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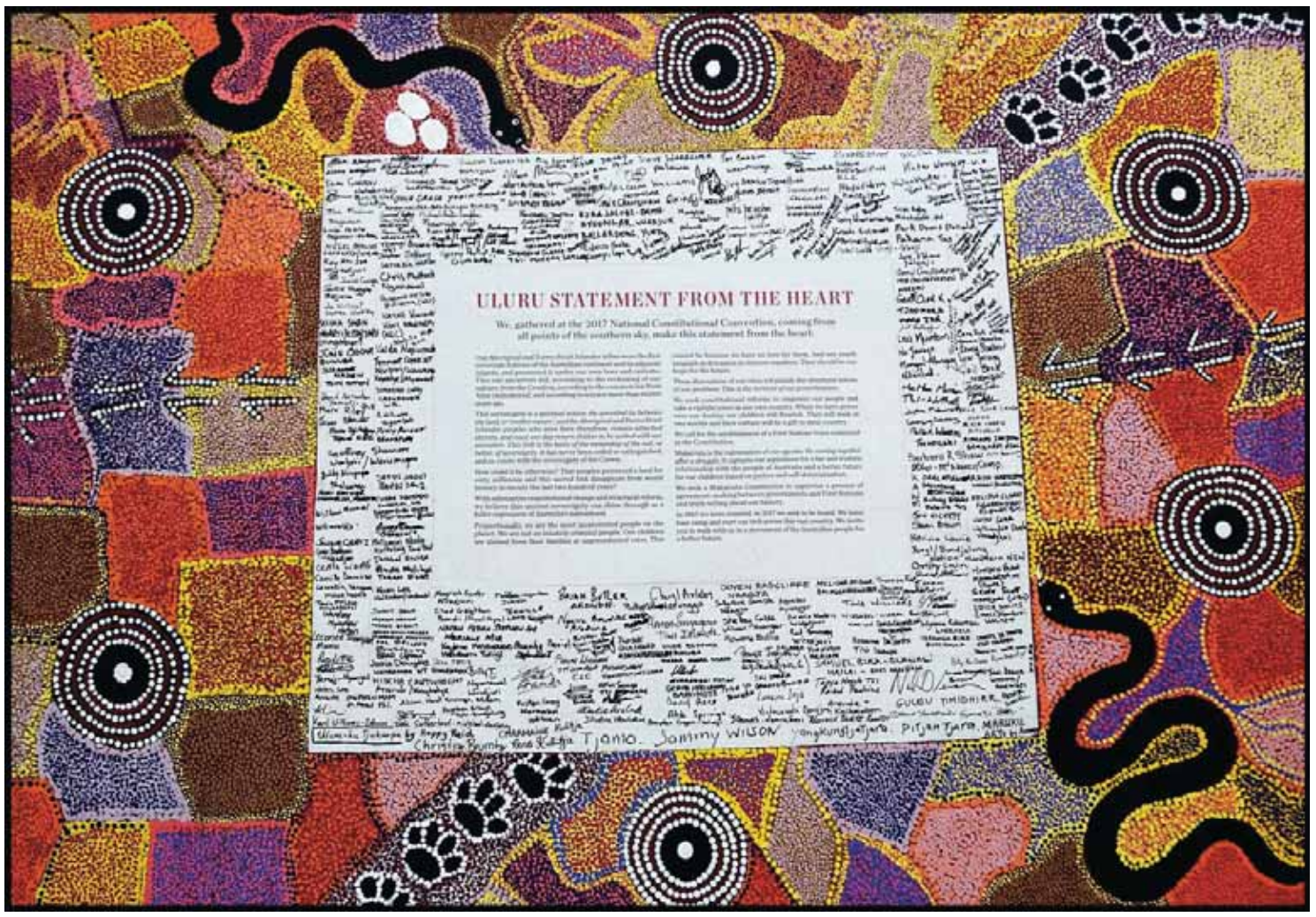
NO VOICE, NO TREATY, NO TRUTH:
INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS CONTINUE TO BE LEFT OUT OF THE CONVERSATION

B Curphey

In a controversial move earlier this year, the Senate voted down a proposal to establish a parliamentary committee to investigate truth-telling and treaty-making processes – two of the three key recommendations of the Uluru Statement From the Heart. Two developments have occurred in the past few weeks concerning the rights of Indigenous Australians which have shed light on why the recommendations of the Uluru Statement, and in particular the third element, an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, are more vital than ever.

On the one hand, the Commonwealth government is seeking to have the landmark decision in *Love & Thoms* overturned. That case, which was decided in 2020, held that Indigenous Australians cannot be deported from Australia as 'illegal aliens' under the *Migration Act*. On the other hand, a new land rights Bill has been introduced in the Commonwealth Parliament that seeks to change the way investments in Indigenous land are handled.

Both decisions undermine the Morrison government's claim that it has the best interests of First Nations people at heart – with prominent Indigenous people speaking out against the legal challenge to *Love & Thoms* and very little First Nations consultation over the new land rights Bill.



COMMONWEALTH SEEKS TO OVERTURN *LOVE & THOMS*

The case of *Love v Commonwealth; Thoms v Commonwealth*, commonly known as *Love & Thoms*, was decided by the High Court in early 2020. It established a key principle: that people of Indigenous descent, whether or not they are citizens of Australia, cannot be deported as illegal aliens under the *Migration Act*. The Court declared that doing so would give rise to an inconsistency between the *Migration Act* and the common law's recognition of the First Nations of Australia and their deep spiritual connection to land, as well as with existing laws like Native Title.

Both applicants, Mr Love and Mr Thoms, were non-citizens of Australia but of Indigenous descent. The government tried to deport both men from Australia on the grounds that they had failed the character test for their visas after both were convicted of offences and served jail terms. They challenged this decision, arguing that Indigenous Australians could not be considered "aliens" within the meaning of the *Migration Act 1958* and therefore could not be deported.

Now, the Commonwealth government is seeking to challenge the *Love & Thoms* decision, asking the High Court to overrule itself after a Wakka Wakka and Mununjali man who is a citizen of New Zealand, but not Australia, sought to use *Love & Thoms* to challenge his deportation.

Shayne Montgomery has lived in Australia for more than twenty years but is not a citizen. After being convicted of aggravated burglary, the government tried to deport him in 2019. He commenced proceedings shortly after *Love & Thoms* was decided, in early 2020. Montgomery seeks to further expand the *Love & Thoms* principle to include those who are customarily adopted as Aboriginal, even if they have no biological Indigenous ancestry.

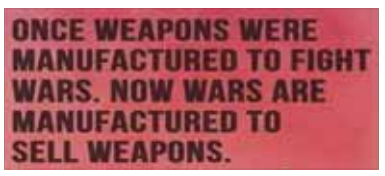
How can a court overrule itself? The High Court will not do this lightly, but it is within their power to overturn a past judgement. This allows Australian law to develop over time, in step with a changing Australian culture and values. But the power to overturn previous decisions must be balanced with rule of law values. Overturning established precedents may lead to uncertainty about the state of the law, or even outright inconsistencies. In general, the rule of law requires that the law be consistent, certain, accessible, and relatively easy to understand.

The reason why the government thinks the High Court might overrule itself on this occasion has to do with the Justices on the bench. *Love & Thoms* was decided by a narrow majority of the High Court, with four judges deciding in favour of the men (Justices Bell, Nettle, Gordon and Edelman) and three dissenting (Chief Justice Kiefel, with whom Justices Gageler and Keane agreed).

Continued on page 2

3

Greenwashing dirty investments

4


NO TO WAR!: Nuclear is back

5

School strike for climate change – Perth

10

Powell dies, but Iraq war will linger on

Guardian
Issue 1984 25th October, 2021

THE LIBERALS ARE NOT GOOD ECONOMIC MANAGERS

We hear it all the time, but we especially hear it during election season: "the Liberals are good economic managers! Labor just spends, spends, spends!" No conservative politician can do without this talking point in their arsenal, including our prime minister, who on announcing the 2019 federal election, stated: "Labor cannot manage money." It is rhetoric founded on the notion that "penny-pinching" (i.e. austerity) is the sign of fiscal responsibility. Thus the saying is built on two premises: 1.) That government spending is bad, and 2.) That the ALP does a lot of it. Are either of these propositions true? Let's start with the former.

The Liberals being painted as being economically sensible is one of Australia's oldest political narratives, but it's just that – a tale, a story, a myth. The Liberals are in no sense of the adjective, "good" economic managers. Perhaps the largest sign of hubris displayed in contemporary Australian politics was the campaigning in 2019 that the Australian budget was going to be "Back in Black." Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit. As a result, the Morrison government now presides over the largest deficit in Australian history.

No one, however, can blame the Morrison government for spending money to keep the economy afloat. In fact, it's what good economic managers do: but how did the Morrison government spend money? While JobKeeper was a much-needed response, as we have reported in several editorials (*Guardian* #1958, #1955) and in articles (*Guardian* #1973, #1975) the Liberals have mismanaged this program. How badly have they mismanaged it?

Earlier this month, the Morrison government noted that it had only paid $27 billion to recipients who didn't experience a thirty per cent turnover decline. This, according to *The Australian Financial Review*, is a mistruth. This amount is in fact a portion of a "$47.6 billion sample of the $70.3 billion paid in the first phase of JobKeeper." When taken in this context, the $27 billion accounts for 56.7 per cent of the sample size! "Extrapolated to the full $70.3 billion of JobKeeper paid in the first phase, $39.9 billion of JobKeeper" to recipients who didn't experience a turnover decline – does this sound like good economic management?

Furthermore, Australia's debt is expected to be $729 billion dollars. An argument one might expect to be mounted is that this has accumulated because of the pandemic – not so. As shadow treasurer Jim Chalmers has stated, two-thirds of this debt was accumulated *before* the beginning of the pandemic.

When the Coalition came to power, gross debt was approximately $280.3 billion. By January 2020, as Australia began to record its first COVID-19 cases, gross debt was $568.1 billion. "The increase in gross debt since the pandemic hit Australia – $155.3 billion – represents 35 per cent of the $443.1 billion of debt borrowed by the Coalition since it came to office" (ABC). If the Coalition is so fiscally responsible, why does it need to borrow all this money?

Labor had its own economic crisis to deal with when it was in government: the Global Financial Crisis (GFC). When recessions crippled other major Western countries economies, Australia came out relatively unscathed due to "cash handouts in 2008 and the schools building program that were widely credited with quarantining Australia from the economic woes of the GFC" (ABC). For his efforts, Wayne Swan was awarded the finance minister of the year award judged by leading European banking and finance magazine *Euromoney*. The only other Australian Treasurer to win? Paul Keating – also Labor.

This is not to say Labor is perfect (far from it) or without fault. They, much like the Liberals, perpetuate the system of capitalism and are therefore denying the working masses what is rightfully theirs. However, when it has come to getting Australia out of tough financial situations, Labor has performed better. Spending *helps* the economy. We need to destroy this myth so that the economy does not suffer even further under another Coalition term.

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Continued from page 1

Since the decision was handed down, Justices Bell and Nettle have retired from the Court. Their replacements, Justices Gleeson and Steward, bring a fresh perspective to the Court, and according to a report by the Assistant Attorney-General, the Commonwealth thinks "there is a significant possibility that a reconstituted bench would reconsider the decision in the event of challenge."

The government considers it unlikely that the current High Court will be open to overruling the current indigeneity test which requires (i) biological descent in addition to (ii) identifying as Indigenous and (iii) being accepted by the Indigenous community as Indigenous.

However, Constitutional law scholar and Wamba Wamba man Eddie Synot argues that Indigeneity should not even be an issue for the courts to decide. He advocates for scrapping the biological requirement of the test, as this is inconsistent with common practices among Indigenous communities of which adoption is one. Therefore, Synot argues, whether or not someone is Indigenous is a matter for Indigenous communities themselves. Allowing courts to intervene to make such decisions for Indigenous communities is paternalistic and significantly undermines the already fraught relationship between Indigenous people and the Commonwealth government.

NEW "LAND RIGHTS" BILL

The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment (Economic Empowerment) Bill 2021 was introduced in the Commonwealth Parliament on 25th August by Ken Wyatt, the Minister for Indigenous Australians. The Bill, currently before the House of Representatives, seeks to amend the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* to establish the Northern Territory Aboriginal Investment Corporation (NTAI) and to streamline the processes for mining and exploration, as well as to clarify the administrative provisions of the Act.

The stated purpose of the Bill is to "empower Aboriginal peoples in the NT to activate the economic potential of their land for generations to come." However, the Senate Standing Committee for the Scrutiny of Bills (SCSB) has raised a number of concerns about how the Bill seeks to achieve this purpose. The SCSB is concerned that the new processes in the Bill are lacking in accountability and ironically, that the Bill, whose purpose is supposed to be to empower Traditional Owners, keeps them out of the loop.

Firstly, section 12D(4) provides that Land Councils must not enter into any agreement without consultation of the Traditional Owners, however, section 12D(7) provides that failure to consult Traditional Owners will not render such an agreement invalid, significantly undermining the effect of 12D(4) and potentially keeping Traditional Owners out of the loop. The Minister gave no explanation for why this clause is necessary.

Secondly, the Bill also leaves significant decisions to be decided by delegated legislation. Delegated legislation is increasingly common and it is sometimes even necessary to ensure that the government runs efficiently. Essentially, delegated legislation is rules or regulations made under a principal Act. For example, the power to make federal COVID rules is delegated to the Governer-General under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*. Another advantage of delegated legislation is that it is more adaptable to quickly changing conditions because it is not subject to a vote by Parliament (although it may be disallowed by Parliament).

Although delegated legislation is supposed to deal with small administrative matters, the new land rights Bill leaves significant matters to be determined by the delegated legislation, something which concerns the SCSB. These delegated matters include things like the terms on which the NTAI can lend, borrow or invest money, as well as the process for granting a township lease under the Act.

A group called "Concerned Australians" has written to the Minister expressing their concerns over the Bill, chief among them the seeming lack of consultation with Traditional Owners over the Bill and whether the suggested amendments will be effective in achieving its stated purpose. Of course, there are significant concerns that the Bill is simply making it easier for mining companies to get contracts to mine Indigenous land under the guide of "economic empowerment."

Bourgeois governments like to tout measures like the new land rights Bill as empowering Indigenous peoples and supporting their right to self-determination. However, this appeal to rights and self-determination is hollow if it is not made in consultation with Traditional Owners.

To ensure that measures like this Bill are enacted with consultation from Indigenous communities, the Uluru Statement calls for an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, similar to the First Nations parliaments in Norway, Sweden, and Finland, to be enshrined in our *Constitution*.

Of course, some have rejected the idea Indigenous government ought to be institutionalised within the Australian parliament at all. Whether the Voice is institutionalised or is constituted by many Indigenous voices, one thing is certain. The disturbing lack of Indigenous consultation on both the Commonwealth's approach to the Montgomery case and the Bill raises serious doubts about the extent to which 'self-determination' is being used by the government as a smokescreen for other agendas.

The CPA supports genuine autonomy and self-determination of First Nations peoples and condemns the use of these terms as empty buzzwords for a bourgeois agenda that ignores Indigenous voices. Always was, always will be Aboriginal land. ✪

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

GREENWASHING DIRTY INVESTMENTS

Anna Pha

Is there a company that doesn't claim to support the Paris Agreement on climate change? The agreement was signed in 2015 and since then the world has experienced the five hottest years on record. Drought, unprecedented bush fires, floods, bleaching of coral reefs, loss of biodiversity, and the shattering of historical records tell us that climate change is here, now.

Australia's Big Four banks – CommBank (CBA), ANZ, NAB and Westpac – are amongst the big corporations that publicly claim to support the Paris Agreement and are committed to zero net emissions by 2050 – a deadline that science now tells us is too late to prevent catastrophic and irreversible changes to the climate.

The CBA's chairwoman, Catherine Livingstone, is on record as saying: "Our philosophy overall is to support the transition [to zero net emissions], but to make it very science-based and data-based." She was responding to pressure from Market Forces.

Market Forces is a research and campaigning group that believes that "the banks, superannuation funds and governments that have custody of our money should use it *to protect not damage* our environment."

The actions of the Big Four tell another story.

EXPANSION PLANS

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has made it clear that there is no room for new or expanded coal, oil, and gas projects if the minimum 2050 target of net-zero emissions is to be met. Yet the Big Four continue to dish out loans to the coal, oil, and gas industry contrary to their climate change commitments. The big fossil fuel producers also claim to support the Paris Agreement.

Major polluters including BHP, Woodside Petroleum, Santos, Mineral Resources, New Hope Corporation, Origin, and AGL continue to expand their production of fossil fuels. At the same time, they claim to be committed to the Paris Agreement.

Santos, for example, one of the largest offenders with plans for expansion, makes such a claim in its 2020 Annual Report: "A proudly Australian company, Santos is a leading supplier of natural gas, a fuel for the future, providing clean energy to improve the lives of people in Australia and Asia.

"Santos is already Australia's biggest domestic gas supplier, a leading Asia-Pacific LNG supplier and aims to be a world-leading clean fuels company, achieving net zero emissions by 2040."

"Santos will grow its clean fuels capability as customer demand evolves for zero-emissions LNG, hydrogen and other products through carbon capture and storage, nature-based offsets, energy efficiency and use of renewables in its operations."

Natural gas is a fossil fuel. It is not a source of clean energy. To expand production now before large-scale carbon capture and storage are proven means years at the very best of ongoing dirty emissions.

It is not enough to have a target for 2050 if in the intervening years production is boosted. The recent report by the UN International Panel on Climate Change warned that what happens in the next ten years is critical. Expansion of production and opening-up of new sources requires financing and that does not appear to be in short supply for greenhouse gas emitters.

UNETHICAL INVESTMENTS

Of the Big Four banks, ANZ is the worst offender having leant almost $14 billion to fossil fuels globally in the past five years. The NAB leant $9.5 billion and Westpac $6.7 billion in the same period. The Big Four have loaned more than $44 billion in the past five years fuelling the emission of more greenhouse gases.

If Australian fossil fuel companies get the go-ahead with their present plans, they would facilitate emissions equivalent to 146 times Australia's annual carbon footprint. These and other companies including Whitehaven and New Hope are pursuing more than 115 new or expansionary projects. (Market Forces)

ETHICAL INVESTMENTS

There are however some smaller banks that do not invest in the fossil fuel industry.*

ME Bank told Market Forces: "ME does not have any investments in the mining industry, including the coal and gas export industries and does not intend to invest in these industries in the future." (ME Bank was owned by the industry superannuation funds but was recently purchased by the Bank of Queensland which does invest in the fossil fuel sector.)

The Australian Mutual Bank goes further: "Australian Mutual Bank does not have any direct investments in the fossil fuel industry. Nor are there direct investments in gambling, armaments, persistent chemicals, or animal testing. Australian Mutual Bank's banking services are directed to improving the economic and social well-being of members as opposed to corporate speculative gain."

The Credit Union SA is a bank in the traditional sense: "The Credit Union primarily invests funds received from members deposits in retail loans to members. The remaining funds are primarily held in cash and liquid investments with other financial institutions to meet minimum liquidity compliance requirements under the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority (APRA). No funds are directly invested by the Credit Union in the fossil fuel industry."

It is evident that the message is getting through to many of the smaller financial institutions but not the Big Four.

INSURANCE OFFENDERS

Ironically major insurance companies are still investing in fossil fuel companies, despite massive payouts due to the impacts of climate change. At present they recoup the additional costs by raising premiums for policy holders. Insurance is already beyond the reach of many but there is coming a time where insurance will become even more unaffordable.

They support fossil fuel companies by insuring their operations and through share portfolios. The massive returns on investments in this industry dictates their investments. QBW, IAG (NRMA, RACV, CGU, SGIO), and Suncorp (AAMI, GIO, APIA, Just Car) are winding back their coverage.

SUPER FUNDS FALLING BEHIND

Market Forces obtained legal advice on climate change and investment by superannuation funds. Some of the critical findings outlined in the legal opinion are:

Super funds must take a thorough approach to understanding the financial risks posed by climate change, including obtaining regular expert advice

Where these risks are too great for a particular investment, funds must consider divestment – that is, shifting funds to less risky investments

Multiple studies have confirmed that failing to limit global warming in line with the Paris climate goals would have serious negative financial impacts across the economy broadly, and therefore super funds' entire portfolios.

A number of industry funds have pursued ethical policies when investing members' funds, including considerations of climate change. Very few exclude any investment in fossil fuels across all products. Australian Ethical, Future Super, Cruelty-Free Super and Verve Super products do. Some larger funds offer a fossil fuel free option, but this accounts for just a fraction of their funds under management.

Of the fifteen largest super funds in the country, ten have taken no action to divest from or exclude any fossil fuel companies: Colonial First State, QSuper, MLC, BT Super, Sunsuper, AMP, Rest, Cbus and Hostplus. Sunsuper, Cbus and Rest have set targets to reduce portfolio emissions to net-zero by 2050, with Cbus also targeting a forty-five per cent reduction by 2030.

Rest Super was successfully sued by a member for failing to consider climate change. It should serve as a warning to other superannuation funds.

One of the aims of the Coalition's *Your Future, Your Super Bill* passed in June 2021 is to prevent superannuation funds from making ethical considerations such as not investing in fossil fuels. The bill by requires directors to exercise their powers "in the best financial interests" of members.

In 2018-19, an election year, fossil fuel companies donated just under $1.9 million to the Liberal, National and Labor Parties. This is the amount reported to the Australian Electoral Commission. As the ABC TV series, *Big Deal,* revealed the amount could be considerably more as sixty-five per cent of the Liberal Party's and fifty-five per cent of Labor's donations were from private undisclosed sources. With such whopping donations, it is hardly a surprise that the two major parties are in the pocket of the big miners.

INVEST GREEN AND CLEAN

Climate change puts humanity at risk. There is no time to waste and anything less than urgent action to execute a just transition to net-zero emissions is unacceptable. Banks, insurance companies and superannuation funds have control over literally trillions of dollars in investments.

They have the power to direct future investments and savings of workers. They have the power to control loans to corporations. People have power too. People's power works. The Big Four banks are not lending to Adani.

Contact any financial institutions you have savings in or loans with. Ask them whether they invest in dirty fossil fuels, what action they are taking to divest from these companies. The sooner divestment occurs, the safer we will all be.

* Market Forces has lists of banks and insurance companies with their responses to the question of investment in fossil fuels. (marketforces.com.au) ✪

Climate change puts humanity at risk. There is no time to waste and anything less than urgent action to execute a just transition to net-zero emissions is unacceptable.

NO TO WAR!: NUCLEAR IS BACK – PART 2

Anna Pha

Imperialism and war go hand in hand. According to the Canada-based Centre for Global Research the US has killed more than 20 million people in thirty-seven nations since World War II. It has engaged in 188 conflicts between 1992 and 2017 alone.

Wars mean big profits for the military industrial complex. They also provide the basis for regime change, new markets, access to cheap labour, forcible acquisition of resources, or counter-revolution.

In the past twenty years alone, the US has spent US$21 trillion (AU$28 trillion) on foreign and domestic militarisation. The human cost was and continues to be enormous. The number of people directly killed is over 900,000, and several times that indirectly due to war-induced famine, disease, blockades, and infrastructure destruction.

During the same period wars have forcibly displaced thirty-eight million people, principally in and from Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, the Philippines, Libya, and Syria. (Watson Institute, Brown University)

The military industrial complex requires never-ending wars to sustain its unquenchable appetite for mega-profits. Australia's purchase of nuclear-powered submarines and missiles is part of the country's emerging role as a merchant of death with its establishment as a manufacturer and supplier of weapons of mass destruction.

In the case of the US and Australia, the dangerous conflict with China brings out contradictions within the ruling class; for those sections whose profits depend on Chinese trade and investments and those who stand to benefit from the massive gains from the build-up to war. There are other capitalists who see China as providing an opportunity for massive investments and accumulation of capital following regime change, a reflection of the broader counter-revolutionary tactics led by US imperialism.

The US is an imperialist power in decline. Its massive expenditure on wars is taking its toll: such expenditure is unsustainable. It faces an economic crisis as a result of which its only means of asserting global hegemony is through war.

INTERNATIONAL REALIGNMENT

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries up to the Second World War, Britain, Spain, Belgium, France, and Holland exploited the people and resources of their colonial possessions on the African, American, Asian and Pacific continents. Inter-imperialist wars resulted in changes in colonisers as these wealthy European nations attempted to expand their empires.

At the end of, and in the decades following the Second World War, national liberation movements saw India, Indonesia, Philippines, South Africa, Cuba, and China gain their independence. Britain, in particular, saw its once vast empire crumble. As the British empire was in decline, the US was on the rise in pursuit of global hegemony.

Capitalism with its global reach was threatened by socialist revolutions in Russia (1917), East Europe (1945), China (1949), and in Cuba (1959). These revolutions posed an ideological threat to imperialism as the working class took power, their people made gains, and their socialist governments pursued peace. A bipolar world emerged with two "superpowers" – imperialist US and the socialist Soviet Union. Following the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, the US saw itself as dominant in a unipolar world.

As the US continues to assert itself around the globe, there are other emerging forces that also seek to play an independent or leading role in a multi-polar world. The concept of a unipolar world, with one imperialist power at the helm is being challenged. In addition, the People's Republic of China, with its rapid economic, social, and military development is perceived as a threat by US imperialism.

While the US has spent trillions of dollars on the military, at the expense of its people's needs, China has lifted hundreds of millions of its people out of poverty. Today China is the world's second largest economy set to overtake the US within a decade.

Shifting and at times contradictory alliances mark the realignment of international forces that is underway.

"GLOBAL BRITAIN"

Britain, once a global power with a vast empire spanning continents, is now in a war coalition aimed at China. AUKUS signals the UK's shift to an increased participation in the Asia-Pacific as a junior partner to the US, and Australia as the launching pad for this strategy. The UK is a member of the Five Eyes intelligence sharing alliance with the US, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia.

In 2020, the British government released the report, *Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy*. In the introduction to the report, conservative Prime Minister Boris Johnson states:

> "By 2030, we will be deeply engaged in the Indo-Pacific as the European partner with the broadest, most integrated presence in support of mutually beneficial trade, shared security and values. We will be active in Africa, in particular East Africa and with important partners such as Nigeria. And we will have thriving relationships in the Middle East and the [Persian] Gulf based on trade, green innovation and science and technology collaboration in support of a more resilient region that is increasingly self-reliant in providing for its own security."

He continues: "We will remain *a nuclear armed power with global reach* and integrated military capabilities across all five operational domains. Our diplomacy will be underwritten by the credibility of our deterrent and our ability to project power." (Emphasis added)

Military spending will be increased. The UK is already second only to the US in military spending in NATO.

The report also refers to "China's increasing international assertiveness and the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific; systemic competition, including between states, and between democratic and authoritarian values and systems of government."

"Russia will remain the most acute direct threat to the UK, and the US will continue to ask more from its allies in Europe in sharing the burden of collective security," the report states.

Australia is also sharing the burden of US war plans with the purchase of nuclear submarines, long-range missiles and other materiel and a massive hike in military spending. The report does not shy away from the fact the UK is preparing for war.

EUROPE AND US RELATIONS

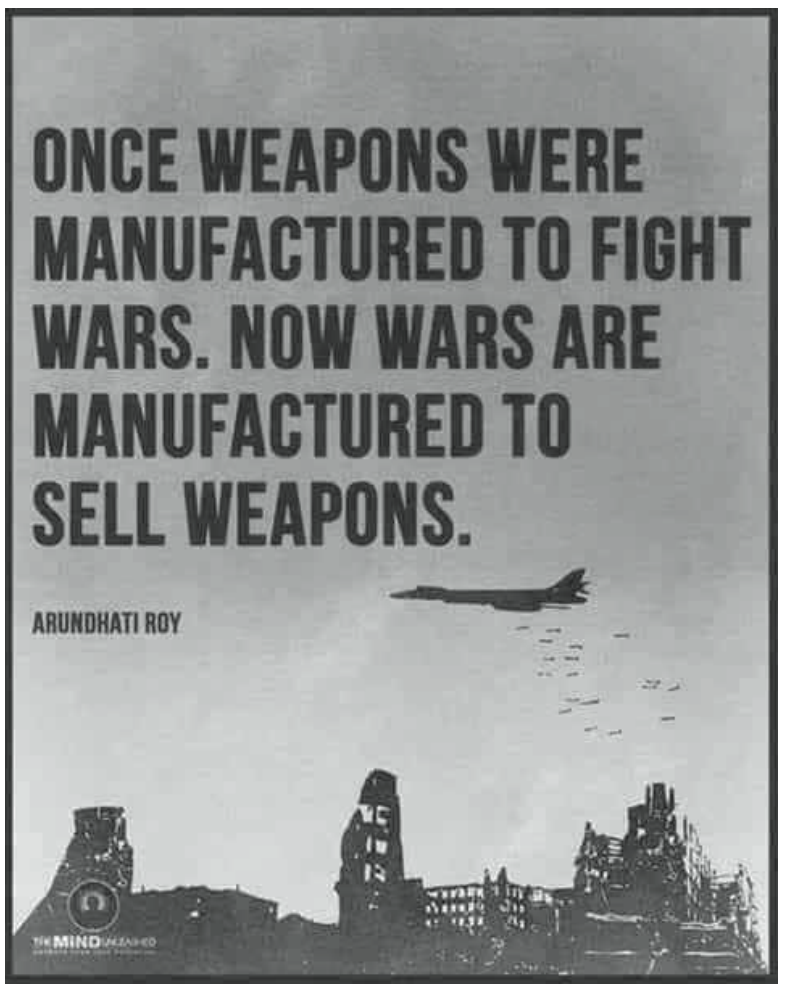
It is too soon to estimate what impact the departure of Chancellor Angela Merkel will have on Germany's relations with the US. France's President Macron has called for the formation of a European army, which could have consequences for NATO and the US. France and Germany are the most powerful countries in Europe.

A number of European countries have defied the US's bans on trade with Russia and have also signed up to China's Belt and Road Initiative in defiance of the US.

Nuclear-armed India, under the leadership of the reactionary Narendra Modi government, has been drawn into US war plans, and has held joint military exercises with the US and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including Australia.

CHINA'S STAND

The US's targeting of China and Russia and attempts to contain both countries are drawing them closer together. They recently held joint military exercises on Chinese territory with unprecedented cooperation. China has repeatedly made its position clear. It was Australia that decided to abandon previously friendly relations with China by discriminating against Chinese investment and meddling in China's internal affairs.



"There is no way for China to develop economic ties with a country that treats it as an enemy," said the *Global Times* newspaper. "There is no path to future prosperity for an Australia which chooses to isolate itself from the region's largest economy." (*Global Times*, 16th September 2021)

At the recent UN General Assembly, China's President Xi Jinping pledged that his country would never seek hegemony by attacking other countries. He emphasised that China was "a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, defender of the international order and provider of public goods."

The United States has around 800 military bases globally with around half of them at the borders of China or Russia.

NO WINNERS

The US has by far the largest nuclear arsenal of any country. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) it has an estimated 5,550 nuclear weapons – enough to destroy humanity many times over. It is constantly modernising its arsenal.

The AUKUS agreement provides for the sharing of nuclear submarine technology with Australia and paves the way for the establishment of a nuclear industry here and the development of nuclear weapons contrary to the international Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. It should be noted that Australia is not a signatory.

There would be no winners in a nuclear war.

The provocative actions of the US and its allies, including Australia's in the Taiwan Straits and South and East China Seas pose a serious risk of escalating into war. The regular joint military exercises conducted by the US and South Korea off the coast of North Korea with live weapons are a further provocation.

The world faces numerous crises including climate change and the global pandemic. At the same time the US is preparing for war with the aim of enforcing a unipolar world with itself at the helm. It seeks to overthrow China's socialist system, by war if necessary, and to defeat it economically.

ACT NOW!

The people of Australia and the Asia-Pacific region want peace and stability. The Quad and AUKUS military alliances are a catalyst for a new arms race, and are preparations for nuclear war, against China.

Say NO to war! Cancel AUKUS! Disband the Quad! No Nuclear Australia! Time for Action! ✪

"There is no way for China to develop economic ties with a country that treats it as an enemy."

REPORT: SCHOOL STRIKE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE – PERTH

Richard Titelius

The School Strike 4 Climate Change (SS4CC) was called around the world in the lead up to the critical COP 26 climate change conference, which will be held in Glasgow, Scotland, from 1-12 November 2021, to help put domestic pressure on governments and corporations to take bold and decisive action on climate change. In Perth, the rally was organised by a collective leadership of mostly young students. Most of those attending the rally were young school-aged children who are the ones who will be affected most by the impacts of climate change that will have already started to be felt by people in all parts of the planet.

The welcome to country was given by Daniel Garlett, a Noongar activist for many years and a candidate for the Federal south-east metropolitan seat of Burt for the Greens Party. Garlett spoke of the need for stronger protection of Aboriginal heritage as good physical, mental, and spiritual Aboriginal health is bound up in the protection and preservation of their country. We cannot have climate justice without justice for our First Nations People.

A member of the SS4CC collective told the 800 protesters who came, "We are being robbed of a safe and secure future by the current inaction on climate change. In our lifetime, the speaker from the collective continued, "We have experienced so many climate records and extreme weather events." However, the speaker continued, "Governments have chosen to continue to take money from fossil fuel corporations instead of supporting the development and uptake of renewable energy." We are the next generation, and we will not allow this to happen. The SS4CC leader asked all people at the rally and in Australia to join them as we are stronger together and can create climate justice.

The proposed Scarborough gas project off the north-west coast of Western Australia would release 6 gigatons of carbon over its lifetime and greatly accelerate the negative impacts of climate change. While there had been pressure on Prime Minister Scott Morrison to attend COP 26 in Glasgow – until the afternoon of the rally he had remained defiant. By the time of the evening news cycle that day he had announced he would be attending.

"Solidarity is where we stand together to help us move to a just transition."

The leaders of the SS4CC also announced that they were not just on strike for climate change but for political change and said up to 300,000 new voters would be on the electoral roll for the next election and most of these were young people who wanted to vote in politicians who were prepared to take unequivocal action on climate change.

A guest speaker was Simon Stokes a organiser from the Construction Forestry Maritime Mining and Energy Union whose high school aged daughter was attending the rally today notwithstanding that the principal of her state government high school had sent letters to parents telling them not to encourage their children to attend the rally. Simon Stokes said to the protesters, "We stand together with you in your defiance. Solidarity is where we stand together to help us move to a just transition." Trade unions show us when we stand together for things which are important to us then we can win. In an ode to the trade union membership rousing chant, Stokes taught the students their own take on, "I say union you say power, UNION POWER, was changed to I say Student you say power, STUDENT POWER!

At the conclusion of the rally the protesters – in 30 celsius plus heat were asked to march the short distance to the Woodside Energy office tower to take their message of, "No more coal, gas or oil – keep your carbon in the soil and climate change is not a lie – do not let our planet die."

The Communist Party of Australia supports stronger and more concerted action on climate change, but however calls for system change to achieve this as the operation of the capitalist mode of production is predicated on economic growth and profits for the few and poverty and misery for the many. Socialism and the socialising of the means of production ensure production for use rather than exchange value to ensure a more equitable distribution of wealth for all and the preservation of life and biodiversity on this planet to ensure this happens. ✪

TOLL WORKERS WIN JOB SECURITY PROTECTIONS AND 15% SUPER IN NEW AGREEMENT OFFER

Transport Workers' Union (TWU) Statement

Toll workers have secured job security protections and an industry-first fifteen per cent superannuation offer in an in-principle agreement which will be put to national union delegates on Friday. If endorsed, Toll workers will not take part in national strikes flagged for next week.

The offer includes enhanced job security protections including the same pay for outside hire as employees, limits on outsourcing, commitment to give employees first preference over all available work, and improvements to consultation and auditing rights to further protect employees from their work being contracted out.

The proposed agreement is a significant development following six months of negotiations and national strikes, with workers successfully fighting off attacks on existing conditions and pressuring Toll to abandon plans to bring in a b-grade workforce on thirty per cent less pay and fixed-term contracts.

At negotiation meetings with Linfox, StarTrack and FedEx, the TWU presented similar settlement proposals with job security provisions which provide guarantees for workers while allowing flexibility for companies.

TWU National Secretary Michael Kaine commended Toll workers for staying strong and fighting off some of the worst attacks on job security in the industry, then going on to lead the way in securing additional protections.

"This is a major victory for Toll workers and sets an important precedent for transport operators still denying reasonable job security protections for employees. This triumph is all the sweeter given the hard slog Toll workers have endured over the last couple of years battling mismanagement, cyber-attacks, a split of the company with half sold off during negotiations, and proposals to bring in an underclass of workers to undercut employees in their own yards.

"We implore StarTrack, FedEx, Linfox and BevChain to follow Toll's lead and commit to the reasonable protections workers are seeking. As Christmas draws nearer and negotiations reach their sixth month, it's time to end the attack on jobs and prevent the need for further industrial action," he said.

TWU NSW/Qld Secretary and lead Toll negotiator Richard Olsen said it was good to see a positive result at the end of a bumpy road.

"It has been a long and difficult journey, but the finish line is in sight with Toll taking the lead. It is a testament to the strength and unity of TWU members that job security provisions were retrieved from Toll's shredder and reinforced with extra protections. The future is looking far brighter at Toll and in later life, with an industry-first offer of fifteen per cent superannuation leading the way to dignity in retirement for frontline transport workers. The negotiating committee is pleased to have a decent offer to present to the membership who will, as always, have the final say," he said.

A Senate inquiry into job security will take place today with the TWU and a StarTrack worker giving evidence this morning, followed by StarTrack, Toll and FedEx this afternoon.

The TWU is calling for the Federal Government to establish an independent body to set minimum binding standards which would eradicate the "Amazon Effect" of squeezing supply chains from the top while posing an existential threat to operators through exploitative competition like AmazonFlex.

"Workers are doing the hard yards of fixing an insecure work crisis in transport, but they are only able to provide band-aid solutions to protect their own jobs. This is an industry-wide emergency requiring Federal Government action. Scott Morrison must step in and regulate to tackle the root cause of deadly pressures which are crushing supply chains," Kaine added. ✪

50TH ANNIVERSA

POLICIES FROM 1ST CONGRESS

Below are some of the first policies adopted by the SPA at its first congress in October, 1972.
As you can see, the Party's progressive platform is as relevant then as it is today.

– PEACE –

The SPA declares that imperialism is the breeding ground of war and that the ending of imperialism is essential to man's need for a world of durable peace. At the same time, the SPA stands for building the broadest national and international peace movement calling for peaceful co-existence and peaceful competition between nations of differing political and economic systems as an essential alternative to military confrontations and outbreak of war.

- **A scaling down of Defence Department expenditure.**
- **Opposition to any nuclear armament by Australia. Ending of all nuclear tests above and below ground, total nuclear disarmament and destruction of all nuclear weapon stockpiles.**
- **Australian foreign policy to be based on the principles of peaceful co-existence between nations having different political and economic systems.**

– IMMEDIATE ISSUES –

Immediate issues for working-class unity in action include inadequate wages, continuing price rises, high-level taxation, inadequate social services, continued high-level unemployment, inadequate education services, pollution of the environment, likely further involvement in war and threats to democratic rights.

These problems are aggravated by a state of continuing economic crisis which is beyond the capacity of the government to solve. There is need to strengthen trade union and workplace organisation and to use a variety of forms of action including strike action.

A section of congress chatting during interval

– WOMEN –

The SPA stands unequivocally for full equality of wome sphere of modern society.

Women's position has been an inferior one since the ad classes. Only the joint united class struggles of men and socialism, the basic requirement. for the emancipation socialism, equal pay and opportunities in all spheres ha accepted part of life.

In Australia, as in most countries, increased attention t position in society flows from the increasing number of workforce.

There is need for increased struggle, including job actio There was need to develop women to play a prominent trade union movement as well as the Socialist Party itse

Other needs are:

- **The right to job and educational opportunities, including the availability of apprenticeship and technical training.**
- **Pre-school, after school and holiday child-care facilities.**
- **Paid maternity leave.**
- **Extension of family planning clinics, financed by the government.**
- **Contraceptives to be free of sales tax. Legal abortions to be available.**

– INDIGENOUS PEOPLES –

The Socialist Party declares its support for Aboriginal peo to preserve and develop their own languages and cultures, possession of their tribal lands and the mineral wealth in Aboriginal people should be free to choose whether to live Communities or as part of the non-Aboriginal community. equal rights with other Australians – industrially, political The SPA stands for unity between the Aboriginal movemen movement and all progressive forces.

The Party places emphasis upon the winning of Aboriginal working-class struggle against monopoly and for a socialis

It declares that Aboriginal workers must be seen above all members of the Australian working class, fighting with all against monopoly capitalism.

ARY OF THE SPA

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SPA ORIGINS

The Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) was formed on the 5th of December, 1971. The following year, it published its first newspaper simply titled SPA. In making the announcement of its formation, the Party stated that:

"[...] [P]eople may ask; 'Why the need for a new revolutionary Party? What has happened to the CPA?'

It is no secret that an open struggle has been going on in the CPA for a number of years against the present leadership which has deserted the teachings of scientific socialism, moved away from the working-class and based itself on radical-power movements and upon a sect known as Trotskyism. The CPA leaders abandoned development of working class united action adopting instead, divisive policies and tactics which weakened the struggles of the trade unions, the peace movement, and other progressive organisations. Its policies have become so hostile to the world socialist system and the communist movement that it is politically isolated internationally.

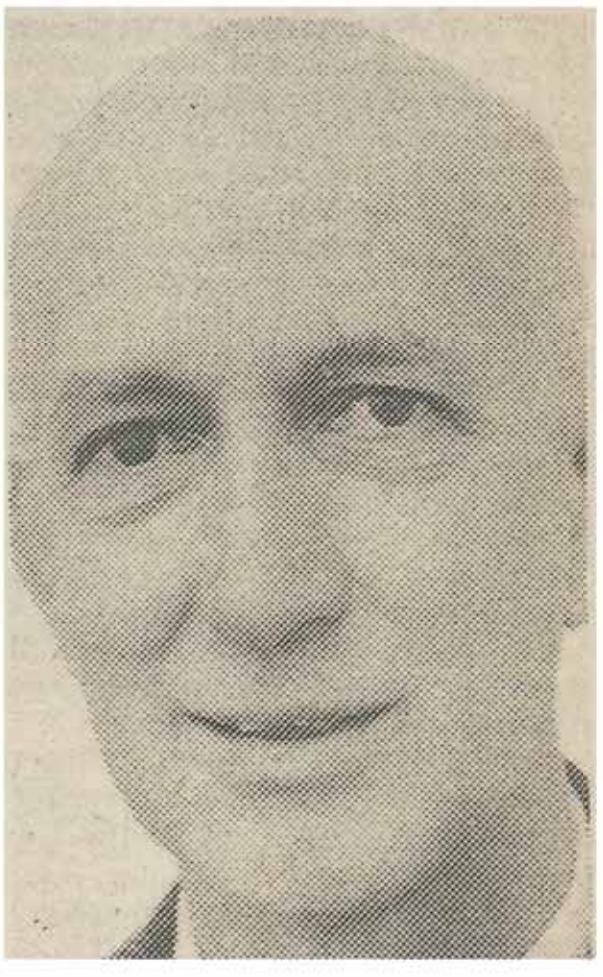
The lesson to be learnt is that a revolutionary party can exist and grow only if it bases itself on scientific socialism and is committed to the concrete issues facing the working people." The SPA's scientific analysis ultimately proved correct. The SPA, now CPA, still exists, fighting for the working class and oppressed masses, while the old CPA liquidated in 1991 when it proved no longer to be a viable, left-wing alternative. It has since transformed into the democratic socialist think tank, the SEARCH Foundation.

The SPA held its first congress on the 2nd of October, 1972. Its radical platform is still as relevant today as it was fifty years ago, highlighting the accurate scientific analysis of Marxism-Leninism. The Party has stood firm on these issues, never wavering, and has been present in the trade unions, the peace movement, Indigenous struggle, climate movement, among other spaces.

In 2021, we have seen renewed growth in our Party as the ailments of capitalism worsen. We will continue to fight for socialism, for equality, for the working masses. The struggle, comrades, is just beginning!

SPA
SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA
March 1972
Monthly
No. 1
15'
RIGHT TO WORK
Trade Unions Face 1972 see p. 8
A Look at the I.R.A. see p. 4
SOCIALIST PARTY FORMED
WILL LEAD NEW METAL UNION see p. 5

Front page of the first SPA newspaper. (March, 1972)



Peter Symon
General Secretary
of the SPA

STALIN DID NOT DEPORT GERMAN

Grover Furr

In August 2021, the social-democratic magazine *Jacobin* published an article by Dutch writer Alex de Jong titled "Stalin Handed Hundreds of Communist Over to Hitler". The assertion in the article's title is false. De Jong's article, and other articles and books that make this claim, all commit the following three cardinal errors:

REHABILITATIONS

They assume that persons declared "rehabilitated" by the Khrushchev and Gorbachev regimes in the former USSR were in fact innocent of the crimes for which they were punished.

Many or most of the Germans and Austrians deported from the USSR to Germany between 1937 and 1941 were declared "rehabilitated." However, in reality this does not at all mean that they were innocent of the charges against them. Anti-communist researcher Marc Junge notes:

> "Rehabilitation in the Soviet Union remained an arbitrary political and administrative act, which was primarily determined by the political expediency of the measures, but not by the correctness of criminal law."
>
> (Junge, *Bucharins Rehabilitierung*, Berlin, 1999, p. 266)

In Chapter 11 of my 2011 book *Khrushchev Lied*, I studied the rehabilitation reports that had been published by 2003. I showed that none of them contains *any* evidence that the person "rehabilitated" was innocent. It was politically convenient for Gorbachev (and earlier for Khrushchev) to claim that many persons convicted of serious crimes during the "Stalin period" were falsely convicted. But Gorbachev's men did not make public the investigative files that included the evidence against the defendants or – in the case of the Germans and Austrians – even the "rehabilitation" reports.

In 2010, my colleague Vladimir L Bobrov and I published an article on the "rehabilitation" of Nikolai Bukharin, who had been convicted of participation in the Right-Trotskyist conspiracy and executed in March 1938. There we showed that in 1988 "the Soviet Supreme Court deliberately lied about a document they cited as evidence in 'rehabilitating' Bukharin." That document, finally published in 2006, in fact, provides more evidence of Bukharin's guilt!

To date, we have no evidence that any of these people were innocent of the charges of which they were convicted. In those cases where we have any evidence at all, it points towards their guilt.

CONSPIRACIES

Books and articles that claim that the Germans deported to Germany were innocent all assume that the conspiracies of which they were claimed to be guilty were bogus – did not exist.

Naturally, if no such conspiracies existed, then those convicted of participation in them, including the Germans, must be innocent. This too was claimed by Khrushchev's and Gorbachev's men. However, evidence from former Soviet archives shows that such conspiracies did indeed exist and were dangerous and widespread.

The investigations and trials of the period 1936-1938 broke up serious conspiracies by Trotskyists, followers of Grigory Zinoviev, military leaders, and others. The image of a "witch hunt" served the interest of anti-communists and those who, like Leon Trotsky, denied his own conspiracy and his collaboration with the Germans, Japanese, domestic fascists, and his own clandestine followers against the Stalin regime.

FAILURE TO USE THE NKVD INVESTIGATION FILES ON THE DEFENDANTS OF THE 1930S

These have been available to researchers for some years. These files normally include interrogations, confession statements, face-to-face confrontations between accusers, the investigators' report, the prosecution's indictment, and transcripts of the trial.

No claim that a given person is innocent or guilty can have any validity unless this, the evidence, has been studied. Neither de Jong nor his sources have studied investigation files on even one of these figures. I have obtained NKVD investigation files on a number of prominent oppositionists. One of them is Osip Pyatnitsky, leader of the Comintern until 1935, arrested in 1937, convicted and executed in 1938. De Jong could have done likewise.

Heinz Neumann had been a leader of the "left" – i.e., the anti-Stalin, anti-Soviet – opposition in the German Communist Party. De Jong claims that the charges against him and his wife, Margarete Buber-Neumann, were "trumped up." This is false. The only evidence we have concerning the charges against Neumann – for example, in Osip Pyatnitsky's confession statements, points towards Neumann's guilt.

One of the women imprisoned and then deported to Germany with Buber-Neumann was Betty Ol'berg. She was the wife of Valentin Ol'berg who, at the 1936 Moscow Trial, confessed to travelling to the USSR to assassinate Stalin on instructions from Trotsky. We now have a great deal of evidence from the Soviet archives that corroborates Valentin Ol'berg's confession.

One confession statement by Betty Ol'berg was published in 2013. In it, she admits that she and her husband had bought fake Honduran passports with the aid of both the Gestapo and of Trotsky's son, Leon Sedov. Valentin Ol'berg was executed, but his wife was not – possibly because she cooperated with the prosecution.

Like similar articles, de Jong's claims that the deported Germans and Austrians were (with a few exceptions) communists. This too is false. Conviction of a serious crime entailed expulsion from the communist movement. In addition, some of those deported had been expelled from their own parties as oppositionists. For the Soviets, therefore, none of them was communists when they were deported.

De Jong writes: "It is thus difficult to be sure how many people suffered the same fate as [Margarete] Buber-Neumann. A conservative estimate is that over 600 were deported or expelled."

Where does de Jong get this number? He cites the 1990 book by anti-communist historian Hans Schafranek, *Zwischen NKWD und Gestapo*. Schafranek concludes that there could not have been more than 300.

De Jong notes that Buber-Neumann called the deportations "Stalin's gift to Hitler." However, de Jong does not tell his readers that a careful study by the anti-communist German socialist Wilhelm Mensing concluded that this was not so.

- No "500 bitter opponents of Hitler" were deported to Germany. A little over 300 persons were deported. The Nazi regime did not punish most of those deported.
- The deportations of 1939-1941 were not aimed at communists
- There is no indication that the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-aggression Pact was the motivation for the deportations.
- There is no evidence that those deported from the USSR to Germany in 1939-1941 were persecuted there. On the contrary, there is evidence that some of them, including former communists, were not molested.

Mensing also reveals that many of those deported had been convicted of one crime or another.

De Jong discusses Austrian communist Fritz Koritschoner but does not even know the charges against him. Schafranek, de Jong's main source here, does not know either. Here, as elsewhere, de Jong simply assumes that "rehabilitation" means innocence – and it does not.

Concerning Austrian socialist Georg Bonner, de Jong writes:

> "A group of twenty-five deportees transferred in December 1939 included ten Schutzbündler. One of them was Georg Bogner. He had fought during the February 1934 uprising in his hometown of Attnang-Puchheim before fleeing to the Soviet Union. The Soviet secret police arrested Bogner in 1938. By late December 1939, he was in the custody of the German intelligence service, the Sicherheitsdienst, in Warsaw."

De Jong fails to add that Bogner, arrested on the 25th of March, 1938, was not put on trial until the 14th of December, 1939 – plenty of time for an investigation.

Bogner's Austrian comrades had their doubts about him long before the Soviets arrested him. An anti-communist German page on Bogner states:

> "The Schutzbund [Protection League] collective noted that Bogner had joined a fascist organisation in 1934. De Jong fails to mention this."

About Ernst Fabisch, de Jong writes:

> "Fabisch had joined the Communist Party of Germany (Opposition), or KPO, when he was nineteen. Led by Heinrich Brandler and August Thalheimer, the KPO was a communist current that formed part of the so-called "Right Opposition" in the movement, associated with Soviet politicians such as Nikolai Bukharin, Stalin's last major rival. It rejected the KPD's sectarian hostility toward Social Democrats and other socialists and argued for unity against fascism."

This is all wrong. By the 1930s, Bukharin was no "rival" of Stalin's. Moreover, we have a great deal of evidence of Bukharin's guilt from the former Soviet archives. As for "unity against fascism," that had already been the Comintern and Soviet position for more than two years by the time Fabisch was arrested by the NKVD on the 29th of July, 1937.

According to the only information I can find about him Fabisch was charged with "counterrevolutionary activity" and "membership in an armed group." The German Wikipedia page says Fabisch was convicted of "membership in the Brandler group." This group, expelled from the German Communist Party in 1929, was part of the international Right Opposition, which attacked the Stalin leadership of the USSR.

On 15th November, 1937 (Schafranek, 136, has 17th November) Fabisch was first sentenced to a term in a labor camp, and on 5th January, 1938, sentenced to deportation as an undesirable foreigner.

De Jong writes: "As historian Hermann Weber pointed out, out of forty-three top leaders of the KPD, more died in the custody of the Soviet secret police than were killed by the Nazis."

Who were they? Why doesn't de Jong mention even one of them? In fact, Weber seems to have copied this list from one issued by Gorbachev's men on the 3rd of August, 1989, which contains no investigation and no evidence.

De Jong writes: "Stalin disbanded the Polish Communist Party in 1938 [...]" This too is false.

On 28th November, 1937, Comintern leader Georgi Dimitrov sent Stalin a draft resolution by the Comintern Executive Committee proposing the dissolution of the Polish Communist Party along with the reasons for it. On it in Stalin's handwriting is the note "This dissolution is about two years late."

Even then, the dissolution did not take place until 16th August, 1938, and not by any order of Stalin but by a vote of the Comintern Executive Committee. (*Dimitrov and Stalin*, 1934-1943, 26-32) Therefore, Stalin did not order it – or it would have happened two to three years earlier! More evidence that Stalin was not a dictator – something the CIA reported in the early 1950s.

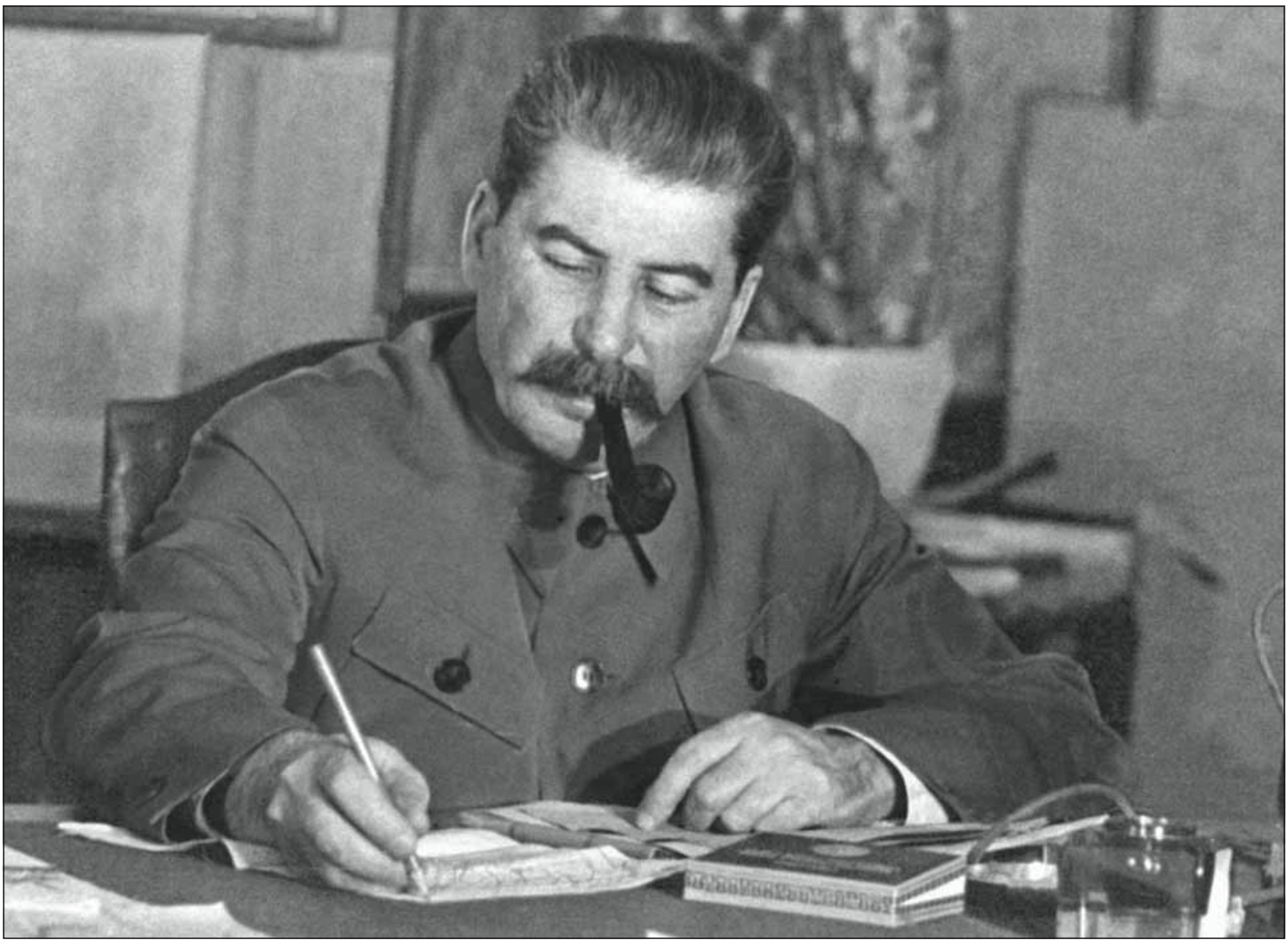
Neither Buber-Neumann nor any of the others deported to Germany by the Soviets were communists at the time they were repatriated to Germany. All had been convicted of some serious, but not capital, crime. Conviction would have meant expulsion from the communist party, if they had not quit or been expelled earlier.

In discussing the case of Hugo Eberlein, de Jong fails to mention that he appears in a summary of investigative materials concerning Comintern figures sent to Stalin by the NKVD on 20th April, 1938, where some of his confessions are summarised. This document is even available on the Internet.

Soviet sources state that on 30th July, 1941, Eberlein was convicted of "participation in an anti-Soviet Right-Trotskyite organisation," for which he was sentenced

Socialists, communists, and all those who work for a better world free of capitalist exploitation and war, should "seek the truth from facts" and seek the facts from evidence.

COMMUNISTS TO HITLER



to execution. Eberlein had been in the anti-Thaelmann opposition in the German Communist Party.

De Jong writes: "Buber-Neumann, Fabisch, Bogner, Eberlein, and many others were victims of a witch hunt. Their ultimate fate depended on arbitrary bureaucratic decisions."

This is a deliberate falsification, since de Jong had no way of knowing this. In every instance where I can find any evidence at all, the defendant received a trial after an extensive investigation.

For the past few years, NKVD investigative files from the 1930s have been available to researchers. But de Jong doesn't care about evidence! However, if you don't care about evidence, you don't care about the truth.

De Jong is ignorant of Soviet history of this period. He writes:

"The impulse behind the deportations was primarily internal to the Soviet system. Stalin's purges had begun as an attack on a well-defined group of people: communists who were seen as potential supporters of the opposition. Over time, the use of torture and other forms of pressure to coerce suspects into naming names combined with a generalised atmosphere of paranoia and distrust and the bureaucratic imperative of arrest quotas to widen the number of targets inexorably."

This too is all wrong. The arrests and trials of conspirators were not "attacks" on anyone. They were investigations of conspiracies against Stalin and the Soviet leadership, and prosecutions of the conspirators. Today we have a great deal of evidence against these conspirators from former Soviet archives.

Only persons actually suspected of conspiracy, not "potential supporters of the opposition," were put on trial. The Soviet government did not authorise "arrest quotas" but instead set "limits" – maximum, not minimum numbers – of arrests.

The late Stephen Cohen, whose work I have criticised elsewhere, concluded in a 2003 article that Nikolai Bukharin was not tortured. However, torture and phony charges were indeed used by Nikolai Yezhov, head (People's Commissar) of the NKVD from August 1936 until November 1938. Yezhov and his men killed more than six hundred thousand Soviet citizens, the vast majority of whom must have been innocent of any crime. Documents from former Soviet archives have shown that Yezhov had his own dangerous conspiracy against the Soviet state. (see *Furr, Yezhov vs Stalin*, 2016)

Yezhov was persuaded to resign – evidently with some difficulty, according to historian Yuri Zhukov – in November 1938, and was replaced by Lavrentii Beria. Beginning in December 1938, the massive crimes of Yezhov and his men were investigated and uncovered, and the guilty parties tried and convicted.

There is no reason to doubt that Eberlein's letter to his wife Charlotte is genuine. In it, he describes his brutal treatment at the hands of Yezhov's NKVD men. Mikhail Shreider, a former NKVD man under arrest, wrote in his memoir that in prison he had met Hugo Eberlein, who had been badly beaten.

Later, Shreider met Lavrentii Beria, who had replaced Nikolai Yezhov as head of the NKVD. When Beria heard from Shreider about Eberlein's torture by Yezhov's men, he expressed surprise and disbelief but promised an investigation. (NKVD Iznutri 136; 168) There is no reason Shreider would fabricate a story that made Beria look good.

THE SIGNING OF THE MOLOTOV-RIBBENTROP PACT

De Jong seriously distorts the nature of the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the USSR, often called the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and, by anti-communists, the "Hitler-Stalin Pact."

The Pact did not "divide the territory of the Baltic states and Poland between" Germany and the USSR. It designated Eastern Poland as a Soviet "sphere of influence." This meant that a shrunken state of Poland could exist there, hostile to Nazi Germany and a buffer between the German army and the Soviet border.

The USSR did not "attack" Poland. The Polish government had fled the country without appointing a government-in-exile. Since by international law a state must have a government, the Germans informed the Soviets that there was no more state of Poland. That meant that to the Germans the secret protocol concerning a Soviet "sphere of influence" in Eastern Poland was no longer valid. Had the Red Army not occupied Eastern Poland, German forces could have rolled up to the pre-1939 Soviet border.

This area – "Eastern Poland" – was in reality Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine. It had been seized by imperialist Poland in the 1919-1921 war from a weakened Soviet Russia. Therefore, in 1939 the USSR regained the territories it had lost in 1921.

The Polish government fled Poland into internment in Romania on 17th September, 1939, the same day the Red Army entered Western Belorussia. The 17th of September is now a holiday – "Unification Day" – in Belarus.

De Jong claims that the USSR's deportation of these Germans and Austrians was "a shocking betrayal," and that Stalin "shamefully broke the promise" of the "right of asylum." As we have shown, the persons repatriated to Germany had been convicted of serious crimes, while those who had once been communists no longer were.

De Jong claims that "Our own understanding of socialism should keep its promises and have human dignity at its core." I would suggest, however, that the litany of falsehoods and omissions in de Jong's essay suggest something else.

Socialists, communists, and all those who work for a better world free of capitalist exploitation and war, should "seek the truth from facts" and seek the facts from evidence. If de Jong had stuck to the evidence that has long been available – about the German and Austrian deportees, about the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, about the opposition conspiracies against the Stalin government in the USSR – he could never have written this essay.

Instead of relying on evidence, de Jong has taken demonstrably fraudulent claims of professional anti-communists at face value. The result is yet more falsehoods, to poison the minds of people today who want to learn from the successes, as well as from the failures, of the communist movement of the past.

Challenge ✪

Letters to the Editor
The Guardian
74 Buckingham Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010

email: editor@cpa.org.au

Dear Editor,
I was disappointed to read Matthew Hole's article, "Afghans Reclaim Sovereignty as US-NATO Occupation Comes to an End" (*Guardian* #1977), ironically with a photo of a young Afghan woman looking out of a window. First, I raise an issue with the title, that "Afghans [have] Reclaim[ed] Sovereignty." Next, I raise an issue with the statement that "the process to hopefully build a more inclusive government is underway."

The article states that the actions of the Taliban "have moderated considerably since the '90s. Major differences from this time include women being able to work and go to school, only a Hijab being required as opposed to a Burqa [...] in what appears to be a sign of increased religious tolerance." It concludes with, "the ending of US occupation of Afghanistan must be seen as a preliminary step towards peace." These statements are incorrect, which was evident before the new government was "elected" in Afghanistan.

I am deeply concerned that the article in the *Guardian* argues that the Taliban has given back sovereignty to Afghanistan, which suggests that it is an army of liberation. The Taliban has replaced the US and NATO as another occupying force. I fail to see where and how the Taliban is advancing the working class in Afghanistan, where it has helped the downtrodden poor to gain a sense of a working-class struggle and assist the country towards socialism. Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world.

The reality is that the Taliban is the antithesis of what the Party stands for. Our party is a Marxist-Leninist party, in which we believe in educating and strengthening the class struggle. The Taliban are staunchly anti-communist and anti-union. Furthermore, what of their horrific treatment of women, which was widely known even before they occupied Kabul, and has now become even more apparent? Where is the regaining of national sovereignty, even in part, in the Taliban occupation of Afghanistan? It is not an army of liberation but a group of bigoted religious zealots who, through violent action, have turned back the country's past twenty years of progress, especially for women.

With the new government, we know that there is no Taliban 2.0. The old members are back in power. The hated Ministry of Virtue and Vice, previously abolished by the former government, has now been re-established. Posters of women have been painted over, and their shops closed. Women have lost their position of power in politics and business. Women are forbidden to do sports in public, including the Olympic bicycle team. Women are locked out of universities, and their education is curtailed. Women are now forced to wear the Burqa in public. Demonstrations by women have been banned. We see women being whipped in front of the camera for the world to see, so what happens to those arrested when behind closed doors? The Ministry of Women has been removed, thereby reducing women's health care. Women are being forced to know their place in Afghani society. And this is Liberation?

Those old enough will remember the videos taken more than twenty years ago showing young women shot in the head by the Taliban for not wearing the Burqa. The Taliban are not liberators, but a bigoted, far-right organisation that have made agreements with opium-exporting warlords, to regain power. Already there are signs of corruption. The millions of dollars the Taliban found when occupying Kabul have mysteriously disappeared, and the government cannot pay to import food. The Taliban is about to introduce the cutting off of hands for theft and re-introduce executions for other crimes.

China signed an agreement with the Taliban, not because the CPC agrees with the Taliban, but because it was in China's economic and political interests to reopen its mines without fear of attack by terrorists. The agreement also stops the Taliban from infiltrating China to stir up the Muslim Uighurs of North-West China. The Chinese had to deal with a terrorist organisation politically.

Can the *Guardian* please clarify these issues?

Comradely regards,

Graham Holton

POWELL DIES, BUT SHADOW, MISERY OF IRAQ WAR WILL LINGER ON

Lu Xue

Colin Powell, the first black US Secretary of State and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, died on Monday at the age of eighty-four. Although he died of COVID-19 complications, people seemed not interested in the cause of his death. Instead, the well-known picture in which Powell holds up a vial of "washing powder" has triggered a new round of heated discussions across the world.

In 2003, during a presentation to the UN Security Council, Powell laid out US's version of the "evidence" that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, which later turned out to be nonexistent. Even in the US, this presentation was controversial. Many wonder why the US resorted to such an inferior means to try to persuade the UN to back its military action against Iraq.

After the Cold War, the US was overconfident, and its strategic circle believed the country could do whatever it wanted. Even without Powell's UN speech, the US would find something else as an excuse to invade Iraq, as former US president George W Bush had made up his mind to wage an invasion on Iraq anyway.

Powell, who had served as a life-long professional soldier, was highly obedient to his superiors. Powell's speech at the UN was just for the execution of Bush's grand strategy. Yet there is no doubt that Powell's UN speech did have a severe impact on his reputation. Iraqis still blame him for his role in the Iraq War. AP reported on Monday that word of Powell's death dredged up feelings of anger in Iraq toward him, one of the several Bush administration officials who should be held accountable for the Iraq War and the ensuing decades of death, chaos and violence in Iraq.

Powell later expressed his regret, describing it as a "blot" on his record that "was painful then" and "painful now," according to *NBC News*. Powell wrote in his autobiography *My American Journey*, "The event will earn me a prominent paragraph in my obituary." Powell was right in saying so. "But he found it hard to live down his infamous February 2003 speech to the United Nations Security Council about the alleged existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq – the evidence he presented was later proven to be false," the AFP commented when reporting his death.

It has also become an indelible stain on the US, a great blow to the country's international image and credibility. Such an impact has continued to this day.

Even though Powell's UN speech has resulted in a great negative impact on the US, the country has never reflected on itself. Instead, the US continues to be arrogant, domineering and belligerent and keeps promoting lies resembling the "washing powder" by other means.

"Engaging in the 'black propaganda' has been the US' old tricks for seeking geopolitical gains. To win its allies' support and attack its competitors or adversaries, the US has always attempted to confuse them by spreading fake news, and to contain them by fabricating lies," Lü Xiang, a research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, told the *Global Times*. "It is believed that the 'washing powder' was merely one such case, and the majority of them have not been exposed yet. Washington is still attempting to confuse the public."

"The US is aware that the consequences of waging a war against any country would be severe and the price would be way too high," Lü said. "Now, Washington tends to deal with its rivals and competitors by economic and political means."

Washington views Beijing as its top rival, and to implement its strategy of containing China, the US has rapidly ramped up its attempts to slander China. The instrument that the US planted on Iraq was "washing powder," while on China, it is all kinds of wild lies, ranging from human rights to origins tracing of the COVID-19.

Washington has recently been sparing no effort to spread lies about Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region to mislead the global public, so that it can gang up with more countries to counter China. Such US practices will bring more instability and uncertainty to the world. The international community should be vigilant of the US. The world would soon find out that the US lies about China are actually more vials of "washing powder."

Global Times

Such US practices will bring more instability and uncertainty to the world.

CUBAN INTELLIGENCE CHIEF SAYS "US GOVERNMENT PREPARING FINAL BLOW" TO REVOLUTION

W T Whitney Jr.

Fabián Escalante helped establish Cuba's state security services. He headed Cuba's Department of State Security from 1976 to 1996, served as vice minister of the Interior Ministry, and after 1993 led the Cuban Security Studies Center. His views on threats from the US government and on protecting Cuba's Revolution carry weight.

Writing on the 23rd of September, on Cuba's *Pupila Insomne* website, Escalante notes that "the internal counter-revolution is reorganising its forces and is on the offensive." They were "calling for a 'national strike' for October 11 [...] to secure the 'liberation of political prisoners.'" He insists that, afterwards, "a group of 'activists,' presumably counter-revolutionaries," will be seeking authorisation from Havana municipal authorities "for a peaceful march against 'violence' in November."

He regards the timing as crucial, inasmuch as Cuba will be reopening its borders to international tourists in November; they've been excluded due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At issue is revival of Cuba's economy.

Escalante cites a Miami periodical's report asserting that "marchers will be calling for rights for all Cubans, liberation of political prisoners, and democratic and peaceful solutions of differences." The story portrays island-wide marches as challenging Cuba's government to honour a constitutional right to "public protest."

He observes that lies and half-truths, swarming around via social media, are disparaging government leaders, especially Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel. Accusations centre on "failing to improve living conditions in deprived, vulnerable urban districts."

Escalante notes that in Miami, "a sector of the Cuban community, manipulated by fundamentalist congresspersons Marco Rubio, María Elvira Salazar, and their acolytes, are readying their weapons, coordinating and paying local peons." These are "in close touch with counterparts on the island and will assist in creating an environment of social destabilisation."

Adding substance to a grim scenario is the reality of long-term and bipartisan US funding of counter-revolutionary activity in Cuba. Journalist Tracey Eaton reports that presently "the US Agency for International Development is offering up to $2 million for new democracy-promotion programs in Cuba. USAID's goals are to advance the effectiveness of independent civil society groups ... [and to] develop broader coalitions to expand civil society's impact."

In July, the House Appropriations Committee "approved a bill that would authorise the State Department to spend $20 million on democracy promotion projects in Cuba during fiscal 2022 [...]. Nearly half the money – $9.98 million – would go toward civil society; $4.78 million would be spent on independent media and free flow of information, and $5.24 million would be used to promote human rights."

Regime-change fervour in official Washington is always intense. Miami congressperson Mario Diaz-Balart recently issued a statement praising "the many activists who have suffered or perished for simply daring to speak against the regime." He recently introduced a resolution seeking international support for counterrevolution in Cuba.

Fabián Escalante is alarmed. He declares that "In circumstances like those at present – pandemic, escalation of the blockade, scarcities, etc. – we must not underestimate the enemy and if we want to transcend the impasse, we must accept the challenge, with MORE REVOLUTION, as Fidel taught us."

Escalante calls for mass action, "local political and patriotic mobilisations." And, "we will do what we know to do, which is to mobilise the people." We will "strengthen the bases of our organisations with 'new ideas' [and] with concepts exceeding tired prescriptions for 'change in style and working methods.'"

He calls upon "communists occupying the superstructure to come down ... to organisations at the base and other area-based centres and, from there, [move on] to leadership elements of the remaining revolutionary forces." They must "dialogue and hear about conflicts and local necessities and [then] undertake a counter-offensive."

He believes that the "enemy of humanity, the US government [...] is preparing to deliver the final blow to the Revolution." He suggests that the Biden administration, presuming Cuba to be weakened, wants a "consolation prize" in view of recent US defeats. Now, therefore, "The street belongs to the revolutionaries, as Díaz Canel has alerted us."

People's World ✪

LEBANESE COMMUNISTS WARN AGAINST RETURN TO DEADLY CIVIL WAR AFTER SEVEN KILLED BY CHRISTIAN FASCIST MILITIA

Steve Sweeney

Lebanese communists warned today that sectarian violence could lead the country back into a deadly civil war, as it warned of US meddling in the country.

The party accused Washington and Israel of fuelling internal divisions, seeking to divide Lebanon to further their own regional interests.

"The violent clashes taking place in Beirut [...] are in the interest of the American and Zionist projects in the region, pushing Lebanon towards sectarianism," the communists warned.

It issued the statement as the country held a day of mourning for those shot dead by Christian fascist militia, who ambushed a protest against the politicisation of the port explosion in Beirut.

At least seven people have now died as a result of Thursday's attack in the Tayouneh district, which targeted supporters of the Shi'ite Amal and Hezbollah movements.

They were making their way to the Palace of Justice for a rally, demanding the removal of judge Tarek Bitar as the head of a probe into last year's port explosion, when snipers opened fire.

The Lebanese army confirmed that at least eight members of the far-right Lebanese Forces were detained on Thursday, with sources saying that some have admitted to planning the shooting.

Calls have been made for the arrest of the leader of the Lebanese forces, Samir Geagea, an ally of the US and Israel.

But he has denied involvement in the shootings, calling for an independent investigation.

President Michel Aoun addressed the nation on Thursday evening, saying it was "unacceptable to return to the language of arms, because we have all agreed to turn this dark page of history."

But, in what was seen as a warning to both Hezbollah and Amal, he said that Lebanon would "not allow anyone to take the country hostage for their own interests."

In a statement, the Lebanese Communist Party hit out at religious leaders for interfering in judicial affairs to protect its accused officials, saying investigations must be carried out unhindered.

It added that the street confrontations that followed Thursday's shootings served to divide the Lebanese people and divert attention away from those responsible for the crisis.

"The ruling system finds in the use of violence and internal strife a means to obscure the basic issue the Lebanese people suffer from: the economic collapse, poverty, unemployment and exploitation," the party said.

The only solution, the communists said, is for the overthrow of the current sectarian system and the transition to a secular democratic state that protects the independence of the judiciary and the people of Lebanon.

Morning Star ✪

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Politics in the Pub, Perth

People before Profit: Solving Public Housing

28th October 6pm
43 Below Bar & Restaurant
corner Barrack St and Hay St Perth

Speakers:
John Berger, End Homelessness WA
Christopher Crouch, CPA WA President
Speaker TBC

MAURICE BISHOP AND THE NEW JEWEL MOVEMENT PROJECTED A NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONSHIP OUTSIDE THE BONDS OF GLOBAL NEOCOLONIALISM

Owen Schalk

> nearly ten years later
> look at me here analysing
> still distraught and debating
> sympathising synthesising
> regretting and remembering
> and time
> just passing
>
> "Nearly Ten Years Later (For Grenada)" by Merle Collins

16th October marks 38 years since the death of Maurice Bishop, leader of the tragically short-lived People's Revolutionary Government of Grenada (PRG). The PRG was formed when the New Jewel Movement (NJM), led by the widely popular Bishop, seized control of the country from the US-backed dictator Eric Gairy. Although the NJM government lasted only four years before Bishop was killed in a military coup led by Bernard Coard (after which America invaded to destroy the remnants of the movement), Bishop's humane and popular policies, as well as his internationalist perspective, remain an inspiration to students of the Grenadian Revolution.

Grenada is a small island in the southern Caribbean, near the cost of Venezuela. Prior to the colonisation of the Americas, it was populated by the Indigenous Arawaks and the Kalinago, or Caribs, the people from whom the Caribbean gets its name. The island was eventually colonised by the French, who killed most of its Indigenous population, but it was taken by the British at the end of the Seven Years' War, which explains why English is the most common language in Grenada today. In a pattern replicated across the Americas, the British forcibly relocated thousands of enslaved Africans to the island and used their labour to produce profits for the metropole. As a result, the vast majority of Grenadians claim African ancestry.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, many Grenadians lost work. This caused them to seek employment abroad, which often led to involvement in trade unionism and anti-colonial activism. One of the most important activists at this time was Eric Gairy, who returned to lead his country out of the colonial period in 1974. Once in power, however, he became a brutal dictator who received considerable support from the US and its allies. Gairy terrorised the population with his Mongoose Gang, a private militia that targeted critics of the regime for torture and death (including Rupert Bishop, the father of Maurice Bishop, who was killed in 1974) and received arms and training from Pinochet's Chile. In exchange for his loyalty, he was granted membership to the English Privy Council in 1977, and later that year he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth.

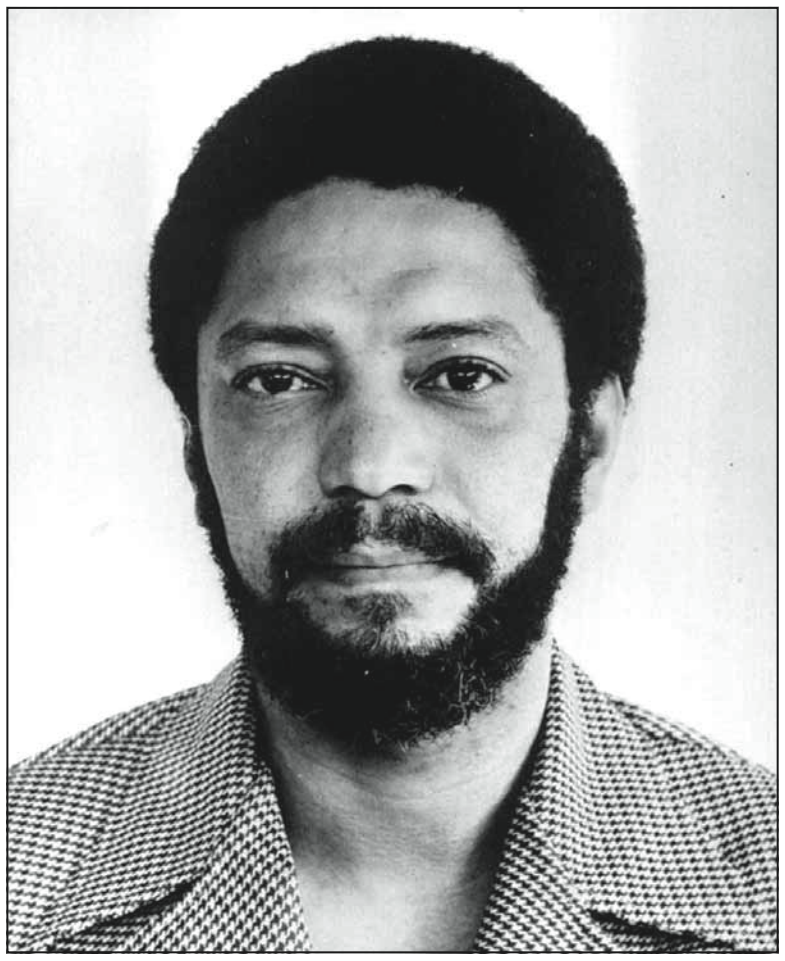
Unsurprisingly, Gairy and his clique showed little interest in the economic development of Grenada. Agricultural production dropped, unemployment rose, prices skyrocketed and movements against his government gained more and more influence. The NJM, a communist group modelled on the tenets of Marxism-Leninism, became the primary body for collecting and organising anti-Gairy resistance. Gairy was aware of the NJM's goals, and in 1979 he planned to have its leaders murdered while he was away on a trip to the United States. The NJM learned of his plot and acted first, detaining the Mongoose Gang and seizing control of the state. On 13th March, 1979, with the resounding support of the population, they declared the founding of the People's Revolutionary Government of Grenada. Maurice Bishop became prime minister.

Bishop was a well-travelled Marxist with an internationalist philosophy, and he spoke positively about anti-imperialist intellectuals like Frantz Fanon, post-colonial leaders including Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and Julius Nyerere, and figures of American resistance such as Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. Under his premiership, healthcare became a human right, low-income housing was established for the first time, food production soared and adult illiteracy was reduced to less than five per cent in three years. Furthermore, the National Women's Organization of Grenada (NWO) was established with the intention of prioritising gender equality. Trinidadian scholar Rhoda Reddock declares that "the leadership of the Grenada Revolution was unmatched in its public acknowledgement of women's role in bringing about the revolution and extended an invitation to them to participate in the 'process of revolutionary transformation.'" All of these initiatives were undertaken in a popular, participatory fashion, and they resulted in significant social and infrastructural gains. The successes of their communist governance model made the PRG an enemy of the United States.

After his normalisation efforts with America collapsed, Bishop recognised that he had become a target. As he outlined during a speech at Hunter College in New York City on 5th June, 1983:

"They give all kinds of reasons and excuses [for opposing us] – some of them credible, some utter rubbish. We saw an interesting one recently in a secret report to the State Department ... That secret report made this point: that the Grenada revolution is in one sense even worse – I'm using their language – than the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions because the people of Grenada and the leadership of Grenada speak English, and therefore can communicate directly with the people of the United States [...] They [also] said that ninety-five per cent of our population is Black [...] if we have ninety-five per cent of predominantly African origin in our country, then we can have a dangerous appeal to 30 million Black people in the United States."

Both Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan looked for ways to demonise and destabilise the Grenadian government – Reagan even called an airstrip built to support tourism, the second largest sector of the island's economy, a "Cuban-Soviet power projection" – and the American media played along. As Noam Chomsky writes in *Necessary Illusions*, "US actions ... to undermine the government of Maurice Bishop were barely reported ... Also unreported were the other measures pursued [ex. the blocking of aid to Grenada after the August 1980 hurricane] to abort progress and development under a government now conceded to have been popular and relatively successful."



Maurice Bishop (1944-1983)

When Bernard Coard, the PRG's Deputy Prime Minister, seized power in a coup whose exact circumstances remain muddled to this day, Bishop was imprisoned and ultimately executed. The Reagan administration seized this opportunity to finish off the New Jewel Movement once and for all. Over 7000 US troops invaded on the pretext of protecting US students on the island, but it soon became clear that their true intention was to prevent the revolution from holding onto power. As Lola Campos writes, "[the American invasion] resulted in the reinstitution of the former Grenadian constitution and an immediate reversal of the accomplishments of the NJM's revolution."

Over forty years later, students of the violently interrupted Grenadian Revolution are – to borrow the words of poet Merle Collins, an ardent supporter of the NJM – "analysing / still distraught and debating / sympathising synthesising / regretting and remembering" the circumstances that brought Maurice Bishop to power and those which resulted in his ouster. Although the PRG is no more, the social and economic accomplishments of the New Jewel Movement, in addition to its internationalist focus, remain an inspiration to those seeking to imagine a new North-South relationship outside the bonds of global neocolonialism.

People's Voice

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