

# Communist Party of Australia



# POLITICAL RESOLUTION

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**BUILD THE PARTY  
FOR A SOCIALIST FUTURE**



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# Introduction

In analysing the world today, it is necessary to examine the major events that have occurred in Australia and around the world, in particular in the most recent years. In late 2019, a severe drought came to an end followed by unprecedented fires throughout the east coast of Australia. A global pandemic hit our shores in early 2020 and has severely disrupted Australian society. Every country, including Australia, needs to take urgent steps to prevent massive climate change. Around the world, including in Australia, right-wing extremism is rising rapidly, with fascist movements posing a threat to workers. Employers have launched a massive offensive against the working class taking back hard-won gains. The US is escalating tensions in the Indo-Pacific region threatening China and using Australia as part of its war plans. Australia must devote its resources to protecting the health and wellbeing of the people instead of towards war and imperialism. These developments must be uppermost in our minds over the coming four years till the next Congress.

In 2020 we celebrated the centenary of the foundation of the Communist Party of Australia. For over 100 years generations of Communists in Australia have struggled for the interests of the working class against capital, nationally and internationally. In this struggle significant gains have improved the condition of the working class. These struggles took place under difficult circumstances similar to those we face today. The history of the Communist Party of Australia contains a history of victories to inspire and instruct us in the struggles of today. This is not a time to be despondent, nor is it a time for complacency, rather now is the time for communists to act and intensify their efforts in working for a socialist future.

The capitalist system continues to secure the accumulation of wealth in a few hands at the expense of workers. In this process it is causing the inevitable destruction of our planet, delivering misery and death. It is an imperative that we overthrow that system and fight for a socialist future, one that ensures the end of exploitation, imperialism, and colonialism. Neither the climate crisis, COVID-19 pandemic nor any other catastrophes can of themselves change the course of capitalism towards socialism; nor can workers become spontaneously conscious of the need

for socialism when facing these crises. The political and ideological work of Communist parties is a critical factor in the development of socialist consciousness.

In opposing the drive to war and the growth of nuclear weapons, the Party has continued its engagement with socialist and anti-imperialist parties, studying their successes and learning from their processes of governance. The Party has been active in establishing links with new fraternal Parties, strengthening ties with others, participating in the international meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties, and participating in international solidarity campaigns.

It is a priority for the next four years to continue building the Party. This document aims to be a guide for the work of our Party in the next four years until the next Congress. It is in three sections that firstly describe the potential of a socialist Australia; secondly identify key strategies to help achieve that goal; and finally discuss the priorities and processes for building the Party.

## **Socialist Australia**

Socialism is a new society that transcends the present capitalist system. It is based upon the collective ownership and democratic planned management of all sources of wealth. It can be built when, following a long period of struggle under capitalism, the working class becomes the ruling class and displaces the present ruling capitalist class. Using this newly acquired power the working class builds a new liberated society.

The Communist Party of Australia's vision of a socialist Australia is of a rejuvenated country that is strong, prosperous, democratic, independent, and ecologically sustainable with rights for all. Socialism is not an inevitable outcome of capitalist development but is essential to defend the people from a barbarous alternative of catastrophic climate change and imperialist wars that threaten the survival of civilisation.

The Communist Party of Australia aims for an Australia that places the people and the planet at the centre of all decisions. There will be an

economy based on social needs rather than corporate profit; a publicly owned and democratically planned economy that can bring the big corporations, which control around 80 per cent of the Australian economy, into public hands and under working-class control. Currently the money to fund change is there but is hoarded by a super-rich minority. The wealth of companies that make huge profits for private shareholders, like Telstra, the big banks, the major supermarket chains, and huge energy and mining companies like BHP, should be used to invest in education, health, jobs, homes, and social services. A socialist Australia will put the wealth the people create into the hands of the people.

A society founded on maximising the collective good, rather than profits, will mobilise research and technology to convert society to sustainable practices and start the repair of the environment. The resources and technology needed to provide every human with the necessities of life are already available. Socialism is simply the way to use them rationally for the betterment of all.

## **Trade unions**

The authority of trade unions to organise effectively in the interest of workers must be clawed back from the efforts to curb their influence. The right to strike and the legalisation of pattern/industry bargaining will be crucial for empowering trade unions in the fight for workers.

Under socialism trade unions will remain an important mass organisation of workers in Australia. All legislation introduced under capitalism to criminalise trade union activity will be removed. Instead, the right to unionise and take industrial action will be protected by law.

Trade unions are not only critical for workers under capitalism but will play a central part in the organisation of society and workers in the struggle for socialism. The struggle for political power is impossible without the support of the trade union movement. Equally, the interests of the working class can never be fully achieved without political power being vested in the party of the working class.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights**

Land rights as a recognition of prior Indigenous ownership of the entire Australian continent will be realised. This is the fundamental issue of rights for Indigenous people. There will be legislation to return land to its traditional owners based on traditional ownership, cultural association, long occupancy, connections or need. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' land title will include full rights to minerals and other natural resources as well as to all sacred sites, heritage areas and areas of traditional significance.

Under capitalism, the process of colonisation continues in Australia today for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This occurs through an endless number of economic, political, and social means; such as the denial of land rights, pay inequality, over-policing, incarceration rates, Indigenous deaths in custody, and the pervasive racism of non-Indigenous Australians towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Without the interests of capital dictating law and policy, a socialist Australia would be to give effect to the demands for justice, land rights, treaties and truth telling processes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people call for.

It is within our capabilities to establish autonomous areas based on communally owned land in accordance with the wishes of traditional owners and local Indigenous communities.

## **The Climate Emergency and a Just Transition to a Sustainable Future**

The chaos of capitalist markets has brought the planet to the current global emergency of growing poverty, increasing water and food stresses, spreading desertification, ocean acidity, and more frequently occurring natural disasters. There is an exponential rise in the extinction of many species of animals and plants – victims of disasters, or unable to adapt quickly enough to the changes that are taking place. The devastating

bushfires in several states on the Australian continent during the 2019-2020 fire season are just one example of the global climate emergency.

A major task for a socialist government would be to educate everyone in an attitude and lifestyle which respects and protects the environment. Protection of the environment calls for scientific knowledge, vigilance, and public awareness together with democratic involvement and accountability. It requires the development of new systems that do not imply declines in living standards while being environmentally sustainable and responsible. It requires the development of new means of life that respect ecological limitations and facilitate harmony between people and nature.

Sustainable development must be a priority goal, not just for the survival of humanity but also for life as we know it. Sustainable development is only possible through workers' control of the means of production under working class rule and planning for people's needs.

A planned, just transition away from a carbon-based economy will provide jobs, social protection, and security to workers, as well as to those communities most affected by the transition to a sustainable economy. A planned transition will ensure all climate policies are socially future-proofed. No workers or communities can be left behind in the move away from carbon culture to more sustainable forms of living.

## **Renewable Energy**

It is imperative to diversify and develop our renewable energy sources. Research and development will become an important arm of the economy to help develop a national structural framework for publicly owned non-polluting, renewable energy industries. The role of the domestic micro-generation of renewable energy and community ownership and public participation in renewable energy projects will play an important role in developing an equitable national distribution of energy resources.

# **Australia as a peaceful and independent nation**

A socialist government would insist on the peaceful, negotiated settlement of international disputes and would support mutual international disarmament. Aggression and interference in the internal affairs of other countries would be replaced by a policy of friendship, non-interference and respect. It would aim to facilitate economic cooperation, solidarity, and integration between socialist countries.

Unwarranted military spending is environmentally destructive, creates few jobs, causes insecurity and costs lives. Instead, the CPA envisions an Australia free of foreign military bases, and free of interventions by foreign governments, corporations, or vested interests, that at present seek to exert undue influence in shaping Australia's foreign and defence policies in a manner that diminishes Australia's sovereignty. A socialist Australia will not interfere in the sovereignty of other nations. It will massively reduce the military budget, with funds used for socially useful development of services to meet the needs of the people.

## **Social Policy**

### **Healthcare**

Australians can only benefit from a fully nationalised healthcare system including dental with the priority of ensuring a physically and psychologically healthy community. A nationalised health scheme can provide a quality primary care system with GPs, nurses, allied and community health workers working together with an emphasis on preventing disease and the early detection of illness. Team-based, community-based care can enable focus on early intervention and provide care in community centres and in the home. COVID 19 has shown us this is essential.

Under a fully funded Medicare system and an expanded Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, quality medical and dental treatment will be made universally accessible and centrally funded through progressive taxation.

Universal physical access in the built environment and the public provision of disability services will remove the barriers that prevent disabled people's full participation in society, including in the workplace. Disabled people shall be guaranteed full employment, the same as other workers in a socialist Australia.

## **Education**

The guiding principle and aim of the education system must be the provision of free, universal, and secular public education for all children from pre-school to tertiary levels, to produce a knowledgeable and cultured society, with strong critical thinking abilities. There shall be revitalisation of bilingual education based on community needs including revival of endangered Indigenous traditional languages and protection of new Indigenous languages. By taking the current barriers away from access to education, a socialist economy will liberate people stuck in the exploitative systems they currently face.

Schools and universities would be at the centre of local communities. They will provide resources for education and the arts, meeting places, computer and leisure facilities for the local community. In turn, the community would become an educational resource for school and tertiary students. Education will be about community empowerment and personal development as well as being skill centres for future employment and powerhouses for new ideas.

A massive increase in public education spending will provide the increased staffing, smaller class sizes, good quality resources and buildings needed to ensure the best education and individual support for everyone.

## **Housing**

Public housing represents the best way to help solve the massive shortfall in affordable, good quality homes. Public housing should be well maintained, accessible and safe; research and development into new sustainable design and materials can become a major driver in the economy. A

socialist government will take responsibility for the provision of basic infrastructure and services and respond to meet the needs of communities. These communities shall include disabled people. There shall be security of tenure for housing tenants.

The current housing policies of both Liberal and Labor are based on an economic rationalist approach in which government housing assets are valued at current market value and sold off if their value is sufficiently high. This is not a social policy; it is the government acting as a private investor playing with a large pool of assets. Quality public housing is essential for the most vulnerable groups in society such as women fleeing domestic violence, the disabled, unemployed, and older workers, but beyond this public housing should be a comprehensive system for housing the majority of people in Australian society.

By liaising across sectors, a socialist government will provide physical and psychological sanctuary for the homeless. There will be a 'housing first' solution to the problem of homelessness, focussing on prevention and early intervention. A place to call home, a roof over your head, is a basic human right. In such a rich society as Australia, there should be no homelessness. Without a home, it is virtually impossible to exercise other rights such as studying, going to work, or meeting basic hygiene requirements.

The government will build community housing based on social research data, setting clear and publicly accountable objectives for construction and its network of social support services. Houses left deliberately vacant to provide tax breaks will be added to public housing stock and made available to rent.

## **Production**

Economic planning is necessary in a socialist society to prevent the booms and slumps which are a persistent feature of all capitalist economies. Planning would enable the best use to be made of the nation's resources, the technical skills of workers and to protect the overall needs of the people. The tools for economic planning have already been invented

and are used constantly by large monopoly corporations to manage their internal production and supply chains internationally. This provides a key technical foundation for the realisation of socialism. Socialism would overcome the anarchy and chaos inherent within the capitalist system.

Conditions for the investment of foreign capital would be controlled and regulated, as would the export of profits, so no other country or transnational corporation could gain a dominant position in the Australian economy. The commanding heights of the economy and basic resources would be the collective property of the people. Foreign nations would not be permitted to establish military bases on Australian soil. This will be essential for Australia's national independence.

Automation can be a process of democratic change in workers' hands instead of an alienating, socially disruptive mechanism to force down wages. Instead of creating job losses and forcing people into poverty, automation will mean the shortening of the working week without sacrificing jobs. Robots taking on our jobs will no longer be a doomsday threat but a welcome development that provides more leisure time and frees up more resources to be put towards scientific, philosophical, cultural, and artistic breakthroughs. As long as automation is used for profit, job shedding and union-busting the CPA stands by workers in opposing its introduction.

## **Mining, resources and manufacturing**

The Australian government, under the influence of the mining industry, has promoted the extractive industries leading to adverse community, agricultural and environmental consequences. Indigenous people are particularly affected by the unbridled privileges given to these industries, as their sacred lands are continually extorted and extracted for profit. The creation of, and investment of power in independent democratically-elected bodies of representatives from First Nations communities is vital to ensure the preservation of culturally-significant sites (something willfully-neglected by private industry). In moving a large part of its workforce to *Fly In Fly Out* the resource industries' employment policies have had a devastating effect on mine workers and their families.

Nationalising the entire resource sector can ensure the current and future prosperity of the Australian people. Natural resources are public property and should always remain so. When brought under public ownership the profits from the current carbon-based energy industries can be re-invested in alternative energy development, and proper planning can be carried out for the phasing out of fossil fuel production and extraction, facilitating a just transition to other industrial processes and projects providing employment in local communities. Part of this process will involve land reforms, in consultation with Indigenous people, that will ensure that the Indigenous people will not be deprived of the land they have lived on for thousands of years.

Developing local industries secondary to mining can ensure the full value of the materials taken from the ground goes back into the community. Secondary industries can be built around the primary renewable energy industries in economy-wide areas. Manufacturing should be onshore to support a nationalised resource extraction and processing industry. While this process happens, trade with the global south, who currently do our manufacturing for us, as part of our imperial status, will need to be renegotiated on a basis of equal footing.

## **Agriculture**

Agriculture in Australia has undergone a significant shift to highly monopolised, corporate structures. While small farmers still exist, they are under increasing pressure.

The agricultural workforce has been reduced to less than three per cent of the Australian workforce, the lowest figure since federation. It includes skilled workers operating expensive machinery and casual employment including backpackers and labour imported from the Pacific. The use of special visas has made this labour vulnerable to exploitation in accommodation and labour hire practices. Workers on these visas have problems with hyper-exploitation via low/unpaid wages, substandard accommodation, and harassment.

The marketing and sale of Australian agricultural products has been taken over by large capitalist cartels. Barley, a crop which Australia provides 40 per cent of world production, has its marketing and sale controlled by an organisation of brewing and seed companies.

Water allocations to large agri-businesses have allowed high intensity farming of crops such as cotton and almonds in low rainfall areas. The conservative government's resistance to measures to reduce or offset emissions has allowed practices such as land clearing and use of natural vegetation for extensive cattle farming.

Managing our waterways, oceans and fish stocks can ensure the long-term viability of some of our most valuable strategic resources thus rejuvenating the fishing industry, making it environmentally sustainable and economically viable for local fishing communities.

The inclusion of Indigenous peoples in environmental management and publicly owned farming and food production can create an important opportunity to learn from generations of careful observation of the natural world while simultaneously reinforcing the right of Indigenous peoples to own and control the use of their traditional lands.

## **Multiculturalism**

The politics of exclusion and national chauvinism can be dismissed by reaffirming, sustaining and developing the policy of multiculturalism established in Australia in the 1970s. The right to cultural identity (expressing and sharing one's individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion); social justice (equality of treatment and opportunity, and the removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender or place of birth); and social efficiency (the need to maintain, develop and utilise effectively the skills and talents of all Australians) can be at the centre of our domestic and foreign policy.

Multiculturalism should be about building an inclusive and diverse Australia. Real multiculturalism is the respect, acknowledgement, and cel-

eboration of our Indigenous history. It is an awareness that this is a foundation block of multiculturalism.

Real multiculturalism is not tokenism but a recognition that Australia is a nation of migrants; each wave of migrants has contributed to building the lifestyle we enjoy today. Multiculturalism should be a celebration of working-class achievements that has helped construct our social environment.

Multiculturalism is about rejecting prejudice; it's recognising that no one culture is superior and that we all have contributed positive elements to a many-layered culture. Multiculturalism should help us to maintain languages and traditions but at same time help us reject negative and backward cultural practises. Multiculturalism must be a celebration of our diversity, secularism, and the idea that what we have in common is more important than our differences.

## **Communications and the media**

Communications and media should not be in the hands of capitalist corporations, run for profit. The distrust of the mainstream media should be an opportunity to encourage editorial staff to question the deleterious community consequences of news reporting for profit. Objective, dispassionate reporting and investigation will be returned to the heart of journalistic work. There are opportunities to develop independent media, to demonstrate by example that another journalism, a more demanding and liberating journalism, is possible.

A democratically controlled, anti-monopoly and anti-imperialist media infrastructure can increase and guarantee employment in the broadcasting sector. The creation of a sovereign internet under the control of the state will keep foreign agents from meddling with the self-determination of a socialist Australia. We can finally make the distribution of information a common good and not a commodity.

## **Culture and the arts**

In a socialist Australia, Indigenous culture will no longer be suppressed and commodified but shall be given the platform and support it needs to flourish independently and finally be liberated from the oppressive colonialist legacy of capitalist Australia. This could include teaching Indigenous languages in schools based on the region, and the return of cultural lands, artifacts, and art to the Indigenous people. It is important to understand this historical relationship as central to all contemporary Australian cultural endeavours.

## **Government Debt and Spending**

The prudential use of debt will be a responsible mechanism of finance available to the Socialist Republic of Australia for the progressive realisation of sustainable social, environmental and economic development.

Instead of running up a debt to escalate an arms race and subsidising the fossil fuel industries this debt should be used for social empowerment. Debt is a product of economic management. The key questions which arise are: who controls the economy; who plans it; and what issues or spending are prioritised?

## **Strategy**

### **The working class as the leading force for social change**

Unions are critical organisations for workers in Australia and have existed in Australia for over 150 years. In the main they have struggled against capital to defend and improve the position of working people.

Australian unions were dealt a severe blow with the implementation of the class collaborationist *Prices and Incomes Accord* introduced by the ACTU and the Hawke Labor Government in 1983. The Accord poli-

cies were driven by the false premise that workers and employers had common interests and a Labor Government would act as an independent player to facilitate mutual outcomes. Lived reality revealed this false perception which sits at the heart of declining trade union density. The Accord process was a part of an ongoing all-out offensive on workers and unions by capital. This offensive has not stopped since that time and continues to escalate in its intensity against unions today. Since then, the wealth gap in Australian society between the ruling and working classes has continued to widen.

Growing contradictions internal to Australian society are breaking down old social compacts that tied the people to capitalism. These contradictions make increasingly possible the reconstruction of a new militant working class movement with the Communist Party at its core.

Today there are more anti-union institutions and laws than ever before in Australia's history. Some anti-union institutions, like the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC), not only curtail workers' action on the job, including for safety, effectively criminalise working class action on building sites, and impose harsh legal obstacles on unions and workers including removal of the right to silence. The Fair Work Commission is another anti-union institution and plays its part in weakening struggle. It enforces the reactionary *Fair Work Act*, creating the illusion of independence while operating actively as an arm of state power.

Since the early 1990s, life at work has become harder for workers as the balance of class forces in society around the world massively shifted to the capitalist class. The changed international conditions following the emergence of neoliberalism and the counterrevolutionary wave in the socialist camp gave confidence to an intensified anti-unionism, conjoined twin of anticommunism, by capitalist-forces internationally. The ruling class, as always, aimed for maximum extraction of profit from the working class, taking back many concessions won during the Soviet era. Capital has used its power to remove rights and conditions, de-unionise workplaces and heighten exploitation of all workers. Basic rights such as workers' compensation have shifted from state hands into those of private insurers who have no care for workers, and only care for their sole motive – profit.

The situation with COVID has highlighted the disastrous situation for casual workers and the country, by the fact that over 40 per cent of the workforce do not have annual leave or sick leave, conditions which workers struggled for over a century. The employers in Australia have been allowed free reign by their government, to stop casuals from advancing their rights, to seek to have recognition that they are actually permanent workers, who should be entitled to sick leave and annual leave. The employers' government has legalised wage theft, and criminalised trade unions, by imposing large fines, and threats of fines on workers' organisations, who have sought to defend the rights of workers.

The employers' government has created a hyper-exploitable temporary workforce. The COVID crisis has revealed the massive reliance on what has come to be termed "backpacker labour", but is in reality, a form of migrant labour, which is offered no permanent resident status. In agriculture and hospitality industries, these workers have suffered dramatically in the lockdowns, and the employers have been pushing other workers into these highly exploitative conditions. Australian workers need to end the discrimination being foisted under racist legislation that allows this practice to continue.

Recently we have seen many workers in significant disputes across the country, demonstrating a willingness of workers to struggle against bosses even during the pandemic. Many workers have fought for their collective rights and won despite being in the middle of an unprecedented pandemic. Wharfies and transport workers are fighting to protect their jobs and working conditions, along with miners and many others. They have stood up against attempts to de-unionise and casualise entire industries.

It is imperative that unions should be able to take action around wages and working conditions, occupational health and safety matters, in support of negotiations, against injustices, in solidarity with other workers, on political questions, and any other matters they deem appropriate. They must be recognised and have the right to negotiate collective agreements on behalf of workers. The relationship between the Party and the trade unions is extremely important. Trade unions are under the collective control of their members. They are independent organisations that determine their policies and actions through their internal democratic structures.

The Party prioritises building unionism and fighting to win basic trade union rights, including the right to strike. Our work in the union movement should also include organising the unemployed.

The CPA regards the trade unions as vital for class struggle under capitalism. They play a crucial part in the organisation of society and workers in the struggle for socialism. As members of unions, we fight for unity in struggle and the development of class and political consciousness.

The Party must win the battle of ideas and support for its policies through the work of its members. Party members must be active members of their trade union or retired members' organisation and do all they can to build the trade union movement and develop unity and struggle within the movement. Party members have an important role to play in raising class consciousness, exposing the cause of social and economic problems, and promoting policies in the best interests of the union, its members, and the working class.

The unity of the community and the workers in a workplace creating an insurmountable force to ensure victory for workers in struggle. Across the Party the credibility generated here would be the basis for recruitment to the Communist Party.

The Communist Party of Australia must be the party that offers leadership in industrial and political campaigns, achieves unity for the working class and has the energy and power to do this. What will be of interest to workers and our potential supporters is not just the existence of the Communist Party and its ideas in the abstract, but rather the capacity of the Party to be active in the class struggle. This is what a strong communist party really means to the people.

Campaigning work that agitates for reforms in line with party policy and participation in social movements should strategically connect participants in these struggles with future industrial and political struggles. It is the Party's role to link all the struggles the people face under capitalism and bring the members of the community and community organisations to flashpoints of industrial and political struggle and to bring the trade

unions into broader political struggles such as the peace and environmental movements.

Progressing the strategic direction of the Party cannot be done without serious attention paid to questions of unity. In considering unity we must ask the question – unity with whom and for what? In considering this matter, it is important for the Party to be clear about our unity work and our aims and intentions in building united front approaches to struggle against the ruling class. It is also important to understand the various forms of unity work. These different forms of unity encompass left unity, working class united front unity, and democratic or people’s unity. Each has a different role in various stages of the struggles of the working class but at the same time they are all linked and interdependent on one another and need one another for success.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights**

The settler-colonial regime inflicts various genocidal policies on First Nations peoples. Deaths in custody have only grown more frequent since the years immediately after the Royal Commission (whose recommendations were never implemented). More First Nations children are being separated from their families today than during the official Stolen Generations. The destruction of traditional ways of life and of the environments which supported those ways of life, together with the egregious exploitation and neglect of the communities who have survived the genocide so far have driven First Nations Communities into a degree of poverty largely unheard of in developed countries. This poverty causes chronic disease, abysmal educational outcomes, high rates of incarceration, and isolation from broader society. These effects results in a crisis which must be urgently addressed. But even more importantly, the constant struggle for basic survival blunts First Nations Peoples’ capacity to fight against colonial occupation. We are committed to fight alongside First Nations Peoples – standing with them in a revolutionary capacity in the fight for sovereignty.

The CPA recognises that the land now known as Australia has been occupied since time immemorial by hundreds of groups with their own cul-

tures, languages, and geographical areas. The colonisation of their lands by white European settlers saw the destruction of the existing economies, including agriculture and trade. Significant research has been conducted in recent years which undeniably shows the complex nature of First Nations economies. Various farming methods have been used before colonisation, during and in some cases, to this day. Some of these activities have been for self-sustenance, and others have been for trade with other indigenous groups, Southeast Asian nations, and European colonists.

First Nations sovereignty has never been ceded. Colonialists were met with resistance. The colonial dispossession of the land began with the Frontier Wars, where a series of battles and massacres occurred, and continues to this day by other means by the Australian settler-colonial state. The ongoing intervention in the Northern Territory has seen an erosion of previously achieved land rights. The CPA supports the continuing struggle for land rights and the reversal of these erosions. This includes standing with First Nations against the extinguishment of native title, such as in the Galilee Basin.

Establishment forces chose the 26th of January to celebrate the founding of the British penal colony on this land, presenting a racist myth that Australia is British and mono-cultural. This day denies the hurt and suffering of the First Nations people, and as such has been more accurately referred to as Invasion Day. The CPA supports First Nations in the definition of this event. Rallies throughout Australia bring tens of thousands of people to the streets, including First Nations people and progressives, playing a significant role in challenging white supremacy and reactionary viewpoints. CPA cadre are called on to join rallies organised by our indigenous comrades until the observation of the 26<sup>th</sup> January is abandoned.

## **The Climate Emergency and a Just Transition to a Sustainable Future**

Capitalism is the root cause of the climate crisis. In Australia it is difficult to differentiate between the federal government and the fossil fuel industry. Our local emissions may be relatively small on the global scale,

but our fossil fuel exports make Australia a major driver of the climate crisis. The profits that fossil fuel executives draw from this destruction are used to buy political influence, influence that's used to further favour coal barons at the expense of the public. Their pollution and environmental devastation drives climate change, mass extinctions, chronic disease, depletes rare earth minerals, and threatens our supplies of food and drinking water. These impacts are not spread evenly among the population, affecting the poor more than the rich – capitalism enables the climate culprits to use their wealth as a shield, while exposing the least culpable to the worst impacts. Only a communist ecological struggle can preserve our planet.

Capitalism's readiness to co-opt resistance is on full display in the form of "green capitalism." We must reject false solutions like cap-and-trade schemes and the "Green New Deal," as well as empty demands like "declare a climate emergency." Only public, democratic control of mining, energy & other relevant infrastructure will ensure an adequate reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The CPA must contribute to climate demonstrations, to build our network of anti-capitalist organisations and to provide leadership to others to make the step towards an anti-capitalist stance.

In our demand for reforms towards mitigating the climate emergency, the historical and continuing imbalance between rich, developed countries and developing countries must not be neglected. Therefore, the demand of limiting carbon emissions should reflect the unique situation of each country.

Nothing spoils the planet like war. The CPA must bring peace and disarmament into the discourse on climate action. The contribution of the war industry towards the climate emergency is enormous, and does not feature proportionately in the current climate movement debates.

The CPA must argue that the development of public environmental services is crucial, as is that of public enterprises operating under criteria of saving natural resources and material resources.

In all these struggles, it will be vital to forge alliances with trade unions, farmers, communities, Indigenous peoples, landowners, and others impacted by the environmental destruction wrought by monopolies.

The Party must campaign against coal seam gas and the expansion of coal and uranium mining, and against market-based “solutions” for the environmental crisis. It must argue for the regulation and management of water usage and biodiversity. The Communist Party of Australia will campaign for a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

Sustainable development must be a priority goal, for the survival of humanity. Sustainable development is ultimately only possible through socialism with democratic social control of the means of production and rational planning for people’s needs. It is crucial that the working class becomes involved in the struggle to save the planet from environmental catastrophe.

This must prioritise a just transition – a process that involves worker and community participation in the planning and implementation of change and retraining. A just transition places workers and their local communities and environmental and social needs at the centre of political economic processes. No worker must be worse off as a result of environmental protection.

We must demand that every program for cleaning up the environment include a guarantee of jobs and retraining for workers who are displaced. It must provide jobs, social protection and security to workers, as well as to those communities most affected by the change from an exploitative capitalist economy to a sustainable socialist economy.

The Australian Conservation Foundation and the Australian Council of Trade Unions’ 2008 report, “Green Gold Rush”, estimates that more than 800,000 new green jobs can be created in 15 years. Based on the analysis of 30 green industries globally, the report says Australia should focus on six sectors: renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable water industries, biomaterials, green buildings and waste recycling.

The CPA must demand that the Australian government redirect the \$47 billion-a-year subsidy given to the fossil fuel industry towards post-COVID-19 stimulus funding for publicly owned green industries, including re-training of workers for well-paid 'green' jobs.

## Healthcare

The privatisation of Australia's health system creates a two-tier system which leads to the wasteful private health insurance rebate which is driving further privatisation of Australia's health system. This ultimately leads to the rationing of health care for those who need it but cannot afford it and the means-testing of public hospitals. Our public hospitals are under extreme pressure.

The \$7 billion plus rebate for private health insurance is a backdoor subsidy for private hospitals and should be abolished. That would provide more than enough to fund a universal dental scheme under Medicare, improve services at the point of primary care, offer universal access to bulk billing and increase resources for community care.

State and federal governments have encouraged and subsidised the proliferation of private hospitals. There are more private hospitals than ever before. When COVID-19 hit in early 2020, the federal government reached an agreement with these private entities to take over their facilities, equipment and staff at an initial cost to taxpayers of more than \$1 billion. Such is the inefficiency of the private model.

The CPA supports a nationalised health scheme providing a quality primary care system with GPs, nurses, allied and community health working together must become our frontline for maintaining people's well-being with emphasis on preventing disease, including early detection of illness.

The CPA must use the pandemic as an opportunity to focus on healthcare not warfare. A global ceasefire is essential and thus the first step towards lasting peace with a focus on health for all. Wars destroy individuals, healthcare systems, health facilities and health workers. War-ravaged communities are already overwhelmed and are ill-placed to manage

public health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. “Healthcare, not warfare” must be affirmed as a national and global goal, and our resources committed to achieving it.

Military adventures have devastating impacts on the health of civilian people and make us less secure. It is time for Australia’s ramping up of spending on the military and preparation for war to end. We must argue that all the money recently committed for major arms acquisitions, and for a large portion of our annual military budget, be redirected to socially useful spending. Currently, our military budget is \$44 billion annually, as well as the extra \$200 billion plus for the acquisition of missiles, other weapons, nuclear-powered submarines, and US bases.

## **Unemployment**

The CPA recognises that unemployment and underemployment are an essential feature of the capitalist mode of production and will only be solved under socialism. However, we also recognise that the state can minimise the rate of unemployment through job creation schemes. The CPA will continue to campaign for the expansion of such schemes, which should focus on providing jobs for the hardest hit by unemployment (youth, older workers, disabled, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and workers lacking formal qualifications) and creating these jobs in areas of greatest public need (health, education, public works, etc.).

Job creation schemes themselves, however, are not enough as hundreds of thousands of people will remain unemployed under capitalism. The CPA will continue to campaign for a living income, above the poverty line, for all unemployed. We will also continue to campaign against the privatisation of welfare delivery especially in the form of the Job Network.

Government unemployment policy has tended to be based on a belief that unemployment is a result of the personal failings of the unemployed. The CPA will continue to campaign against policies based on this perspective, such as Mutual Obligation, Work for the Dole, and the Cashless Debit Card. In their place we believe that governments should make University and TAFE courses free.

## Defending science and education

Education is a right, not a privilege for those who can afford it. Australia has the wealth to be able to provide every person with access to a quality education. This applies to all levels of education and to lifelong access to education.

All education in Australia should be publicly funded and available without cost to all people. Existing fees in public educational institutions at all levels must be abolished.

Education and training are continuing to be privatised and corporatised by stealth. The recent OECD Education at a Glance 2019 shows that Australia is the 4th most privatised country for education. In 2020 private schools in Australia received 75 percent of all federal funding for schools even though the public system has higher student need.

In Australia and around the world we are seeing attacks on education by conservative governments with significant cuts to funding to all public universities affecting employment in the sector and curtailing the range of disciplines being offered at institutions. This has long-term debilitating effects on the economy.

Intellectual freedom and university standards cannot survive in an insecure work environment. Insecure work is anathema to intellectual freedom.

The private-public model on which the Australian universities function, and which is supported by both major parties, has failed miserably. Since COVID-19 hit and universities lost revenue from their exorbitant international student fees, 40,000 tertiary education jobs had been lost in 12 months up to May 2021, according to the Australia Institute's Centre for Future Work.

In an attempt to dismantle the education sector as an engine for critical thinking, the government has put mechanisms into place to destroy the study of the Humanities. The value of education cannot be reduced to Arts and Humanities vs Science. It is important for us to emphasise that both

these aspects of education need to be developed. The doubling of fees in Australia for arts and humanities courses, and the reduction of education to a vehicle solely for future employment is an ideological attack reducing human relationships to economic relationships. By putting barriers on the accessibility to education, capitalism seeks to control social change – keeping people stuck in the exploitative systems they currently face.

Australia's spending on Research and Development as a percentage of its GDP sits well below the OECD average. Funding preference is given to developing technologies with commercial application at the expense of objective scientific research. Scientific work retains all its usefulness in understanding the world, and at this time of climate emergency is increasingly important. Research must have real resources and be able to work without being dependant on having commercial outcomes.

The government increasingly politicises the research and education system, failing people and the environment. There is an overwhelming rejection of scientific integrity within government that fuels a strategy of creating uncertain science messaging and promoting pseudoscience conspiracies such as the recent marketing by the Morrison government on the efficacy of gas for energy and job creation.

A recent study published in the journal *Conservation Letters* found about half the government scientists and nearly 40 per cent of those working for industry surveyed said they had been blocked from releasing or discussing what they had found either publicly or internally where they worked; 56 per cent reported the constraints had escalated in recent years. The suppression took many forms including not being able to present or publish results, amendments being made to findings before the work is released, and self-censorship due to fear of retribution.

The current economic crisis with massive job losses in higher education is dramatically impacting on job security in the science system, with large risks of broader damage to our society. According to the OECD, countries including the US, UK, China, New Zealand, and Singapore are reinvesting in science and technology following the Global Financial Crisis. Australia is lagging behind. With recent cuts to the research block grant, Australia is at its lowest level of direct public investment in research in

decades (just 0.5% of GDP) putting at great risk the STEM and research sector we rely on to be our salvation from the pandemic – and also from the recession.

The CPA supports researchers, teachers, lecturers, and students protesting against attacks on the education system and calls for the proper funding of both education and scientific research sectors.

## **Women's struggle**

At its last Congress, the Communist Party of Australia resolved to 'take the party to the people'. This has led to a period of significant growth in membership. Importantly, the Party has seen success in the recruitment of women from many different backgrounds. This isn't seen simply in numbers, but in active participation, representation, and leadership from women in the Party. This engagement allows women's voices to guide and indicate how the Party can best guide the whole of society towards Socialism, especially when considering the best way to help other women.

In the past four years of neoliberalism, previous gains towards women's equality have continued to be eroded on every front. The gender wage gap has widened, and women continue to be concentrated in low-paid, under-valued "women's" work. They are more likely to be in precarious employment and still carry the main responsibilities as carers. They are disadvantaged during working life and enter retirement with significantly less superannuation than men.

During the pandemic the important role that so many women play as nurses, carers, community workers, and cleaning staff has come to the fore, but has not been acknowledged with commensurate wage rises in line with their skills, qualifications, and responsibilities. The largest group of rising homeless are older women. Migrant and First Nations women are further disadvantaged in unique ways under the capitalist system.

The pandemic has seen a significant rise in domestic violence. An estimated one in six Australian women (1.6mil or 17 per cent) aged 18 years

and over have experienced partner violence since the age of 15. (Australian Bureau of Statistics). One woman is murdered every week by a partner or former partner; another hospitalised every three hours. Domestic violence can be physically brutal or more hidden in its various non-physical forms.

Throughout 2021, the major parties and their members have made headlines for allegations that demonstrate the misogyny that permeates the current Australian political system and wider community. The seriousness of the crimes reveals how the male colleagues and peers of these women debase them and devalue them, not only as individuals, but how they view them in general. The Communist Party of Australia will continue to stand against violence against women and vulnerable people and reaffirm its values in direct opposition to such oppression, and systematic abuse. There is no room for such deplorable conduct and lack of accountability for anyone who does not stand by the respect of women and other minorities.

High costs of early childhood education and care mean that women on low wages are gaining little financial benefit from their employment. Women in this situation have no choice but to pay these costs if they wish to raise children and maintain a job. Early childhood education and care should be free.

The CPA supports the call for women to be paid an equal wage as men for work of equal value, but stresses that we cannot stop at this demand. The primary impediment to women's freedom under a capitalist system is the exploitation of their labour. It is not enough to fight for equality with men under capitalism to be equally exploited. The struggle must go beyond reforms within capitalism where gains are never permanent, to one of replacing the exploitative system of capitalism with socialism. The struggle for women's liberation is a struggle for working women and men to fight shoulder to shoulder to end capitalist exploitation.

# Gender and Sexuality

In overcoming the exploitative nature of capitalism, a socialist society must achieve the liberation of all members of the working class who have been oppressed under it. For the LGBTIQ+ community, this means that the institutions which seek to dehumanise, discriminate against or abuse them must be abolished.

One of the first and most necessary steps is the immediate banning of so called “corrective” practices, such as conversion therapy, which are cruel and inhumane attempts to erase LGBTIQ+ identity. Pseudoscience which sees LGBTIQ+ people as mentally ill will be fiercely combatted in all areas of society. Along with legal campaigns against the abusive practices, education campaigns will also be carried out to counter these misconceptions that have been planted among the working class.

In addition, classes should be included in the curriculum in primary and secondary education to provide a deeper and more scientifically accurate view of gender and sexuality. By building a better understanding of such concepts from an early age the mutual understanding developed will better strengthen community ties and support structures.

As well as education, the current measures designed to reduce access to healthcare should also be abolished. In particular, the waiting periods currently in place for transition services will be shortened significantly, as they merely serve to keep trans people in stressful states of waiting for months, in some cases years, at a time.

The legal, social and medical barriers designed to subdue and abuse the LGBTIQ+ community are not compatible with a socialist society. Such a society must recognise this struggle as part of the wider class struggle and seek to abolish all that stands in the way of LGBTIQ+ liberation.

# **International Affairs**

## **Solidarity**

Turning globalisation into proletarian internationalism is a vital part of the struggle against global capital, including the strengthening of the international Communist, workers', and peoples' movements. The Communist Party of Australia will continue to support the struggles of fraternal Communist and workers' parties around the world and participate in the International Meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties. The Communist objective of economic, social and national liberation of the people is the fundamental direction of our times.

## **Peace**

Peace is the reign of collective human security guaranteed at all levels (food, physical, social, economic) including, on the democratic level, respect for and access to all inalienable rights, respect for individual and collective philosophical, political and religious freedoms, and full respect for popular and national sovereignties. Peace is essential for the equitable, stable development of our societies. It abandons the logic of predation and substitutes it with mutually beneficial cooperation. It is built on and by the commitment of individuals and peoples to determine equitable policies that ensure the guarantee of rights for all.

Imperialism's "economic war" dominates through sanctions, the financialisation of economies, austerity and privatisation policies, maximum commodification, the weakening of public policies and powers. Imperialism fuels the arms race and competition between multinationals for the control of resources and wealth, endless conflicts and wars, the long-term destruction of entire ecosystems. This has led to the systematic reduction of working people's standard of living causing suffering and poverty for billions of human beings.

Global capitalism is the antithesis of peace. Internationalism has the political potential for citizens and peoples, the basis of strengthened

cooperation, new global solidarities in the development of rights and freedoms, social and economic progress and development for all peoples, human and social emancipation, and the safeguarding of the planet and ecosystems.

## **Refugees**

Unauthorised travel to Australia is driven by the needs of people fleeing war and persecution in their homeland. They are often doing so as a result of US-led wars in which Australia is a participant. Australia has a moral responsibility to increase its intake of asylum seekers and do all it can to provide them with a new start here.

Labor and Liberal alike have imposed mandatory detention in conditions that are nothing short of torture and barbarism. Children are subjected to physical and sexual abuse; they are denied a normal childhood and access to the necessary medical services. Many of them will never recover from the mental and physical impact of their indefinite incarceration. Numerous reports from international and national bodies have found Australia to be in breach of its international human rights and refugee obligations.

Asylum seekers should be quickly processed in a humanitarian manner and then released into the community with the necessary support. Not only is this the humanitarian thing to do but it would cost a fraction of what the government is wasting now and would see new refugees making an important contribution to society. It is costing more to incarcerate refugees on Nauru or Manus Island than it would to provide each of them with a new house in rural Australia each year.

## **Imperialism**

US-led imperialism is facing serious internal and external challenges but remains a formidable military force. In desperation it is embarking on one military adventure after another. The Australian ruling class is a willing and enthusiastic participant and ally to United States imperialism. This has led to the establishment of a number of key US military bases

on Australian territory and is reflected in the increasing militarisation of Australia, escalating military budgets and the subservience of successive Australian governments in following the military dictates of US imperialism in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean regions.

Australia's increase in military spending is of an aggressive, rather than defensive nature. In 2019 Australia was ranked 13th with 1.4 per cent of global military spending for just 0.3 per cent of the global population. Australia has an annual defence budget of \$44 billion. The military is the largest user of fossil fuels in Australia. The Australian government spends about \$3.5 billion on environmental protection compared with the \$44 billion annual spend on the military. Australian military spending is around two percent of Gross Domestic Product in line with previous instructions from the US. It is set to rise to between three and four per cent following the announcements that were made as part of the AUKUS agreement. Australia exports arms to nations that are ravaged by armed violence or are contributing to war-induced humanitarian disasters, including the countries bombing Yemen.

Any laws that allow foreign military forces to be called in against “public disturbances” (i.e. strikes or protest marches), such as the *Defence Legislation Amendment (Enhancement of Defence Force Response to Emergencies) Bill 2020*, must be rolled back.

Australian government compliance with the United States' foreign policy has also been accompanied by an offensive on our domestic democratic rights and led to Australia's civic structures being undermined. Australia's intelligence organisations and police now have extensive powers to detain and question innocent people. “Anti-terror” laws extend the power of the state, removing long held fundamental rights such as the right to remain silent, the right to see evidence, the right of a detained person to be present in court, and the right to freedom of speech during and after detention.

The Australian government's foreign and diplomatic policies are largely determined by US strategic goals, making the whole country a US military base and a launching pad for US wars of aggression in the region. Australia is host to over 50 US military bases and facilities. Furthermore,

due to the policy of interoperability between Australian and US military hardware and software (requiring US technicians at all Australian military bases), the autonomy of the Australian military is in doubt. The Pine Gap base has directed drone strikes in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, while other bases carry out widespread electronic surveillance of ordinary citizens. The Australian government's role as the US deputy-sheriff is important for the US' continuing economic and military domination in the Asia Pacific.

The role as deputy-sheriff manifests itself domestically as inordinate spending on the Australian military. This military spending is environmentally destructive, creates few jobs and costs lives. Internationally it leads to the participation of Australian troops and supplies in imperialist ventures across the globe.

The most significant aspect of imperialism in the current period is the growing mobilisation for war with China. The US has been undertaking its "pivot to Asia" by building up its forces in the region and pushing a narrative of China as an aggressive force that must be 'contained'. Australia has offered its support in this build to war through the deployment of naval assets in the South China Sea and the hosting of military installations. These are important lynchpins of the US plan. Australia's membership of the Quad, AUKUS, Five Eyes military alliances, and the ANZUS Treaty all serve US imperialism's agenda and weaken what remains of Australia's sovereignty. The Australian media has dutifully reproduced the US narrative of China as a 'rogue actor' and is increasingly aggressive in its calls for action against China.

The militarisation of the Australian manufacturing industry continues in partnership with US weapons companies that are also funders of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute. ASPI in turn plays a central role in disseminating anti-Chinese disinformation.

We demand Australia's removal from the ANZUS treaty and other military alliances, and an end to military ties with the US regime.

The Australian capitalist ruling class is divided over China. Those sections that see that their economic future lies in trading with China are

showing signs of backing off from blind subservience to US imperialism. They see no benefit in a war with China. This illustrates the role that mutually beneficial economic cooperation and integration can play in preventing war and maintaining peace. It is imperative that the CPA continues to exploit the splits in the Australian ruling class to agitate for peace.

The CPA must continue to work in peace groups raising awareness about these issues and build alliances exposing capitalism's links to war and imperialism.

Cooperation, which can only be achieved through negotiations, must be prioritised over confrontation. Our true national security is derived from health, equity, solidarity, and self-determination. Nuclear weapons must be abolished to ensure a safer, healthier world for all, and the CPA should link the abolition of nuclear weapons to debates about climate action. The CPA demands the Australian government signs and ratifies the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. There must be a global struggle for the universal provision of health and education and eradication of poverty.

The Communist Party of Australia calls for an independent, non-aligned foreign policy. The CPA must prioritise public presence at rallies and demonstrations for peace, at anti-imperialist rallies and demonstrations, and at events in solidarity with socialist and anti-imperialist countries. It must continue to build its networks in these areas and argue that such solidarity builds peace and is part of the anti-capitalist struggle.

## **Party priorities**

The Party continues to support progressive movements nationally and locally around such issues as the climate emergency and contemporary anti-racism movements. Branches have been initiating and responding to their immediate circumstances, playing leading roles within local and national organisations, and developing community outreach through public functions. The Party headquarters in Sydney has been used to coordinate broader actions and as a safe haven for protesters.

Nationally there have been poster paste-up initiatives, especially for the right to strike. There was a successful banner drop campaign in capital cities in support of unions. The May 1 Movement in Sydney also had a brief manifestation in Western Australia. The Health, Workers' Rights & Socialism Campaign was initiated this year. The development of a National Party Schools program has been successful. The leadership role should remain centralised, but the Party's national schools should be conducted in state and district centres. Curricula should include the study of past Communist practice in this country to gather an understanding of the ways in which the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism have been, and can be, put into practice by building on particular local characteristics.

The Party has two major priorities in the coming period. Building our numbers and developing working class leaders will strengthen the Party unity and activity that is essential to develop the class struggle, and to build the movement to challenge the power of monopoly capital. We are committed to fighting for workers' rights, democratic and working-class internationalism, the preservation of peace and the environment with the perspective of socialism.

The Party has been paying attention to education during the last period. The reproduction of the textbook *Communist Theory and Practice of Trade Unionism* by Lance Sharkey is a positive step forward in focusing our work. The study of this book is a priority of our party.

National party education to deal with the three sources and components parts of Marxism must be organised and sponsored by local branches as part of the national school program. The delivery of education within the party needs to be based on development of Marxism-Leninism and the necessity of local application.

## **Building the Party**

The aim of the Communist Party of Australia is the establishment of a socialist society that is fairer, co-operative, and genuinely democratic, where the working class has state power. Party members must study and

engage with material reality and apply Marxist-Leninist thought to it. The Party must build and strengthen the struggles of the people. It is this crystallised experience that develops a revolutionary party deeply entrenched amongst the people.

Education has a vital role in improving our ideological level in the Party through branch education, self-guided study, and national schools. This, in turn, will improve both discipline and the practical work inside and outside the Party. We must develop effective Party structures in adherence with the Constitution, especially the understanding of the principles of democratic centralism as core to our Party structure and work. Theory should not be viewed in isolation but must go hand in hand with practice. To build the Party we must win credibility and trust of workers in the leadership of the struggle. Party branches need to identify and create opportunities to develop branch cadre – finding opportunities for them to take responsibility, do research, lead, and to eventually train cadre themselves. The development of effective branch cadre can be achieved through education.

Learning the history of past struggles, how to apply Marxism-Leninism to issues facing us today as well as how to organise effectively will create disciplined cadre that can carry out the tasks of the Party.

Unity is based on knowledge of what we are trying to achieve. In developing leadership, we need to develop our own sense of humility and be prepared to learn, study and practice. We must avoid the pitfall of arrogance that sees us possessing the answers and instead practice fraternity with our own comrades and those we seek to work with. This means learning from them as they learn from us.

Discipline is critical in all our work, according to the guiding principle of democratic centralism. All comrades must abide by Party policies and decisions. Collective methods of leadership must go hand in hand with individual responsibility to carry out decisions. Working through branches and looking after our structures are critical to this. Our priorities must be carried out according to concrete targets and strategies, and progress should be periodically reviewed and evaluated.

Party members must also be activists in non-Party organisations, most importantly trade unions, to strengthen and further the aims of those organisations and introduce relevant Party policies to such organisations in an appropriate manner.

Campaigns must be developed with the expectation that every member contributes to Party work. The Party's leadership capability must be developed and proven by putting it into practice in the people's struggles.

The Communist Party of Australia is a working-class party based on the understanding that the working class is the only force capable of engaging in and leading other social forces in the necessary actions to take political power from the capitalist ruling class, establish the power of the working class, and achieve the revolutionary changes necessary to build a socialist society. The Party has no aims separate from those of the working class and all exploited people.

## **Movement Building**

Systemic change is urgently needed, and complacency is no longer an option. With the looming crisis of climate change we have 30 years for decisive action and that means we have only 10 years to build the Party into a strong revolutionary force. All Party comrades must mobilise, be active and recruit.

Campaigns must be built around assuring human survival by participation in peace and environmental protection campaigns. Such campaigns must be carried out according to concrete targets and strategies, and progress should be periodically reviewed and evaluated.

We must campaign for class-based and action-oriented trade unions with demands for the legalisation of the right for workers to withdraw their labour, the prohibition of employers' right to lockout employees from their place of work and rights for workplace union representatives including right of entry to any workplace where a worker needs representation. Trade union and other democratic rights must be defended, and all members must join and become active in their unions.

In expanding the Party's influence in the trade unions, the relation of this work to the Party should materialise in the development of industry branches. We should concentrate on industries where we already have a stronghold, help members get work in these sectors, and aim to build industry branches. Such gains would allow the Party, in various centres, to focus efforts in specific industries (e.g. Maritime branch on Maritime industry struggles). Industry branches facilitate a direct connection between the Party and the working class.

We must campaign to stop Australia being used as an economic and military base for US imperialism. This must become and remain a priority for Communist Party members. The CPA fights for an independent and non-aligned foreign policy. This means an end to the ANZUS Treaty and other military alliances, and the expulsion of US and other imperialist military bases from Australian soil.

We must campaign against military spending. We must demand the redirection of funding from submarines and missiles towards ventilators, hospital beds and personal protective equipment for our frontline workers; from strike fighter jets towards building surge capacity in our hospitals for the looming crisis in the health system. Now is the time to use our taxes more wisely. Taxpayers' money is needed to feed and house people, and to ensure that they get the healthcare they need, when they need it.

While it's imperialists that plan war, it's the workers who die in them. In the coming period the CPA has an important task in opposing Australia's imperialist ventures, opposing the build to war, and working to expel foreign military presence in the country.

Australian military contributions and weapons exports have an oversized impact in pushing the forces of imperialism forward, and bring nothing but death and misery for the people of the global south while depriving Australians of funding better spent on health, education, and infrastructure.

The CPA must oppose military deployments and weapons exports at each opportunity. In regard to foreign military presence, the CPA must con-

tinue to work in the campaign to have US bases closed, joint exercises cancelled, and our alliance with the US torn up.

Bases such as Pine Gap and Marine Force Darwin are key aspects of US imperialist projects, and are relied upon in their planning but bring nothing to the Australian people other than placing us in harm's way and putting targets on our back.

The CPA must push for Australia's foreign policy to end the alliance with the US and replace it with a genuinely independent foreign policy based on mutual respect, equality, and peaceful co-existence with other nations.

Finally, the CPA has an important role to play in opposing the mobilisation for war against China and building up a genuine desire for peace amongst the Australian working class. Beyond being an imperialist attack directed at a socialist country, war will only bring death and destruction to the people of the Pacific and beyond. There can be no benefit for the Australian working class in being part of such a war and a movement of workers opposed to war needs to be built up. This task is made all the more pressing in that this war is highly likely to involve the use of nuclear weapons. A nuclear war has no winners.

In pursuing these aims, the CPA must continue to work in peace groups and trade unions to oppose war and militarism. The CPA must continue to promote anti-imperialism and show workers that this push for war and military spending is an intrinsic element of capitalism and imperialism and comes at the cost of social programs at home.

The continued failings of the Australian Government to address any real structural changes on climate change in this period show where their priorities lie, in the hands of Capitalists. Most recently the federal government, at the behest of these capitalists running the fossil fuel industries, have spruiked an energy program of a "gas led recovery". This "recovery" is a scheme by which the federal government will funnel public money into the hands of fossil fuel giants for a token number of jobs.

In this past period, we have been involved in pushing for better climate action through our publications, through attending climate rallies and pro-

tests. There has been a groundswell of support for climate protest movements as new forces like the Student Strike for Climate have created new grassroots organising spaces not fully attached to the older NGO groups.

Our members in their trade unions have also pushed for more work to be done by those unions in planning and pushing for a just transition away from those pollutant-heavy jobs and moving workers in a just transition into green jobs. Continued work in the unions by members of the CPA to win their unions to the Party's position on fighting climate change and achieving a just transition for all workers is a decisive means for the CPA to have an impact in this area of struggle.

To ensure that activity is escalated we must deeply analyse and understand the dangers of misinformation by the media and others to divide and confuse. Care must be taken to ensure we do not see another generation of people become disillusioned and demobilised by ambiguous or confusing messaging. Demands need to be scientifically well-founded.

The systemic roots of the problem must be made clear to the people. We need to be able to explain clearly to raise awareness and develop a correct analysis in the unions and other progressive movements. Our new Party materials will be essential to this task. We need to be at the forefront of the struggles for the defence of the environment and its protection against predatory exploitation.

Within the movement, it is our role to advance the necessary demand for an end to the capitalist system, and an end to wars that see the US military emerge as the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in history. The demands must include the redistribution of wealth to combat global inequality created by climate change. We need to make these connections for people and be prepared to rebut false solutions such as "green" capitalism which sets a lucrative foundation to legitimise the further impoverishment and worsening of the working-class life conditions with respect to food, transport, leisure, housing or heating. Being "green" without demanding the overthrow of capitalism channels the desire for social change in a way that when it encounters capital's drive for profit it becomes impotent.

The history of the coming decades has to be one of massive environmental struggles, alongside other progressive movements to save humanity from exploitation and oppression.

The Party has produced the publications *Good Planets are Hard to Find*, *Hot Earth* and in 2020 *Fighting for the Future* was finalised. These publications should become an important tool for Party branches in the campaign on the climate crisis.

Humanity is living in very challenging times. The crisis of capitalist overproduction is unsustainable. The 2020 pandemic has exacerbated the already deep economic crisis and it is the workers that the capitalists want to pay for it.

## **Elections**

Pursuing elections in capitalist society is only one form of struggle for a communist party and it must not come at the detriment of other areas of work; the revolution cannot be won at the ballot box. It can only be won by our work on the ground.

The field of elections presents opportunities for the Communist Party of Australia in the coming period. By running as communists in elections we gain the ability to spread information about communist policies to the wider population and present an alternative to the workers of Australia. Genuine alternatives to the prevailing capitalist system are few and far between in the media and absent on the ballot paper in Australia so there is a void for communists to enter into. Due to the way the Australian electoral system is constructed there is the potential for smaller parties to achieve success as the system of preferential voting removes any concern over 'splitting the vote' of progressive voters, although the recent increase in the number of members required to 1,500 to have a party's name on the ballot paper will make it more difficult.

There are several avenues for reaching this registration goal. The most obvious and most reliable is by recruiting members to the CPA as these new members can be asked to register their electoral support. Fellow

travellers or ideologically sympathetic individuals that are encountered in social movement or trade union work are also a source of electoral registrations. Although they may not be Marxist-Leninists they may still be willing to support the Communists running in elections, and there is the benefit that they are known to CPA members and have an existing relationship with the CPA.

The field of local government elections also deserves particular attention for the Party for several reasons. Primarily it is because the areas of responsibility for local councils and the change councillors can affect are closely linked to the daily aspects of the lives of workers like community services, infrastructure, and recreation. Thus, in this regard communist campaigns can reach workers on a level they are intimately familiar with and can relate to, allowing them to begin understanding communist policies and ideology through aspects of their regular lives. If councillors are elected, they can represent the interests of workers by promoting communist policies in their council that affect the daily lives of workers. In addition to this, local council elections have a lower barrier for entry than state or federal elections and allow the Party to concentrate its limited resources in one location rather than dispersing them far and wide.

In pursuing local council elections, while the exact and precise strategy cannot be laid out word for word in this document, there is general and preparatory work that the Party can consider for the coming period. The immediate task is for district and state level organisations to begin the task of identifying and considering council areas that are suitable for communist campaigns. While they may not be immediately obvious, there are factors that will elevate some areas, such as the distribution of party members and resources, the presence of non-party individuals and organisations willing to help CPA campaigns, and previous experiences in the area Auburn (Sydney) and Vincent South and Balga (Perth). Serious effort should be made towards identifying significant local issues in that area (e.g. shortage of housing, unpopular developments, lack of facilities) and begin working with the community on these issues.

## Conclusion

The period since the 13<sup>th</sup> Congress was marked by four years of the Trump Administration, instability and unpredictability in international relations. Trump ran the Administration like it was a private business. His policies on immigrants and refugees, including children, were cruel to say the least. He reinforced the criminal blockade on Cuba and began a trade war with China. His views were seen as endorsement for right-wing ultranationalists who rioted and took over the US Congress on 6th January 2021. His successor President Biden created lots of expectations among the people of the US and many others around the world. However, it soon became evident that under the Biden Administration there was little or no change in the benefit of the peoples of the world. President Biden resumed a number of the Obama's policies, in particular the Pivot in the Asia-Pacific. This means up to 60 per cent or more of the US war resources will be concentrated in our area on a warpath against China. The AUKUS and QUAD military alliances play an important role in the US's war plans.

Since the 13<sup>th</sup> Congress the CPA experienced some internal difficulties that were swiftly overcome by the Party's leadership. The growing number of Party members both young and old has created good conditions for further development but it demands more attention in education and development of cadre. The Party's methods of work need to be passed on to new comrades to consolidate the numerical growth into qualitative growth and development.

The collective and individual study of the basic Party documents, Program, Constitution and this Political Resolution are important steps which together with the mentorship of Party elders will contribute to building the Party for a Socialist Future.

The key tasks for the following period are the building of the Party and its influence amongst the working class. Everything we do in the next four years must contribute to building and consolidating the growth and role of the Party of the working-class.

The struggle for the environment, for peace and against war, Aboriginal land rights, and workers' rights are essential campaigns in which all Party members must be involved. Recruitment of new Party members will come from our visibility on the ground.

Party activity in all major centres of the country will result in gaining the confidence and trust of workers and people in general to see the Communist Party of Australia as the powerful weapon of workers in struggle.

As we move closer to a post pandemic reality in which the ruling class will continue to lay the weight of the crisis on the backs of workers our campaign to ensure workers won't pay will become urgent.

The government will continue waging war on workers and pass on the cost of war, the pandemic, and the capitalist crises. To help combat this the role of communists is essential for the development of class and political consciousness.

We must win the fight for a better world, for the defence of the environment and peace for a socialist future.

Justice is on our side and together with working people and other sectors of society we will overcome.

**Workers of all countries unite!**

**Long Live the Communist Party of Australia!**



