



# HARD SHUT DOWN NOW!

Anna Pha

**The situation in NSW is extremely serious. The Delta strain is far more infectious and deadly than earlier strains. Almost ten per cent of those who tested positive have been hospitalised. It is hitting young and old, including a sixteen-year-old in ICU, and at the time of writing there had been two COVID-linked deaths. The NSW government waited far too long to impose any form of lockdown and even then, it was not a hard lockdown.**

It is a health, economic, and political crisis. Workers and their families have taken yet another hit. Many small businesses are on the brink. The federal government is still proving incapable of governing. The vaccine roll-out is shambolic. Messaging is confusing. Millions of dollars have been spent on advertisements to convince people to get vaccinated when the main barrier to being vaccinated is a lack of supply of an appropriate vaccine – a failing of the federal government. Dedicated, fit-for-purpose quarantine facilities are months away and only seen as complementary to, not a replacement for hotel quarantine.

The NSW government has not kept up with the spread of the virus, despite the herculean efforts of contact tracers. The virus has now spread to regional NSW and into Victoria.

There is a lag time of up of five or more days between a close contact spreading the virus and someone testing positive. Most worryingly, there are literally hundreds of people who tested positive in the past ten days who were in the community while infectious. The number is rising exponentially. With only twelve per cent of the adult population fully vaccinated and thirty-three per cent having had one dose, the country is ill-prepared and on the back foot.

The lockdown should have been swift and hard following the first cases as called for by medical experts because of highly infectious nature of the Delta strain. Instead, the government delayed any form of lockdown, and still, it is not hard enough. It is commonly referred to as a "Clayton's" lockdown because of its inadequate nature. A harder lockdown would involve a 5km limit on travel, closure of all non-essential retail outlets and a curfew at night.

The NSW government sent in the police when the virus hit working class suburbs in



south-west Sydney. This was not done when the cases were in the wealthier eastern suburbs. It should have directed its resources to a health response, improving communications, encouraging people to get vaccinated.

It is worth remembering that this outbreak started with one unimmunised limousine driver, apparently not wearing a mask, transporting flight crew. At the time, that was not contrary to health directives. A month later, there were more than 700 cases.

## CONFUSION & DIVISIONS

The majority of cases are presently coming from south-west Sydney which has a large ethnic community. Shortcomings in communications did not help

The public has been told not to browse but to stay home except for a specified list of essential reasons such as performing essential work, shopping for food, health care, vaccination, and exercise. But major retail stores selling non-essential goods are permitted to and remain open at the time of writing. What constitutes essential work is left to the individual or their employer to

decide. The health directives do not define who can and cannot go to work. This puts employers in a powerful position to pressure workers to do non-essential work.

## DANGEROUS

The confusion and misinformation around COVID make the situation more difficult for the government. In NSW the cabinet is divided over whether to prioritise the economy and live with the virus or impose a lockdown. Treasurer Dominic Perrottet argued strongly against an extension of the lockdown when it was extended for another week on Friday 9th July. Fortunately, Berejiklian held firm and adopted the lockdown, albeit questionably not hard enough. The lockdown has now been extended another fortnight.

At the federal level, Queensland National Party Senator Matt Canavan demanded an end to the Sydney lockdown saying it did not "justify the cost" and that we should "learn to live with this [COVID]."

Nationals' leader, Barnaby Joyce, has a let-it-rip approach. In an interview with

NewsCorp, he said, "You have to learn to live with it."

Clive Palmer continues to distribute his conspiracy theory leaflets and lies about the development of vaccines. The leaflets, falsely and dangerously, claim that 210 Australians died due to receiving a coronavirus vaccination and that fifty per cent of animals died during animal trials – claims that play to animal rights and anti-vaxxer groups.

## INCOMPETENT

From the very outset, Prime Minister Scott Morrison has demonstrated complacency and incompetence in the handling of the pandemic. The roll-out of the vaccines has been and still is shambolic. Hotel quarantine has been a failure with the inevitable leakages from totally unsuitable facilities.

There is still no plan for an orderly roll-out to reach the most vulnerable. When the vaccination "program" was initially announced, it outlined a staged roll-out with Groups 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b and 3 to be followed in order.

Continued on page 2

3 

When east beats west: COVID-19

4 

Where's the fair go gone?

7 

Socialism: Utopian or Scientific: A guide

8 

An interview with Amb Izzat Abdulhadi

**Guardian**

Issue 1970

19th July, 2021

**CHARITIES UNDER THREAT FROM COALITION'S LEGISLATION**

Undisputedly, the pandemic has caused economic disruption, much to the chagrin of the Morrison government. Unfortunately, however, it has also provided the perfect cover to bring forth some of the most insidious rules and legislation. We saw this happen earlier this year with the watered-down "omnibus bill" (one of the many examples in this period), and we see it again with new rules targeting charities.

Under the proposal introduced by the government last month, new regulations would expand the types of offences for which the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) would be able to deregister an organisation if it believes its members – "more likely than not" – could commit a summary offence. Even worse still, in its explanatory memorandum, it states that "it is not necessary for a registered entity to be charged or found guilty of a relevant summary offence for the ACNC Commissioner to take appropriate enforcement action under Chapter 4 of the Act."

Speaking to *The Australian*, Assistant Treasurer Michael Sukkar stated that "The Morrison government strongly supports the right to peacefully protest and engage in political discourse as key pillars of our democracy [...]. However, political activists and organisations condoning criminal activities, while masquerading as charities, undermine Australians' trust in the sector overall and do not deserve this privilege."

There is a lot to unpack in Sukkar's statement. Firstly, does the government support peaceful protests? Far from advocating a person's right to protest, anyone who attended the Black Lives Matter (BLM) rallies last year will be quickly reminded of Morrison's immediate reaction that we shouldn't be "importing the things that are happening overseas to Australia." Sure, Morrison paid lip service to respect "people's right to protest" but immediately qualified it by saying "equally protesters have to respect all other Australians in how they conduct themselves." Morrison continued further, stating that when protesters "inconvenience others just trying to get to work or do things like that, well, they obviously get the irritants. And I think it's important that everyone respects everyone." These statements are exactly exemplars of "strong support" for peaceful protest.

What's more, is the idea that charities do not deserve to be registered as such for condoning "criminal" activities. Sukkar's use of the word "criminal," while perhaps accurate in that actions may be breaking the law, is an attempt to mislead. Here, there is an implication that actions undertaken by charities or NFP that are illegal are, therefore, harmful. Of course, charities and NFP may engage in actions that are an *inconvenience* for the public, but they are rarely, if ever, harmful. One does not have to look long to find that many causes worth fighting for have been won because brave people broke the law, engaged in "criminal" activities, and advanced the movement.

Speaking on the proposal, Daniel Webb, legal director at the Human Rights Law Centre said "The proposed rules are ridiculously broad and unclear, and the latest in a long line of attempts to silence community voices [...]. These rules could see charities deregistered for supporting protests, whistleblowers and others who are vital to a healthy democracy."

Even though the pandemic is at the front and centre of our minds, we must remain vigilant against the government attacks on our freedom of expression and condemn and fight back against these laws!

Support *The Guardian* by donating to Press Fund

**HARD SHUT DOWN NOW!**

Continued from page 1

Group 1a consists of quarantine and border workers, frontline healthcare workers, aged care and disability care staff. Group 1b includes elderly adults aged 70 years and over, aged care and disability residents, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 55, younger adults with an underlying medical condition including those with the disability, and critical and high-risk workers including defence, police, fire emergency services, and meat processing. And so forth.

The roll-out failed to follow this strategy. Some priority groups remain largely unvaccinated. In most instances vaccines were not taken to people. For example, some workers in aged care centres received leftovers. The majority were left to their own devices. It meant taking time off work, possibly facing no pay if they were casuals and if laid low with side-effects experiencing a further loss of income. Less than a quarter of disability care workers are fully vaccinated.

Now, younger people may have the AstraZeneca vaccine, but are advised to consult their GP first. The government is keen to use the excess supply of AZ. The risk of blood clots is still very small compared with the risks associated with COVID. Around ten per cent of COVID patients suffer "long COVID" with illness continuing for months.

Unfortunately, the government put all its eggs in too few baskets. It knocked back an offer of many more Pfizer shots, has an oversupply of AstraZeneca, and its third option was the University of Queensland vaccine which never made it to roll-out. It should have ordered a wider range such as Moderna and Novavax. Now it is frantically playing catch-up.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT PACKAGE**

Morrison told the media, "You do what works, it worked last time we are doing it again." Except the government is not doing it again. JobKeeper has not been restored. The JobSeeker supplement has not been restored.

Anyone in NSW who has lost 8-20 hours of work will be eligible for \$375 a week, an increase of \$50 on the existing disaster payment. For those who have lost more than twenty hours of work, the payment will be \$600 – up from \$500.

These sums are below the minimum wage of \$772.60 per week for full-time workers. \$600 hardly covers Sydney rental for a family, let alone \$375. Sole parents, mostly women, casuals and those on low incomes will be hardest hit. It is just not good enough.

There is nothing for the unemployed.

"JobKeeper gave people job security and just enough support to get through. We know it works," Australian Council of Trade Unions Secretary Sally McManus said. "Instead of guaranteeing workers weekly pay and a connection to their jobs, workers now have to navigate Centrelink and hope their employers keep them on."

There are payments for small to medium businesses of between \$1,500 and \$10,000 that have experienced a thirty per cent loss of income and

retain their employees. The payments are part of a joint agreement with the NSW government. Other features of the package include payroll tax deferral, and rental moratoria for people who have lost a fifth of their income.

**INTERNATIONAL INEQUALITIES**

Delta is now the dominant strain hitting countries around the world. Some that have not received a single dose of vaccine. Only one per cent of people in low-income countries have had at least one dose. Globally, a quarter of the world's population has received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. (ourworldindata.org)

"The Delta variant is ripping around the world at a scorching pace, driving a new spike in COVID-19 cases and death," World Health Organisation (WHO) Secretary-General Adhanom Tedros said. He called on countries with many times the vaccines they could possibly use and the pharmaceutical companies to contribute vaccines to COVAX, the WHO's central vaccine distribution agency set up to distribute vaccines to medium-low- and low-income countries.

But the EU, Canada, the US, and the UK are moving quickly to put in place deals with Pfizer for the years ahead. The EU has contracts for as many as 2.4 billion doses – more than five times the population to be covered. The Canadian government struck an agreement with Pfizer in April to buy up to 125 million doses of the company's vaccine in 2022 and 2023, more than three times the country's population. This hoarding is criminal when millions of people in low-income countries are still contracting COVID and hundreds of thousands are dying.

**WAY FORWARD**

The NSW government should impose a hard lockdown to curb Delta before it spreads further.

The Communist Party of Australia is calling on the federal government to:

- Plan the vaccine roll-out, prioritising the remainder of Groups 1a and then 1b.
- Reinstatement the JobSeeker supplement on a permanent basis
- Reinstatement JobKeeper
- Ensure care workers have permanent, full-time, well paid work
- Start manufacturing mRNA vaccines in Australia
- Listen to and act on the advice of the epidemiologists
- Order a mix of vaccines
- Give people a choice of vaccines
- Contribute to COVAX
- Support the waiver of COVID patents at the World Trade Organisation
- Put people's health before profits.

Footnote: The Grey Knights were out in force at the vaccination centre at Olympic Park where hundreds of people queued for a jab. Their free vaccine cost many of them a \$270 parking fine! 🚗

**Special Appeal Reds go Green**

The *Guardian* is running a special appeal with the aim of raising \$10,000 for solar panels. The panels will not only make substantial savings in electricity bills but also put into practice our commitment to a sustainable future. They involve a substantial cash outlay, but we believe that every measure we can take to reduce carbon emissions is important. It is not enough to preach "green." We must act "green"!

We are looking to *Guardian* readers and CPA members and supporters to assist us with this important project. Every contribution is appreciated, no matter how small or large.

Send your contribution today.

Name .....

Amount \$ .....

You may /may not publish my name

Send your contribution to 74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010, email info@cpa.org.au or pay by PayPal on cpa.org.au

# WHEN EAST BEATS WEST: HOW THE “RED ROOSTER LINE” AFFECTS COVID-19 POLICE RESPONSE

Nate Pano

Often referred to light-heartedly, the “Red Rooster line” highlights the class border separating two parts of the city – east and west Sydney – where the fast-food chain is typically found only in working-class areas. However, recently this border has real, targeted consequences.

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian’s heavy-handed approach to the recent lockdown restrictions has exposed the ugly underbelly of Australia’s class divide: workers in Western Sydney are disproportionately targeted for police harassment, hefty fines, and intimidation.

After two weeks of an ineffective lockdown with multiple exceptions, open retail stores, and “business as usual,” more intensive measures were implemented. On the 9th of July, NSW police announced that they would conduct sweeps of major roads and public places in hot-spot areas for anyone who breaks COVID restrictions or who may not be performing an “essential” task – the definition of which is extremely subjective and vague.

Despite two weeks of countless patrons flocking to major department stores across the eastern suburbs and attending the beaches in droves at Bondi, police have decided that since Sydney’s southwest has taken the crown of “hot spot king,” it is time to get serious. Over 100 extra officers were dispatched to patrol the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Fairfield, Liverpool, and Canterbury-Bankstown.

Immediately, multiple videos and images of police intimidation and aggressive behaviour were uploaded on social media. Famously, over a dozen police were deployed to the head office of restaurant chain Rashays in western Sydney over an “anonymous” tip that their workers weren’t wearing masks. A lone policeman arrived initially, issuing fines to two women working over two metres apart at the reception desk who were not wearing masks, even though they were eating lunch – their food still open and half-eaten in front of them.

The situation escalated when the business owner voiced his opposition, upon which over a dozen police officers were dispatched in several vehicles and engaged in highly intimidating behaviour, consequently crowding the office with personnel, social distancing rules be damned. This resulted in distressed workers, necessitating an ambulance having to be called for one who suffered difficulty breathing and became faint.

Other posts on social media include police approaching shoppers outside a Woolworths in Mount Annan Marketplace, checking their shopping bags for anything which might be “non-essential.”

Fines are particularly aggressive, ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 depending on what the offence is and who is the perpetrator. However, as widespread and well-staffed this “crackdown” was, there have been no arrests and only eight people were fined as of writing.

Western Sydney is differentiated from the east by being mostly working-class families



of recent ethnic migration. Many of these families do not speak English as their first language. The 2016 census revealed that 65.9 per cent of residents in Canterbury-Bankstown and 75 per cent of residents in Fairfield spoke a language other than English at home.

The NSW government’s guidelines for what residents can and cannot do are haphazard and nonsensical at best for proficient English speakers, and what is considered “essential” and “non-essential” is not clearly defined, giving the ultimate deciding power to the police officer and the mood they are in when they confront you. To say that the messaging is mixed is an understatement.

Given these circumstances, how are non-English speaking working families expected to clearly understand what is or is not allowed?

To make matters even more racially charged, Berejiklian singled ethnic minorities out by stating that many communities in western Sydney have “a similar background to me” and warned them by stating that “don’t think it’s okay to visit your cousins or have sleepovers.” The assumption being created here is that ethnic minorities and their presumably large families are the only ones who want to mingle with family members, and it is them who are at fault for the lockdown being extended.

If racial distinctions must be made, it should be with the intention of understanding communication barriers so that they can be overcome. One of the very vague restrictions placed by the NSW government is not permitting visitors unless for medical care or “compassionate” reasons.

At present, there is no extensive definition of what “compassionate” or “medical care” entails. Due to the highly privatised and predatory aged care industry, most elderly residents from ethnic communities in Sydney’s west are much more dependent on their extended family for medical care at home. However, according to Berejiklian’s advice, it is not clear if this is acceptable, meaning that without adequate, cheap, and accessible government support, these highly dependent older residents may have

to fend for themselves as families must decide between risking a hefty fine and not caring for their loved ones.

And yet, the media is all too eager to lean into this demonisation of western Sydney, focusing on revealing as much as legally possible about the identities of those who breached the rules, exposing them as sacrificial lambs for other workers to focus their outrage on. Early in the lockdown, an example was made of a nurse who worked at both Fairfield and the Royal North Shore hospitals. Although vaccinated, she unknowingly carried the virus before a subsequent test revealed she had spread it to countless people.

Never once in the media’s coverage are we drawn to ask how this worker was expected to know she was infected, nor is the fact raised that as a health worker, she is expected to work at both locations, regardless of a lockdown.

But this is a distraction. At no point during this lockdown has any prominent figure asked why small businesses and those who work for them are forced for economic reasons to remain open. Or, why the government has not sprung into action with an adequate and immediate emergency financial support plan to allow these business owners, and their workers, to stay home without worrying that they can afford to feed their families.

Neither has anybody asked why the definition of who can and can’t work from home rest solely on the employer, and not the government – or why the construction industry, already hugely profitable thanks to numerous government subsidies, is permitted to continue business as usual, forcing up to dozens of workers onto a single construction site to meet corporate deadlines.

It stands to reason that these questions are not being raised because the government’s corporate donors are not to be disappointed. Profits must keep rolling in so long as the government maintains the appearance that something is being done about the pandemic.

If corporate profits were not a priority, any government of action would swiftly close these industries, implement vast, adequate

financial support plans for workers and small businesses, and therefore thousands more people would then be able to stay at home. This would have an immediate, positive impact on the reduction of cases.

Intimidating and financially punishing the working class of Sydney, which is concentrated primarily in these LGAs, is precisely the result we expect to see as this contradiction between having to maintain profits for the corporate sector and the semblance of public responsibility plays out.

By leading us to direct our outrage on specific cases where people bend the rules, the media successfully distracts us from the fact that many times more workers would be able to stay at home if there was adequate government support. What is happening is far from simple political incompetence; it is a capitalist government doing what capitalist governments always do best – govern for the interests of capital.

Instead of mixed messaging and inconsistent rules, a people’s government of action would provide real, concrete support to workers so as many could stay at home as possible. It would provide huge amounts of funding to the health sector so that medical professionals in full personal protective clothing could provide door-to-door testing and vaccinations as part of a real public health service and wellbeing campaign.

The workers of western Sydney deserve better. We deserve certainty and stability. We need to stop focusing our outrage on a handful of people who are skirting these already ridiculous, inconsistent lockdown rules and direct it upwards at our political leaders and their corporate donors who are doing the real damage and preventing thousands of more people from being able to stay at home so that this pandemic can end sooner rather than later.

The lack of a shared land border with any other country already places us in a fortunate position. By ending this severe limitation that catering to corporate interests poses to our public health and wellbeing, there is nothing stopping us from completely eliminating this pandemic on our continent. ✪

**The NSW government’s guidelines for what residents can and cannot do are haphazard and nonsensical ...**

# OP-ED: WHERE'S THE FAIR GO GONE?

Eileen Whitehead

**Since 9/11, we've experienced governments giving enormous powers to police forces and intelligence services in order to facilitate anti-terrorist laws. This has led to collection of data on individual citizens, and also – more importantly – no legal accounting by authority figures, such as Cabinet Ministers, and senior members of the police force. With the intelligence collected inaccessible to the public, those in authority are seldom held accountable but expect us to trust them. As a result, we see increasing secrecy in government which political theorists would suggest is "fascism," which is also known for its promotion of "nationalism," masculinity and contempt for democracy. I rest my case!**

We've seen a steady erosion of civil liberties, with the various governments in Canberra over the last twenty-plus years introducing restrictive legislation with increasing regularity. Acts on workplace relations; mandatory detention; the Northern Territory Response; and now the cashless debit card! Remember the Royal Commission into the Unions, to try to discover criminal activity? But nothing has come out of the Royal Commission into the banking fraternity!

9/11 gave John Howard the excuse to push through new anti-terrorist laws – almost one a month – and these counter-terrorism laws have led to warrantless searches, banning of organisations, and the secret detention and interrogation by ASIO of innocent citizens. The Australian Federal Police have accessed information on people quite unnecessarily. And that's what we know about. Any chance we have of any future brave whistle-blowers is being effectively removed by intimidation.

There is also an increasing veil of secrecy permeating this government's actions which is subtly undermining our individual liberties, and which people are beginning to accept as "normal." This "normalisation" is daily backed by the Murdoch Empire where its operatives are quick to deride any dissent we make about police state tendencies whilst denigrating whistle-blowers who tell us the truth. The electorate is beginning to feel unrepresented by their political representatives and is reeling under the growing threat to our democracy which they represent. I sometimes wonder if this government is following Hitler's handbook.

We have seen how authoritarian the characteristics of Australia's legal and political landscape have become with the abusive treatment of its citizens. We only have

to look at the Australian government's failure in supporting Julian Assange to realise its spite for any attempt at exposing criminal activity of those in power. Civil liberties are completely ignored by police and intelligence services, with the backing of a revengeful Minister for Home Affairs or Attorney-General, as in the case of lawyer Bernard Collaery, citizen K, military lawyer David McBride, NSW Labor MP Shaoquett Moselmane, and taxation office whistle-blower Richard Boyle.

Shaoquett Moselmane's home was invaded a year ago, conveniently in full view of assembled media by forty police. I wonder would a LNP MP have received the same treatment? Complete with sniffer dogs, and a hovering helicopter, the raid lasted eighteen hours – no doubt leaving the family completely traumatised. In another example of federal "thuggery," we have citizen K and his lawyer, Bernard Collaery, being judged in a closed court. They reported on the Australian government's illegal bugging in 2004 of offices in Timor Leste, done for the sole purpose of empowerment during oil negotiations to gain commercial advantage for Australia. They've now been charged under the National Security Information Act – intended for the protection of intelligence information while prosecuting terrorists! Two upright and honest citizens are being persecuted and, in fact, have suffered years of official bullying tactics, for revealing the illegal activities of their government. Do we still believe that we live in a democracy?

Military lawyer David McBride had, since 2014, been warning about the conduct of the war in Afghanistan, but Attorney-General Porter decided to lay charges. Secrecy had to be protected. When told that McBride had displayed courage in the public interest and should be thanked not prosecuted, Porter blamed court proceedings on the Commonwealth Director of Prosecutions. Let's see how he wriggles out of his own past misdemeanours!

Richard Boyle's exposure on the debt recovery tactics of the Australian Taxation Office hasn't made such a big imprint on our consciousness but is equally significant. He has become a victim of this fascist system for daring to speak about institutional ineptitudes. He faces a long prison sentence for the charges cooked up against him. Last year, a Senate report found that the ATO had performed a superficial investigation into Mr Boyle's public interest disclosure about the ATO misusing its powers against small businesses. This is the first major test case of protections available under the Public Interest Disclosure Act (2013), and if found guilty Mr Boyle will face a life sentence.

This legal chicanery, which can



be seen all the time from the haste of our politicians to sue for defamation at the slightest excuse, is extremely damaging to our democracy and needs fighting at every turn of the screw. We have a breed of politicians currently meeting and plotting in secret and seemingly in thrall to fascist methods. This can be seen in its support for the US-concocted charges to prosecute Assange, which to my horror as a Londoner, has been supported by the crooked UK justice system now in place. Politicians now have a sinister rapport with a legal system which is allowing them to do what they can get away with. This is a dangerous trend that must be identified. We must challenge it here and now, or we will be living under a fascist regime, which will have crept in whilst we slept.

It is being encouraged by an opposition which mutely accepts this secrecy in government, perhaps keen to use it if they ever get into power. While we have sections of the media willing to label any activity questioning those in power as "terrorism" and therefore a threat to security, we will be kept in ignorance and begin to accept illegal government activity as "normal."

Orwell's essay *What is Fascism*, ends with most people's definition of fascism being "something cruel, unscrupulous, arrogant, obscurantist, anti-liberal and anti-working class." I think this sums up precisely what our present government represents, and we tolerate it at our peril. ☼

**RICHARD BOYLE'S EXPOSURE ON THE DEBT RECOVERY TACTICS OF THE AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE HASN'T MADE SUCH A BIG IMPRINT ON OUR CONSCIOUSNESS BUT IT IS SIGNIFICANT.**

Australia Cuba Friendship Society invites you to a

**M-26-7**  
**SOLIDARITY**  
*lunch with Cuba*

CELEBRATE THE JULY 26 MOVEMENT

END THE US BLOCKADE

SUPPORT THE HENRY REEVE MEDICAL BRIGADE,  
FIGHTING COVID-19 WORLDWIDE

**12PM, SUNDAY 25 JULY 2021**

GREEK COMMUNITY CLUB  
206 LAKEMBA ST, LAKEMBA

Talk from the Cuban Embassy in Australia

Music from the one and only Papalote

Raffle and auction with great prizes!

**TICKETS:** \$30 waged, \$25 unwaged (inc. lunch & entertainment)

**BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL!** Contact Chela on 0422 665 099 or go to <https://www.trybooking.com/BSGKE> to book tickets.



Find out more about the  
**Communist Party of Australia**

web [www.cpa.org.au](http://www.cpa.org.au)

# REPORT: CPC AND WORLD POLITICAL PARTIES SUMMIT

The Communist Party of China (CPC) hosted the “CPC and World Political Parties Summit” on the 6th July from Beijing. Delegates from over 500 political parties of the world attended the virtual summit, including Communist Party of Australia (CPA) General Secretary Comrade Andrew Irving, CPA President Comrade Vinnie Molina, and CPA *Guardian* Collective member Comrade Seamus Carey. The event took place at the time of the celebrations of 100 years since the CPC’s founding.

The keynote speech was delivered by China’s President and General Secretary of the CPC, Comrade Xi Jinping. He said:

“A few days ago, we celebrated the CPC’s centenary with a grand gathering. Over the past hundred years, the CPC has united and led the Chinese people in working ceaselessly towards the tremendous transformation of the Chinese nation from standing up and growing prosperous to becoming strong. [...]”

“The human race is an integral community and the planet Earth its homeland. In the face of common challenges, no person or country can remain insulated. The only way out is to work together in harmony with one accord. Political parties, as an important force behind human progress, need to set the right course forward and shoulder their historic responsibility to ensure the people’s wellbeing and pursue human progress.”

The next speech was contributed by President of South Africa and President of the African National Congress (ANC) Cyril Ramaphosa, who congratulated the CPC on its centenary. He said:

“This is a joyous occasion for the people not only of China, but of the world.”

“For us as South Africans, this is a particularly auspicious moment, because we are this month celebrating the 100th anniversary of the formation of the South African Communist Party, a revolutionary organisation that played a central role in our struggle for freedom and democracy.”

Contributions were made by President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Chairman of the United Russia party and former President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev, and Argentine President Alberto Fernandez.

Next spoke General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) Central Committee, Comrade Nguyen Phu Trong, who said political parties should



accompany their governments to bring happiness to the people, actively engage in efforts to respond to global challenges, uphold the spirit of solidarity and sense of responsibility, foster dialogue, respect each other’s legitimate interests, and comply with international law, especially in addressing differences.

He said, “Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and other theories on state governance are of particular referential value to Vietnam,” and expressed desire to further consolidate relations and cooperation between the CPV and CPC, and their respective countries.

First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, Comrade Miguel Diaz-Canel, said that the CPC has explored a development path suitable for China’s national conditions and led the country in making great achievements. China has effectively handled the COVID-19 pandemic and eliminated absolute poverty, which Comrade Diaz-Canel attributed to the CPC’s people-centred development philosophy.

Contributions were then made by the respective Presidents of the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Palestine, Serbia; the Prime Ministers of Cambodia and Pakistan; the Presidents of Mozambique, Namibia, and the Republic of the Congo.

Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapaksa, spoke, saying “China is the most sincere friend we have.”

The next contribution was made by Bolivia’s former President and Chairperson of the Movement Towards Socialism party, Evo Morales.

Further speeches were made by the Prime Minister of Morocco, President of South Sudan, President of the Socialist International, and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain (PCE), Comrade Jose Luis Centella. Comrade Centella praised China’s Belt and Road Initiative, describing it as an important international cooperation platform and a great opportunity for the world economy to recover from the pandemic.

A video contribution was made by CPA President Vinnie Molina, who said:

“Political parties and organisations from all political and ideological perspectives have the responsibility to work together in solidarity with each other for the elimination of poverty, health, education and to save the planet from climate change or war.”

“On the historic occasion of the centenary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, the Communist Party of Australia sends its fraternal greetings and congratulations. [...]”

“As the CPA General Secretary Comrade Andrew Irving said in a recent interview with Chinese media, the developments and achievements led by the CPC are a success for all Marxists around the world.”

“The CPA appreciates its growing fraternal relations with the Communist Party of China, and the deepening relations amongst the international Communist movement generally. [...]”

“The Marxist doctrine is omnipotent because it is true” – these immortal words of Comrade Lenin remain as valid as ever. And as Comrade Mao Zedong said: ‘Armed with Marxist-Leninist theory and ideology, the Communist Party of China has brought a new style of work to the Chinese people, a style of work which essentially entails integrating theory with practice, forging close links with the masses and practising self-criticism.’ This style of work continues to be carried on by the CPC, guiding the successive victories of the Chinese people.”

This summit represents a historic moment for global friendship and cooperation of political parties and peoples. Regardless of all ideological differences and disputes, at this historical juncture it is yet more necessary than ever to seek unity on all issues held in common, while respecting differences and independence. ☺

## WAGE THEFT LAWS COME INTO EFFECT IN VICTORIA

Bree Booth

**Last year, the Victorian parliament passed a law making wage theft a crime. On the 1st of July this year, that law came into effect. The law could not have come sooner – thirteen per cent of the Australian workforce are underpaid, with the burden falling disproportionately on casual workers. Twenty-one per cent of retail employees and eighty-two per cent of hospitality employees report being underpaid at some point in their career.**

Specifically, the law was enacted in response to a series of high profile underpayment scandals in the past few years.

The employers embroiled in these scandals included such high profile names as George Colambarris, Woolworths, the ABC, Bunnings and the Red Cross.

The Victorian law makes it a crime for an employer in Victoria to:

- Deliberately underpay employees
- Dishonestly withhold wages, superannuation or other employment entitlements
- Falsify employee entitlement records to gain a financial advantage
- Avoid keeping employee entitlement records to gain a financial advantage.

These crimes are punishable by up to ten years’ jail or \$218,088 in fines for individual employers or over \$1mil in fines for companies. The legislation also establishes the Wage Inspectorate to educate workers and employers about their rights and obligations, investigate and prosecute wage theft, and respond to reports about alleged wage theft.

Victoria is the first state in Australia to criminalise wage theft. A

federal wage theft law does exist under the Commonwealth *Fair Work Act* but the Victorian law has been described by the Victorian Treasurer as much stronger, with “real teeth and greater enforceability” compared to the federal law.

There is a concern that the existing commonwealth law “covers the field” of wage theft, meaning that the Victorian legislation could be deemed invalid under section 109 of the Constitution. Section 109 provides that Commonwealth laws override inconsistent state laws.

Commonwealth laws may “cover the field” in a particular area, meaning that federal legislation on the subject is comprehensive and any state law on the subject will be invalid. However, until a section 109 challenge is brought before the High Court, the Victorian law will continue to have effect.

Critics are also concerned that unstable work and an entrenched

culture of intimidation in the casual workforce will undercut the effectiveness of these laws. If workers are afraid that making a report might cost them their job, they are less likely to report wage theft by their employer.

This issue is exacerbated by the fact that the logic of the capitalist economic system depends on labour being a highly interchangeable commodity. This means that workers are easily replaceable because there is always a proportion of the population who are unemployed and seeking work.

This is especially true in the current climate with the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic making casual work more precarious than it has ever been. So if a worker speaks out against wage theft they may risk losing their job entirely. This is a well-founded fear: according to the United Workers Union (UWU), over a third of hospitality workers report

some form of retaliation from their employer after questioning their working conditions – everything from having their shifts cut, to harassment and even being fired.

So while the new wage theft law in Victoria is a huge step forward for the labour movement, the law will only be marginally effective while casualisation remains the norm. Criminalisation shows that a cultural shift is taking place, it shows that workers will not stand for being exploited in this way. However, the cultural shift is not complete and more work needs to be done to oppose insecure work so that workers feel empowered to report wage theft. The voice of many workers rings louder than one who stands alone, empowerment comes from the unity of workers against an unjust system. ☺

# HOW BIG A SECURITY THREAT DOES CHINA FACE AS TALIBAN DRAWS CLOSER TO BORDER WITH XINJIANG?

There are increasing concerns that Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region is facing a resurgence of terrorism infiltrating through the Wakhan corridor, on the Afghanistan border, after the Taliban swept through northeastern Badakhshan province and is drawing closer to the border with China's Xinjiang.

However, Chinese observers believe it is unlikely that terrorist groups will enter Xinjiang through Wakhan corridor. They are more likely to threaten China through Central Asia countries if the situation in Afghanistan worsens, which further demonstrates that the situation in Afghanistan has a direct bearing on regional stability and needs enhanced international efforts in fixing the situation.

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi's visit to Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and the scheduled foreign ministers' meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)-Afghanistan Contact Group this week come amid a growing spillover of security threats coming from the worsening situation in Afghanistan.

With the evolving Afghanistan situation, the Taliban is quietly transforming itself to improve its international image, easing the concerns of and befriending neighbouring countries. Chinese observers noted that China and Russia, as the major responsible powers in the region, will cooperate more with all parties in peacefully solving the Afghanistan issue and its reconstruction work, and that Afghanistan will not become a "graveyard of empires" for China and Russia, since both countries uphold the principle of non-interference.

## HOW BIG IS THE THREAT?

With the US-led troops withdrawing from Afghanistan at a faster pace and the Taliban continuing to gain ground, some Western media have been hyping the so-called "China's fears." They said the Taliban is now on China's border, stoking instability in Xinjiang.

*France 24* reported that China is worried about attacks on Afghanistan's border near China's Xinjiang, and claimed China's anti-terrorism measures have "spawned blowback."

However, Cao Wei, an expert on security studies at Lanzhou University, told the *Global Times* that it is highly unlikely that extremists and terrorist groups will enter China from the Wakhan corridor.

The part of the corridor which borders China is about ninety kilometres long, and it is not difficult for China to "block" it technically, Qian Feng, director of the research department at the National Strategy Institute at Tsinghua University, told the *Global Times*.

Meanwhile the Taliban today is totally different to what it was some 20 years ago, Cao said.

In an interview with *This Week in Asia* on Wednesday, Taliban spokesperson Suhail Shaheen said the organization sees China as a "friend" to Afghanistan and is hoping to talk to Beijing about investing in reconstruction work "as soon as possible."

Suhail also said the Taliban would no longer allow Uygur separatists, some of whom had previously sought refuge in Afghanistan, to enter the country. The Taliban would also prevent al-Qaeda or any other terrorist groups from operating there.

A Taliban delegation also reassured Russia during their visit to Russia last week that it would not allow the country to be used as a platform to attack others.



All of these reveal that the Taliban is quietly transforming to become more like a political organization focusing on the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and it is preparing to take power, Cao said, noting that time will tell whether the Taliban's words will match its actions.

A recent US intelligence assessment estimated that the current Afghan government could fall to the insurgency as soon as six months after the American pullout, and media have reported the Taliban is preparing to take full control of Afghanistan.

Chinese analysts warned that if security threats in Afghanistan continued to spill over to neighbouring countries, extremists and terrorists are more likely to enter China through Central Asian countries and Pakistan.

The US troops in Afghanistan have compressed the working space of some terrorist groups in Central Asia in the past years, as some have moved to Syria, but with the Taliban set to take power in Afghanistan, we need to observe whether the Taliban-backed al-Qaeda might develop again, Cao said.

The deteriorating situation in Afghanistan has quickly spread to Central Asia, with hundreds of Afghan servicemen crossing the border with Tajikistan recently in response to advances by the Taliban, Reuters reported. Tajikistan has called on members of a Russian-led military bloc to help it deal with security challenges emerging from Afghanistan.

Russia faces higher pressure than China as some terrorist groups may infiltrate to Russia through these former Soviet Union states and the spread may reach the Caucasus and Chechnya, Cao said.

Meanwhile Russia shoulders the major responsibility for the security of Central Asia under the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which includes Russia and five other former Soviet states, observers said.

## CHINA, RUSSIA WON'T BE NEXT "EMPIRES" TO ENTER "GRAVEYARD"

This SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group meeting was elevated to the foreign minister level this week for the first time since the mechanism was established in 2005. This

indicates the urgency of the Afghanistan situation and the great attention and consensus of SCO countries to have a detailed and thorough discussion on Afghanistan and its reconstruction plans. Six of Afghanistan's neighbours are members of the SCO.

Sun Zhuangzhi, executive director of the Chinese Research Center of the SCO, told the *Global Times* that the meeting will enhance coordination efforts in pushing all concerned parties to seek peaceful means to solve the issue, come up with detailed plans on bilateral and multilateral levels to help Afghanistan with reconstruction, and warn some Western countries led by the US of their irresponsible withdrawal.

Russia is expected to engage in the SCO meeting after receiving a Taliban delegation last week.

Led by China and Russia and created in 2001, the SCO includes India, Pakistan and four other former Soviet republics: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. It has four observer states – Afghanistan, Mongolia, Belarus and Iran – and six dialogue partners.

India wants to use Afghanistan to extend its strategic reach because the country circles Pakistan in the north and west. India also needs to guarantee Afghanistan not to become a haven for anti-India forces, Qian said, noting in the past twenty some years, New Delhi's aid to Afghanistan reached \$3bil and it has maintained a good relationship with Kabul government, regional leaders and civil forces.

India's relationship with the Taliban was bad and it is eager to resume contact with it given the latter's rising influence, which indicates Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan, Qian said.

Some Western countries have described China and Russia's effort to engage in Afghanistan's reconstruction as the "next empires" to enter the "graveyard" of Afghanistan.

In a report published on the website of The Hill, it said China plans to "swoop in" and "fill the vacuum" left by the withdrawal of US troops and said that China will be the "next empire to enter the Afghan graveyard."

However, Cao said that China and Russia, upholding the non-interference principle, will focus on economic help rather than

military involvement, noting that China, and Russia will not be the next empires as Western media hyped.

Both China and Russia stressed that the Afghan issue should be dealt with by the Afghan people, while the US bluntly interfered in Afghanistan's internal affairs, analysts said.

And Taliban has expressed its welcome to China over help with reconstruction, and it would strive to maintain stable relations with China and other neighbouring countries if it takes power, observers said.

As for the possible threat of the resurgence of terrorism evolving with China's engagement with Taliban on the reconstruction work, Chinese analysts said that the Taliban is unlikely to deliberately export its ideological thought, but China should maintain its alert over threats from extremist groups which voluntarily accept the Taliban's fundamentalism and attempt to affect Xinjiang.

The Taliban is fragmented as many of its senior leaders are not in Afghanistan, thus some branches of the Taliban in Afghanistan have taken in members of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), Qian said, noting that no matter who forms the Afghan government, continuing anti-terrorism is Afghanistan's international responsibility as well as the significant foundation of future China-Afghanistan relations.

The Taliban in Afghanistan has gradually transformed to a "regional government" which is more willing to participate in governing the country rather than just harbouring terrorist groups, but even if it still adopts extremist means in the future, China could deal with it with its comprehensive domestic anti-terrorism mechanism and regional cooperation as well as international law.

Observers said the US will not offer any helping hands to Afghanistan's reconstruction work despite the fact that the ongoing suffering of the country was purely caused by the US.

The US will also unlikely completely give up its involvement in Afghanistan, and it may expand its military presence in the region in the name of anti-terrorism, Qian said.

*Global Times* 🇺🇸

# SOCIALISM: UTOPIAN OR SCIENTIFIC: A GUIDE – PART 2

Valentin Cartillier

**In the previous article we analysed some of the basic concepts in Engels' work and what the problem with utopian socialism was. The basic problem was that the utopian socialists, lacking the proper class analysis, ended up fusing their socialism with the ethics, values and class interests of the emerging capitalist class.**

We examined how the philosophy of materialism laid the groundwork for scientific socialism and how idealism led the utopian socialists astray. This time, in chapter two, Engels transports us to Germany to explain one of the most formidable concepts in philosophy, dialectics. Dialectics is an incredibly complex topic, whose history and development are equally complicated, originating from Ancient Greece. However, for our purposes, since we take a materialist position, the question of dialectics boils down to a simple question: is matter stationary or is it in motion? This question may seem incredibly banal or irrelevant to a discussion of scientific socialism. However, it is fundamental to an understanding of what makes the materialism of scientific socialists different from the idealism of the utopians.

Engels asserts that our intuitive understanding of the world around us is that everything is constantly in motion:

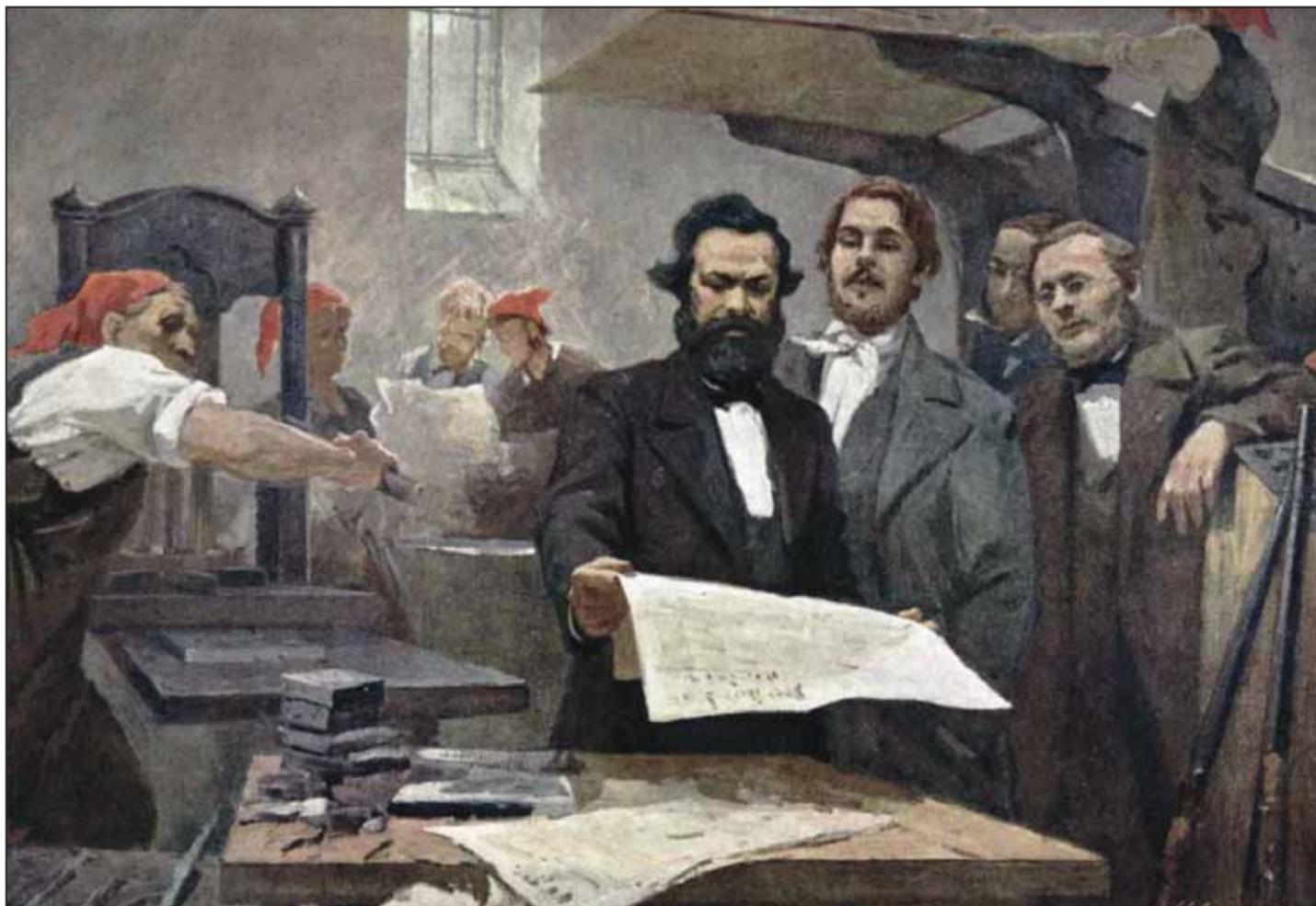
“When we consider and reflect upon Nature at large, or the history of mankind, or our own intellectual activity, at first we see the picture of an endless entanglement of relations and reactions, permutations and combinations, in which nothing remains what, where and as it was, but everything moves, changes, comes into being and passes away [...] we observe the movements, transitions, connections, rather than the *things* that move, combine, and are connected.”

Put simply, when we look out into the world, we see that things come and go; a flower blossoms in the spring and wilts in the autumn as the trees lose their leaves. But the question Engels is asking us is slightly more subtle than these obvious changes. He thinks that we are looking too narrowly at the changes in individual objects, rather than looking at them and the relationships between them in their broader context. This is how he characterises the work of the natural sciences. When we began studying the natural world, we broke it down into its different distinct parts, observed their natural processes, and then classified them into different categories. We saw the example of botany earlier, with the tree and the flower, but the same process is at play across the natural sciences: chemistry, biology, geology, and so on.

The problem Engels sees in the approach of the natural sciences is that they observe things in isolation from one another. Engels refers to this as metaphysics, which, in philosophy, is the study of the fundamental nature of reality. Metaphysics, he says, is the opposite of dialectics, because:

“To the metaphysician, things and their mental reflexes, ideas, are isolated, are to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, are objects of investigation fixed, rigid, given once for all ... For him, a thing either exists or does not exist; a thing cannot at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another; cause and effect stand in a rigid antithesis, one to the other.”

Or put another way, metaphysicians can only think about things as totally separated and isolated binaries; for example, a tree is not a flower. While Engels admits that this appeals to our common sense understanding



## Metaphysicians can only think about things as totally separated and isolated binaries.

of things, he implores us to take a closer look at the binary relationship *between* fixed things to understand that reality is more complex than a “this or that” analysis. True, a tree is not a flower, but the two things are not entirely distinct. Both receive their nourishment from the soil and the sun, and indeed flowers may grow on trees, for example. So, when we take a broader view, the two things are related. Far from being abstract philosophical speculation, the metaphysical way of thinking should remind us of how Engels spoke about the utopian socialists. Their way of thinking was based on fixed ideas about what the ideal society *should* look like, projected above our heads like the heavens, as opposed to the scientific socialist perspective on what society *currently does* look like and how it develops.

This brings us to the concept of dialectics. Take for example, red and blue. They are contrasting colours: red is not blue. However, by understanding this contrast, we gain a clearer understanding of what colour itself is by expanding our knowledge of the different shades, which in turn leads us towards a greater understanding of the light spectrum in general. As the shades of blue and red intersect, we get purple. Their initial opposition becomes a unity which, as soon as it appears, continues its movement, becoming something else. While this is a very simple example, the important point is that this contrast helps us understand the bigger picture, that is, the light spectrum in general.

To use the example of cause-and-effect which Engels cited above, it is clear that cause and effect are total opposites of one another. However, is it possible to think about one without the other? What meaning does a cause possess on its own without the effect it produces? Essentially, dialectics says that the very identity of a thing depends upon what it is contrasted with, its opposite. In this case, the cause is contained within the effect and vice versa. The tree contains the seed which will then produce another tree.

They both depend on one another for us to understand; the seed cannot be thought about in isolation from the tree. This ongoing exchange is at the heart of dialectics. It starts with a simple opposition between two things and begins the process of comparing and contrasting to arrive at a fuller understanding of what we are investigating. This is possible because matter is in constant motion, as we described above.

Now that we've grasped this we can see what the metaphysicians get wrong: nothing is ever entirely fixed or rigid but rather, things are always in motion. To bring these philosophical questions back to socialism, it is clear why dialectics would appeal to the scientific socialists. A metaphysician could say of politics, “your place in society is fixed because that is just how the world works.” There are plenty of concrete, historical examples of this reasoning. We need only consider the justifications for slavery on the basis of skin colour, a peasant's place in the feudal order because the social hierarchy was “God's will,” the poor under capitalism being poor because they are innately less hard working than capitalist “innovators.” However, for scientific socialists, a person has no fixed, unchanging “human nature” or “essence,” but rather, they change according to the developments in the material conditions of the society they're living in.

However, Engels (and Marx) didn't come up with this particular kind of dialectics on their own. The concept of dialectics was first elaborated by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, an 18th century German philosopher. In Hegel's system:

“for the first time the whole world, natural, historical, intellectual, is represented as a process – i.e., as in constant motion, change, transformation, development; and the attempt is made to trace out the internal connection that makes a continuous whole of all this movement and development.”

Despite crediting Hegel with this new philosophy, there remained a problem for Engels: Hegel was an idealist. As we saw in the previous article, idealism holds that reality is constituted by human ideas about objects, and rejects the claim that objects have an independent existence to human thought. We saw the outcome of this reasoning in the previous article. Now we can add that not only were the utopian socialists idealists, but they were also metaphysicians. They did not see society in motion but instead invented fixed visions of what an ideal society could look like, ignoring what already exists. The scientific socialists, the materialists, did the opposite and took a dialectical approach to understanding society as it *currently* exists and develops.

A contradiction appears here: if an idealist philosopher developed dialectics, and the utopian socialists were idealists, then how can Engels claim that dialectics is at the heart of scientific socialism? To break out of this contradiction, Marx and Engels had to develop their own philosophy: dialectical materialism. Dialectical materialism is distinct from the idealist Hegelian model of dialectics. As the name suggests, it is a combination of materialism (matter precedes thought) and dialectics (the theory of development and motion). Why is this change from idealism to materialism in dialectics so important? Because this approach allows us to concretely understand not only the natural world but society and its development as well. Dialectical materialism is therefore also a theory of history which will be analysed in the next part.

This section has gone through quite a few quite complex parts of socialist theory and philosophy while leaving quite a few loose ends. In the next article we shall see how they relate to historical materialism and how they are used to understand and analyse the economic mode of production of our society. ★

# AN INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR IZZAT ABDULHADI

Interview prepared by the CPA Canberra Delegation

A CPA delegation made up of the general secretary comrade Andrew Irving, Party president Vinnie Molina and CC member Romina Beitseen held conversations with ambassador Izzat Abdulhadi (IA) of the State of Palestine on important matters on the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

**The CPA has a long-held policy on a two-state solution for Palestine based on 4th June 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital; the UN resolutions in line with the Oslo Accords, including access to water, the release of all political prisoners, and the right to return and the end of Israeli settlements. This position is supported by the majority of the international community, who also campaign for the full recognition of Palestine as an independent state.**

**In recent weeks, people worldwide and in Australia have mobilised against the occupation and the criminal attacks on the Palestinian people by the Zionist state of Israel. Frustration in the community is growing, with many seeing the two-state solution as a failed effort. Recently a one-state solution proposal has been advanced by some sections of the Palestinian community and solidarity organisations inside and outside Palestine.**

**CPA: What are your views on the current situation in Palestine?**

**IA:** Israel's assaults on the Gaza strip last month killed at least 230 Palestinians, including sixty-five children, over half of whom were under ten years old. More than 1,500 homes were destroyed as well as schools, hospitals, and Gaza's only COVID-19 testing facility. Israel's eviction policies targeting families in Sheikh Jarrah and the provocative incursions of Muslim holy sites, including Al Aqsa, are some of Israel's recent human rights violations against the Palestinian people.

Now, violent demolitions have begun in the predominantly Palestinian neighbourhood of Silwan, East Jerusalem. Moreover, the Israeli leadership has announced plans to build more illegal settlements in the West Bank, and Occupation Forces continue to assault and kill Palestinian civilians regularly. Additionally, the Israeli Knesset has endorsed a discriminatory law that prevents Palestinian family reunification. It is a very tense situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), but the Palestinian people continue their own resistance against human rights abuses by the Israeli Occupation Forces.

Unfortunately, the peace process and bilateral negotiations with Israel have been stagnant since 2015 due to Israel continuing its illegal colonial settlement program in the OPT. The settlement program is widely considered to be the main obstacle in advancing peace, as well as being explicitly illegal according to international law. Furthermore, many reports by prestigious human rights organisations (notably the recent Human Rights Watch report, "A Threshold Crossed") have described the Israeli occupation as apartheid.

The Palestinian presidential and legislative elections have been postponed due to Israel's refusal to allow Palestinian East Jerusalemites to participate. The Palestinian Authority (PA) has rejected this decision, as East Jerusalem is an integral part of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and it should



From left to right – Vinnie Molina, Romina Beitseen, Izzat Abdulhadi, Andrew Irving.

be noted that the international community does not recognise Israel's illegal annexation of East Jerusalem. Palestinian leadership have declared that the elections will go ahead as soon as Israel gives its approval for the 150,000 voters in East Jerusalem to participate in the democratic process, as is their right.

**CPA: Do you view the two-state solution for the Palestinian people as a failed policy?**

**IA:** The vision of the Palestinian leadership is still in support of the two-state solution as the only realistic solution to the conflict. After failed negotiations for the last twenty-seven years, however, it is the strong belief of Palestinian leadership that bi-lateral negotiations and the so-called peace process will not lead to the realisation of self-determination for the Palestinian people in statehood.

The vision of the establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian state according to 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital remains the same, but the approach must be changed. Bi-lateral negotiations will not help to solve the main problems. Accordingly, an international or regional conference should be organised to discuss and finally solve the conflict based on clear terms of reference, security council resolutions, and relevant UN resolutions.

Likewise, the international community should re-evaluate its engagement with the conflict, utilising international law tools such as the International Criminal Court, immediately recognise the state of Palestine, and implement a total boycott of illegal Israeli settlements and their products.

**CPA: What are the key demands for the Palestinian people to end the occupation?**

**AI:** We demand international protection, equality, justice, and human rights for the Palestinian people. From the international community, we demand that they recognise

the State of Palestine with 1967 borders and East Jerusalem as its capital. Also, pressure should be placed on Israel to respect international law and UN resolutions, immediately stop its colonial settlement projects in the OPT, and end its occupation of Palestine. Israel must also be held accountable for its human rights violations against the Palestinian people: it should not be treated with impunity.

**CPA: Is unity of the Palestinian people possible?**

**AI:** Yes, it is possible. There already is a unity between all Palestinian people, regardless of geographical locations, against colonisation, occupation, persecution and discrimination. This unity was felt during the recent Israeli assault on the OPT among Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Palestinian communities in Israel, and the diaspora.

In addition, regarding fragmentation on the official level between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Hamas (and indirectly the West Bank and Gaza), there was and is still an ongoing process of meetings in Cairo and elsewhere to solve the ongoing problems between the two parties. The problems I refer to here are problems in vision and in strategy. These negotiations reached a very positive outcome when Hamas agreed to be involved in the democratic process by participating in the elections. In this regard, it is also worth mentioning that the PA is still responsible for all services provided to the people of Gaza (we do not have two administrations) and more than fifty-eight per cent of the PA's budget goes to Gaza.

It was assumed that the elections would solve the issues between the two and increase unity between Gaza and the West Bank. Unfortunately, due to the latest Israeli assaults and their refusal to allow East Jerusalem to participate, the elections have been postponed. The talks between the two parties

will resume soon in Cairo and will hopefully solve the pending issues.

**CPA: What can organisations like the Communist Party of Australia and other solidarity organisations in Australia do to advance the freedom and self-determination of the Palestinian people?**

**AI:** Firstly, I would like to recognise and appreciate the role of the Communist Party of Australia in advocating for the self-determination of the Palestinian people in statehood with East Jerusalem as its capital.

In response to this question, I would like to suggest the following strategy to advocate for Palestinian self-determination and recognition of the State of Palestine in Australia:

Network with other civil society organisations in Australia, in particular Labour Unions, social movements, NGOs, and faith-based organisations, as well as Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian communities.

Continue to educate the Australian people about the story and narrative of the Palestinian people, amplifying Palestinian voices and visions, with a focus on the Palestinian Nakba (Catastrophe) and its ongoing impact.

Lobby Australian politicians from all parties and call on the Australian Government to recognise the State of Palestine without further delay, provide protection for the Palestinian people, and support the ICC's independent investigation into possible Israeli war crimes in the OPT.

Additionally, call on the Australian Government to increase their financial support to the Palestinian people, particularly refugees, through UNRWA. Australia's reduction of funds to UNRWA by half has had a very negative impact on the services provided to Palestinian refugees and, therefore, on their wellbeing.

The Communist Party of Australia and other solidarity organisations are encouraged to propose and implement effective media and social media strategies to amplify the voices of Palestinians in Australia.

Solidarity organisations, the Palestinian Embassy, the Muslim, Arab and Palestinian communities in Australia should all be united in solidarity with global social movements in support of the Palestinian cause, advocating for global democracy, peace, justice, equality, and decolonisation. ✪

**"We demand international protection, equality, justice, and human rights for the Palestinian people."**

# NEW INTERNATIONAL COALITION SEEKS TO FURTHER UN CHARTER PRINCIPLES

E Lennon

**Seventeen countries joined together to launch their initiative, forming the Group of friends in defence of the Charter of the United Nations.**

The signatory nations include China, Russia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran along with several other states.

Nations involved share a common goal: to promote multilateralism over unilateralism and seek diplomatic solutions to international issues.

Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations Samuel Moncada hosted the digital conference, giving a chance for state representatives to develop ideas on these values and their reasons for joining.

"The current situation in the international arena makes the establishment of this group of friends timely and essential," Moncada said. "The year 2020, for instance, was marked by the worst pandemic humanity has faced in a century and made clear the need for collective action. That is, for the creation of more inclusive multilateralism. Nowadays, we see growing attempts aimed at challenging the Charter of the United Nations."

Other signatory states include Algeria, Angola, Belarus, Bolivia, Cambodia, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Laos, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Syria, and Venezuela; as well as Palestine, which is an observer and non-member state of the United Nations.

The core belief that these states wish to reinforce is a cooperative approach to international relations and diplomacy, with respects to the original intentions of those who formed the UN and produced its charter.

Former President of the United Nations Security Council Maria Luiza Viotti also joined the meeting.

"Born of the devastation of the Second World War," said Former President Viotti, "it set the foundations for a more just and peaceful world order. Three quarters of a century later, its vision has not only been vindicated but remains as vital as it was in 1945. [...] Our shared challenge right now is to do far better in upholding the Charter's values."

While there were major powers in attendance, the respect and non-interference in smaller countries' affairs and sovereignty became a reoccurring point in speeches during the digital launch.

"We believe that the international

community must renew its commitment to multilateralism," Bolivia's Foreign Minister Diego Pary Rodríguez said. "The multilateral system represents a guarantee of respect for the sovereignty and independence of the smaller states vis a vis the larger states."

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's UN Ambassador Kim Song echoed these calls, denouncing interventions in the affairs of smaller states by major powers.

"Seventy-five years have passed since the foundation of the United Nations," Kim said. "However, it is deeply regrettable that the principle for respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs, enshrined in the Charter, are yet to be fully implemented."

Both Bolivia and the DPRK are two countries that have been subject to interference from Western nations, namely the United States. In building solidarity with the other signatory states, it reinforces a pushback against imperialist forces and the ways in which they seek to undermine the development of countries defiant to capitalist intervention. ✪



## BRAZIL: CAUGHT BETWEEN HOPE AND DESPAIR

Seamus Carey

**Brazil's next general election is scheduled to be held next year, on the 2nd October. Former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of the Workers' Party is leading current polls; a 7th July poll conducted by Poder Data showed a fifty-five per cent intent to vote for Lula among the Brazilian voting population, versus thirty-two per cent for the incumbent Jair Bolsonaro.**

The far-right, fascist-adjacent government of Bolsonaro has governed with hateful negligence toward the workers and impoverished people of Brazil, and has committed massive violations against Indigenous peoples. Bolsonaro's rise emboldened fascists to commit violence and intimidation against leftists, unionists, and disadvantaged groups. The Bolsonaro regime's criminally incompetent

mishandling (perhaps even mishandling is too generous a word!) of the pandemic has resulted in one of the highest death rates in the world, with over half a million victims and counting.

Lula's 2003-2010 presidency was one of the most successful in Brazil's history, from the perspective of the welfare of the people. He initiated massive social programs, and made Brazil one of the few major poverty alleviation success stories in the world of the period, other than China and Vietnam. Simultaneously he managed to bring the country out of a decades-long debt crisis – demonstrating, in real practice, that the neoliberal claims about a trade-off between national debt and welfare programs are pure fiction!

Lula had attempted to run in the 2018 election, but was not permitted to, as in 2017 he had been arrested and jailed on

corruption charges. He spent 580 days in prison. The presiding judge, Sergio Moro, was then chosen by Bolsonaro as his Minister of Justice and Public Security!

Earlier this year, the convictions were overturned, confirming the suspicions of many that the charges had been politically motivated. Lula is now free to run in 2022.

In early July, Bolsonaro made public comments attacking the electronic voting system of Brazil, and expressed the intention to return to paper voting. His comments reveal themselves to be nothing but an extremely flimsy pretext to preemptively dispute the outcome of the election, and undermine democracy. In his own words:

"If that method continues, we are going to have problems because one side may not accept the result. And that side, obviously, will be our side."

Sometimes they say the quiet part out loud!

Claims of electoral fraud have become a habitual way to disrupt the election of leftist candidates, around the world and particularly in Latin America. The habits of US-backed puppets have become almost comically stereotyped.

The rising wave of support for Lula occurs in the context of what might be a new "pink tide" in Latin America, this time perhaps a deeper shade of pink. The recent electoral victory of Bolivia's Movement Toward Socialism, President Maduro's overwhelming re-election in Venezuela, the election of President Pedro Castillo in Peru, the huge protests against neoliberalism in Colombia, and the lead which the Communist Party of Chile holds for Chile's November election, all point to bold new possibilities for the peoples of Latin America. ✪

## CPA STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH SOCIALIST CUBA

**The Communist Party of Australia condemns in the strongest possible terms the subversive campaign waged by the US government and Western media against the Cuban Revolution, its government, and people.**

The CPA stands shoulder to shoulder with the Cuban Revolution and its revolutionary government. It will defend the revolution as it is the responsibility of all revolutionaries and communists around the world.

We praise the revolutionary

people of Cuba who have taken to the streets in defence of their sovereignty and right to self-determination. The counter-revolution *No Pasaran!*

The imperialist calls for a "humanitarian" intervention is a direct attack on the Cuban Revolution. Cuba needs the end of the criminal US blockade.

The Biden Administration recently authorised more funds to continue the attacks on the Cuban people. The US President, despite his electoral promises, hasn't eliminated any of the 243 executive

orders made by Trump. The most barbaric of these is the inclusion of Cuba on the unilateral US list of countries sponsors of terrorism.

This means that Cuba cannot purchase any goods on international markets or have access to financial loans as the US controls the economic and financial systems. The Helms-Burton Act Title III also punishes third countries from trading with Cuba.

We have great optimism in the Cuban revolutionary spirit to persist even during these toughest of times no matter how unjust, but we

say loudly there is no reason why a people should be asked to endure such an injustice.

During these times of COVID when the greatest cooperation is needed globally among people, Cuba has not faltered in that commitment despite the ramping up of the attacks against it by US Administrations. The Cuban Revolution continues to deliver not only for the Cuban people but more broadly by sharing their medical skills where needed.

We call on the Australian government to assist Cuba in these

difficult times of the pandemic and use its diplomatic channels to end the US blockade.

We demand the end of the subversive campaign against Cuba. No to the imperialist call for a "humanitarian" intervention!

We demand the end of the US blockade!

**Communist Party  
of Australia  
International Department  
12th July 2021**

# END OF THE FOREVER WAR?



Matthew Hole

**The United States' longest war has officially come to an end. After twenty years of intervention, US troops packed up and left Bagram Airfield in the dead of night earlier this month, without a proper handover to their Afghan partners and leaving countless old vehicles without keys and other equipment for onlookers to salvage. The hasty withdrawal came after US President Biden pledged in April to end their occupation, with the knowledge that if left to the generals, US presence would remain indefinitely. The official end of assistance to US-backed Afghan government forces will end on 31st August. At that time, the US still reserves the right to conduct drone strikes on ISIS and other extremist forces in the region, and an additional 650 troops will remain behind to guard the US embassy in Kabul. But, one must ask, is this really the end?**

Taliban forces – the key resistance movement to US occupation – have advanced significantly across the country, first upon the announcement of the withdrawal in May, and then again as most US forces have now left the country. A Taliban spokesperson has claimed that they now control eighty-five per cent of the country, and according to a US Intelligence report, the whole country is likely to fall under their control within six months.

## BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

The current US intervention into Afghanistan began in the wake of the 11th of September attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York, when US government officials accused the Taliban of harbouring Al-Qaeda terrorists that were responsible for the attacks. The Taliban, who were the ruling government of Afghanistan from 1996-2001, asked the US to provide evidence that Al-Qaeda was responsible for the attacks and they would subsequently hand Bin Laden over. However, the US ignored this request and launched its invasion days later. However, one must go back further to see the beginnings of US

machinations in the country that is on the crossroads of South and Central Asia.

In 1978, the Saur Revolution led to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan being established, which then embarked on a program of modernising the country and improving the lives of workers, women, and other oppressed groups. A counter-revolution formed in the countryside by ultra conservative forces, known as the Mujahideen, which the United States under then President Jimmy Carter and Secretary of State Zbigniew Brzezinski armed to the teeth as part of their Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union. The socialist government called on their Soviet Union allies for assistance, as Brzezinski had thought they would, and in doing so would give the USSR 'their own Vietnam'. Ultimately the move proved successful for the United States, as the USSR was bogged down for 10 years before pulling out, given the multitude of internal issues they were facing at the time, and was ultimately one of the many contributing factors to their dissolution. Warring factions of the Mujahideen dominated the period between 1992-1996, at which time the Taliban came into existence and were able to take control of the country.

## THE GRAND CHESSBOARD

Brzezinski's wishes have ultimately come full circle, as the United States gave themselves "their own Vietnam" again when they invaded Afghanistan in 2001, being bogged down for twenty years, leaving enormous death and destruction in their wake before exiting after two decades in another war they could not win. Over one hundred thousand lives lost, and trillions of dollars wasted, this truly is par for the course of United States behaviour throughout its short history.

Whilst the "War on Terror" was utilised as an alibi for US intervention, reading Brzezinski's own words in his 1997 book *The Grand Chessboard*, point to their true intentions in both Afghanistan as well as other Middle Eastern wars of aggression. Brzezinski asserts that all great powers throughout history have controlled Eurasia, given it has the vast majority of the world's population and resources. Suppose the US was going to have a chance at another century of global hegemony. In that case, their

number one strategic priority was to stop the emergence of a Eurasian power rising to challenge them. The independent states of China, Russia and Iran being listed as their core foreign policy objectives today remain testament to this way of thinking.

The exit from Afghanistan is by no means a turn towards benevolence by the empire, with recent reports of increased troops in Eastern Yemen to thwart Iranian support for the Houthis fighting for independence from US-allied Saudi Arabia, as well as increased focus more broadly in the South Pacific and Latin America. More recently, US corporate media have launched a massive propaganda campaign for a small group of reactionary protestors in Cuba, falsely attributing imagery from Arab Spring protests in Egypt from a decade ago and pro-government rallies in Cuba itself, in a sign of worrying times ahead.

## ISLAMISM IN ONE COUNTRY

The composition of the Taliban has changed significantly in the two decades they have endured as a guerrilla force – which is four times as long as their short stint in power in the late 1990s. They are now made up of various ethnic groups across the country – including the Hazara's who were persecuted during the Taliban's reign – as a multitude of forces joined their ranks to repel the US invaders. The Taliban has also grown diplomatically and has built relations with China and other neighbours to gain legitimacy for seemingly their inevitable rise to power in the wake of the US's exit.

Neighbours of Afghanistan have reason to be concerned given the escalation of the situation in recent weeks, and the fear of an extremist spill-over into their own countries. Tajikistan has arranged for 20,000 armed forces to secure their border. Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan invited Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi between July 12-16 for a series of talks on how they can ensure regional security in the wake of the US withdrawal.

China – who itself shares a small border with Afghanistan – has a specific reason to be concerned, given the Taliban's previous association with the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), who have been

responsible for countless terrorist attacks in China's northwest province of Xinjiang in recent decades. However, the Taliban, for their part, has made assurances that they will not harbour ETIM forces and will respect China in managing their own internal affairs.

Notwithstanding the relatively harsh interpretation of the Quran the Taliban adheres to, they now claim to be concerned with rebuilding their war-torn country and see China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a key pillar in how they can improve the lives of Afghans and in doing so reinforce their rule. Should a relative peace within the region be found, there is an opportunity for Afghanistan to become a stopover in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), something that would benefit all peoples in the region. However, the internal dynamics of the country mean that a number of difficult hurdles will need to be overcome before such a prospect for peace is realised.

## AUSTRALIA-US ALLIANCE

This has not only been the United States' longest war but Australia's too. John Howard, Prime Minister at the time of the invasion, invoked the ANZUS treaty as the reason behind Australia's support for US aggression. The Peace Movement in Australia is calling for an end to Australian participation in US wars, with the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) recently launching an enquiry into the costs and consequences of the US alliance. Australian soldiers have been accused of war crimes whilst engaged in Afghanistan, which has significantly hampered Australia's reputation in the community of nations.

Everyday Australians must take this opportunity to have their voices heard and ensure that our political class represent the best interest of all Australians – which would involve a defence orientated foreign policy and free up resources to better meet the needs of the public. Afghanistan may finally now have the opportunity to heal and develop a more prosperous way of life after decades of conflict. Australians must make sure that they don't contribute to another "Afghanistan" again. ☺

# OIL STRIKE SPREADS IN IRAN

Jane Green speaks to Union of Metalworkers and Mechanics of Iran (UMMI) national secretary Mayizar Gilani-Nejad about the ongoing dispute and the current situation for Iranian workers.

**The strike by workers in the oil and petrochemical industries in Iran, which began on the 19th of June, has spread to numerous sites across the vast oil and gas exploration fields, as well as the oil industry in general.**

According to a statement released by UMMI, 28,000 workers have downed tools and remain determined to stay out until their demands are met.

In response to being asked to outline the main goals and demands of the oil industry and contract workers in the recent strikes, national secretary Maziyar Gilani-Nejad was quite clear that the demands were within the strictures laid down in Iranian employment law, which in any case gives employers huge advantages.

"For example, the employment law states that the employer must pay a worker's wage on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis," says Gilani-Nejad. "Nowhere does it state that the employer can delay the worker's wages for three months plus or suddenly disappear having made no payment.

"In such cases, workers and their representatives have tried everything from direct correspondence to requests to meet with their respective parliamentary representatives, but to no avail."

One of the key demands of UMMI is that wages must be paid monthly and without delay.

The current action has been initiated mainly by the project and contract workers. However, Gilani-Nejad was clear about the need for support from permanent employees of the oil, gas, and petrochemical companies.

Gilani-Nejad indicated that full-time permanently employed workers in the oil company are also

on low wages and have protested several times since the beginning of the year, supporting co-ordination between them and the project workers. Full-time workers announced their intention to take strike action on 30th June.

"The conditions and leave arrangements of the workforce are key demands in the current struggle," said Gilani-Nejad, "with strikers demanding that employers should be obliged to implement the rightful demand for a standard rotation of 20 working days onsite followed by 10 days of commensurate paid leave."

In addition, the strikers are demanding that insurance contributions must be based on the actual job titles and not capped at the level of an unskilled worker, as at present.

Gilani-Nejad also made the point that workers are also demanding the payment of bonuses and benefits, transport costs and child benefits; proper air-conditioning; an end to low-quality and repetitive meals; and an improvement of hygiene and sanitation in the dormitories.

"Contractors charge the employer for providing first-class air-conditioned minibuses, yet transport the workers in World War II-type minibuses. The conditions are inhumane with temperatures clocking 55°C in the province of Khuzestan."

When UMMI announced that employers should raise salaries by 40 per cent, in line with Ministry of Employment guidance, workers faced sacking and insults directed at the campaign and union. The current action is the outcome of that failure to adhere to previously reached agreements by the employers.

The UMMI are pressing that peaceful protest against the violation of workers' rights, as recognised by all international laws, is also included in the constitution and employment laws of Iran. UMMI hope that such civil protests will persuade the government to find a reasonable and effective way to respond to the demands of the



workers. Gilani-Nejad stressed that they must respond positively and in accordance with the respective ILO conventions on trade union structures and workers' rights.

The situation for workers in Iran is exacerbated by the fact that the government do not recognise independent trade unions, making it more difficult for unions to organise.

In addition, employers regularly contract out project work, through so called labour brokers, who take work from the oil company and delegate it to smaller firms. This subcontracting essentially breaks or obfuscates the direct line of accountability between employer and employee.

As Gilani-Nejad makes clear: "It is a regular practice for the oil companies and the Ministry of Employment to give a portion of the wages owed workers to labour brokers, who do nothing for the project, skim some of the payment and then delegate the work on, thus depriving the workers of that which is rightfully due to them."

In order to reduce the parasitic role of labour brokers UMMI are demanding that a copy of the

employment contract on official headed paper, signed and sealed, must be handed to the respective employee. This would make the relationship clearer and the rights and duties of the employer under the law more transparent.

In relation to the recent elections in Iran, which saw hard-line cleric Ebrahim Raisi elected President, Gilani-Nejad is not optimistic that this will be of any benefit to Iran's workers.

"While administrations come and go, workers have learned to pay more attention to the actions of the officials rather than election campaign promises."

Gilani-Nejad drew attention to the statement of Raisi that, "The economy should be left to the private sector. Anything that slows down the private sector must be eliminated."

"These words may serve to encourage people in the private sector," said Gilani-Nejad. "However, the country's workers are demanding that the government, in its first steps, address the catastrophic living and working conditions of the working people.

"They are demanding basic

steps without delay to address the consequences of privatisation and endemic corruption, as well as the need to fill the country's industrial production capacity."

It is clear that in the current dispute and in relation to the situation for workers in Iran in general, the UMMI general secretary sees a significant role for international support.

"By uniting with us and giving coverage to our legitimate demands, the trade unions can send a clear and unequivocal message that solidarity at regional, national and international levels can force the authorities to realise that they must pay the workers their rightful dues.

"It is a fact that such solidarity is only natural and has a great effect on motivating workers to insist upon the realisation of their legal rights."

That action, that solidarity and the campaign to highlight the struggles of the people of Iran for peace, democracy, and social justice, is one which will continue beyond the current dispute, until those goals are achieved.

Morning Star ✪

**"By uniting with us and giving coverage to our legitimate demands, the trade unions can send a clear and unequivocal message that solidarity at regional, national and international levels can force the authorities to realise that they must pay the workers their rightful dues."**

## Subscription to **The Guardian**

12 months: \$100 (\$80 conc/\$150 solidarity)  6 months: \$55 (\$40 conc/\$80 solidarity)  
 Special offer: 10 issues for \$10 (new subscriptions only)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTCODE: \_\_\_\_\_

Pay by  Cheque  Money order (Payable to "Guardian Publications")

Phone in details on 02 9699 8844 or [info@cpa.org.au](mailto:info@cpa.org.au) Or send to:  
 Guardian Subscriptions

74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010

or by credit card:  Mastercard  Visa \*\$20 minimum on cards

Card# \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Guardian

Editorial Office  
 74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, 2010  
 Ph: 02 9699 8844 Fax: 02 9699 9833  
 Email: [guardian@cpa.org.au](mailto:guardian@cpa.org.au)

Editor: Franc Stregone

Published by  
**Guardian Publications Australia Ltd**  
 74 Buckingham St,  
 Surry Hills, 2010

Printed by  
**Spotpress**  
 24-26 Lillian Fowler Pl  
 Marrickville 2204

Responsibility for electoral comment  
 is taken by **T Pearson**,  
 74 Buckingham St,  
 Surry Hills, 2010

## Politics in the Pub Perth

### TALKING ABOUT REVOLUTION

**6pm Thursday 22nd July**

**43 Below Restaurant & Bar**

Corner of Hay and Barrack Streets, Perth CBD

**CPA speakers**

**Free entry**

For more information

email [perth@cpa.org.au](mailto:perth@cpa.org.au) or call 0419 812 872

# ELECTION OFFICIALS BAN GERMAN COMMUNIST PARTY FROM RUNNING CANDIDATES

Uli Brockmeyer

**BERLIN: A committee of the German parliament responsible for preparing the election scheduled for 26th September decided not to allow the German Communist Party (DKP) to run for office. The Federal Election Committee of the German Bundestag, which includes representatives of the extreme right-wing "Alternative for Germany," ruled that candidates of the DKP will not appear on ballots anywhere in the country. The committee used the late submission of accounts as a pretext for its ban on the Communists.**

The leadership of the DKP learned about the decision only through press reports. The Federal Election Commissioner apparently did not even consider it necessary to inform the party, which has democratically-elected representatives in several cities and towns. Only an inquiry by DKP chairman Patrik Köbele brought to light that the committee claimed delivery of the party's accounting reports had been delayed.

The actions of the Federal Election Committee present a very serious problem for the DKP – beyond just the upcoming election. With this ban on participation in the September vote, the DKP is also threatened with possibly having its status as a legal political party revoked.

Köbele said that although the decision was not an open outlawing of the party, it was in effect a "cold" party ban.

"This is what we Communists are familiar with," he said. "In 1933, the Communist Party was banned by the fascists, in 1956 by [Chancellor Konrad] Adenauer. It's fearful that this should now take place in 2021 by bureaucratic means."

As Köbele mentioned, political attacks on Communists are by no means new in German history. Since the beginning of their appearance as a political party, the German Communists have repeatedly had their existence threatened. Within days of the founding of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) in January 1919, the leaders of the counter-revolution that pushed back against workers' uprisings at the time targeted the party for destruction. Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, KPD leaders, were murdered that same month.

This fate met many active Communists in the years that followed, until finally, in January 1933, the government of Adolf Hitler, hoisted into office by the masters of industry and the banks, completely outlawed the KPD. German Communists were among the first to be arrested by the Nazis and thrown into prisons and concentration camps, tortured, and murdered – among them the unforgotten KPD chairman, Ernst Thälmann.

After the fall of Hitler and the end of the war in 1945, KPD members were subjected to new persecutions by the West German government. When resistance to remilitarisation in the Federal Republic of Germany became too strong in the early 1950s, the Free German Youth (FDJ), an organisation in which young communists and other anti-fascists had joined forces, was initially banned. The ban of the KPD followed in 1956, and many of the Communists who were then thrown into prisons faced the same judges who had sentenced them during the Nazi era.

Since then, the DKP, newly founded in 1968, has had to contend with many difficulties thrown in its path by the state. The Communists chalk it up to the fact that they consistently oppose armaments and war,



stand up for the social rights of the people, and expose the anti-social measures of the state, especially now in the health crisis.

As for the latest injunction against the DKP, Köbele said, "The deprivation of party status would be an attempt to drive our party into financial ruin. This joins the various scandals in which attempts are made to ruin progressive organisations via the withdrawal of non-profit status." The attempt to squeeze out the DKP is part of an increasing trend of criminalisation and slander against leftist

forces and an escalation of state actions against them.

The DKP argues it is a case of the Cold War continuing unchecked against Communists and leftists today, but the party says, "History has shown that you can ban a communist party, but not its idea of creating a just society without exploitation of man by man."

The party has four days to appeal the decision to the Federal Constitutional Court. *People's World* ✪

## SAN ANTONIO DE LOS BAÑOS: WHATEVER IT TAKES, DÍAZ-CANEL!

Laura Mercedes Giráldez

**Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez arrived in San Antonio de los Baños in the province of Artemisa to talk with inhabitants about a provocation by a group of counterrevolutionaries attempting to subvert the public order, while Cuba is struggling against COVID-19, as well as the brutal blockade imposed by the US government**

[On 11th July], Benito Alonso Gonzalez left the comfort of his home in the municipality of San Antonio de los Baños, in the province of Artemisa, because a group at the service of foreign and annexationist interests, paid

and directed by the United States, was looking to provoke a social explosion.

He went to the park, and spoke to reporters there about "the traitors who want to sell the Revolution for a few pesos," the revolution that helped save his brother from COVID-19 just two weeks ago, the revolution that asks us to stay home, to avoid seeing more people die due to the pandemic.

There, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee and President of the Republic, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, Benito himself, and the provocateurs came across a crowd of residents carrying Cuban flags and shouting: Long live the

Revolution, Homeland or Death, Venceremos!

"Those of us who have come this far are faithful custodians of the Revolution, we want it strong, we were raised by the Revolution. And now, with the presence of Díaz-Canel, we feel firm, secure, because the Revolution is with the people, who are the true owners of the streets. In Cuba we will not allow those who want to take away what we have conquered to enter," warned Antonio Crespo, a resident of San Antonio who joined the popular response.

Also in the park where Díaz-Canel went to confront those who intended to fracture the unity of the Party, the state, the

government and the people, were father and son, Roberto Reyes Herrera, president of the Antonio Briones Montoto agricultural cooperative production unit, and Yosbel Reyes Sotomayor. The former recalled the hard times Cubans faced before 1959, which his parents told him about, and insisted that he is grateful for "the opportunities the Revolution has given me, that a few do not want to recognise."

His son likewise stated, "I'm sure that it was the Cuban-American mafia who paid the provocateurs who wanted to take advantage of the difficult situation Cuba is experiencing," adding, "The youth of San Antonio are on the side of

our leaders, that is why we have taken to the parks and the streets."

The flags, the cheers, the revolutionary conscience and confidence in those who are working every day to move our nation forward, left drowning in a sigh of impotence the malicious imperialist lackeys who made Benito leave his quiet Sunday at home. He insisted, "Let it be known, the people of Cuba are not those who disturbed the peace today, those who love the empire so much. The people of Cuba are the doctors, the scientists who made the vaccines, those of us who came to tell the President: Whatever it takes, Díaz-Canel, whatever it takes!"

*Granma* ✪



### Communist Party of Australia

[www.cpa.org.au](http://www.cpa.org.au)

[cpa@cpa.org.au](mailto:cpa@cpa.org.au)

**General Secretary**  
Andrew Irving  
[andrew@cpa.org.au](mailto:andrew@cpa.org.au)

**Party President**  
Vinnie Molina  
[president@cpa.org.au](mailto:president@cpa.org.au)

**Media**  
[guardian@cpa.org.au](mailto:guardian@cpa.org.au)  
[amr@cpa.org.au](mailto:amr@cpa.org.au)

**Adelaide** Liam Ellis [sa@cpa.org.au](mailto:sa@cpa.org.au) 0405 020 614

**Brisbane** 0499 476 540 [bris@cpa.org.au](mailto:bris@cpa.org.au)  
PO Box 6012, Manly, Qld 4179

**Canberra** [act@cpa.org.au](mailto:act@cpa.org.au)

**Darwin** Vinnie Molina 0419 812 872 [darwin@cpa.org.au](mailto:darwin@cpa.org.au)

**Melbourne** Andrew Irving [cpavic@cpa.org.au](mailto:cpavic@cpa.org.au)  
Box 3 Trades Hall, Lygon St, Carlton Sth Vic 3053

**Newcastle** [newcastle@cpa.org.au](mailto:newcastle@cpa.org.au)

#### Head Office (Sydney)

74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010

phone: 02 9699 8844 fax: 02 9699 9833 email: [info@cpa.org.au](mailto:info@cpa.org.au)

**Perth** Elly Hulm [perth@cpa.org.au](mailto:perth@cpa.org.au) 0419 812 872  
PO Box 98, North Perth, WA 6906

**Western NSW** Allan Hamilton [western.nsw@cpa.org.au](mailto:western.nsw@cpa.org.au)  
121 McKay St, Cootamundra, NSW 2590

**Sydney District** [syd.dist.comm@cpa.org.au](mailto:syd.dist.comm@cpa.org.au) 02 9699 8844 Surry Hills (head office)

**Tasmania** Andrew Irving [tas@cpa.org.au](mailto:tas@cpa.org.au) 03 9639 1550

**Wollongong** [wollongong@cpa.org.au](mailto:wollongong@cpa.org.au)

**Youth** [youth@cpa.org.au](mailto:youth@cpa.org.au) Surry Hills (head office)