CPA
The Workers' Weekly
Guardian
#2151 30 June 2025
$5
COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA
We acknowledge the sovereignty of the First Peoples of Australia.
www.cpa.org.au
ISSN 1325-295X

Stop the war on Iran
No to the law of the jungle
Respect for International Law

The Communist Party of Australia condemns the unprovoked US unlawful bombing of nuclear facilities in Iran. The attacks occurred despite the lack of evidence that Iran's nuclear program was developing nuclear weapons. Iran has been clear that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes and it has no intention to acquire nuclear weapons. Iran is also a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the NPT.

It is clear that complex problems facing humanity today cannot be solved by bombs and violence. Instead, US-Israeli aggressions are contributing to the already massive toll of death, injury, rubble and misery throughout the region. The attacks on Iran were done with the usual rhetoric and lies used as excuses for the military action and they must be condemned.

Australia must condemn the US attacks on Iran and do something practical to back up its call for de-escalation. The Australian government should not endorse the law of the jungle but demand adherence to the UN Charter.

To do this Australia must immediately:

1. Cut all military and trade ties with Israel
2. End the use of Pine Gap and Exmouth bases by US forces
3. Australia must stay out of yet another US war in the Middle East

The Communist Party of Australia recognises that Australia is so deeply embedded in the US military strategy that it will not readily accede to the above demands. In this scenario we call on all Australians to continue to campaign against US-Israel genocide on Gaza, for an independent Palestinian state, and for peace.

Hands off the Middle East!

Communist Party of Australia, CPA
International Department
22nd June 2025

Iran Resists

Ali Abutalebi

(editor's note: this piece was written just before the US bombing of Iran)

19 June marked the seventh day of Israeli strikes against Iran, with developments appearing to diverge from White House expectations.

Following targeted attacks on senior military commanders and nuclear scientists, along with strikes on nuclear and military facilities, Iran has regained operational control. The country launched its 'True Promise 3' operation without delay.

After initial disruption in the opening hours, Iran appointed replacement commanders and enhanced the effectiveness of its air defence systems. Iranian authorities also implemented security measures to identify suspected infiltrators who had allegedly used drones and other small aircraft to conduct covert operations within the country.

US and Israeli authorities likely did not anticipate an immediate collapse of the Iranian government through airstrikes alone. While both governments have made strategic miscalculations, it would be surprising if they genuinely believed a state could be toppled solely through aerial bombardment.

The apparent strategy seemed to rely on triggering civil unrest among opposition groups following the initial government disruption. This would have potentially created openings for trained mercenaries to initiate a secondary phase of operations. However, this scenario failed to materialise.

Instead, the majority of Iranians, particularly after reports emerged of civilian casualties from the attacks, responded with anger and solidarity. The civilian losses appear to have awakened a sense of national unity and patriotism among the population.

Trump's contradictory statements can be understood within this context of strategic miscalculation, alongside pressure from the Zionist authorities, as evidenced in social media posts and public commentary.

Trump's messaging has been inconsistent: one day stating he has no plans for US involvement in the conflict, the next threatening to consider declaring war against Iran unless it accepts 'unconditional surrender'.

On the other side, the televised message from Iran's Supreme Leader was clear and definitive:"We do not accept imposed "peace", just as we did not accept imposed war, as we demonstrated during the Iraqi Ba'ath regime's invasion of Iran."

This stance is reflected in the Iranian armed forces' retaliation and the positions taken by senior political officials.

Perhaps this explains why International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Grossi acknowledged that they have 'no proof of Iran's active plan to build nuclear weapons'.

Notably, Tulsi Gabbard, Director of National Intelligence, had previously made similar statements, though Trump recently indicated he dismisses them, saying he doesn't care about "what she said". This echoes the pretext used to invade Iraq in 2003: claims of 'weapons of mass destruction' that proved to be unfounded.

Three points are clear:

First, Israel is not operating independently. The Israeli state functions as a settler colonial entity representing Western imperial interests in West Asia.

Second, the United States disregards international law, evidence, and public opinion when it calculates that the benefits of military action outweigh the costs.

Third, and most importantly in my view, this is not a religious or regional conflict between two competing powers. This represents a new phase of the 'New Middle East' plan, as reflected in the cover of a recent Time magazine issue. The fragmentation of Iran is a main part of this plan.From this perspective, this constitutes a full-scale confrontation between the Global North and Global South, with Iran positioned on the front lines of Western imperialist aggression against national liberation movements throughout the Global South.

Based on this analysis, all revolutionary forces must unite behind this slogan: 'Hands Off Iran!'

And a message to our friends around the world: Iran resists, to the last person, the last bullet, the last breath.

People's Dispatch

Joint Statement of Communist and Workers' Parties

The struggle of the people against imperialism must be strengthened!

The Communist and Workers' Parties signing this Joint Statement strongly condemn the US attack on Iran, which escalates the military offensive already launched by Israel.

After Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria and the ongoing genocide in Palestine, the USA and its allies are now shedding the blood of yet another country in the Middle East. This imperialist aggression is plunging people into war across a wider region and threatening to destroy humanity as a whole.

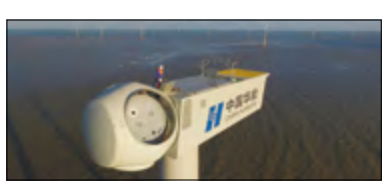
The Communist and Workers' Parties are demanding an immediate end to the escalation of the war against Iran by the USA, NATO and Israel. We also call on people to strengthen their struggle against war, foreign military bases, troop deployments abroad, military equipment and nuclear weapons.

Solidarity with the people of Iran, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and all other peoples in the region must be strengthened.

(co-signed by the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) and the Communist Party of Australia)

6

CFMEU QLD – 2 days of marches & rallies

9

Three Aspects of Socialist 'Productivity'

The *Guardian* has a podcast
Search for "Communist *Guardian* Podcast"

Guardian

Issue 2151 30 June 2025

Hard to hide

There have been a lot of protests in Israel recently, including demonstrations against Prime Minister Netanyahu for his perceived corruption, and because he seems more interested in prosecuting a war than in getting Israeli hostages back. Lately there's a new kind of demonstration, a silent one. People are marching carrying photographs of children. These are a few of the many children Israel has killed in its attacks on Palestinians in Gaza.

Israeli media apparently don't cover these demonstrations much, but word is getting out. Israel has killed more than 17,000 children. All most Israelis see in their media is Israeli hostages and pictures of injured soldiers, but the demonstrations continue. 17,000 and counting, is a lot of deaths to overlook. One Israeli at one such demonstration put things very clearly: "We are now avenging. It's a revenge."

The apartheid state of Israel has been very good at hiding what it's doing. For decades there has been a strategic use of the Nazi holocaust as a catch-all excuse, justifying anything Israel did in the name of survival. That horrendous crime, and centuries of anti-semitism have been used as ammunition to justify any crimes the Israelis themselves carried out.

Israel has also had a lot of cover from compliant governments. It suits the USA and the interests of the capitalists who run it to have a client state in the Middle East that depends on the US the way Israel does. Other US client states fall into line like well-trained dogs. That's why we get the repetitive cries of "Israel has the right to defend itself" – true inasmuch as any state has a right to defend itself, but nauseating when used to defend a state which is practicing apartheid, genocide and ethnic cleansing the way Israel is. The UK and Australia have been particularly submissive here, with Penny Wong meekly parroting Israel's line that Iran could have nuclear weapons in weeks.

In 2003, Wong said "I say suspicion is not enough. To justify going to war we need more than suspicion. What sort of world would we live in if suspicion alone was justification for participation in unilateral military action outside the auspices of the UN?"

That was 22 years ago. Wong wasn't Foreign Minister then. Now we live in the sort of world where Wong repeats Netanyahu's falsehoods about Iranian nuclear weapons being "weeks away." Even Trump's advisors know this to be untrue. Wong and Albanese know it, but they toe the line.

Other states like Cuba and South Africa are more independent. Cuba knows US imperialism from the receiving end, while South Africa's people have experience of apartheid. So it is that Cuba's President marches in demonstrations in support of Palestine, while South Africa has brought a case against the Israeli genocide to the International Criminal Court.

Israel can't hide forever. The rest of the world is waking up to what it's doing.

People who excuse what Israel is doing like to say the situation is "complicated." The people carrying the pictures know it isn't. They're surrounded by Israel's propaganda, and they still know the truth.

Israel is killing children. In Gaza. On the West Bank. Right now.

Happy 140th birthday, Public Service Union

A thousand public servants crammed into the Athenaeum Hall in Collins Street, Melbourne after work on June 17, 1885, to form a union which, it was hoped, "would benefit all and abolish grievances." The union already had 1,900 members prior to this first general meeting.

In the early days of the Union claims included, the establishment of an independent Appeals Board, protection for temporary officers, long service leave, a living wage – an adult male rate 21 yrs – then 26 yrs, and sick leave.

- In 1916 the union campaigned for and won the passage of the Political Rights Bill ensuring it was no longer a criminal offence for public employees to chair and speak out at meetings, ask questions of political candidates, or to join a political party.
- In 1918 we took the first step towards gaining equal pay for equal work when a case was won to improve the pay of women teachers from 1/3 of the male rate to 4/5.
- In the 1920's they won fortnightly pays, ceasing the payment of public employees on an annual stipend.
- In 1926 Superannuation was first established as an entitlement by the Union and backdated to 1924.
- Paid sick leave of 6 days per year were won in 1926.
- In 1936 the Union won its members the right to cumulative sick leave and the principle of a Higher Duties Allowance.
- In 1937 the Union fought for a 5-day working week.
- In 1951 members' entitlements to annual leave were extended to 3 weeks.
- In 1969 the union finally achieved its equal pay claim - introducing 85% of the male wage as of 5th October 1969 for female rates of pay and 100% from 1st January 1972.
- In the early 1970s, paid maternity leave was achieved.
- In 1973 the union succeeded in increasing annual leave to 4 weeks.
- By the early 1990s, all that had been achieved was under threat with the election of the radical conservative Kennett Government with individual contracts of employment [Victorian] introduced, State Awards abolished, annual leave loading removed, access to arbitration of disputes requiring employer consent introduced, 30,000 jobs cut, and Superannuation benefits reduced as member contributions increased.
- On 11 December 1996, the Australian Industrial Relations Commission delivered its arbitrated decision establishing an Interim [VPS] Federal Award which included retrospective annual leave loading to 4 March 1994, and a 10% wage increase with 7% backdated to 25 November 1995. Victorian ceded its IR system to the Commonwealth.
- More recently members entitlements received a boost to include paid superannuation on all parental leave and paid leave for reproductive rights.

Now affiliated with the Commonwealth Public Sector Union, the union in Victoria keeps fighting for members' rights. ✪

Guardian as campaigning tool

***Guardian* regular Ron Hall attached a PDF of this paper to every email sent to every member of the South Australian legislative assembly in protest against a planned visit by the Israeli ambassador to the South Australian parliament. The visit didn't go ahead.**

Ron received only automated responses, with one exception. That says a lot about how South Australia's state MPs treat their constituents. We'll never know what, if any difference attaching the *Guardian* made, but we salute Ron's use of it. ✪

Something to say?

Write to the Editor!

editor@cpa.org.au

Tudeh Party of Iran and CP of Israel

Stop the Killing! End the War Now!

The Tudeh Party of Iran and the Communist Party of Israel strongly condemn the continuous Israeli aggression in the region, and its latest attack on Iran which is in direct violation of international law. We demand an immediate halt to all military action resulting in significant civilian casualties on both sides.

The crimes committed by the right wing reactionary government of Benjamin Netanyahu in Gaza and the West Bank with the support of US Imperialism, the UK and allies in the EU have not only resulted in more than **55,000 Palestinians losing their lives and over 18,000 children** being killed but has also given the Israeli government a green light for further aggression against countries of the region, with the aim of redrawing the map of the Middle East in accordance with the strategic goals of US imperialism. This is a government whose leaders have rightly been accused of crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court.

While we are witnessing war and destruction in Iran and Israel, we also warn against the exploitation of the situation to intensify and continue the inhumane suffering and oppression of the Palestinian people in Gaza and the occupied West Bank. We call upon the international community to take real and concrete actions to prevent further disaster to the Palestinian people and to the peoples of the region.

Recognise a Palestinian state now! **End the genocide in Gaza.** Only imperialism, its client forces, reactionaries, and the ruling dictatorship benefit from tensions and war.

Israel and the US – after Iraq, Libya, and Syria – are now determined to undermine Iranian sovereignty and will not stop until all regimes in the region are coerced under the same project of imperialism and hegemony in the Middle East that aims at subjugating the people's will and their right to self-determination.

We express our fundamental opposition to all nuclear armament programs in the Middle East and worldwide. The road to stop the nuclear race in the Middle East does not pass through an aggressive war on Iran, but rather goes via demilitarisation of the entire region of nuclear weapons, and the signing up of all its countries, including Israel, to a non-proliferation of nuclear weapons treaty.

We call upon on all progressive and freedom-loving forces in Israel, Iran, and the world to unite in condemning this blatant and brutal violation of international law and to focus all efforts on prevention of a far-reaching, destructive military conflict and the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

The global public must go beyond mere concern expressed by the UN Secretary-General over Israel's attack on Iran. All international mechanisms available through the United Nations and its Security Council must be used to stop the region from plunging into a catastrophic far-reaching war.

STOP the war and military escalation in the Middle East now!

End the war on Gaza, recognise a Palestinian state!

CC of the Communist Party of Israel

CC of the Tudeh Party of Iran

Australian Services Union campaigns for safety, against new KPIs

FK

Introducing new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) can be a way of jacking up workloads without consulting the workers. The Australian Services Union (ASU) isn't having it.

Recently, the ASU was involved in a campaign where workers had been told by management that they would be temporarily increasing workloads by 3-6 times the standard requirements in order to bring a backlog of work down to sustainable figures. They also told the team that this would be commencing in two business days.

The impacted workers were employed by a large company and handled customer complaints regarding the services of other companies. It's a high conflict job.

ASU delegates and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) sounded the alarm and organised an emergency union meeting on-site to raise complaints about the health and safety risks associated with the company's plans.

The ASU immediately attended the worksite using their powers under the OHS Act and interviewed the workers who would be impacted. They heard that workers were concerned about the lack of time they had to deal with their current workload in anticipation of a major increase to their KPIs, current levels of work being barely sustainable, and fear about being able to take leave.

Delegates and the Health & Safety Rep (HSR) brainstormed safe ways to tackle the backlog the company was so concerned about. The group devised a proposal for workers to be offered overtime that could be taken voluntarily. This would ensure that workers are able to choose whether to take on higher KPIs.

The ASU attended an urgent meeting with management and put forth the proposal from the delegate and HSR team. The ASU flagged that section 35 of the Occupational Health and Saftey Act required the company to adequately and meaningfully consult with the both the workforce and HSRs if the company was proposing changes to work performed that may affect the health and safety of staff. Penalties apply for non-compliance.

Following pressure from the ASU delegates and staff, the company agreed to adopt voluntary overtime to manage the backlog.

Having a trained HSR in this workplace alongside the delegate group was critical for this outcome.

Make sure there's an HSR at your workplace!

Many workers don't realise that the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic) actually creates an entitlement for workers to implement a system of worker representation. This is a system that can be incredibly powerful and effective. Instead of being stuck with having to raise issues directly with the boss or HR, if you have a workplace with a well-supported and trained HSR, you can raise it with them instead.

HSRs are elected by workers to help raise and resolve OHS issues in the workplace and are able to access comprehensive paid training.

NSW: miners locked out

US coal giant Peabody has locked out miners for over a week at their Metropolitan Mine near Helensburgh NSW, in retaliation for union action that stopped work for a single hour.

Mining and Energy Union members at the South Coast mine engaged in one hour shift stoppages in response to Peabody's lack of progress in negotiations, which also include a blatant attack on job security.

In retaliation, Peabody has notified Mining and Energy Union members that they will be locked out without pay from 5:30pm on Wednesday, 18 June until 5:30am on Thursday, 26 June.

Mark Jenkins, Vice President of the MEU South West District, said that Peabody's lockout is a harsh response aimed at coercing MEU members into giving up their bargaining position.

"Peabody's move to lock out MEU members for over a week is nothing but an attempt to punish and intimidate workers for exercising their industrial rights.

"Through several years of low wage growth compared to high inflation and cost of living pressures, workers at Helensburgh have been continually setting production records at the mine for their employer. Now, they deserve to see some of the benefit that they were promised in the last agreement."

The lockout notice came less than two hours after a Fair Work Commission-facilitated conciliation meeting on the dispute, which was attended by MEU representatives in good faith.

Jenkins said: "That well-resourced multinational employers are able to deny workers a full week's wages in retaliation for comparatively minor industrial action is an indictment of the disproportionality available to employers under the current laws.

"Peabody needs to drop the Trump-style bullying tactics and engage constructively with MEU members demands.

"Helensburgh miners aren't intimidated by Peabody's heavy-handed strategy; it has only strengthened their resolve to secure a better deal for their families and workmates."

Mining and Energy Union

Members of the Communist Party of Australia and of the Australia-China Friendship Society WA joined a commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the defeat of Japanese occupation of China. The event was hosted by Chinese Consul-General Long Dingbin at his residence in Perth on Saturday 21 June 2025.

Seven in ten renters afraid to ask for repairs

Almost seven in ten people who rent privately worry about asking for repairs in case they face a rent increase, according to research by the ACOSS/UNSW Sydney-led Poverty and Inequality Partnership, National Shelter and the National Association of Renter Organisations (NARO).

The study, which surveyed 1,019 people who rent in the private sector across Australia, also found a third of renters would be unable to afford their rent if it went up by 5%.

The report, titled Rights at risk: Rising rents and repercussions, found half of renters (50%) live in homes that need repairs and one in 10 need urgent repairs (10%).

The survey found almost one in three rental homes have pests such as cockroaches and ants, almost one in four have leaks or flooding, and one in five have issues with hot water, while almost one in five bathrooms have mould.

The report notes that rents have surged by a staggering 47 per cent in the past five years and calls for nationwide rental increase limits.

It finds that 68 per cent of renters fear that asking for a repair would lead to a rent increase, 56% fear it would lead to eviction and 52 per cent fear being placed on a blacklist that would prevent them renting another property.

The figures are worse for renters in disadvantaged groups – especially renters who are unemployed, renters with low education and renters with disabilities.

ACOSS CEO Dr Cassandra Goldie AO said the research highlighted the serious failings of Australia's housing market.

"It is completely unacceptable that people in the private rental market are nervous about asking for essential repairs because they fear a rent increase or eviction notice," Dr Goldie said.

"Everyone deserves to be able to live in secure homes without the constant fear of losing their home. We urge state and federal governments to work together to cap rent increases, abolish no-grounds evictions and boost social housing to ensure people on low incomes have safe, secure and affordable homes."

Lead author of the report, Dr Chris Martin, Senior Fellow at UNSW's CityFutures Research Centre, said: "This research highlights the difficulties faced by many people renting privately in a flawed system. The median rent for new tenancies has risen a massive 47 per cent over the past five years, creating an atmosphere of worry as the majority of renters (68%) express concerns that requesting repairs will lead to increased rent. Even worse, our research found that people who are unemployed or who have disabilities experience more rent increases and are more concerned about asserting their rights than the general rental population."

Leo Patterson Ross, spokesperson for the National Association of Renters' Organisations, said: "This report validates what renters across Australia already know. Despite extensive rental laws on paper, this report exposes the stark gap between legislation and reality for Australian renters. Weak oversight of rental costs, property standards, and industry practices have denied renters the benefits of a safe, stable and healthy home.

"Federal, state and territory governments across Australia must act to empower renters through better funding tenant advocacy, ensuring fair renting rules, robust and visible regulatory enforcement, and providing genuine housing choices."

The Communist Party of Australia calls for a massive increase in varied types of public housing – publicly owned and run.

ACOSS/UNSW Sydney-led Poverty and Inequality Partnership

University governance 'Broken'

The National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) has urged the federal government to overhaul Australia's broken university governance system following an unprecedented intervention by the Education Minister Jason Clare.

Clare has referred serious governance concerns at Australian National University (ANU) to regulator TEQSA, after staff passed a no-confidence motion in Vice Chancellor Genevieve Bell and Chancellor Julie Bishop over a litany of failings.

While the government holds special powers over ANU – due to its foundation in federal law – new national and state legislation is urgently needed to fix governance failures across the rest of the higher education sector.

NTEU National President Dr Alison Barnes said the case for major change was now overwhelming.

"This is a watershed moment in the NTEU's campaign to fix the disgraceful governance crisis that has engulfed our public universities," she said.

"The situation at ANU has sparked an unprecedented ministerial intervention. Unfortunately, the problems at ANU are being replicated all around the country.

"We're seeing egregious conflicts of interests, eye-watering amounts of wage theft, a hiring-firing yo-yo, and zero transparency for leadership decisions that cripple universities.

"It's time for a major change in how our universities are run. That means governance reform that makes university bosses accountable for the incredible damage they are doing.

"This must mark the end of vice chancellors pocketing a million dollars a year and acting with impunity as they destroy student experience and slash jobs.

"The government has acknowledged the crisis, now we need national laws that pull these rogue university executives into line so we can provide world-class research and teaching."

NTEU ACT Division Secretary Dr Lachlan Clohesy said:

"ANU is a great university with great people, which has been let down by poor governance and leadership. We welcome this intervention by Minister Clare. It is a signal of intent in terms of cleaning up university governance."

"It is difficult to see how the continuation of the current ANU leadership is tenable. Every day they remain in place further damages our national university and its people."

NTEU ANU Branch President Millan Pintos-Lopez said:

"A lot of staff are doing it tough at the ANU and will welcome this development. This news demonstrates that the Minister is treating our concerns with the seriousness they deserve."

National Tertiary Education Union

Support the *Guardian* by donating to Press Fund

Dingo bytes

Protests rocked the host city, The Hague in the Netherlands at the recent NATO summit, as peace campaigners protested at the militarisation of Europe. "Let's invest in peace and sustainable energy," Workers' Party of Belgium Senator Jos d'Haese told crowds, who also bore banners in solidarity with the Palestinians facing genocide by Israel and against the Israeli-US attacks on Iran.

Protester Hossein Hamadani said: "We are opposed to war. People want to live a peaceful life. Look at the environment. Things are not good, so why do we spend money on war?"

Half the entire Dutch police force was on duty guarding the summit, at which NATO states committed to increase their military spending to Donald Trump's 5 per cent target of GDP. NATO states already account for 75 per cent of worldwide military spending. Former German MP Sevim Dagdelen said European NATO members alone already outspend Russia four to one and the huge diversion of resources to the military would entail "social warfare against their own populations."

"Every euro squandered on the massive rearmament effort, which ultimately enriches US investment firms like Blackrock, will be missing from pensions, education, and healthcare," Dagdelen said, pointing to cuts already hitting Berlin from reduced school bus services to closing swimming pools.

Most European states are expected to try to meet the target, though Germany's pledge will require almost doubling military spending to half the whole federal budget.

PARASITE OF THE WEEK: is big polluter Woodside. The Australian Conservation Foundation has expressed its bitter disappointment at Environment Minister Murray Watt's announcement that he intends to approve Woodside's proposal to extend the life of the North West Shelf gas hub out to 2070. (See *Guardian* #2148, 9 June, "Labor's carbon bomb" article.)

"This is a bitterly disappointing decision that locks in decades more climate pollution and will drive demand to open new gas fields," said ACF CEO Kelly O'Shanassy.

"That the gas is destined for export makes no difference to its climate impact. It will be felt by Australians through more intense and frequent extreme weather events like bushfires, heatwaves, floods and coral deaths.

"Woodside is seeking this extension so it can drill gas from the proposed Browse gas field at Scott Reef, further fuelling global heating.

"It is hard to understand how a government that prides itself on its climate credentials can think it's OK to approve a fossil fuel project that aims to still be producing climate-damaging pollution when Minister Watt and I are in our nineties," O'Shanassy said.

"When a baby born this week is 45 years old, the North West Shelf will still be polluting, if Woodside gets its way.

"Approving the expansion of fossil fuel projects is the opposite of climate action."

Furthermore, the ancient World Heritage-nominated petroglyphs at Murujuga may not be visible in 2070 if acid emissions from Woodside's Burrup gas hub keep deteriorating the rocks' surface.

"ACF and many others will continue to vigorously oppose the expansion of the gas industry, including the exploitation of the Browse climate bomb gas field at Scott Reef."

Minister Watt's announcement comes despite a draft decision by UNESCO to send the nomination of rock art at Murujuga back to the Australian government to address risks to World Heritage values, including 'degrading acidic emissions currently impacting upon the petroglyphs.'

Analysis released by ACF in 2024 shows lifetime emissions from the Burrup gas hub would be more than 13 times Australia's annual emissions from all sources.

Basketball Legend Kevin Coombs honoured with Indigenous Round

Wheelchair Basketball Australia (WBA) is celebrating a major milestone with its first-ever Kevin Coombs Indigenous Round, taking place 4–6 July across the Men's National Wheelchair Basketball League.

The round recognises the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players past and present, and celebrates culture, connection and community through the power of sport.

"Uncle Kevin blazed a trail for so many of us," said CJ McCarthy-Grogan, Darwin Salties player and chair of WBA's Indigenous Working Group. "This round is about more than just basketball – it's about identity, leadership, and showing young people that there is a place for them here."

Named in honour of Uncle Kevin Coombs OAM – the first Indigenous athlete to represent Australia at a Paralympic games – the round pays tribute to a sporting pioneer whose influence shaped both the game and the broader community.

Uncle Kevin used a wheelchair from the age of 12 and went on to become one of the nation's most distinguished wheelchair basketball players. He represented Australia at five Paralympic Games between 1960 and 1984, captaining the national team in 1972 and 1984, and leading the entire Australian Paralympic Team in 1980. He also won silver at the 1974 Commonwealth Paraplegic Games and gold at the Far East and South Games for the Disabled in 1977 and 1983.

Beyond his athletic achievements, Uncle Kevin was a tireless advocate for the recognition of athletes with disability as elite competitors and played a pivotal role in shifting public perceptions of disability and inclusion. His contribution was recognised with the Medal of the Order of Australia (1983), the Australian Sports Medal (2000), and induction into both the Basketball Australia Hall of Fame (2007) and the Australian Paralympic Hall of Fame (2016).

Uncle Kevin carried the Paralympic torch into the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games, has an avenue named after him at Sydney Olympic Park, and in 2016, Paralympics Australia created the Uncle Kevin Coombs Medal for the Spirit of the Games in his honour. He passed away in 2023.

With permission from his family, the round now carries his name as a lasting tribute to his leadership and legacy.

The Kevin Coombs Indigenous Round is the result of months of collaboration through WBA's Indigenous Working Group, which includes representatives from each team. Chaired by McCarthy-Grogan, the group has shaped a meaningful program that celebrates cultural identity alongside elite sport.

Each team will wear a specially designed warm-up shirt by Darwin-based Indigenous artist Willie Hewitt, whose artwork tells a story of strength, vision and passing knowledge to the next generation. The design, titled The Next Generation, will feature in ceremonies across the weekend and be highlighted in WBA's social media, live streams and broadcast commentary.

"This round is a celebration of leadership, inclusion and legacy," said Lorraine Landon, Director of Wheelchair Basketball Australia. "It's about honouring those who paved the way and continuing to build a sport where everyone belongs."

National Indigenous Times

Photo: WBA

Victoria: a killing in Footscray

Lauren Trumble

On Saturday 22 June, Communist Party of Australia members attended a demonstration against racism and police brutality in Footscray, organised in response to the killing of Abdifatah Ahmed by Victoria Police. Ahmed was shot dead by police after allegedly rushing at them with a knife.

The demonstration began at Nicholson Street Mall with speeches. Speaker Berhand Ahmed said that people like Abdifatah Ahamed were "victims of the institutional system." After the speeches had concluded we all marched down to Footscray Police Station where another speech was given. After protesting outside Footscray Police Station, we marched to the Bai Alkebulan Library. During the initial stage of the protest at Nicholson Street Mall one counter protester did manage to infiltrate the crowd, but was promptly and safely removed. Prior to the protest I and some other comrades went around Footscray putting up posters for the Party.

Abdifatah's death is part of a broader pattern of escalating violence, brutality, and surveillance at the hands of Victoria Police. Instead of supporting community members in crisis by providing increased funding to mental health services and other social services with the aim of addressing the underlying issues that lead to social disadvantage, the Victorian Labor government is increasing funding for Victoria Police and dancing to the tune of right-wing media when it comes to bail laws and other 'tough on crime' measures.

The Communist Party of Australia wholly supports an end to racism and an end to violence against all racial minorities by Victoria Police. We support full funding for services aimed at helping the most vulnerable members of our communities while recognising that it is only through the complete overthrow of the current capitalist system and the establishment of socialism that these issues can be fully addressed.

ABC's pro-Israel bias documented

Peter Farmer

***Deepcutnews* and media watchdog *Newscord* have carried out a quantitative study, the first of its kind, that suggests ABC online news coverage has favoured Israel. In the words of *Newscord*'s founder Nima Akram, "the ABC aligns with other mainstream western outlets in shaping the genocide narrative around the perspective of its perpetrators."**

The analysis looked at groups of articles reporting on the same events from the ABC, Al Jazeera, CNN, and the BBC from 2023 to 2025.

The study found that the ABC used humanising language almost twice as much for Israelis as for Palestinians. 'Aunty' also cited Israeli sources 53 per cent more often than it did Palestinian sources.

Importantly, the ABC consistently gave more space to the official Israeli perspective when covering Gaza.

Humanising language means using terms that make the subject more likeable and relatable to the audience. Terms such as 'child' 'mother' or 'family' have that affect. The ABC used terms like that almost twice as often when describing Israelis as for Palestinians.

When it came to sources, ABC news cited Israeli sources 53 per cent more often than Palestinian sources.

Deepcut says the findings "raise further doubts of the ABC's ability or willingness to meet its own standards of balance, accuracy, and fairness in reporting when it comes to West Asia."

The full report can be found at deepcutnews.com

Discrimination: Northern Territory takes a backward step

The union representing teachers and support staff in Northern Territory non-government schools has condemned the NT government's plans to restore the right of faith-based schools to discriminate against staff and students.

Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory (IEU-QNT) Branch Secretary Terry Burke said the current NT CLP government's decision to reinstate the religious discrimination exemptions was deeply disappointing.

"The reinstatement of religious discrimination exemptions is unnecessary, divisive and harmful," Burke said.

"Faith-based schools were more than capable of functioning in the absence of these exemptions.

"We know faith-based schools have the capacity and resilience to continue to operate in the absence of discrimination exemptions – the vast majority of them already do so.

"Indeed, they have done so quite adequately under the legislation which has been in place."

Changes to the NT *Anti-Discrimination Act* made three years ago by the previous NT Labor government removed the religious discrimination exemptions that historically permitted non-government school employers to discriminate against staff and students.

"The reinstatement of religious discrimination exemptions in the NT does not reflect modern community values and expectations, especially given many faith-based organisations receive public funds," Burke said.

Burke said employers still had the opportunity at the point of engagement to determine if an employee was suitable for the position advertised.

"That has always been the case," he said.

Burke said the CLP government's plan to also alter the existing wording of the current vilification provision would weaken it.

IEU

www.cpa.org.au

CFMEU QLD – Two days of marches and demonstrations

Graham Holton

On 18 June the High Court rejected the CFMEU's appeal to overturn the Albanese government's decision to place the union's Construction & General division into forced administration (see page 16, this issue). 270 elected officials lost their positions. Queensland's LNP Premier, David Crisafulli, welcomed the High Court decision and condemned the CFMEU's "criminal and violent behaviour," referring to the union as "thugs." The CFMEU is Australia's largest union.

Following the decision the CFMEU rank and file undertook two days of industrial action on 19 and 20 June. A major snap strike, with workers walking off building sites across Brisbane, saw more than 200 CFMEU members march through Brisbane's CBD. A further 500 members demonstrated outside the union's headquarters. Protesters waved flags, chanting "we're not going to take it any more" and "f**k you I won't do what you tell me." The police closed roads for the march to proceed safely.

Areas of Brisbane were brought to a standstill as a sea of hi-vis workwear demanded their ousted leaders be reinstated. Union members are angry with the Federal government and have had enough. For four hours speakers addressed the crowd. Union members are threatening to continue industrial action until administrators meet with the Queensland branch.

Administrator Mark Irving told union members to return to work, saying "The High Court decision is final." Irving told *The Courier-Mail* the strike "is likely to be unlawful industrial action, and I have directed them to return to work." He said the union needed to return to "membership control." CFMEU members can take strike action for two hours without prior notice, only if approved by Irving. Irving told Channel *9 News* that he urged "everyone to stay calm and focus on getting on with the job."

Sacked CFMEU leaders Michael Ravbar and Jade Ingham did not organise the strikes. Ingham, the former national president, told the Bowen Hills gathering the CFMEU is a member-led union. "We know the entire system is against us, but … they underestimate our resolve, they underestimate how prepared we are to take this fight on all the way until we win … mark my words we will win this fight." While Ingham and Ravbar addressed the crowd, members chanted "Stand up, fight back." They argued that as the Queensland branch had no allegations brought against it, the branch should not be included in the federal government takeover.

More industrial action will follow.

Queensland teachers rally

Graham Holton

Hundreds of teachers attended the Qld Teachers Union (QTU) rally outside Parliament House, Brisbane on 24 June. Premier David Crisafulli's LNP government says teachers will only get an 8 per cent increase over the next three years. Teachers already suffer from an effective 6.5 per cent wage cut due to inflation. Under the Qld LNP teachers face a continuing pay cut, the under-funding of schools, and heavy workloads resulting from severe staff shortages.

The QTU criticised Crisafulli's offer as "an affront" that lifts "the lid on the government's true disdain for education professionals and union members." Union leaders already have held fourteen meetings with the government. QTU president Cresta Richardson said: "QTU representatives have met regularly with the government and discussions up to this point have been productive and constructive." Under the LNP government, a beginning teacher with a four-year degree only reaches an annual salary of $84,000 by 2027, while a senior teacher would get $116,000.

A QTU media release said: "With the current agreement expiring on 30 June, the Queensland Teachers Union is now exploring all options on behalf of its 48,000 members, including potential industrial action should a more substantial offer not be forthcoming."

Teachers suffer from unrealistic expectations, and state governments need to acknowledge the hard work and the dangerous situations state school teachers and principals face daily. Genuine improvements are needed to stem the number of teachers leaving the profession every year. A 2024 survey of Qld state school principals found that more than half had unfilled teaching positions. Nearly half of schools were reducing specialist classes due to staff shortages, and 32 per cent were regularly merging classes.

To make matters worse, Queensland state schools are underfunded by $1.6 billion a year. The federal Labor government's Better and Fairer Schools Agreement involves a nominal increase to public schools of $16.5 billion over ten years, but most of the funding has been delayed until the 2030s. Federal Education Minister Jason Clare insists that even that agreement comes with demands: new standardised testing for children; greater 'accountability' for teachers; and increased unsustainable workloads. Teachers remain frustrated at the lack of a positive response from government.

Universities: Ranking the rankings

It's university rankings time again. Yet again, there's angst about Australian universities sliding in the league tables yet again. What are these rankings anyway? Where do they come from? Why do they hold so much power?

University league tables are compiled by shadowy corporations for their own profit. Rankings are big business. They aren't, ever, reliable measures of which university is the best. University rankings follow arbitrary algorithms concocted by these parasitic companies. Some rankings place a big weight on "research," others like to quantify "reputation."

How do you measure a university's "reputation?" Different companies take different approaches. For the QS World University Rankings it is done by sending out lots of people spam-like emails, and getting them to fill out a survey of which universities they think are the best.

Not much can go wrong there, can it? Most universities that care about rankings send out emails to people who they think might be friendly to the university, requesting that they fill out the ranking survey, and the rankings end up reflecting which universities are best at being "strategic" about rankings.

It gets worse. Rather than putting funds towards paying their workers or supporting teaching, universities pay these dodgy companies to run expensive workshops to train their staff to do better according to the arcane rules the companies have invented.

What we have is what Raewyn Connell, the author of *The Good University*, describes as a "small industry supplying many different kinds of rankings (new universities, technical universities, regional rankings, discipline rankings, etc.) so the market can get what it wants," and every university can find a ranking that they can be happy about, and use in advertising to prospective students.

It's not just universities that are captured by these companies. The Australian government's website "Study Australia" recently published an update, proudly proclaiming, "Australia's education excellence is again highlighted by the QS World University Rankings 2026. Our universities have delivered outstanding results in the latest rankings, further cementing the country's reputation as a top study destination globally."

The rankings become a way the government can both justify its inadequate funding of tertiary institutions. Governments should instead let the university ranking industry determine what a good university should be.

So when you see the rankings, don't look at them as a measure of a university's quality. Look at them as a benchmark instead for how financial capital runs counter to the public good, and how corporate maggots are rapidly eating away at the rotting, emaciated corpses that are Australia's universities.

Canberra Branch

Campaign for International Co-operation and Disarmament (CICD)
Box 66 Trades Hall, 54 Victoria Street, Carlton South, 3053 Australia.
Tel: (61) 414 352 542 Email: peacecentre@cicd.org.au www.cicd.org.au

18 June 2025

STATEMENT ENDORSED BY THE CICD COMMITTEE

Stop the war in the Middle East

The Campaign for International Cooperation and Disarmament (CICD) expresses its profound concern about and condemnation of the continuous Israeli aggression in the region, and its latest attack on Iran which is in direct violation of international law. We demand an immediate halt to all military action which has resulted in a significant number of civilian casualties on both sides.

The Zionist regime, with the support of the US, has threatened to attack Iran's nuclear facilities several times and hit several targets in Iran in early morning of Friday (13 June) with air-to-ground missiles. This led to the death of a number of senior military commanders, nuclear scientists and civilians.

The Israeli war on Iran did not begin on 13 June. For decades before that, they waged what is commonly known as a "shadow war," primarily through intelligence operations, cyberattacks, and support for regional proxies. But now, at Israel's initiative, the conflict has escalated into open warfare.

The Zionist regime has assassinated numerous Iranian scientists since 2010.

Zionist apartheid Israel has the full political and military support of US imperialism.

Israel's consistent attacks on Iran since 2023 have all been illegal and in violation of the United Nations Charter (1945).

In contrast with Israel, Iran has no history of invasions, occupations and bombings of other countries.

We declare our solidarity with the peoples of Palestine, Iran, Lebanon, and Yemen, all targets of this crime.

Genocide and ethnic cleansing are crimes against humanity. Targeting civilians and denying them food, water, and medical supplies are war crimes. These are among the most serious of breaches of international laws to which Australia is a signatory.

Iran poses no national security threat to the United States, nor does it threaten US interests in the region. Iran's only crime is that it occupies a piece of real estate in a region where Israel is determined to be the dominant power. That means Iran's military capability must be significantly diminished by Israel with the support of the United States.

While the US continues to stagger between endless wars it won't rise from the ashes of another burnt country.

Iran is not currently in violation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) nor has it been in the past. In fact, Iran has willingly complied with numerous additional protocols and confidence building measures, (that have not been imposed on any other country) all aimed at alleviating fears that it was secretly developing nuclear weapons. As Tulsi Gabbard confirmed recently, and former CIA Director William Burns before her, Iran does not have nukes, is not building nukes, and has not broken its agreements under the NPT.

Trump openly ignores the US intelligence consensus that **Iran does not have a nuclear weapons program**.

Israel's strike was unprovoked and illegal. It was done with weapons paid for by US taxpayers and with the foreknowledge of the Trump Administration. It killed civilians and puts millions of people in mortal danger, including US service members deployed in the region.

CICD affirms our full solidarity with the Iranian people, who faced a targeted, unprovoked and unprecedented surprise attack. US imperialism and its proxy in the region, the Israeli military, carried out this aggression.

Stop the War in Iran

Stop all wars

John Speight
Executive Chairperson

Romina Beitseen
Secretary

Sydney Vigil

STOP USA BLOCKADE ON CUBA

4:15pm till 5:00pm Thursday 17 July
US Consulate, 50 Miller Street North Sydney
Call 0418 270 885

PEACE NOTES

(In addition to being a Communist Party of Australia President, General Secretary and Guardian editor, Dr Hannah Middleton was a leading figure in the peace movement and inaugurated the 'Peace Notes' column. After the sad news of her passing on 19 June (see Guardian #2150) it seems appropriate to do a special 'Peace Notes' about her. We are fortunate to have long-time peace activist Romina Beitseen to write it.)

I first met Dr Hannah Middleton in late 1980's in Melbourne.

I was a delegate to attend the seventh National Congress of The Socialist Party of Australia in October 1992 in Sydney. I cherish the special times when I stayed at Hannah and Denis (her partner and fellow peace-activist) place for the Congress.

We have a lot of positive memories of comrade Hannah Middleton. The Council for International Cooperation and Disarmament has had a long and close working relationship with comrades Hannah and Denis.

Hannah spoke at the Melbourne Unitarian church on behalf of the Congress for International Co-operation and Disarmament (CICD). Her topic was: "ANZAC is a criticism of the folly of war, a criticism of Australian defence policy and a criticism of our relationship with the US."

Hannah said: "The 1915 invasion of Turkey at Gallipoli by Britain and its allies was a disastrous failure.

"The carnage was appalling. Turkish total losses were about 300,000. Estimates of the British and Dominion losses lie between 198,000 and 215,000, with something like 46,000 dead.

"8,709 Australians were killed in action or died of wounds or disease. Australians wounded and missing numbered 19,441.

"From all this the ANZAC myth was crafted – a story which suggests that Australian soldiers possessed qualities including endurance, courage, ingenuity, good humour, larrikinism and mateship."

Hannah also accepted an invitation from CICD to speak on its behalf at the Borderland gathering of the OASES conversation group in 2021.

Her topic was: "No nuclear submarines – No AUKUS pact – No war on China"

In her talk she mentioned that: "The AUKUS, QUAD, and AUSMIN agreements are manifestations of US efforts to retain economic and political control in the Asia-Pacific region.

"The Australian government, echoed by most mainstream media, claims that AUKUS will provide peace and security for our country and our people. How ludicrous this claim is becomes clear when we look at the economic and environmental costs."

Hannah was also happy to be interviewed many times on the CICD's Alternative News radio program still broadcast on Community Radio 3CR.

She was interviewed by Andrew Irving while in Sydney in 2016, when they heard the sad news of the passing of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

Hannah was always generous with advice and assistance. I sought her advice on many occasions when I attended overseas conferences on behalf of CICD.

Throughout her career, Hannah has actively struggled for peace, justice, equality, environment, and socialism.

Andrew and I visited Hannah in hospital just before she passed. We gave her some news of comrades activities in and around Victoria.

Always generous, she was pleased to hear it. We said our goodbyes and I told her that she has a big place in my heart.

Rest in power, comrade Hannah

(Romina Beitseen co-presents 'Alternative News' on 3CR, AM 855 in Victoria, and available worldwide from 3CR.org.au)

The stranglers roundtable

Marcus Browning

Last week in spruiking the government's "productivity roundtable" in August, federal treasurer Jim Chalmers named areas in the economy where "red tape" was to be cut, meaning slashing of legislated rules and regulations around the operation of corporations. It is appropriate that this summit to make profits skyrocket is exactly a year since the government's takeover of the CFMEU.

'Red tape' areas include human capital and competition policy revealing the government's strategy to crucify workers and trade unions and turn Australia into a low wage corporate destination.

Further, it will dump measures that protect the environment, another 'red tape' item. Its aims are to reduce wages and working conditions, de-unionise workplaces, and cut back social security, all defined as the aforementioned red tape.

In fact, their strategy is a recipe for unemployment, with the removal of any structures and regulations that currently give workers some limited protection. The government knows that legally binding award wages and conditions and union-negotiated agreements are barriers to unfettered profits. The government's ultimate goal is the complete deregulation of the "labour market."

Chalmers and his fellow Labor Party snake oil salesman have been given a text titled "Abundance" written by a couple of US journalists, which will be the discussion guide at the roundtable. The book includes ways to cut 'red tape' from scientific research and comes with a shining recommendation from former head of the US Federal Reserve Janet Yellen.

The book tells "progressives" to re-think their "overly rules-based approach." Here's Chalmers take on it; "We want good things to happen, we've got to stop strangling good things from happening."

"Strangling" is an appropriate word to use for a meeting with the objective of denying unions the right to bargain on behalf of their members. They are out to scrap key labour cost constraints on business including a more concerted move away from penalty rates and other "on-costs" – workers' total pay will be reduced by the removal of basic entitlements such as penalty rates, holiday loadings and sick leave, a process already underway.

Productivity under a capitalist system tends to mean only one thing – higher profits.

Brisbane, 2022.

NO TRICKLE DOWN

In the broad sweep of the government's plan the long term unemployed will be excluded from the unfair dismissal provisions if they do get a job. Business will be able to secure labour from the ranks of the long-term unemployed on a rate below the award safety net. It will allow open slather for labour hire companies

Exemption from the unfair dismissal laws would allow employers to sack these workers before they had to pay full wages.

It is the utilisation of capitalism's reserve labour pool, providing cheap labour to compete with workers on a full wage and help keep real wages down.

This is the latest means to pursue the same capitalist agenda of squeezing the workers in order to give a greater share of the takings from what they produce to the owners of capital. The results of the past 40 years of the intensified and globalised neo-liberal program in Australia continue to roll in and it is no surprise that the big winners have been the super-rich while the big losers are the battlers on the bottom of the heap.

Along such lines, the Albanese government's vision for Australia's economy is a hole in the ground and cheap labour.

As such the World Bank and IMF should be invited to the roundtable. A poor country borrows from the World Bank to build up some aspect of its economy. Should it be unable to pay back the heavy interest because of declining export sales or some other reason, it must borrow again, this time from the IMF.

But the IMF imposes a "structural adjustment program" (SAP), requiring debtor countries to grant tax breaks to the transnational corporations, reduce wages, and make no attempt to protect local enterprises from foreign imports and foreign takeovers. The debtor nations are pressured to privatise their economies, selling at low prices their state-owned utilities to private corporations.

They are forced to open their forests to clear-cutting and their lands to strip mining, without regard to the ecological damage done. The debtor nations also must cut back on subsidies for health, education, transportation and food, spending less on their people in order to have more money to meet debt payments. Required to grow cash crops for export earnings, they become even less able to feed their own populations.

As to the "trickle down effect" there is no trickle down, only a siphoning up from the toiling many to the moneyed few.

The purpose behind their investments, loans, and aid programs is not to uplift the masses in other countries. That is certainly not the business they are in. The purpose is to serve the interests of global capital accumulation, to take over the lands and local economies of the debtor countries, monopolise their markets, depress their wages, indenture their labour with enormous debts, privatise their public sector, and prevent these nations from emerging as trade competitors by not allowing them a normal development.

In these respects, investments, foreign loans, and structural adjustments work very well indeed. Which brings us back to productivity and the Albanese government's agenda.

Failed Liberal candidate and party powerbroker Jason Falinski has praised the 'Abundance' pop-economics book that Jim Chalmers likes so much. Falinski seems to understand 'Abundance' better than Chalmers – what he likes about it is that it prioritises economic growth over the redistribution of wealth. Falinski doesn't say who the economic growth is for, but he doesn't have to. ✪

Consequences

M Santos

The Mid-North Coast of NSW recently experienced record breaking flooding, after experiencing back to back extreme weather events in the last few years. Such disasters are no longer simply 'natural.'

Extreme rainfall events have become more frequent and intense in Australia, and communities are suffering the consequences again and again. "It is vital that emergency services, media, governments, and communities understand why these events are occurring with increasing frequency and ferocity to ensure that we can both tackle the root cause – pollution from coal, oil, and gas – as well as prepare for more destructive disasters into the future," Climate Council CEO Amanda McKenzie said.

There are at least three ways that climate change is influencing the intensity of these floods:

1. More water in the atmosphere leads to more heavy downpours. As the climate heats, the global atmosphere holds more moisture. The total amount of water vapour in the atmosphere reached a record level in 2024, at about 5% above the 1991–2020 average. With more moisture in the atmosphere, extreme downpours have become more common.

More rain is falling during extreme events. The amount of rain is much higher than the 5% figures that are used in existing flood planning standards used by policy makers, engineers and urban planners.

2. A hotter, wetter and more energetic climate means there is more energy to fuel storms that generate heavy rainfall. Since July 2024, sea surface temperatures in Australia have been the warmest or second warmest on record for each respective month. That means the energy available to power storms has also increased – largely due to rising ocean temperatures from the burning of fossil fuels.

3. A near stationary high pressure system in the Tasman sea has contributed to the persistence of this rainfall event, stalling a moist, easterly flow of air over the NSW coast. Similarly in major flooding events in 2021 and 2022 'blocking high' contributed to the severity of flooding. Blocking highs are strong high pressure systems which have formed further south than usual and remain near stationary for an extended period of time. These highs essentially block the west to east progression of weather systems across southern Australia.

IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

Floods have been the most damaging disasters in Australia in the last decade. Immediate impacts include property damage, destruction of crops and livestock, clean-up costs and emergency response. "The increasing frequency and severity of extreme events means communities are facing successive disasters with little time in between to recover," McKenzie noted.

The Mid Coast Local Government Area has experienced back to back disasters over the last six years, needing support for disaster recovery on 13 occasions. Communities are picking up the pieces over and over again. Much of the affected area has been identified as at high risk of flooding, with insurance becoming too expensive for many home owners in most at risk areas. Emergency services are being overwhelmed by the increasing frequency, intensity and destructiveness of out of control fires, floods and storms.

The frequency of intense rainfall events is expected to almost double each degree of global heating. However, we can still influence how much worse things become. The severity of the climate crisis depends on how swiftly and deeply we slash climate pollution. This decade is critical.

Australia has already experienced a succession of major climate disasters in the first five months of 2025:

- Ningaloo Reef has experienced its first mass bleaching event.
- The Great Barrier Reef has experienced the 6th mass coral bleaching in nine years.
- Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred was exacerbated by hot ocean temperatures, a wetter atmosphere and higher seas. The unusually slow speed led to greater deluges over areas it passed, while the southerly track brought risks to communities not usually exposed to cyclones.
- West-Queensland floods, partly driven by Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred, were likely the largest on record.
- Swathes of South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia are in the grip of drought as they experience some of the lowest rainfall totals on record. ✪

Three Aspects of Socialist 'Productivity'

A Carruthers

Wind Turbine under Construction, China. Photo: Greece-China News – pexels.com (CC0)

Given all the talk now of "productivity" in the Australian economy (see article page 8) much of it being just vacuous nonsense, within a supposedly 'Social-Democrat' framework, it is about time we gave a socialist perspective on productivity.

1. Socialist productivity is public, state-led, planned productivity. It is productivity that proceeds according to a national plan that conceivably ends poverty and strain among the majority, the working class.

2. In complete contradistinction with Labor's haphazard manner – throwing around grants, using Future Funds, i.e., using capital for the sake of capitalism – we want the *socialisation* of all means of production. This does not mean that all small and medium producers are going to instantly be included in this framework. Commodity production will still occur. Small scale private forms of capitalism will still exist.

However, bypassing finance capitalism is entirely possible within the framework of winning the socialisation of production. A country like ours is fully prepared to take the first steps towards building a national economy for people, an economy where most of its major industries are nationalised, publicly-owned by the whole society.

3. Socialist production is green production. The socialist mode of production is circular, based on the ecological civilisation under the plan. The plan should not just 'take into account' local labour requirements and the skills of the labour force as it is, it should seek to *shape* the social relations of production in every way possible given the immediate local environment. The planners come from the ranks of the builders, and the builders should more and more work according to local plans. The more localised the plan is, all the more it must fit into the larger state effort, the effort to build an ecologically sound economy, an economy without waste products, an economy that is civilised and contributes to the collective greening of the globe.

Let me give a concrete example of each of the three points.

For 1, we have in mind the supermarket duopoly and the real estate industry. These must immediately be regulated by the *state*, given the damage they are doing to the two famous crises, the cost-of-living and housing crises.

For 2, just look at what Labor is doing with the reliance on "Future Funds." The Funds "balance the risk aspects of each investment mandate to maximise returns" but with the proviso that they "have no role in determining the projects and initiatives that are supporting or in allocating funding to specific areas." In other words, what form of state capitalism is this?! A way of producing Funds with no assurance that they will be allocated to any specific area! Worse than this, *no role* is assigned to the Funds themselves. How did this bid to establish a more "favourable" economic position come about? From "proceeds from the sale of the government's holding of Telstra and the transfer of remaining Telstra shares." They wonder where the crumbling of our remaining infrastructure comes from. We wonder why the "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land and Sea Future Fund" has not brought any semblance of sovereignty to First Peoples.

People wonder – or at least they should wonder – why the "Housing Australia Future Fund" in the years it has been operating could only produce a tiny fraction of the housing required. The socialist model is entirely the opposite – we will build these things by firmly grasping the mechanisms of the state and bending them owards the needs of the people. We will bring about public housing construction. We will put First Peoples at the centre of the state. We will smash the Future Funds and this useless bourgeois machinery, this 'financial position' idiocy that will only prolong the people's suffering. We will build a national economy.

For 3, unfortunately the example for this given must be foreign: China. China has entirely begun to transform its economy along the lines of what they are calling, from the Soviets, "Ecological Civilisation." This means ecologically-sound production on a local scale according to the national plan, and for the benefit of the whole world. It proceeds according the following principles:

- the principle that civilisation will flourish when ecology flourishes
- the harmonious coexistence of humanity and nature
- the principle that clear waters and green mountains are invaluable assets
- the principle that a good ecological environment is the most universal benefit to the people
- the principle that mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes and grasslands are a community of life
- the most stringent system and the most stringent rule of law to protect the ecological environment
- the national action of building a beautiful country
- the joint efforts of the people to build a global ecological civilisation.

This has practical outcomes. China has embarked on EV transformation on a world-historic scale. Streets are now filled with the quiet hum of EVs. The EV transformation is complete for their bus fleet. Their HSR (High-Speed-Rail) network is the biggest in the world, interlinked with regional transport. Solar and Wind technology is expanding and overcoming the old productive forces. Biodiversity protection is underway on a scale never before seen. Housing ownership is up to 97%.

Most importantly, the age of disorderly expansion of production and pollution, of capitalist production, is coming to an end. In its place is the emergence of channels of planned state capitalism side-by-side with emerging socialist modes of ecological production, all under the supervision of the national economy.

Only Communist parties have been able to accomplish the just and green transformation of production on such a scale. ✪

NATO counter-summit warns of arms race

Skala Landmand

While NATO heads of state and governments met for a summit in The Hague in the Netherlands, a counter summit gathered for a series of panel debates, happenings, and a large demonstration. The program for the counter-summit included series of debates between peace activists, researchers and politicians, focusing on NATO's role in current global conflicts; the consequences of militarisation for climate, democracy and human rights; and International solidarity, peace movements and strategies for action and cooperation. Keynote speakers at the counter-summit included former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn and Secretary General and Member of Parliament for the Belgian Workers' Party PTB, Peter Mertens.

The counter-summit, organised exactly 50 years after the signing of the Helsinki Accords sought to "Develop new diplomatic strategies for conflict resolution around the world. Form a coalition against the rising military spending on both sides of the Atlantic. Agitate for the immediate closure of foreign military bases on European soil. Challenge the narrative of a new Cold War that seeks to divide the world into irreconcilable blocs. Promote welfare policies, not warfare, to create social and economic justice."

Olaf Kemerink explained.

"In The Hague they want to 'save' NATO with more defence spending, but we want solutions rooted in sustainable peace and justice. We want to mobilise everyone who feels fear, anger or concern about increasing militarisation. Security should apply to all people – not just a select group of wealthy nations."

Counter-summit spokesperson Guido van Leemput pointed out that at the NATO summit, member states were expected to commit to pouring hundreds of billions more into the military alliance. The money will go to developing new high-tech weapons systems and buying even more fighter jets and missile systems so that NATO can become "more lethal."

Van Leemput warned that with the arms race NATO is engaged in and the war rhetoric NATO promotes, the world is only becoming more dangerous. He added that those who stockpile weapons will eventually want to use them. ✪

BOOK REVIEW

AFTER AMERICA:
Australia and the new world order
by Emma Shortis

Reviewer: Eileen Whitehead

This book is a well-timed look at the new world 'disorder' and particularly analyses the situation in which Australia now finds itself, having been subservient to the United States for so long. Emma Shortis questions this deference now that the USA under Trump is redefining international rules-based order and his blatant disregard for the law.

Shortis emphasises the need for Australia to re-assess its relationship with the US, as we need to have a clear understanding of our interests and values. Therefore, her book gives a very full appraisal of Trump and his machinations: how he sees the US "as a growing nation ... violent, all-powerful, relentless and unforgiving." The US was colonised ruthlessly and violently. Perhaps Australians see themselves in step as fellow colonisers?

Our present situation with the AUKUS fiasco takes pride of place in the book and Shortis covers the secrecy over its inception. More importantly, she looks at the rationale behind AUKUS – "that Australian security can be purchased from the United States." The secrecy behind AUKUS has denied the Australian Parliament or the court of public opinion from having a chance to even discuss this. Had it gone to Parliament it would not, in all probability, have survived scrutiny by Treasury, or Defence.

Shortis is clear that "AUKUS forfeits Australia's autonomy, agency, and sovereignty to the US." The biggest change in our defence policy in decades and the biggest transfer of sovereign wealth in the history of Australia, has not even been discussed in Cabinet, the House of Reps or the Senate! People have not been consulted, yet its implementation makes us a target in the event of war. She points out that 'the reality is that AUKUS will cede Australia's decision-making autonomy to the United States.'

Her real concern is that the second Trump administration is minus the slightly saner heads that kept him in check in his first. He is surrounded by people with "dangerous, hawkish views that motivate the worst of American military interventionism." Australia, through AUKUS, is now closely tied to them.

An important difference between our two countries is raised when discussing Australian values which, despite our dark history, are miles apart from those of our supposed 'ally.' Trump is now dismantling the rule of law in the US, and threatening the climate, while fascism is rising and billionaires are having a field day pillaging what's left.

Shortis questions our own moral bankruptcy in supporting such a person, saying Australia should play "a leadership role in building genuine global security, by acting on climate change, on nuclear proliferation, on peacebuilding, and on safeguarding the international rule of law." She ends by saying that "what Australia does matters. Our choices matter. We can choose to build a world after America. A world that is better and safer than the one we had before."

Trump is dismantling the rule of law in the USA, and threatening the climate, while fascism is rising and billionaires are having a field day.

Down;

1. Japanese city where the US brutally attacked innocent civilians (9)

2. Island over which the most powerful nuclear weapon in history was detonated (7)

5. Name of two British nuclear tests on an archipelago off the coast of West Australia, so large they contaminated the mainland (6)

7. Chemical that stops/controls nuclear fission (5)

8. First country to develop nuclear weapons (3)

9. Acronym for a useful excuse to invade a country (3)

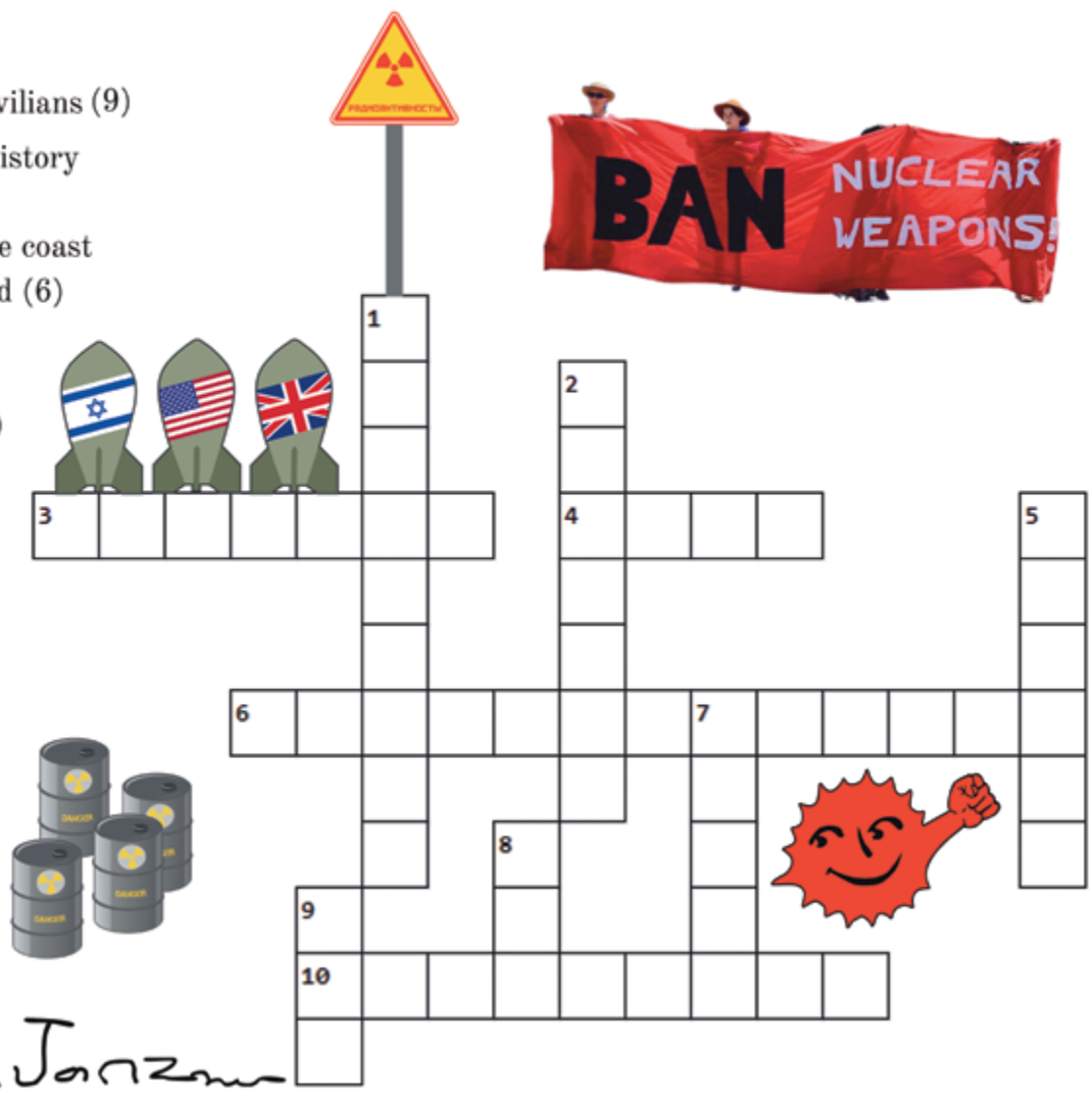
Across;

3. Nickname for the Semipalatinsk Test Site, a Soviet site that became the most researched in the world (7)

4. Satellite that detected a double flash in the late 70s, revealing that Israel or South Africa had conducted nuclear tests (4)

6. Grinning deity, code for India's first successful nuclear tests (7-6)

10. Australian territory where the UK tested nuclear weapons in the 1950s (9)



Written by John Paterson & Designed by: Che Jarman

BOOKS

UK: the latest in crime fiction

Matt Coward

A corrupted chemist, a Hampstead homosexual and finely observed class-conflict at *The Bohemia*.

Idris owns a pharmacy in Headingley, in *The Chemist* by AA Dhand. But government cuts mean he's constantly on the verge of bankruptcy. All that's keeping him going is his monopoly access to a nearby estate where he delivers clean needles and prescription drugs to a large population of heroin addicts. Keeping that contract means not falling out with the gangsters who run The Mews.

When doing a favour for an ex leaves him on the wrong side of the law and the criminals, he's forced into making terrible decisions. However, once he's crossed the line he begins to realise that there's a certain satisfaction in using his professional skills to solve impossible problems. You could say it's a bit addictive.

Idris is one of the unlikeliest and best anti-heroes in years.

A Queer Case by Robert Holtom introduces Selby Bigge, who has a dull job in 1920s London and lives alone in a dull bedsit. His evenings are spent on Hampstead Heath, looking for brief company, terrified that he might "accidentally proposition a normal." He dreams of a life in which he might hold hands with a lover in public without the danger of arrest, perhaps even a life in which that lover might become something more permanent.

A chance reunion with an old college acquaintance makes him think he might have found his man, but then a murder occurs at the mansion home of his friend's father. To save the object of his desire, Selby must turn amateur sleuth – without himself risking exposure and ruin.

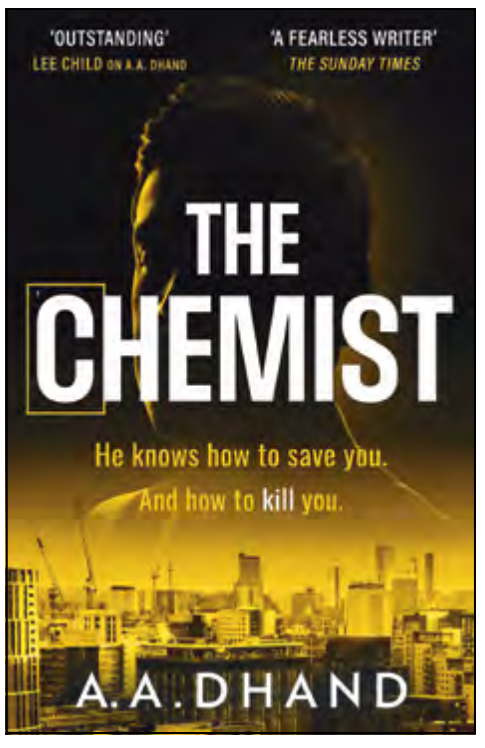
An irresistible central character and an unusual historical setting in high and low society make this whodunnit something special.

The cops in New York have gunned down another Black man in *The Doorman* by Chris Pavone, and the protesters and counter-protesters are gathering. Inside the Bohemia, the city's most famous apartment building, the residents prepare themselves for trouble. Out on the pavement, their door staff, mostly black or Hispanic, have their own, rather more immediate concerns. And all of them are looking in the wrong direction: threats can come from within as well as without.

The rich are portrayed here as divided into two tribes. There's the deranged conservatives, who believe that straight white people are the only oppressed minority left and that asking the wealthy to pay tax would be only one step short of herding them into death camps. There's also the self-appointed elite of hideous liberals who devote their leisured lives to policing language, inventing ever more ways to be offended, and above all cancelling each other for crimes against fashionable thought.

This is that rarity, a US novel which understands class conflict as not merely a difference in outlook or social mores but rooted in ownership, inheritance and control of capital. It's beautifully written, a state-of-the-nation novel that is also about recognisably real individual characters and which becomes, in its second act, a nerve-shredding thriller.

Morning Star



Fidel and Religion – forty years of a transcendent dialogue

Fidel and Religion is still a readable and valuable book that allows us to appreciate the depth of the Commander-in-Chief's thought and his stature as a political leader.

Yeilén Delgado Calvo

Frei Betto says that after spending more than 20 hours during four early mornings, from 23 to 26 May 1985, interviewing Fidel Castro, he realised that he had very precious material in his hands: it was the first time that a communist leader at the head of a socialist country had spoken positively about religion.

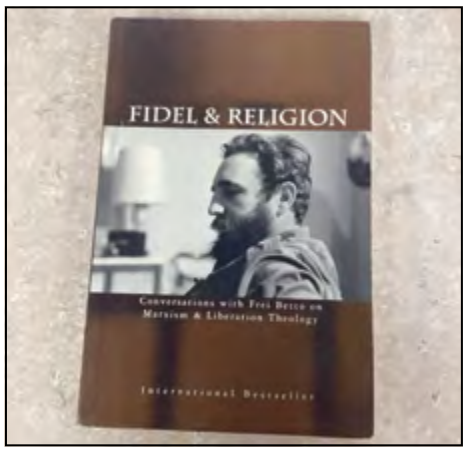
Forty years after that dialogue, to which the Brazilian intellectual arrived with 64 questions, there is no doubt that he was right about his material. *Fidel and Religion*, the book that resulted from those 20 hours, has been published in 33 countries and translated into more than 24 languages, and interest in its contents is far from waning.

This May at the Fidel Castro Ruz Center in Havana, a meeting was held to commemorate this ground-breaking volume. Frei Betto was there, as were relatives of the Commander-in-Chief (Castro) and religious leaders of different denominations.

Historian René González Barrios, director of the institution, spoke at the event, which was attended by Caridad Diego, head of the Office of Attention to Religious Affairs of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

This January, Betto received a standing ovation at the Global Conference for World Balance in Havana, from a crowd that appreciated his thoughtful relationship with Castro, and his hope for a progressive future.

Granma



New US policy requires job applicants to write pro-MAGA essays

Mark Gruenberg

Washington: New rules require all applicants for federal government jobs to write an essay explaining how, in the job they seek, they will carry out President Trump's agenda.

The rules, typical of those promulgated in fascist dictatorships, follow, however, a major loss by Trump in the courts that have reinstated the collective bargaining rights of the airport screeners, taken from them by Trump soon after his election to a second term. The American Federation of the Government Employees (AFGE) say they have won that one battle, even though the new rules requiring written essays may end up being a loss for them. Regardless, they continue their determined and ongoing battle against the Trump administration's attacks on federal workers.

The restoration of collective bargaining rights occurred in US District Court in Seattle on 2 June, but Trump's Department of Homeland Security didn't get around to acknowledging it until 5 June. Judge Marsha Pechman had ordered agency Secretary Kristi Noem to restore the collective bargaining agreement with AFGE covering the nation's 45,000-47,000 Transportation Security Officers, the airport screeners.

"Noem has not explained why collective bargaining has threatened the safety of the transportation system or travellers in America," Judge Pechman wrote.

The potential loss occurred on 4 June, with a 5 June deadline, when Trump's Office of Personnel Management – his HR department for the entire government – posted a new set of rules for who and how to apply for federal jobs. Before Trump, the government employed around 2.2 million workers, but at least 175,000 took redundancies or were arbitrarily fired.

One personnel rule requires essays from applicants on how they would carry out the administration's policies. Another mandate is that agencies prefer applicants from trade schools, community colleges, home-studied secondary school graduates, and religious and charter schools.

It tells personnel officers to downgrade applicants from four-year universities, especially elite schools such as those in the Ivy League, and applicants with specialised expertise.

Every applicant starting at GS-5 – the lowest rung on the federal salary scale – would have to write the essays, which would be a key to whether Trump would hire them or not.

The personnel developments in the Seattle court and the hiring rule are reminders of Republican Trump's ongoing hatred of career federal workers. The president repeatedly calls them "the deep state" and questions their loyalty. The workers, unionised or not, swear oaths to uphold the US Constitution.

So did Trump, twice. AFGE and other unions repeatedly challenge him for violating his oath of office.

The battles are also part of Trump's campaign, backed by both the radical right and the corporate class, to centralise all power and decision-making, even down to the lowest level, in his hands.

Not only does the personnel office make the essays – a form of loyalty statement to Trump – a hiring requirement, but it says the president can fire workers on five days' notice, not 30 days.

AFGE President Everett Kelley, a military veteran, slammed the new hiring and firing rules, especially the essays.

"Federal employees should be hired based on their ability to do the job and their commitment to following the Constitution and other laws – not on their allegiance to any one president," Kelley said.

"These changes to the job applicant process, combined with the proposal to fast-track the firing of federal employees whom the Office of Personnel Management deems 'unsuitable' for their positions, should be a red flag to anyone concerned the administration is attempting to stack federal agencies with subservient employees who will do the administration's bidding regardless of the law."

People's World (edited for space)

‘No Kings Day’ strikes and mass demonstrations

Graham Holton

No Kings protest in Sarasota, Florida. Photo: Aiden Marshall – wikimedia.org (CC0 1.0)

The US political organisation 50501 (50 protests, 50 states, 1 movement) sought to build a General Strike to coincide with the protests on 14 June against the Army’s 250th birthday and President Donald Trump’s 79th birthday. The military parade in Washington DC attracted few observers. In comparison “No Kings Day” saw more than five million protestors peacefully rally in hundreds of cities across the United States, in opposition to the Trump administration’s policies on tariffs cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, and education, ICE’s illegal arrests and deportations, and the use of the military on the streets of American cities. In New York city, protestors blocked streets as far as the eye could see.

While mass demonstrations have an impact on popular opinion, the mass strikes have been far less reported. In the lead-up to to No Kings Day numerous strikes swept across various states in one of the largest coordinated labour actions in US union history. The AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations), an international federation of sixty-three labour unions, listed sixty-nine strikes.

Grocery workers, largely represented by the UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers), took a stand against the corporate grocery giants, Kroger and Albertsons. Coordinated negotiations gained support and popularity amongst the rank-and-file. Over 150,000 UFCW and Teamsters grocery workers organised strikes across the US. By doing so, the two unions demonstrated the collective power of the working-class on a national scale. It was the biggest union action since 2023, when a national strike on the Big 3 automakers by the UAW (United Auto Workers) brought the car industry to a standstill.

Trump’s sacking of NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) member Gwynne Wilcox was a preliminary step to the total, and unconstitutional, takeover of federal decision-making. NLRB officials, administrative law judges, federal members, or anyone who crosses Trump, can now be instantly fired, impacting 130 million civil service workers.

Matt Ginsburg, General Counsel of AFL-CIO, said Trump is the law, “he could dictate board decisions up and down the line, and there is no alternative. We could see situations where complaints” about unfair labour practices “wouldn’t even be issued” because board and rank-and-file members of the NLRB would be fired for defying Trump. The federal agency protects employees’ rights to join unions and improve working conditions. Chief Starbucks stockholder, Howard Schultz, and Amazon’s Jeff Bezos hate unions and the NLRB. They have sued to get the board declared unconstitutional in federal courts with Trump-appointed judges.

IATSE (International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees) joined the AFL-CIO and eighteen national labour organisations urging the Senate to remove a dangerous provision from the budget reconciliation bill that bans states from enacting or enforcing AI (artificial intelligence) protections. The proposed federal provision,would nullify these vital state-level protections for the next decade, leaving workers vulnerable to unchecked AI abuses and eliminating the states’ authority to respond to emerging threats. IATSE members face significant threats to their livelihoods from AI.

Throughout June thousands of workers from across the US, from numerous sectors, organised unions to improve workers’ rights, conditions and bargaining power. Union worker wages are 11.2 per cent higher, and members have better employer-provided health insurance and pension benefits, than non-unionised workers. Black, Latino and women workers are paid 26 per cent, 39.2 per cent and 23.8 per cent more, respectively, when they belong to a union.

While there was no general strike on No Kings Day, there were scores of strikes that demonstrated the power of unions. Essential Workers for Democracy (EWD) wrote in their rank-and-file newsletter: “A strike is our most powerful weapon,” and “If we strike together, we win together.”

Irish neutrality and the illusion of sovereignty

Jimmy Corcoran

The debate over Irish neutrality forces us to confront a deeper question: Is Ireland truly sovereign? Sovereignty can be defined as complete independence of a state in deciding all questions relating to its internal life and foreign relations. Sovereignty serves as a rampart under the protection of which individual peoples are able to build their state, develop their economy and culture, and enter into equal and voluntary relations with other peoples.

Yet, Ireland’s sovereignty has always been compromised. The six-county statelet remains a British colony, while the 26-county state, despite its claims to independence, has never fully escaped the grip of imperialism.

From its inception, the Irish state lacked true economic sovereignty. Even during the protectionist era, the Department of Finance insisted that policy must “travel in line with British thinking”. The Irish industrial bourgeoisie, though initially benefiting from protectionism, failed to build a self-sufficient economy. Rather than empowering the state to drive development, they capitulated to foreign capital. Meanwhile, the agrarian bourgeoisie, large farmers and cattle exporters, wanted tariff-free access to British and European markets.

By the late 1950s, the Irish ruling class had abandoned any pretense of sovereignty. The repeal of the Control of Manufactures Act (1964), the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement (1965), and entry into the EEC (1973) locked Ireland into dependency on British, American, and EU imperialism.

Some Marxists dismiss the fight for sovereignty as a bourgeois concern, arguing that workers should focus solely on socialism. Communist theorist Greg Godels contrasts the struggle for sovereignty, which he sees as defending one’s national bourgeoisie, with the struggle for socialism. This is a false dichotomy. James Connolly understood that national liberation and socialist revolution were inseparable, hence his leading role in the 1916 Rising. Lenin, defending Connolly from critics who accused him of bourgeois nationalism, wrote:

“To imagine that social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie with all its prejudices, without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses … against national oppression, etc. – to imagine all this is to repudiate social revolution.”

The struggle for Irish sovereignty is not a defence of the native bourgeoisie, it is a struggle against them. Since 1922 the Irish ruling class has entrenched its power, aligning itself with imperialist interests. Their position within the NATO/EU imperialist bloc is complex. On the one hand they have billions of euro invested abroad, meaning that a section derives profits from the extraction of surplus value from outside the state. They also allow the state to be used as a clearing house for multinational tax evasion and avoidance, from which they benefit. This is no new phenomenon. When all of Ireland was a direct British colony, sections of the “nationalist” bourgeoisie enjoyed the benefits of British imperialist exploitation of other peoples. From ‘surrender and regrant’ during the Tudor conquest to the present day, the leaders of the Irish people have always put their own material interests first.

The 2008 financial crisis exposed Ireland’s subservience, the EU forced the state to absorb 42% of European banking debt. Meanwhile, the US military uses Shannon Airport as a de facto base, integrating Ireland into its endless wars, without democratic consent. These betrayals reveal a fundamental truth: the Irish bourgeoisie cannot and will not defend national sovereignty.

The fight for sovereignty resonates with Ireland’s anti-colonial tradition, offering the left a platform to challenge both imperialism and the domestic ruling class. It gives us an opportunity to raise issues such the nature of the bourgeois state and the necessity for socialism. A subject nation cannot build socialism. Only when the working class holds state power can Ireland be truly free.

As Connolly declared over a century ago: “The cause of Ireland is the cause of Labour.”

The struggle for sovereignty is not a distraction from socialism, it is an essential part of it.

Socialist Voice

Check out the official Instagram account of the Communist Party of Australia
communist.party.australia
www.instagram.com/communist.party.australia/

Communist Party of China at 104: A Force for Peace

A Carruthers

In July 23, 1921, in a building in the French Concession of Shanghai, around a small table at which only 13 people were present, the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) held its First Congress. 104 years later, the Party has grown to be 100 million strong, a firmly united Communist Party under the leadership of General Secretary Xi Jinping, and a force for world peace.

Today, the world is on the brink. We may be closer to nuclear war than ever before. Many on the left, don't truly grasp the dialectical relationship between socialism and peace. Socialism, communism, Marxism-Leninism, and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era: these are forces for peace. The proletarian dictatorship is the bastion of world peace. It refuses imperialism in all its forms. It refuses to meddle in the affairs of other countries. Its goal is to end poverty, first at home then everywhere that poverty exists. We have seen that countries that can satisfy their own people, countries led by people-first governments, are precisely the countries that do not need to make wars abroad.

That does not mean communism doesn't fight against fascism and imperialism. It resolutely defends the right of national sovereignty, and refuses the logic of expansionism. Communism defeated fascism in its initial phase in Europe. Without Stalin and the heroic efforts of the Soviet Union during the Great Patriotic War, Hitler may have prevailed. Without communism the world comes ever closer to fascism. As Trump's USA has made clear: anti-communism expresses itself in fascism.

Make no mistake, China's sovereignty is not up for debate. Anyone that wishes to undermine the hard-won sovereignty of socialist China will be met with a Great Wall of steel built by 1.4 billion people.

Communism is forever the guardian of world peace. China and the CPC have shown this. China's policy of non-interference would not exist without grounding in Chinese Marxist philosophy. Its interests are now on the project of completing modernisation and building an Ecological Civilisation. Let us not forget that the phrase Ecological Civilisation was inherited from the former Soviet Union. What ended in the USSR, China has been able to continue.

China is a force for peace because of the CPC. If those 13 Communists had not gathered around that table way back in 1921, and if Deng Xiaoping had not retained the commanding heights of the proletarian dictatorship through the CPC, the world would be much more worse off than it is now. China's adherence to UN safeguards, to the Bandung Conference spirit, to a Shared Future for All Mankind, to Xi Jinping Thought, and to the philosophical principles of Ecological Civilisation, mark it as the bright, shining star of our world, a beacon of hope for the future.

May the CPC shine eternally in the firmament, and may its contribution to humanity be known by proletarians across the world.

Peace on earth and goodwill to all humankind!

Long live the CPC at 104!

Bandung Conference

Held in 1955, the Brandung Conference (also called the Asian-African or Afro-Asian Conference, held in West Java, Indonesia, was a meeting of African and Asian states representing over half the world's population. The conference set out to promote cooperation between African and Asian countries and to oppose colonialism in any form. China attended and apparently strongly stressed the rights of all nations to choose their own paths to independence. Notably China began supporting Palestine at Bandung.

UK: Palestine Action break into RAF base

Palestine Action targeted two military planes at an RAF base in Oxfordshire where daily flights depart for another base in Cyprus used for military operations in Gaza.

Two activists broke into RAF Brize Norton and approached the planes on electric scooters.

They used repurposed fire extinguishers to spray red paint into the turbine engines of two Airbus Voyagers, before causing further damage using crowbars.

Activists then sprayed red paint across the runway, symbolising the bloodshed in Gaza.

They were undetected by security and managed to evade arrest.

Flights depart daily from the base for RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus, used by Britain to support Israel, the group said in a statement.

More than 500 RAF surveillance flights have flown over the Gaza area from Akrotiri in 15 months, according to analysis by Action on Armed Violence.

The base is also used for British and US military cargo transports to the Israeli military, Palestine Action said.

A spokesperson for the group said: "Despite publicly condemning the Israeli government, Britain continues to send military cargo, fly spy planes over Gaza and refuel US/Israeli fighter jets.

"Britain isn't just complicit, it's an active participant in the Gaza genocide and war crimes across the Middle East.

"By decommissioning two military planes, Palestine Action has directly intervened in the genocide and prevented crimes against the Palestinian people."

The home secretary is looking to ban Palestine Action as a terrorist organisation in the coming weeks, the BBC reported.

Yvette Cooper is understood to be preparing a statement before Parliament which will make being a member of the group illegal if passed.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer said on social media "The act of vandalism committed at RAF Brize Norton is disgraceful.

"Our armed forces represent the very best of Britain and put their lives on the line for us every day.

"It is our responsibility to support those who defend us."

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) said: "We strongly condemn this vandalism of Royal Air Force assets.

"We are working closely with the police, who are investigating."

Thames Valley Police has launched an investigation and said inquiries are ongoing to locate and arrest those responsible.

Shadow armed forces minister Mark Francois told the BBC that there were "serious questions for the MoD to answer" about how protesters were able to "gain access to what is supposed to be a secure RAF air base."

Thousands have gathered in London for the National March for Palestine to demand that the government stop arming Israel.

Morning Star

"Britain isn't just complicit, it's an active participant in the Gaza genocide and war crimes across the Middle East."

Global Briefs

USA: The Supreme Court has avoided constitutional questions to defend Tennessee's ban on gender-affirming care. Chief Justice Roberts said that the Court did not need to determine whether discrimination against transgender people is also sex discrimination, so as to avoid "heightened constitutional scrutiny." Justice Sotomayor's dissent pointed out that the ban effectively introduces sex discrimination into medical practice, banning patient access to certain medical treatments on the basis of assigned sex at birth. Roberts' argument relied on a doctrine of states' rights, essentially saying that the question of discrimination is a matter for states.

This logic historically upheld racial segregation throughout the Jim Crow era. Anti-trans policy has already been utilised to roll back rights protections in other areas. For example, the US Department of Veterans' Affairs has removed language from its guidelines explicitly prohibiting discrimination in VA hospitals on the basis of marital status and political affiliation.

Somaliland: The secessionist state of Somaliland, located within the borders of Somalia, is pursuing military cooperation with the US, EU, and NATO as its ticket to recognition, backed by think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation and the Australian Strategic Policy Institute. Its president, Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi, has stated that recognition is "on the horizon" after Somaliland hosted US military officials for talks. Abdullahi has also announced future talks with the US over Berbera Port, a strategic asset on the Gulf of Aden positioned across from Yemen's capital. US fighter jets have already utilised aircraft carriers positioned off of Somaliland's coast to conduct bombing raids on Yemen.

China: Collaborative efforts in China's Xizang Autonomous Region are working to restore thousands of palm-leaf manuscripts, representing an invaluable wealth of knowledge from Buddhist teachings, history, medicine, and Sanskrit and Tibetan literature. Materials and adhesives developed for the repairs come from a combination of traditional Tibetan craftsmanship and resources from across China, such as palm leaves from Yunnan Province. Launched in 2019, the Potala Palace's Palm-Leaf Manuscripts and Ancient Literature Protection Project has entered its third phase, representing efforts in hands-on restoration, storage development, and digital preservation. The project brings together Tibetan craftsmen and experts from other disciplines with cultural institutions and universities. Some contributors are also part of China's volunteer programs aimed at supporting its western regions.

UK: A report from the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) has called attention to growing evidence that links air pollution to tens of thousands of deaths in the UK. The RCP has warned that air pollution harms every organ in the body, contributing to 30,000 deaths in 2025. The RCP has highlighted a body of evidence from the last decade showing the dangers of even low concentrations of air pollution, impacting "foetal development, cancer, heart disease, stroke, mental health conditions and dementia." The RCP has called for the UK government to recognise air pollution as a health issue, not just an environmental one, which exacerbates healthcare costs and disproportionately affects deprived communities (who often contribute the least to emissions).

Yemen: Tens of thousands have rallied across Yemen in support of Palestine and Iran in the face of US-Israeli aggression. Protesters, as well as Ansar Allah (Houthi) leadership, have labelled Palestine and Iran as fronts in a single struggle against "Zionist-American crimes" and Western-backed imperialism. Ansar Allah leader Abdulmalik al-Houthi also called out the hypocrisy of the West's silence on Israel's nuclear weapons arsenal as Iran's nuclear program is being used as the scapegoat for US-Israeli military aggression. Yemen is no stranger to Western and Israeli violence, as the US, UK, Israel, and Saudi Arabia have a long history of collaboration resulting in the destruction of Yemeni socialism and the current ongoing war.

‘No Kings Day’ protests against Trump

Graham Holton

On 14 June more than 1,500 ‘No Kings’ events stood up against President Donald Trump’s use of the National Guard and the military at Los Angeles demonstrations, against the ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) raids that targeted hard-working undocumented immigrants. The marches on National Flag Day coincided with Trump’s military parade to mark the US Army’s 250th birthday (and Trump’s birthday).

Trump’s mobilisation of thousands of National Guard and hundreds of Marines to quell largely peaceful protests in LA, against the wishes of California Governor Gavin Newsom, only escalated the situation. Trump said before the demonstrations: “For those people that want to protest, they’re going to be met with very big force.”

These protests fall under the larger ‘50501’ campaign (50 states, 50 capitals, 1 protest) which calls on activists nationwide to organise monthly demonstrations opposing the Trump administration. These protests have included events on Presidents Day and May Day. The movement was involved in the large “Hands Off!” protests, which saw demonstrations in over 1,400 locations across the Unites States.

Protest organisers billed 14 June as a “nationwide day of defiance,” during which Americans across the country will stand up to “reject authoritarianism.” Trump also threatened any demonstrators planning to show up at his military procession with more “very big force.” Protest organisers decided not to target the military parade route in Washington DC. Instead, demonstrators showed “up everywhere [Trump] isn’t – to say no thrones, no crowns, no kings.” The marches against Trump were a great success inspiring young and old.

No Kings protest at the Daley Center in Chicago, 14 June. Photo: AlphaBeta135 – wikimedia.org (CC0)

Iranian and Israeli communists join forces

Zo Haderekh

Under the title “Stop the Killing, Stop the War Now!” the Tudeh Party of Iran and the Communist Party of Israel have published a joint statement.

The two communist parties strongly condemned “the ongoing Israeli aggression in the region, and the recent attack on Iran, which constitutes a direct violation of international law.” They demanded an immediate end to all military actions, which they said are killing civilians on both sides.

“The crimes committed by Benjamin Netanyahu’s reactionary right-wing government in Gaza and the West Bank with the support of American imperialism, Britain, and their allies in the European Union have not only resulted in more than 55,000 Palestinians losing their lives and over 18,000 children being killed, but have also given the Israeli government the green light for further aggression against the countries of the region, with the aim of redrawing the map of the Middle East in accordance with the strategic goals of American imperialism,” they wrote.

The parties also noted that the leaders of the Israeli government have “been rightly accused of crimes against humanity” by the International Criminal Court.

The Communists in Iran and Israel linked the war against Iran to the one Israel is already waging against Palestine.

“While we witness war and destruction in Iran and Israel, we also warn against exploiting the situation to intensify and continue the suffering and inhuman oppression of the Palestinian people in Gaza and the occupied West Bank. We call on the international community to take real and concrete actions to prevent another disaster for the Palestinian people and the peoples of the region.”

Tudeh and the CPI said that ending the genocide in Gaza and recognising a Palestinian state were central requirements to lower tensions in the Middle East.

“Only imperialism, its allies, reactionaries, and the ruling dictatorship [in Iran] benefit from the tensions and war,” they declared. “Israel and the US – after Iraq, Libya, and Syria – are now determined to undermine Iranian sovereignty and will not stop until all the regimes in the region bow to the same project of imperialism and hegemony in the Middle East that aims to suppress the will of the peoples and their right to self-determination.”

Both parties also expressed their principled opposition to all nuclear weapons programs in the Middle East and around the world. “The path to stopping the nuclear race in the Middle East does not lie in an aggressive war against Iran, but rather in the disarmament of the entire region from nuclear weapons, and the signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty by all countries in the region, including Israel.”

They also called on all progressive and freedom-loving forces in Israel, Iran, and around the world to “unite in condemning this blatant and cruel violation of international law” and to focus all efforts on preventing a destructive and widespread military conflict and establishing peace in the Middle East.

“All available international mechanisms must be used, including through the UN and the Security Council, to prevent the region from plunging into a catastrophic war,” they warned.

The Communists of the Tudeh Party have been operating underground in Iran since the early 1980s, and thousands of their members have been murdered by the regime, arrested and tortured, and even forced to flee their country. Despite their repression by the theocratic government which rules their country, they say it is the Iranian people themselves, not foreign powers like Israel or the US, who should decide their future.

The Tudeh Party recently published a statement stating: “The criminal attack led by Benjamin Netanyahu, apparently in coordination with the Trump administration, is a violation of all international laws. It is worth noting that the attack occurred two days before the opening of the sixth round of negotiations between the Islamic Republic and the United States on the nuclear issue.”

Meanwhile, US intelligence estimated that Iran was not actually working to develop nuclear weapons and that it would be up to three years before such weapons could be produced. Trump’s Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, shared that fact in testimony before Congress in March.

Gabbard’s report contradicts the position of the right-wing government in Israel, which claims Iran is rapidly approaching the point of no return and that its attacks on Iranian territory are intended to destroy its nuclear program. The US president has dismissed Gabbard’s assessment.

People’s World
(see page 3 this issue for the full statement)

Mali moves to extend Goïta’s rule as AES bloc advances

Nicholas Mwangi

Mali’s cabinet has approved a proposal to extend Colonel Assimi Goïta’s leadership for a renewable five-year term, allowing him to further consolidate ongoing reforms in the country. The bill now heads to the National Transitional Council (NTC) for consideration, potentially setting the stage for Goïta to continue steering Mali’s ongoing reforms and regional strategy.

Colonel Goïta came to power in 2020, following mass popular protests against former President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, and has since emerged as an important leader in Mali’s political evolution and in the growing assertiveness of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), a regional bloc formed by Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger in 2023.

Under his leadership, Mali has pivoted sharply away from France and Western-backed organisations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), focusing instead on building regional solidarity and reclaiming political and economic sovereignty.

The AES has been widely celebrated across the region as a bold step towards sovereignty and collective security. The alliance aims to address shared challenges, including persistent jihadist insurgencies linked to Al-Qaeda, which have destabilised the Sahel for over a decade.

The member states have also championed efforts to reduce foreign military dependence and foster homegrown solutions to their security and governance crises.

The proposal to extend Goïta’s rule reflects his sustained domestic popularity, particularly among Malians who see him as a symbol of resistance against foreign interference and a driver of national renewal.

Critics, however, argue that prolonging transitional military leadership risks undermining democratic norms and delaying the long-promised return to civilian governance. Yet, many also note that the current realities in the Sahel present a unique context where the traditional benchmarks of liberal democracy do not fully capture the urgency of the region’s fight for survival, stability, and sovereignty. Mali and its people operate within a hostile environment.

Peoples Dispatch (edited for space)

Nicaragua and China break ground on landmark solar project

Nicaragua, in partnership with China, has inaugurated construction on the country's largest solar plant to date, powering water systems, cutting energy costs, and deepening South-South cooperation on infrastructure for social good. The plant marks "a strategic leap toward energy independence, climate resilience, and universal access to clean water."

The Enesolar-3 photovoltaic facility in Masaya, funded with $83 million US of Chinese investment, is set to supply renewable energy to the country's water utility, ENACAL, directly benefiting nearly 4 million people across urban and rural communities.

Framed as more than just an infrastructure project, Enesolar-3 is part of a broader initiative by the Sandinista government to expand renewable energy, reduce fossil fuel dependency, and ensure access to public utilities as a basic human right.

Laureano Ortega Murillo, presidential advisor for investment and international cooperation, spoke at the cornerstone ceremony: "this is our Sandinista Popular Revolution delivering works of progress, development, dignity, and peace for the Nicaraguan people – together with our brothers from the People's Republic of China."

Ortega underscored the political and ideological depth of the alliance, highlighting that diplomatic relations between Managua and Beijing were restored just over three years ago. Since then, both countries have developed what Ortega described as an "intense" and "extraordinarily fast-paced" collaboration across key sectors, driven by mutual political commitment and South-South solidarity.

"These are swift approvals, expedited by a shared will to support each other – politically, technically, and as true partners," he added.

Joining the ceremony were Chinese Ambassador Chen Xi and Gan Xingqiu, president of the CCCC Energy Institute, who announced that the plant would feature the most advanced solar technology developed in China and connect to the national grid via a newly built 230-kilovolt substation. "This will be Nicaragua's largest green solar power plant," Gan said.

When construction is complete, Enesolar-3 will be Nicaragua's largest green solar power plant.

China's ambassador to Nicaragua, Chen Xi, reaffirmed China's support for Nicaragua's development and praised the South-South partnership as one rooted in equality, sovereignty, and mutual respect.

Nicaragua has inaugurated construction on a major solar power plant in partnership with China, marking a strategic leap toward energy independence, climate resilience, and universal access to clean water. Funded by an $83 (AUD $130) million investment from Beijing, the plant is set to supply renewable energy to the country's water utility, ENACAL, directly benefiting nearly 4 million people across urban and rural communities.

Led by the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC), the plant will have an installed capacity of 70 megawatts and is expected to generate 140,000 megawatt-hours annually – enough to cover around 40% of ENACAL's electricity consumption. Officials say this will substantially reduce operational costs, improving the delivery of water and sanitation services throughout the country.

Framed as more than just an infrastructure project, Enesolar-3 is part of a broader initiative by the Sandinista government to expand renewable energy, reduce fossil fuel dependency, and ensure access to public utilities as a basic human right.

"This is our Sandinista Popular Revolution delivering works of progress, development, dignity, and peace for the Nicaraguan people – together with our brothers from the People's Republic of China," said Laureano Ortega Murillo, presidential advisor for investment and international cooperation, during the cornerstone ceremony.

ENACAL president Erving Barreda emphasised that electricity represents the company's single largest operating cost. He described the project as "a game-changer" in improving service delivery and advancing public access to water.

The Masaya facility is part of a national network of three solar power plants. The projects form a cornerstone of what the government has called an "energy offensive for human development," aiming to lift people out of poverty through sustainable infrastructure.

Residents of Nindirí, who have long struggled with intermittent access to basic services, expressed hope and gratitude. "I lived through the 1990s, when water pumps didn't work and we had to hire carts and trucks just to bring water home. This is a dream come true," said Coralia José Pavón.

Energy and Mines Minister Salvador Mansell noted that the project reflects the government's continued commitment to prioritising people's needs over market-driven models. Ambassador Chen Xi reaffirmed China's support for Nicaragua's development and praised the South-South partnership as one rooted in equality, sovereignty, and mutual respect.

As countries of the Global South seek alternatives to extractive development models, Nicaragua's renewable energy drive stands as a bold example – where public ownership, international cooperation, and climate action converge in pursuit of human dignity and social justice.

Friends of Socialist China

www.cpa.org.au

Subscription to **The Guardian**

❑ 12 months: $150 (solidarity price) ❑ 12 months: $100 (concession)
❑ 6 months: $100 (solidarity price) ❑ 6 months: $75 (concession)
❑ Special offer: 10 issues for $20 (new subscriptions only)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____POSTCODE:_____

Pay by ❑Cheque ❑Money order (Payable to "*Guardian* Publications")
Phone on 02 9699 8844 or info@cpa.org.au or send to:
Guardian Subscriptions, 74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010
or by credit card: ❑Mastercard ❑Visa *$20 minimum on cards

Card# _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Amount: _____ Expiry Date: ____/____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Guardian

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

Editor:
Floyd Kermode

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

Printed by
Spot Newspapers Pty Ltd
26 Hume Hwy,
Chullora, NSW, 2190

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

Half the Sky

Financial abusers

Bernadette Sneddon

Financial abuse includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Providing a small allowance and strictly monitoring spending.

- Not allowing an adult to have a bank account to restrict financial independence.

- Stopping someone from working outside the home .

- Maxing out credit cards in another person's name or taking out loans in their name.

- Using financial services for harassment, with many recorded instances of abusers paying small amounts into an account so they can leave abusive messages in the 'reference' part of the transaction.

Most of the above information comes from the NSW State Government site. There's a notable exception though, which is the abuse that comes *from* government and authorities. Consider:

- The so-called Cashless Debit Card – foisted on Aboriginal communities, this system was enthusiastically championed by WA mining tycoon Andrew 'Twiggy' Forrest, as a way to reduce substance abuse by restricting what welfare recipients could spend money on. It was paternalistic and race-based. When National Party politician Barnaby Joyce was found incoherently drunk on a Canberra footpath shouting abuse into his mobile phone, nobody suggested placing him on a card that stopped him from purchasing alcohol.

The card was finally ended when the Labor government passed legislation allowing people to leave the scheme early. The Albanese government allowed other forms of compulsory income management to continue for 18 months. Nick Espie, Legal Director at the Human Rights Law Centre called it "incredibly disappointing" that the "financial micro-management" was allowed to continue. It was found that the card could not only rob people of autonomy and dignity, but also entrench financial disadvantage.

- Housing policies. A major driver of domestic abuse is housing stress and uncertainty. Financial stress makes a big difference, as does not knowing if you'll have the same home from month to month. Women are less likely to. Yet the same governments promoting websites full of useful information on family violence, pursue policies that make it more likely. Secure, high quality and genuinely affordable public housing would make a huge difference, but the federal government and state governments around the country put the real estate industry ahead of women.

- Superannuation. Women on average retire with less superannuation than men, and poverty among women makes them more vulnerable to family violence. Knowing this, and disapproving of abuse of women, who would argue to make this situation worse? Step forward the Coalition and poster-boy for reducing super payments on retirement, Tim Wilson. The Liberal-National Coalition has a visceral hatred of industry super and the leverage it gives to unions, who sit on the boards of the most successful superannuation funds. Wilson, back in parliament having narrowly defeated a woman in the last election (after defeating a women in preselection) loves arguing for early superannuation withdrawal. Women who are escaping family violence are desperate, so would grab the opportunity to spend super to help them get out of a dangerous situation. Rather than playing on that desperation, it would be far better to provide safe housing and emergency assistance, not to mention funding women's shelters adequately.

- Jobseeker and Disability support pension. Here the government is abusing an entire population, many of whom are women and hence worse affected. The Albanese government has ignored persistent calls, going back to before it was first elected, to raise the rate of unemployment and sickness payments to above the poverty level. ACOSS says that the punishingly low rate of income support is forcing people to make heartbreaking decisions between buying food and medicine. This is financial abuse of a large group of people. The women in that group will be particularly affected.

Here, the government is putting the needs of capital, which wants the 'reserve army of the unemployed' to keep workers hungry, ahead of the needs of people.

Under capitalism, there is plenty of financial abuse to go around.

CFMEU verdict: a threat to all

M Santos

The decision of the High Court on 18 June to reject a case challenging the constitutionality of the legislation to steal the CFMEU from its members and appoint an Administrator with unprecedented control of a union is a threat to all trade unions.

In August 2024 the Labor government passed the draconian legislation enabling the appointment of Mark Irving KC as Administrator and the sacking of 11 paid and another 257 unpaid, democratically elected union officials.

The ALP Administration Bill is an extraordinary and unprecedented piece of legislation based on media speculation and unfounded charges alone.

The excuse used for the legislation and absolute control of the Construction and General Division of the CFMEU by an administrator and the government was a series of articles and TV programs, 'Building Bad,' run in an all-out attack on the union by the Nine media group.

The aim is to disqualify militant officials from holding office in the CFMEU or any other union for life and turn the construction union into a toothless tiger. In other words, to replace a militant union that was successful in defending its members and promoting their interests and safety with one acceptable to anti-union construction companies.

Workers turned out in force in Meanjin/Brisbane to support the CFMEU against attacks from the Labor government, 2024.

LEGAL CHALLENGE

Sacked CFMEU Queensland secretary Michael Ravbar, who has not been accused of wrongdoing, led the High Court challenge by a group of sacked Queensland union officials.

The sacked, democratically elected representatives of the union had not been charged or found guilty of any illegality, yet they were punished purely on the grounds of media assertions of criminal conduct.

Ravbar and others made four claims that the legislation was unconstitutional:

It infringed on the implied freedom of political communication.

It was an acquisition of property on other than just terms.

Parliament did not have the power under the Constitution to make such a law.

The decision to put the union into administration was a punitive measure, and therefore an overreach of the executive government's powers.

They argued that only courts could enforce punishments, not parliaments, and told the High Court that the administration amounted to punishment by parliament.

The High Court unanimously rejected all the claims.

It was argued that the removal of the union's officers, meant that members were not represented by their chosen representatives, and were not free to engage in political activity with each other unless permitted by the administrator.

The government argued: "It rationally advances [the] legitimate purpose, by taking control of the Division away from those who have failed to ensure its lawful, effective operation, and temporarily giving it to an Administrator charged with rectifying that in members' interests."

A hollow assertion. No charges or evidence have been produced to back such claims. It is also highly questionable that sacking elected officials without due judicial process is in the "members' interests." It is profoundly anti-democratic.

There are courts and prosecutors to deal with alleged unlawful activity. Why weren't they used? The draconian legislation and appointment of the administrator are political.

POLITICAL

Not surprisingly the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations Amanda Rishworth welcomed the High Court's decision to reject the sacked CFMEU representatives' legal challenge.

Equally the employers in the industry are overjoyed at the Court decision. To them it spells the death of a militant union. CFMEU members are not as happy. Quite the contrary, on the two days following the decision, hundreds of CFMEU members took to the streets of Brisbane protesting the decision. (see report page 6)

"We know the entire system is against us," sacked CFMEU national president Jade Ingham told the rally at Bowen Hills. "But ... they underestimate our resolve, they underestimate how prepared we are to take this fight on all the way until we win ... mark my words, we will win this fight."

"As the national president of the construction division of the CFMEU, I was one of 268 union officials to be fired from an elected position. We are now classified as 'removed persons.' The legislation explicitly denies my comrades and I the right to appeal. None of us have been convicted of a crime, and the allegations levelled against a few officials have yet to be tested in a court of law."

Writing for *Jacobin*, Ingham said: "The administrator has also been granted broad powers to change the CFMEU's rules without the endorsement of members, to sell union assets, and to hire and fire staff. If the administrator decides to sack one of the union's membership assistants, receptionists, or industrial officers – for whatever reason – those employees also have no right to appeal.

"It is, by some measure, the most draconian anti-union legislation imposed in decades. It is more insidious than the attacks on workers and unions launched by the conservative governments of John Howard, Tony Abbott, and Malcolm Turnbull." It is also a political attack on the CFMEU as the first union who spoke out on the genocide on Gaza, and stood in solidarity with Palestine.

DANGEROUS PRECEDENT

The sacked officials who led the challenge said the determination was "disappointing for all members who are now being led by strangers who have no idea of the issues faced by the trades and industries we work in.

"What [ACTU secretary Sally] McManus and Labor have done is set a dangerous precedent where untested and unsubstantiated allegations from media reports are enough to sink a democratic organisation."

Their warning should be heeded; it would only take the stroke of a pen to impose similar draconian legislation on any other militant union and its officials.

Irving told union members the High Court's rejection would allow for major changes to the industry beyond just the CFMEU. "The decision provides clarity and it paves the way for the greater systemic reforms necessary for the union and across the industry," he said.

Not noticing the irony, Irving said "It is time for all members, delegates and staff to work together to return the union to membership control," without mentioning the theft of the union from members under Labor's legislation.

All trade unions and workers are threatened by the attack on construction workers.

An injury to one is an injury to all!

KEEP PUNCHING

The Communist Party of Australia is calling for:

- Immediate repeal of the Administration legislation.
- All sacked, elected officials to be immediately reinstated and fully compensated.
- The Labor government to repay all expenditures of union funds by the Administrator and other costs to the union.
- The Construction and General Division to be allowed to carry out its own investigation into any legitimate allegations.
- For maximum trade union and community unity with the CFMEU and any other union under attack.

An attack on all workers and trade unions must be opposed by all.

Hold a National Day of Action demanding the return of the union.

UNPRECEDENTED POWERS

The legislation attacking construction workers empowers the administrator to:

- Terminate or suspend the employment of CFMEU employees including elected union officials.
- Declare elected positions vacant.
- Determine the timing of elections of officers.
- Take disciplinary action, including expelling members from the union.
- Disqualify officers for any period up to life without the need to comply with the union's rules.
- Manage and dispose of property, spend the union's money, and have any power or perform any function that any official, branch, or division could prior to administration.
- Alter the rules of the CFMEU without the need for membership approval.
- Employ people to assist him, and delegate powers to them.

The scheme of administration and the actions of the administrator are not bound by the Fair Work Act or the CFMEU's rules even *after the administration ends*.

See *Guardian* #2113, 21/06/2024, "The bill to kill unions."

Communist Party of Australia

www.cpa.org.au cpa@cpa.org.au

Head Office (Sydney)
74 Buckingham St,
Surry Hills, NSW 2010
phone: 02 9699 8844
email: info@cpa.org.au

General Secretary
Andrew Irving
andrew@cpa.org.au

Party President
Vinnie Molina
president@cpa.org.au

Media guardian@cpa.org.au
amr@cpa.org.au

Canberra act@cpa.org.au PO Box 35 Dickson ACT 2602
Darwin Vinnie Molina darwin@cpa.org.au 0419 812 872
Melbourne Andrew Irving cpavic@cpa.org.au
Box 3 Trades Hall, Lygon St, Carlton Sth, Vic 3053
NSW State Comm Christian Goopy nsw@cpa.org.au 02 9699 8844
74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010
Perth Elly Hulm perth@cpa.org.au 0421 113 343
PO Box 98, North Perth, WA 6906
Qld State Comm 0499 476 540 qld@cpa.org.au
SA State Comm sa@cpa.org.au 0411 805 356 PO Box 56, Royal Park, SA 5014
Tasmania Andrew Irving tas@cpa.org.au 03 9639 1550