northern Gaza devastated
Below: Tabloids don’t blame Israel for hospital bombing. At least the Express has ‘proof’ in inverted commas



In May 2022 Palestinian-American journalist and Al Jazeera veteran Shireen Abu Akleh was shot and killed. She was wearing a clearly marked press vest and helmet. Defence Minister Benny Gantz said then that the Israeli army had ‘seen footage of indiscriminate shooting by Palestinian terrorists’.

Later in 2022 the Israeli government finally admitted that

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Labour leaves it to Murdoch

Tim Gopsill on the links between Murdoch and the Labour leader

On 23 June the media owner Rupert Murdoch, aged 92, threw a summer party in London. Among the guests selected for a tête-à-tête on the sofa was the Labour leader Keir Starmer.

According to social reports, eyebrows were raised among the champagne-sipping cabinet ministers and MPs, the invited great and the good. One unnamed guest told the *Guardian* reporter that it was ‘an extraordinary, symbolic moment, like a changing of the guard’.

For Labour Party bosses whose strategy for power is to win over the right-wing media it was a stride in the right direction: their objective is not just favourable coverage, but party endorsement – notably from Murdoch’s *Sun*.

It is 26 years since Labour ousted a Conservative government at the polls. In the minds of the leadership the determining factor in 1997 was the *Sun* changing sides to support them. Exasperated by the shambles of John Major’s collapsing Tory government, Murdoch summoned Tony Blair to test his compliance. He passed the test and the *Sun* turned to back Labour. Home and dry.

The spinner who engineered the coup was Peter Mandelson and the party marvelled at the brilliance of his media strategy, even though the reason for the triumph was simply that Blair had made ‘New’ Labour, as they liked to call it, sufficiently right-wing to satisfy the owner

of newspapers, film and broadcasting companies across the planet that it posed no threat to his interests.

Remind you of anything? Mandelson is still very much around. Since the day Starmer was elected leader in April 2020 he has been acknowledged as his senior advisor, developing the ‘party of business’ approach to appeal to media and corporate interests. At the party conference in Liverpool, a ‘flagship’ one-day ‘business forum’ sold out in hours at £2,520 a head. Corporate donations now exceed membership and union contributions.

Big companies don’t throw money away; they pay up for a reason, and there is a special bonus on offer for corporate media, that, in addition to a friendly government safeguarding their profits, they can avoid the menace of regulation. Since the 1980s the party has stood for limiting the share of the newspaper and broadcasting markets that a company could control, to counter monopoly power.

But in the mid-1990s, once Blair and Mandelson had sold the party’s soul to Murdoch, the world of media regulation turned upside-down. The Labour Party, still in opposition, sought to amend a Tory Bill

Murdoch summoned Blair to Australia to test his compliance



Sun front page 18 March 1997 when the paper had a readership of over 10 million

on media ownership to make it even more generous to the owners. It took a backbench revolt, led by the former journalist Labour MP Chris Mullin, to stop the move.

Labour remained intimate with the Murdoch press all through the 2000s, but the *Sun* switched back to the Tories in 2009. The phone-hacking scandal of 2011 turned the party further against Murdoch as it adopted the Leveson process to establish a stronger and fairer regulatory regime.

In theory the party is still committed to implementing the remaining elements of the Leveson structure. Fat chance of that! Starmer can happily snub party members, the unions, environmentalists, health service workers ... but the Murdochs are the last people he’ll want to upset.

He has been close to them for years. Research by Matt Kennard of *Declassified UK* has shown that when Starmer served as Director of Public Prosecutions from 2008-13 he accepted hospitality from the Murdoch-owned media on ten occasions, according to his hospitality register seen by *Declassified*.

He apparently stopped accepting hospitality from the media abruptly at the end of 2011, as the Leveson Inquiry began investigating media practices in the wake of the phone hacking scandal involving Murdoch’s News International.

Starmer has made a point of writing regularly for the *Sun*, which Labour boycotted for decades over its notorious reporting of the Hillsborough stadium disaster. “I am very happy to work with the *Sun*, to write for the *Sun*, to do interviews with the *Sun*,” he said recently.

People sometimes wonder how the UK national papers and their websites retain their immense political power, even as their readerships fall and survey after survey show the public increasingly taking their news from elsewhere. The explanation is that political leaders grant them that power.

Starmer does not want to mobilise people with a mass appeal to improve their lives; that might give them ideas. He wants them to stay passive while Murdoch fixes it for him.

Will it be the *Sun* wot wins it again? **MN**

Tom O'Malley on the silence from Labour's leadership about media reform at the party conference

Elephant in the room: Labour's media policy

On 9 October, Thangam Debonnaire, the Shadow Secretary of State for Digital Media, Culture and Sport, addressed the Labour Party Conference.

You could be forgiven for thinking that this was a chance to talk about the key issues facing the media. Though much of worth was said, there was an elephant in the room – Labour's unwillingness to press the case for policies designed to reform the media.

A much criticised Online Safety Bill completed its stages in Parliament in September – with serious implications for users and providers. A Media Bill, announced last March, raises sombre issues about media regulation. The Bill will repeal Section 40 of the Crimes and Courts Act which, though never implemented, stipulates that any publication not signed up to an approved independent standards regulator, such as IMPRESS, would have to pay costs in any libel action even if it wins it. Labour's mild indication that it might reverse this legal change led to a barrage of attacks in the press.

How do we ensure that Ofcom enforces its regulations around impartiality on stations like *GB News*? How can we bolster public service journalism and broadcasting? How can we guard against the use of Artificial Intelligence by big tech to undermine employment rights and jobs?

Debonnaire, however, talked



Above: MediaNorth document to stimulate debate on need for media reform. Right: a younger Keir Starmer had close contact with Murdoch. Starmer wants to renew the links.



about the importance of the Cultural Industries in general. A Labour government would be a 'National Champion' for the creative industries to help boost economic growth.

This is very important; but also beside the point.

The attack on Labour's stance on Section 40 shows that, if the Party steps out of line, it gets condemned. This is one reason why it is trying hard to pacify powerful media interests. Keir Starmer was a guest at Rupert Murdoch's

summer party.

Not a week goes by without Labour retreating on key policies. The leadership avoids saying anything that could incur the wrath of the corporate sector and its attack dogs, the *Daily Mail*, the *Telegraph*, *The Times*, *GB News*, and the *Sun*. Caution is the watch word. That is doubtless one reason why Debonnaire did not address the most pressing and sensitive area of her brief.

This silence is why we need to press the case for media reform among Labour supporters, the Trades Unions and organisations across society before the General Election and beyond. That is what *MediaNorth* has done with our two documents. One briefly outlines key issues, while the other gives more detail on policies (see below for web links).

We need widespread discussion about policies that promote diversity across the media and support higher standards. We need to counter the misinformation and lies that are fed into public discourse, day by day, poisoning the case for social reform. No media reform – no proper social reform.

Join us. Get hold of our documents. Discuss them in your local organisation – press the case for a better media and a healthier society. Contact us. **MN**

Unite warns of threats in proposed merger

By Tony Burke

The Unite union, which represent digital and communications workers, is concerned at the proposed merger between Three UK and Vodaphone, and says research raises doubts that the government will protect the UK's interests. It is proposed that Vodafone will own 51% of the combined entity, with China's CK Group, owner of Three, owning 49%.

If the merger goes ahead the CK Group will have significant control over the privacy and security of 27 million UK mobile phone customers.

A union report by a digital security expert says: "Domestic laws and internal company policies will do little to hinder the exercise of nation-state intelligence-gathering apparatus from leveraging any means of access to data that company mergers and acquisitions might enable. If a merger creates the technical or human means to collect valuable data, then the security services of any nation-state, Chinese or otherwise, are likely to make use of it."

The report shows a cosy relationship between the government and CK Group. Unite's executive head of operations, Gail Cartmail, said: "Meetings with CK bosses here and overseas, Tory MPs on the company payroll, and a government desperate to avoid democratic scrutiny is a recipe for disaster."

Former Transport and Justice Secretary Chris Grayling has been paid £300,000 by CK since 2020 and former Justice Secretary and Lord Chancellor Sir Brandon Lewis currently gets £30,000 a year from them.

Cartmail said: "Unite will continue fighting to ensure this dangerous merger faces the scrutiny it deserves." **MN**

Find the MediaNorth documents referred to above on our web site:

<https://medianorth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/MediaNorthA4WEBFINAL.pdf>

<https://medianorth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/MediaNorthLabConWEB-1.pdf>

Nick Jones on the intense media interest in the epic year-long struggle

Remembering the miners' strike after 40 years

A new series of television documentaries to be broadcast next year to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the 1984-85 miners' strike will aim to cast fresh light on many unanswered questions around troubling episodes during the year-long dispute.

Producers and researchers have been busy for months interviewing key figures in the National Union of Mineworkers and former insiders with knowledge of action taken by the National Coal Board, government departments and the police.

Journalists who reported the strike are also likely to feature in what looks like being a long cast list of interviewees in as many as six or possibly seven documentaries which have been commissioned from independent production companies by the BBC, Channel 4, and other tv services.

An in-depth analysis is promised of events surrounding the infamous 'Battle of Orgreave' when 3,000 police in full riot gear challenged around 6,000 pickets outside the Orgreave coke depot near Rotherham.

This confrontation became one of the defining events of the dispute. Footage of strikers being charged by mounted police is regularly replayed when television news bulletins and programmes look back on the strike.

Before I was interviewed

I went back to my personal archive of scripts for BBC Radio, newspaper cuttings and the many documents which I copied during the various releases of cabinet records and Margaret Thatcher's government papers.

One note which I looked at afresh was from the Department of Energy, dated 5 June 1984, which notified the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire that British Steel wanted to clear the remaining 8,000 tons of coke from Orgreave to Scunthorpe by road in the

Questions around troubling episodes during the strike



Newspaper front pages reveal hostile reporting of the miners' strike



week commencing Monday 18 June – the very day that police on horseback chased the pickets and when the NUM President Arthur Scargill was injured.

Police action needed to be 'part of a carefully conceived and well executed operation' ... 'to minimise any opportunity for the NUM to claim a victory'.

Another find during my research was picking myself out in the background in newspaper photographs taken outside the NUM's headquarters in Sheffield on 8 March 1984

when the national executive voted 21-3 to support unofficial strikes already underway in the Yorkshire and Scottish coalfields.

At the forefront of a group of noisy pickets demanding support were miners from Polmaise in Stirlingshire who were into a second week of a strike against the closure of their pit – the first men to join what became the national strike.

Radio actuality I recorded that day is now with the production company working on a documentary that aims to tell the story of how the plucky Polmaise miners and their community fought valiantly to protect their pit and preserve their jobs.

Such was their unity throughout the dispute that no pickets were ever needed outside the gates to their colliery – instead the Polmaise men travelled throughout the Scottish coalfield and much further afield urging fellow miners to support the NUM's stand against pit closures. **MN**

Nick Jones covered the year-long strike as an Industrial Correspondent for BBC Radio.

Granville Williams on why it all went wrong in Australia

Referendum derailed by misinformation

Australians voted 'No' to a referendum proposal to recognise First Nations people in its constitution. It was a result which shocked indigenous Australians but why was it lost?

Unfortunately yet again Rupert Murdoch's malign influence over Australian politics has been displayed. He may be stepping down from an active role in his global media group but that doesn't mean its anti-democratic values have been modified.

In the past he has been accused of swinging elections and deposing prime ministers in Australia, and this same media interference to polarise opinion and debate has been used again in the referendum.

'No' campaigners were successful through a sophisticated



News Corp Australia owns 59% of national and metropolitan papers

social media campaign and support from the Murdoch-owned newspapers and TV news channel Sky News. In place of balanced and respectful public debate the campaign was awash with misinforma-

tion, scaremongering and racially-charged discourse.

On social media, conspiracy theories were built around the idea of a 'voice' claiming that it involves reparations, land seizures, involvement of the

United Nations, and claims of 'apartheid' - effectively non-Aboriginal people would lose their status and privileges. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter (now X), and TikTok were widely used to share these ideas.

But many of the views expressed online were amplified and endorsed by the Murdoch press, and the rest of Australia's mainstream news media also failed to deliver accurate, quality information about the referendum, or robustly challenge the sort of views promoted by NewsCorp. Research (<https://360info.org/has-news-corps-one-way-voice-commentary-swayed-the-vote/>) shows that the vast majority of commentary (88%) in its publications actively campaigned for a 'No' vote and attacked 'Yes' supporters. **MN**

Unions must ensure workers have a voice on AI

By Louisa Bull

Like any technological change the key to ensuring worker participation and protection is to make it an integral part of union recognition and collective bargaining, and unions need to ensure that we negotiate agreements about the introduction, application, and governance of technological change - and right now one of those is algorithmic management tools in the workplace especially in the media and communications sectors.

Unions need to make sure that they are aware of what surveillance and performance monitoring tools are actually being used and how they are replacing human intervention.

It is never acceptable to pass off responsibility for key decisions to non-human agents and yet that is happening already in the UK media and communications.

Algorithms should advise, and humans should decide. It is that simple. The TUC has done great work on this as well in producing a manifesto for workplace bargaining on AI.

The second area in which we need to be vigilant in the media is where digital labour platform companies have grown exponentially - particularly since the pandemic - and of-

ten with a business model that is based on the exploitation of workers.

The use of bogus self-employment and the avoidance of employers' responsibilities towards workers and the state is a dangerous trend that must be stopped.

That is why unions are organising and telling people like Jeff Bezos and Amazon to end union busting practices.

Amazon embodies in one company most of the risks that the trade union movement is facing - algorithmic surveillance, platformisation, bogus self-employment and union busting. Organising and delivering trade union collective rights to workers across the new digital and tech sec-

tors, giving everyone a strong collective voice is essential. Unite and the Communications Workers Union are building union membership and seeking for recognition and collective bargaining.

This is not an easy task - but globally we are hopeful having seen recent growth of Unite membership within Google. Also the signing of the first European Works Council agreement that included workers from both the UK and Switzerland was a great success for unions. **MN**

Louisa Bull is the Unite National Officer for the Graphical Paper, Media and IT Sector and the Service Sector

MediaNorth will focus on the impact of AI on the media in future issues

Nick Jones explores how Sunak has won their support for new lines of attack

The tribalism of the Tory tabloids

Labour's failure to win the Uxbridge by-election in July was the moment Conservative-supporting newspapers saw an opportunity to develop lines of attack that they hope will drive a general election wedge between Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer.

Starmer was clearly troubled by the strength of the backlash against the introduction of London's ultra-low emissions charge.

Sunak's government seized the opportunity to embark on a rapid gear change against the spiralling cost of net zero pledges.

Within days the Tory press – with the *Sun* already having declared itself the motorists' friend – was clamouring for a retreat on a raft of climate promises.

'I am on motorists' side, says PM as he orders a review of anti-car schemes' was the exclusive splash headline on the front page of the *Sunday Telegraph* (30.7.2023) a week after the Conservatives' unexpected victory.

Since they fell into line in



2016 behind the push for Brexit and were ruthless in their exploitation of fears over immigration, there has been no slackening in the tribalism of the Tory tabloids.

The *Sun* claimed their pre-Uxbridge opinion poll had prompted a ministerial review on policies that clobbered motorists: 62 per cent told YouGov that getting prices down was more important than achieving carbon neutral status by midway through this century.

Two days after Sunak announced that he would launch a review, the *Sun* published its 'Motorist Manifesto' complete with a 'Give Us a Brake' logo. (*Sun* 1.8.2023)

By the run-up to the autumn party conferences there was a full throttle assault by the tabloids in support of what was dubbed 'The Great Green Divide'.

'Given us a brake!' declared the *Sun* (21.9.2023) claiming victory for its campaign to



Wedge issues get front page treatment in the Tory press

Sunak was on a roll by the time of his party conference with sympathetic newspapers primed in advance about the decision to abandon the much-promised Birmingham-Manchester section of the HS2 railway line.

'Rish, Bash, Bosh' was the *Sun's* take (5.10.2023) on his 'common sense' promise.

There had been an equally ecstatic reception the week before for a series of speeches by the Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, arguing that the asylum laws were unsustainable. 'Suella promises reform of absurd immigration system.' (*Daily Express*, 26.9.2023)

Opinion polls putting Starmer consistently ahead have done little to dent the optimism with which the *Daily Mail* greeted Sunak's conference speech: 'Day Rishi gave Tories a reason to believe he CAN save us from Keir's wokery.' (5.10.2023)

Tory tabloids are up for the fight and these early pre-election skirmishes indicate confidence in their own ability to drive the news agenda towards policy divides that will cause Labour the greatest difficulty.

MIN



delay 'crippling net zero targets', hailing Sunak's response for having 'binned the 2030 ban on new petrol and diesel cars' and the '2030 deadline to replace gas boilers with heat pumps'.

Sunak was greeted with a blitz of favourable coverage across the Tory press for slamming on the brakes on the race for net zero.

'I'll spare families ruinous cost of net zero, vows Rishi' (*Daily Mail*, 21.9.2023) was bookended with 'Honest Rishi: Nation won't and can't pay net zero bill' (*Daily Express*, 21.9.2023)

Blitz of favourable coverage for slamming on the brakes



Not just lies, but failure to tell the truth

WAR MADE INVISIBLE How America Hides the Human Toll of Its Military Machine

Norman Solomon
The New Press, New York

Norman Solomon is a phenomenon in American politics: a Democrat Party member, a super-activist who founds and directs grassroots campaigns, a peace campaigner and a journalist who investigates his country's war crimes and writes books about them.

The latest of his dozen books is the third with 'war' in the title. Solomon has got his teeth into the USA's incessant war-mongering and the media mis-reporting that sustains it.

"In matters of war and peace," he writes, "news media perform such crucial functions that they often resemble a fourth branch of government." False dichotomies are generated to give an impression that media are independent while underlying assumptions go unchallenged.

Media support for the 'war on terror' has been 'as perpetual as the war on terror itself'. "The goal of maximizing US power projection is not controversial in relations between press and state. Despite tensions that can flare up

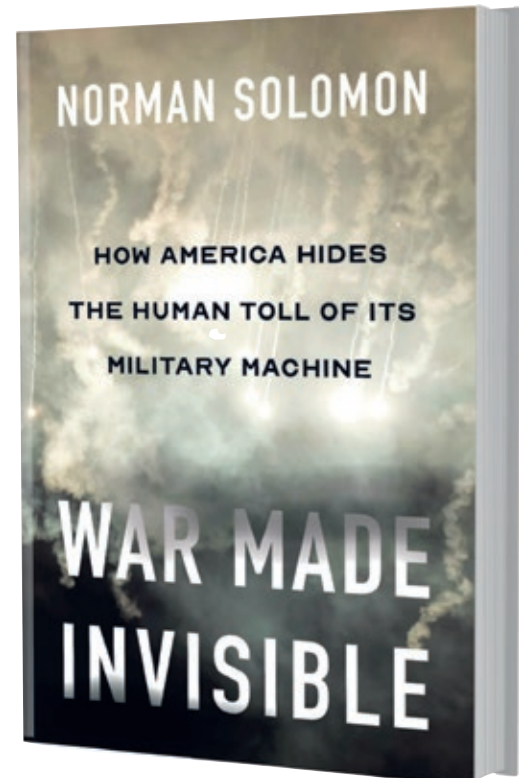
between media and the Pentagon, the overall harmonies of reporting news and making war have endured, without a serious breach, for upwards of five decades. At times, high-profile journalists and top war architects might seem to be arm wrestling, but one hand is washing the other."

Journalists who summon the courage to question their role find their careers in ruins. Solomon writes of a young reporter for the cable TV network MSNBC, a rising star who was appointed anchor on a prime-time show, but spilled the beans in a talk to students. She said that the famous toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad in 2003 "was a glorious, wonderful picture that had a lot of people watching and a lot of advertisers excited about cable news.

"But it wasn't journalism ... [because] we didn't see what it took to do that. You didn't see where the bullets landed. There are horrors that were completely left out of this war."

Her honesty cost her her job

Journalists know what is wrong but choose not to say so



– not at the behest of government, but her employer. They couldn't sack her so ostracised and undermined her till she moved on.

Solomon's point is that many journalists know what is wrong but choose not to say so – at least until it's too late. Of the Iraq war he writes: "Immediately after the invasion ... even the mainstream news organizations that had been expressing trepidation or opposition swung into line to support the war effort.

"Two decades later, many of the same media outlets were calling the invasion of Iraq the worst US foreign policy blun-

der in history." It's not so much the lies as the failure to tell the truth.

The book is concerned only with the US, and the UK could do with such a substantial figure as Norman Solomon. Britain fights the same wars, for the same devious reasons, committing the same atrocities with the same tame media coverage.

Of course, there are a number of brave and brilliant critics but none with national standing – not at least since the virtual retirement of John Pilger (now 84) and the late Paul Foot. Come on you brave millennials! – **Tim Gopsill MN**

How compliant media helps governments suppress dissent

Any new edition of this important book will need an extra chapter. Protests against the massive Israeli assault on Gaza led Home Secretary Suella Braverman to write on 11 October to chief constables in England and Wales saying that waving a Palestinian flag

CHARGED How The Police Try To Suppress Dissent

Matt Foot and Morag Livingstone
Verso £18.99

or singing a chant advocating freedom for Arabs in the region may be a criminal offence.

It's a new low in the way successive governments have sought to suppress dissent. This book shows how after the Brixton riots of 1981 the government covertly allowed the police greater freedom to crackdown on protests and use force – from batons to horse charges and kettling. Case

studies include miners at Orgreave, student protesters and many more.

The book is well-researched and makes a powerful point that the clampdowns on protests are often supported by compliant media praising the police and allowing them to act with impunity. — **GW MN**

MediaNorth takes case for reform to Labour Conference

Plans to maintain campaign post-Conference

By Barry White

A motion calling on a future Labour government to adopt a radical programme for media reform failed to be selected for debate at the recent Labour Party Conference held in Liverpool.

The motion *Action for better media* was tabled by the Skipton and Ripon Constituency Party and set out a wide ranging programme for reform which included calling on a future Labour government to reinstate the Leveson 2 Inquiry, scrapped by the Tories; prepare legislation to challenge large corporations' domination of press owner-

ship and high levels of media concentration, and replacing the BBC's Royal Charter with Parliamentary and public scrutiny, making the prime public service broadcaster more publicly accountable with reduced government influence.

Outside the conference and at various fringe meetings supporters of *MediaNorth* distributed over a thousand leaflets calling for radical media reform which were well received by many delegates who were concerned about the state of the UK's media.

Although the motion failed to win enough support to be debated, the Skipton and Ripon Constituency will be

discussing furthering the campaign for media reform within the Party.

The motion was also discussed by delegates at an overflowing fringe meeting – 'It's the press, stupid' – organised by *Hacked Off* and *Byline Times* which warned that unless Labour addressed press accountability, it would struggle to deliver change on the issues which matter.

The panel discussion which included London Labour MPs Dawn Butler and Bell Ribeiro-Addy, focused on how sections of the press were holding back progressive change in the UK and why a future Labour Government must take urgent action on press standards. **MN**

THE FOG OF WAR

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it was a 'high possibility' that it was an Israeli bullet that killed the journalist.

Shaping the media narrative was dramatically highlighted in the claims and counter-claims about who was responsible for the attack on the al-Ahil hospital in Gaza on 17 October which the Gaza health ministry said had killed 471 Palestinians and wounded 314 others. It was packed with Gazans wounded in earlier airstrikes and people seeking shelter from the bombardment.

Israel denied responsibility, and claimed that a misfired Palestinian rocket by Islamic Jihad militants was responsible for the massacre at the hospital and 'intelligence from multiple sources' indicated the group was responsible.

Politico has reported that since Hamas' attack Israel has pushed dozens of online ads, including graphic videos, to millions of people to drum up support for its actions. Israel's Foreign Affairs Ministry has run 30 ads that have been seen over 4 million times on X, according to the platform's data. One paid video posted to X, with text alternating between 'ISIS' and 'Hamas', has disturbing imagery that gradually speeds up until the names of the two terrorist organisations blend into one. 'The world defeated ISIS. The world will defeat Hamas,' the ad ends.

In what has become an information and propaganda war we also see the rapid dissemination of false and manipulative news regarding the conflict. What is also the case is that now the pervasiveness of social media has made this all the more insidious. **MN**

Two top speakers at South Yorkshire Festival

MediaNorth had its regular slot at the South Yorkshire Festival on Sunday 6 August. This year we were very pleased to have Eileen Turnbull speaking. She focused on the role of the media in spreading lies and disinformation about the building workers convicted and jailed after the 1973 strike. Eileen was on top form and her book on the Shrewsbury 24 campaign *A Very British Conspiracy* sold well.

Our other speaker was Nick Jones, former BBC Industrial and Political Correspondent.

Nick is a regular contributor to MediaNorth and over the past year he has documented the way the media has covered the wave of strike action. The focus for his talk was on whether the right-wing press was a spent force. Their attempts to whip up public opposition to the strike wave failed abysmally and Nick explored the reasons for this.

As always a lively discussion followed the two presentations.

BOOK THE DATE – *We'll be back at Wortley Hall again on Sunday 18 August 2024* **MN**



Eileen Turnbull spoke passionately about the victorious campaign **MN**