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MAY DAY 2026

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

FIGHT GENOCIDE, WAR, AND EXPLOITATION

May Day was born in struggle, forged in the fight for the eight-hour day and won through the sacrifice of workers like the Chicago martyrs. It became our Global Day of Class struggle and international solidarity. Exploitation and war are not natural, they are products of a system we can overturn. From the beginning, May Day linked local battles with the worldwide fight against capitalism and imperialism. Today, as crises deepen and wars spread, our unity in struggle is more urgent than ever.

STOP GENOCIDE IN PALESTINE – END THE US–ISRAEL WAR ON IRAN

This May Day is marked by the horror of ongoing genocide in Palestine and a full scale US–Israel war on Iran as well as the occupation of Lebanon. In Gaza, the Israeli state, backed by US imperialism, has carried out systematic destruction: tens of thousands killed, homes, hospitals and universities levelled, famine deliberately created. Yet the Palestinian people continue to resist with extraordinary courage, demanding liberation from occupation and apartheid.

Now Washington and Tel Aviv have opened a new front: a direct war on Iran.

Massive joint air and missile strikes have hit Iranian cities and infrastructure, killing thousands of people, and pushing the region to the brink of even greater catastrophe.

This war is not about "democracy" or "security"; it is part of a long imperialist project to dominate the Middle East, control energy routes and crush any state or movement that refuses to submit.

Australia is not neutral. Through AUKUS, US bases, intelligence sharing, and diplomatic cover for Israel, our ruling class has tied us to US war plans and made workers here complicit in aggression abroad.

On May Day we raise clear demands:

- End all Australian military, diplomatic and economic support for the US–Israel war on Iran and the genocide in Palestine and occupation of Lebanon
- Break with AUKUS and close bases and facilities that serve US wars
- Redirect war spending to housing, health, education and climate action
- Mobilise against the wars ruining your lives

The struggle for Palestinian freedom and against war on Iran is inseparable from the wider fight against imperialism.

AUTOMATION, AI – TECHNOLOGY IN WORKERS' HANDS

From ports and warehouses to offices and hospitals, automation and artificial intelligence are transforming work. Under capitalism, these technologies are introduced to cut jobs, intensify exploitation and weaken unions. Automated terminals and warehouses slash staffing, fragment the workforce and erode hard won conditions. AI systems are used to monitor workers, speed up workloads and strip away human control.

Yet these tools could help liberate us if they were under workers' and community control. Automation and AI could reduce drudgery, shorten the working week with no loss of pay, and expand access to vital services and culture. The problem is not technology itself, but who owns and directs it.

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May Day is a call to organise

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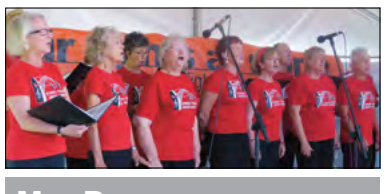
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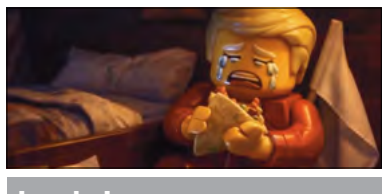
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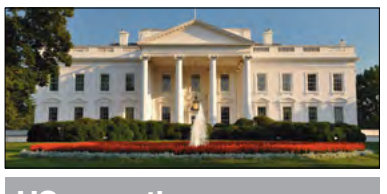
US covertly propagandising

Poster inside

Guardian

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Get in, get active

Here's a May Day riddle for you. What's dead, but still kicking goals? The answer is not your favourite football team, if you follow one that just limps through the season. It's unions. They're the largest united expressions of the organised working class. Unions kick goals for workers every day. If you do any sort of work for pay, unions are helping you personally right now. Unions are written off and ignored with the monotonous regularity by most Australian media.

Union membership is way less than it used to be, but unions still have numbers our hollowed-out political parties would kill for.

Unions are essential for keeping conditions Australians take for granted. When past union triumphs are mentioned, it's tempting to think they're all in the past. Tempting, but wrong. Good conditions like pay, holidays, overtime, safety at work don't keep themselves. Employers flout these things all the time, and are pulled up, not by the Australian government, but by union members and organisers. Even conditions like weekends and overtime that we think of as part of the furniture of daily life are constantly chipped away at by employers and business lobbies. Just look at the recent spate of wage theft cases – from George Calombaris to the nation's universities.

Unions kick goals on wages and conditions all the time. There's also constant union action on safety at work – there's no point getting decent wages if you don't come back from work alive, or if your work injures you and scars your home life. It's unions that put in the hard yards on workplace safety, and employers and their lobbyists that push back on that safety under the guise of opposing 'red tape' or 'overregulation.'

Unions also make Australia more democratic, by fighting for the interests of working people. Without unions, we live in a world in which we can vote for who goes to parliament once every three or so years, then go home, and get up to go to a job where the boss can do whatever they like to us. Unions push for what matters to the majority of Australians in real time, every day.

None of this means you just join and all will be well. Unions can have problems, like any organisations. They can be more or less democratic. Some union leaderships take advantage of an alienated membership and discourage member involvement in union affairs, handing down pay deals without involving members. Some unions seem captured by Labor Party careerists, who care more about getting a safe seat than in making their union effective for members' interests.

Unions are still feeling the after effects of the 1983-1996 Accord, a class-collaborationist deal that the union movement made with a Labor government. The Accord had benefits, but also barred unions from actively seeking wage gains from employers, and disenfranchised union members. Class collaboration doesn't work because workers and employers have opposing interests.

So, just as the safety and wage conditions we have can't be taken for granted, quality unions have to be fought for. This paper is proud to report on union wins. We're also proud to report on grassroots groups that work hard to make unions more democratic and effective for workers' interests.

This May Day, make a May Day resolution to get into your union. Show up! Every extra member makes a union more effective, and member efforts can make a union what it should be – a fighting force for the working class.

MAY DAY 2026

Continued from page 1

This May Day we demand:

- No automation without agreement, job guarantees and retraining on full pay
- Union oversight of new technologies and workplace data
- Public ownership and democratic control of key digital infrastructure
- Change the Fair Work Act so any introduction of Automation or AI gives full bargaining rights to workers including industrial action

The fight over automation and AI is a fight over the future of work – and over whether workers or capital will shape that future.

SOLIDARITY WITH SOCIALIST CUBA

In a world torn by war, inequality and climate chaos, socialist Cuba stands as a powerful example of resistance and hope. Despite decades of illegal blockade and constant attempts at destabilisation by US imperialism, the Cuban people have built a society prioritising health, education, culture and solidarity. Cuban doctors have been sent around the world in times of crisis, sharing what they have even when resources at home are scarce.

Cuba shows it is possible to organise society on different foundations: cooperation instead of competition, planning instead of chaos, people's needs instead of private profit.

That is why it is attacked. On May Day we say:

- End the US blockade of Cuba
- Defend Cuba's right to choose its own socialist path
- Learn from Cuba's achievements in health, education and grassroots democracy

Solidarity with Cuba is part of defending and extending socialist advances everywhere.

DEFEND AND EXTEND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

Here in Australia, the right to strike is still shackled by anti-union, anti-worker laws. Most industrial action is deemed "unlawful," even when workers are defending jobs, safety or living standards. Workers and unions face fines, court orders and employer retaliation simply for exercising their power to withhold labour – the main source of power workers have under capitalism.

Without a real right to strike, unionism is hollowed out and "collective bargaining" becomes begging for crumbs from the bosses' table. To resist job cuts, fight automation on our terms and oppose war, workers need strong unions and unrestricted rights to organise and act.

This May Day we demand:

- Repeal of all anti-strike and anti-union laws
- A full, unrestricted right to strike, including solidarity and political strikes
- Strong, democratic unions rooted in workplaces and communities

MAY DAY: ORGANISE FOR SOCIALISM

May Day is not a ritual. It is a call to organise. This system offers only permanent crisis: genocidal wars, climate breakdown, obscene inequality and the threat of fascism. The alternative is socialism – a society based on public ownership, workers' power, peace and internationalism.

Let this May Day renew our commitment to:

- Fight genocide in Palestine and oppose the US–Israel war on Iran
- Take back control over technology and defend jobs
- Stand with Cuba and all peoples resisting imperialism
- Rebuild militant unions and win back the right to strike

The ruling class has the wealth and the weapons, but the working class makes everything run. When we organise, we can bring this system to a halt – and build a new one in its place.

Workers of all countries, unite! May Day 2026 – for peace, socialism and workers' power. ✪

Quote of the Week

"We don't have anything to say about that"

Michael Terrell, Google's head of advanced energy, asked about Google's decision to use gas power to power data centres. Google once had a lot to say about being carbon neutral by 2030.

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www.cpa.org.au/press-fund/

May Day around Australia

Tasmania

28 April International Workers Memorial Day Service Workers' memorial Garden, Elizabeth Park Launceston 8am, Hobart Parliament Lawns 12 noon

1 May, May Day Toast, 410 Sandy Bay Rd, Sandy Bay

2 May, May Day Parade, Victoria St, Hobart, from 11.30 pm

Naarm/Melbourne

Mayday Rally Sunday 3rd May from 11am with rally forming up at 1:30pm outside Trades hall. Road open 4:30pm

30 April, 5pm, wreath laying at 8-hour monument Labour Day Dinner Dance, 1 May, Trades Hall 6:30pm

International Solidarity Event, Trades hall, 6pm

Gadigal Land/Sydney

1 May, MUA will have a BBQ Breakfast for members and their families before the march at 8am

Both the MUA and the Sydney Branch of the Electrical Trades Union will stop to march, assembling at Belmore Park at 11 am

1 May, 5:30pm, Traditional May Day Toast at Unions NSW

3 May, May Day Family Fun Day, 11am Prince Alfred Square Paramatta

Canberra

1 May, ACT government workers deserve a Pay Rise, rally Civic Square 1pm.

Muloobinba/Newcastle

3 May, Hunter Workers' May Day Parade

Newcastle Museum, 12:00 am

Queensland

30 April: Gold Coast Labour Day Dinner,

2 May: Cairns Toowoomba, Bundaberg, Ipswich will all have a Labour Day March & Family Fun Day

3 May, Gold Coast Labour Day March

Sunshine Coast Family Fun Day

Maryborough Labour Day march and Family Fun Day

May 4, Bowen, Townsville, Brisbane and Gladstone, Labour Day March and Family Fun Day

Walyalup/Fremantle

Fremantle Esplanade Sunday 3 May, 10am rally, 12noon march through Fremantle

3 May, May Day gig at the Buffalo Club 54 High St Fremantle from3-11pm

Fundraiser for Apheda and Workers' Solidarity WA

Kaurna Yerta/Adelaide

1 May, May Day dinner, Cypriot Hall

2 May, May Day March and Family Fun Day, Tarntanyangga/Victoria Square, 10am

(includes May Day awards, recognising individuals who have made a significant contribution to the workers' movement)

Canberra Branch and the way forward

The CPA Canberra Branch hosted an event featuring General Secretary Andrew Irving, Party President Vinnie Molina, and Deputy General Secretary Elizabeth Hulm. The purpose of the event was to reflect on the successfully completed 15th Congress and the publication of the new Political Resolution. Members of the Canberra Branch introduced the speakers. It was held at the beautiful venue Manning Clark House, which is the former residence of that great Australian historian. A packed room, it was attended by people from across Canberra and interstate.

Andrew Irving spoke about the success of the 15th Congress, capped off by a rousing rendition of the Internationale, and the power of unity. Vinnie Molina spoke inspiringly of the initiative of comrades across the Party in a dangerous new period for world peace. Elizabeth Hulm spoke about the Political Resolution and the extraordinarily rich, consultative, democratic processes that led to the final version of that document.

Members of the Canberra Branch also spoke, emphasising the internationalism of the Party and reflecting on the 82nd Anniversary of Fred Paterson's election to Parliament. How the CPA uses, and will in the future use, elections to further the working-class movement, was also discussed in question time.

This was an inspiring event, an uplifting event in an excellent setting. Most of all it was an honour for the Branch to host our Party's leadership as part of a new and exciting era of development for our Party.

Deputy General Secretary Elizabeth Hulm, Party President Vinnie Molina, and General Secretary Andrew Irving.

rich, consultative, democratic processes

'Historically undervalued': NSW nurses and midwives decision falls short

Public sector nurses and midwives across New South Wales have expressed mixed emotions about the recent wages ruling by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC), fearing the pay increase awarded to Registered Nurses and Midwives will not fix the structural reform that is needed.

The Full Bench of the IRC awarded a three-year wage deal from 1 July 2026:

- 16% for Registered Nurses and Midwives – 10% in the first year, followed by 3% in the remaining two years.
- 18% for Enrolled Nurses – 12% in the first year, followed by 3% in the remaining two years.
- 28% for Assistants in Nursing and Midwifery – 22% in the first year, followed by 3% in the remaining two years.

NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) General Secretary, Michael Whaites, said the IRC's decision was historic but fell short of what was needed to repair the state's public health system.

"Today's announcement gives a record-breaking pay deal for nurses and midwives in New South Wales. Yet for registered nurses and midwives it is not enough to fix the structural reform that we need in this state," said Whaites.

"Registered nurses and midwives are the backbone of this workforce. They are the majority of this workforce, and we had hoped for a better outcome for them."

Whaites emphasised that for enrolled nurses and assistants in nursing and midwifery, this is a great outcome. It recognises the undervaluation of the work that they do and gives them the recognition they deserve.

"We respect the IRC's decision in awarding these increases to nurses and midwives, but it leaves further work for the NSW government to do.

"Throughout our campaign, we had politician after politician saying that they know nurses and midwives are worth more, we just can't afford it and yet, here again today we hear that registered nurses and midwives should be paid more, but we just can't afford it."

"In handing down its decision, the Full Bench highlighted that our members are essential, irreplaceable and, 'historically undervalued' while also citing the IRC's obligation to consider the state of the NSW economy. This isn't a reflection on the quality of our case, but rather an outcome of the arbitration process.

"This is an outcome that says that women's work has to remain undervalued because of the economy – that's an appalling position for us to be in in 2026. We will continue to campaign for our registered nurses and midwives to make sure they're valued for the work they do."

"We welcome the return of a court of arbitration for public sector wage disputes. This has assisted us in redressing the damage done by the previous government's wage cap which saw the real value of our members' wages decrease."

The NSWNMA filed the state's largest wage case in early 2025, comprising of more than 17,000 pages of evidence, to demonstrate the work value of nurses and midwives and the historic gendered undervaluation of the professions.

NSWNMA Assistant General Secretary, Katrina Bough, said the decision would not address cost-of-living pressures and workforce challenges being felt across the state.

"Today's decision is unlikely to assist in attracting new experienced nurses and midwives to our professions. It risks more experienced nurses and midwives leaving our public health system in coming years, which will result in increased staffing challenges in an already stressed system," Bough said.

"Nurses and midwives are struggling to pay the bills in this cost-of living crisis. While we welcome the boost to their wages, it doesn't address the gap between male dominated industries and our heavily feminised workforce.

"The NSW government cannot hide behind this decision. They must take responsibility for the ongoing crisis that will continue to be driven by a rate of pay that does not address gender undervaluation of nurses and midwives in NSW.

"We'd like to thank our member and expert witnesses who were part of this historic case, and the tens of thousands of nurses and midwives' who campaigned during this two-year wage fight. We couldn't have got this far without all our remarkable members."

NSWNMA

May Day protest songs

Graham Holton

On 1 May workers across Australia celebrate May Day. At its peak in the 1940s to 1970s, tens of thousands of workers marched. Union leaders and the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) representatives gave political speeches, while members held red flags and workers' symbols. Workers marched behind their union banners, and large choirs sang socialist songs in theatre groups, brass bands played labour anthems, and the crowds sang political songs.

During the Cold War, after the Menzies government attempted to ban the CPA, communist and militant labour songs were censored, banned from radio, public broadcasting, and public venues. Party members continued to sing.

Communist cultural strategy believed collective singing strengthened class solidarity and unity. Choirs were mass participation, providing political education: the lyrics explained exploitation, strikes, and socialism. Large choirs created a powerful sense of shared struggle, such as the Sydney Workers' Choir, Melbourne Workers' Choir, and the New Theatre Chorus. They performed at May Day demonstrations and anti-fascist rallies during WW2, Vietnam War protests, and at union strike meetings.

The most important May Day song was the *Internationale*, sung at the end of rallies. Its lyrics, 'Arise ye workers from your slumber, arise ye prisoners of want,' celebrate the worker revolution and the unity of the international proletariat. The early labour movement's demand for humane working hours is sung in *Eight Hour Day*. The lyrics, 'Eight hours labour, eight hours recreation, eight hours rest,' shouted out what workers wanted.

Solidarity Forever was popular at union marches. The lyrics, 'When the union's inspiration, through the workers' blood shall run,' explained, 'For the union makes us strong,' emphasising union organisation was the path to worker power. *The Red Flag* was sung by CPA members and socialist groups after speeches. Its lyrics, 'Then raise the scarlet standard high, beneath its shade we'll live and die,' honoured the socialist martyrs' symbol of the red banner of socialism.

Folk music played a major political role in the Australian left and Communist movement. The CPA believed folk culture could express the history, struggles, and consciousness of the working class more effectively than could elite culture. Folk songs were used as political teaching tools. At meetings, festivals, and rallies, songs explained the poverty under capitalism, the history of union struggles, and the continuing struggle against imperialist wars.

Dorothy Hewett,'s *Weevils in the Flour* is a satirical attack on poverty and capitalist neglect. This humorous song is a bitter satire often performed in theatre or revue shows. Another is *Freedom on the Wallaby*, which told of the historic 1891 Queensland Shearers' Strike. The lyrics, "So we must fly a rebel flag, as others did before us," linked modern workers with colonial labour rebellions.

These songs, once considered dangerous or subversive, are now widely studied as part of Australian labour and cultural history. Workers' songs continue to unite.

Sydney Trade Union Choir, May Day Sydney 2016.

www.cpa.org.au

Pacific governments and civil society have come together in Vanuatu as part of a key regional meeting ahead of the landmark First International Conference for the Transition Away From Fossil Fuels in Santa Marta, Colombia against the backdrop of a global energy crisis which has seen Pacific Island nations hit especially hard.

The meeting, held from April 13-15, saw a new landmark declaration: 'The Tassiriki Call for a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific.' Leaders cited the energy crisis as evidence of the dangers of fossil fuel dependence and the urgent need to transition away from fossil fuels.

The global energy crisis driven by the US and Israel's illegal war on Iran has raised the stakes for a region that is among the most vulnerable to climate change but is also one of the most fuel-exposed economies in the world. Many Pacific nations are grappling with fuel shortages that threaten power and basic services due to rising fuel costs, with Tuvalu declaring a 14-day state of emergency.

Shiva Gounden, Head of Pacific at Greenpeace Australia Pacific who attended the meeting said, "Never before has the need to end the fossil fuel chokehold been so abundantly clear, as our Pacific communities again suffer the consequences of a global economy hooked on coal, oil, and gas.

"It's always ordinary people who suffer the costs of war – whether innocent civilians killed by bombs, or our communities seeing food and power bills soar, while already bearing the brunt of a cost of living and climate crisis.

"This meeting comes at a critical moment, and was an opportunity for a renewed push for a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific. The government leaders and civil society present at the meeting continued to strongly affirm the Pacific's status as a global leader on climate action. Momentum is building ahead of Santa Marta, and as Australia prepares to preside over the next round of international climate negotiations at COP31 in Türkiye, in partnership with the Pacific.

"Urgent action to transition away from fossil fuels is fundamental to limiting warming to 1.5°C – a survival line for Pacific communities, but also a path of liberation that frees us from expensive, extractive and polluting fossil fuel imports and uplifts our communities. The Pacific has played a vital role in getting to this point, shaping international agreements and holding the line on 1.5°C.

"The phase out of fossil fuels depends on determined international cooperation, particularly when it comes to unlocking the finance needed to support countries and communities with implementing solutions. It is vital the transition is grounded in Pacific knowledge and led by the local communities who live these realities every day."

PARASITE OF THE WEEK: The Liberal-National-One Nation coalition as they push a racist anti-immigration program which would be a return to the White Australia Policy. This was a set of racist policies that aimed to forbid people of non-European ethnic origin – especially Asians and Pacific Islanders – from migrating to Australia in order to create an Anglo-Celtic ideal as a white outpost of the empire. Governments dismantled these policies between 1949 and 1973.

Soon after Australia federated in January 1901, the federal government of Edmond Barton passed the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901. The passage of this bill marked the commencement of the White Australia Policy as Australian federal government policy. These policies effectively gave British migrants preference over all others through the first four decades of the 20th century. During World War II, Prime Minister John Curtin said, "This country shall remain forever the home of the descendants of those people who came here in peace (!) in order to establish in the South Seas an outpost of the British race."

The Whitlam government in 1973 passed laws to ensure that race would be totally disregarded as a component for immigration to Australia. In 1975, the Whitlam government passed the Racial Discrimination Act, which made racially-based selection criteria unlawful.

ACFS report

Peter Farmer

From 17 to 19 April, Australia-Cuba Friendship Society members from around Australia gathered in Canberra for the annual national Consultation. The event opened up with a social night expertly managed by the Canberra ACFS. Delegates heard from the new Cuban Ambassador Gilma Moreira Lino, and others on the unjust and inhumane US blockade, which has been severely ramped up by the Trump administration.

That blockade costs lives and makes the simplest aspects of daily life difficult for Cuban people in ways it's hard for Australians to understand.

Many of the ACFS members at the Consultation have been to Cuba, either independently or as part of the annual Southern Cross Brigade which visits Cuba in solidarity. They've seen first hand the brutal effects of the blockade. They've also seen first hand the resilience and spirit of the Cuban people.

The Consultation passed a resolution which will be a plan for action for the coming year in terms of concrete support for Cuba and its revolution.

After the Consultation finished, delegates demonstrated at the US Embassy, making it clear that we stand in solidarity with Cuba and resolutely support its people in their struggle against US imperialism.

Anyone interested in supporting Cuba is encouraged to get in touch with their local ACFS branch and/or go on the Southern Cross Brigade.

As we chanted loud and clear at the US embassy: LET CUBA LIVE!

HANDS OFF CUBA!

we commit to continuing our defence and promotion of the ideals of the Cuban revolution

Final Declaration of the 41st National Consultation of the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society

This meeting of participating delegates to the 41st National Consultation of the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society meeting in Canberra focused on the increasing economic aggression against Cuba, including the oil blockade, by the United States. For more than 60 years Cuba has faced unrelenting violations of international law, and the result of the illegal blockade is a humanitarian disaster and amounts to the collective punishment of the Cuban people.

This gathering saw activists from around the country reaffirm their commitment to defending and supporting the Cuban Revolution and its people.

WE COMMIT TO

1. Working together to demand that:

a. the United States end the illegal blockade on Cuba, and remove Cuba as an alleged state sponsor of terrorism;

b. the Australian Government condemn the ongoing US attacks on Cuba's sovereignty and right to life;

c. the Australian Government to commit to aid for Cuba, and for an independent foreign policy that does not take part in any form in the US sanctions against Cuba.

2. Immediate mobilisation in the face of armed aggression against Cuba by, or on behalf of, the United States regime and allied forces.

3. Combatting false narratives about Cuba promoted by mainstream media and linked to major political and economic powers. We will continue to fight for and demand public access to information about Cuba and its people that is accurate, unbiased and truthful. We will work to engage with the mainstream and independent media to dispel false narratives.

4. Encourage Members of the Commonwealth Parliament to join the Parliamentary Friends of Cuba group.

5. To work with and mobilise all the forces which express genuine solidarity with Cuba, including trade unions, parliamentarians (at all levels) and Australian society in general. This includes endorsement by trade unions of petitions, open letters, and involvement in the Southern Cross Brigade.

6. Raising funds as branches and collectively for vital projects in support of the Cuban people, especially in collaboration with the Cuban Institute for Friendship Amongst Peoples (ICAP).

7. Actively participate in international campaigns that provide material and political support for Cuba.

8. We will build the Southern Cross Brigade as a key part of our movement. The brigade inspires people and we will build it through collaborations with trade unionists, university students, international activists, and other community organisations.

9. To work, in coordination with Cuban institutions and mass organisations, to take Cuba's example of emancipation, social justice, equity, development, international solidarity and human rights to the world.

10. In the 100th year since Fidel's birth, we commit to continuing our defence and promotion of the ideals of the Cuban Revolution. Fidel's political contributions and his ethical and political example are his legacy to the peoples of the world. We will support the fundamental contribution made by the Fidel Castro Ruz Centre in Havana and will support the Fidel International Colloquium in August.

Cuba is not alone!

Canberra, 19 April 2026

Big banks reject WFH

Australia's biggest and most profitable financial institutions have overwhelmingly rejected workers' request to temporarily suspend in-office mandates, instead insisting that employees commute to work during the worsening fuel crisis.

That's despite Prime Minister Anthony Albanese calling on Australians to conserve fuel where they can. The majority of finance workers can do this by working from home – but only if employers meet the moment and allow it to happen.

Of the 93 finance employers the Finance Sector Union (FSU) wrote to, 83 either rejected workers' request, did not provide a satisfactory response, or failed to respond at all, including the Big Four banks.

Finance workers proved during the pandemic – and continue to demonstrate today – that they can successfully work from home without disrupting workplace operations. It beggars belief that some of Australia's largest employers would deny their workers the opportunity to conserve fuel and save money during this worsening crisis.

In light of this failure, the FSU is supporting members with flexible work arrangement (FWA) requests to highlight the significant financial stress they are experiencing.

The union will continue to support members to call on employers to implement common-sense changes that will make a real difference.

FSU National Secretary Julia Angrisano said:

"Suspending in-office mandates won't cost our profit-rich banks and financial institutions a single dollar. But it will make a meaningful difference for ordinary Australians' hip pockets during this national crisis.

"In the midst of a global fuel crisis, it beggars belief that some of Australia's largest and wealthiest employers are more concerned with keeping their staff working in the office, instead of helping conserve fuel for those who need it most.

"If there was ever an opportunity for our banks and financial institutions to meet the moment and act in the national interest, this is it.

"Australia's finance workers have proven again and again that working from home works – not just for workers, but for employers too. Now, it can make a national difference by helping to conserve Australia's fuel supply."

Finance sector workers have been interviewed. These are some of the things they've said:

"Last pay cycle after all my bills were paid, I had just over $100 to get me through the fortnight."

"Driving my car has become a constant source of stress."

"Week to week, I'm finding it increasingly difficult to afford basic necessities like groceries and fuel, as costs continue to rise while wages remain unchanged."

"Fuel is becoming exorbitant, we are struggling to survive whilst also raising a baby. The lack of time commuting to the office and lack of money to buy fuel/commute is a major stress point for us. My partner also works away so I am solo parenting trying to juggle this all."

"On office days, I incur daily commuting costs (driving to the station and train fares) and unavoidable after school care for my children. Despite minimising discretionary spending, each office day costs me around $75. The ability to work fully from home would allow me to save an estimated $150 per week, which would be a meaningful and welcome relief, especially given my capacity to complete all of my duties effectively from home."

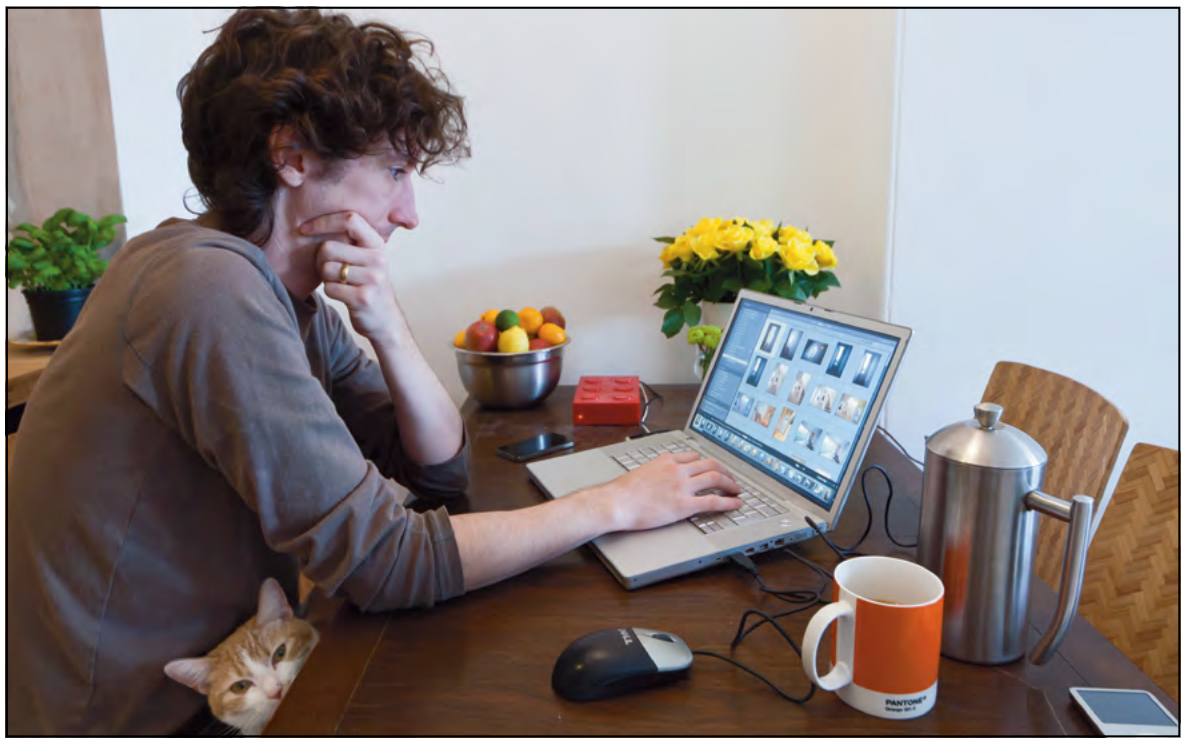


Photo: Dave Morris – flickr.com (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Make Santos pay

MB

As gas giant Santos held its annual general meeting in Adelaide, new polling revealed nearly three in four South Australians believe gas companies should be made to pay for environmental damage they cause.

The polling came as a growing number of parliamentarians and civil society groups urge the Albanese government to place a 25% levy on all gas exports.

"The war-driven fuel shortage has shown how dependent Australia is on dirty, expensive fossil fuels, and big gas drillers like Santos are doing everything they can to make it even worse," said Australian Conservation Foundation CEO Adam Bandt.

"Australia needs to urgently break its addiction to coal and gas and become energy independent by investing in renewables built in the right places."

Santos, Australia's second largest gas company after Woodside, is headquartered in Adelaide and is steamrolling ahead with new projects at Narrabri (NSW), the Beetaloo Basin (Northern Territory), Barossa (off the NT coast) and in Papua New Guinea.

"Finding new sources of fracked gas is the opposite of what we should be doing during a climate crisis," Bandt said.

"Gas use in Australia is tracking down. New supply won't cut prices. It will add to exports.

"If Santos and other companies are allowed to keep drilling in the Beetaloo and scale up the industry, thousands of gas wells could be drilled, which could result in an estimated 1.2 billion tonnes of climate pollution over 25 years between now and 2050.

"If the Beetaloo climate bomb is detonated it could single-handedly undo all efforts to cut Australia's emissions.

"Going ahead with climate and nature-destroying fossil fuel projects means more heatwaves, worse bushfires and the continued increase in extreme weather here in Australia, regardless of where the fuel is burnt.

"The best way for Australia to have energy independence and for people to save money is by investing in the sun and the wind and making climate-wrecking gas giants pay a 25% tax on their exports of Australian gas."

Kirsty Bevan, CEO of Conservation SA said, "Santos was founded in South Australia and is still headquartered here. Adelaide is ground zero for the fight to stop the dirty gas expansions that Santos is pushing interstate, in the Beetaloo and Narrabri."

The opinion poll of 1,242 South Australians conducted by Demos AU in March 2026 found 74% agreed or strongly agreed that 'gas companies like Santos should be required to pay for environmental damage caused by their operations.'

The Santos headquarters in Adelaide.
Photo: Danimations – wikimedia.org (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Open Letter – the youth of the world stands with the Palestinian people

The approval in the Israeli parliament on 30 April of a law that makes the death penalty the sentence for Palestinian prisoners who have exercised their legitimate right to resistance in the face of the violent and illegal occupation, colonisation, and oppression imposed by Israel constitutes a new and serious step in Israel's genocidal policy against the Palestinian people and youth.

This is a law that applies only to Palestinians, thus excluding Israelis, particularly Israeli soldiers and settlers who murder Palestinians. It is a selective and racist law that deepens a de facto Zionist apartheid regime. A law that seeks to support and reinforce the brutal aggression perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people, aiming at the occupation and colonisation of the entire territory of Palestine.

The ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip, the occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, the persecution, imprisonment, and murder of thousands of Palestinians constitute the greatest crime of our time committed against an entire people.

Israel, with its allies and accomplices, in particular the United States of America, NATO, and the European Union, are primarily responsible for the destabilisation of the Middle East, having attacked countries such as Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Iran, posing the greatest threat to Peace and Humanity.

We demand that the Israeli authorities withdraw this iniquitous and unacceptable law for the execution of Palestinian prisoners.

We stand in solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people, for their right to resistance against brutal and illegal occupation, colonisation, and oppression by Israel, for an end to the genocide, for the release of Palestinian prisoners, for the realisation of the State of Palestine and the right of return for Palestinian refugees, as determined by international law.

An AUKUS alternative

Con Pakavakis

Academic and author Clinton Fernandez, in Search for Security – AUKUS and the New Militarism, highlights better alternatives to nuclear submarines. Air-independent propulsion (AIP) submarines convert chemical energy into electric power efficiently, can dive as deep as nuclear-powered submarines, and stay underwater for up to three weeks without surfacing. They are quieter and cheaper, allowing for more units and local maintenance jobs.

Countries such as Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and Italy all use AIP submarines.

Rex Patrick, a former submariner and senator, has argued that Australia could build 20 modern AIP submarines for $30 billion.

Furthermore, the AUKUS nuclear submarines are by no means a certainty. There are real concerns about the capacity of the UK and the US to actually deliver nuclear submarines to Australia. Not long ago, Melbourne newspaper *The Age* carried a front page headline 'Grim warning on AUKUS subs.' A retired British rear admiral, Philip Mathias, a former director of nuclear policy with the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, said, "Australia has shown a great deal of naivety and did not conduct sufficient due diligence on the parlous state of the UK's nuclear submarine program."

While Australia is meant to buy 3 second-hand Virginia submarines from the US under AUKUS, the other 5 are meant to be jointly constructed by the UK and Australia. The UK faces shortages of leaders with nuclear submarine experience, and only one of its six nuclear submarines is operational. Mathias emphasised that policy and money alone do not build submarines – skilled people do, and there are not enough with the necessary expertise.

The US faces similar issues, unable to meet its own needs for nuclear submarines and unwilling to guarantee deliveries to Australia, despite Australia's $2 billion payments each to the US and UK submarine construction industries to improve their infrastructure.

Late last year, a US congressional report criticised the lack of clarity on Australia's use of AUKUS submarines in a potential conflict with China. Prime Minister Albanese had refused US Defence Under-Secretary Elbridge Colby's attempts to commit Australia to war over Taiwan and declined to increase military spending as urged by US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth.

More recently, however, following Minister of Defence Marles's US visit, Bryan Clark, a commentator from a conservative US think tank, suggested that assurances were secretly made that the submarines would support allied operations, including actions against China.

The Beacon

Sydney participants in the Anti-AUKUS and Anti Bases day 21 February.

www.cpa.org.au

Check out the official Instagram account of the Communist Party of Australia

www.instagram.com/communist.party.australia/

PEACE NOTES

Washing our hands

Peter Farmer

There's something Australians hear a lot of when they get news from the rest of the world. It should make us feel better but it doesn't. It's this: we're far away from what's happening and we're not involved.

Australia is far away from Iran. We're a long way from Palestine and Israel. We're the other side of the earth from Sudan. You name it, if there's a war on, we're a long way away, aren't we?

It's a refrain, especially strong from commentators who don't want Australians to feel like they should be doing something.

There's a certain amount of double-think here, holding two mutually exclusive beliefs at the same time. Take Palestine for example. It's true that Australia is a long way from Palestine, and it's true that this country can't just snap its fingers and end Israel's genocidal assault on the Palestinian people. The people who tell us how far we are from Israel, are also often keen on us doing things about the war. They're the same people who support restrictions on protesting in support of Palestine, the same ones who class calls for solidarity with Palestinian people as "genocidal." If Australia really has nothing to do with it, why do they care if we have some protests?

The 'we're a long way away' line doesn't stand up to scrutiny. Australia is part of a supply chain that furnishes Israel with the weapons it needs. We're sending an advanced intelligence-gathering plane to the Middle East to help out the US and Israel with targeting. If you believe the Albanese government that the signals gathered by that plane won't be used to help with any attacks, we have a bridge to sell you, for mates rates.

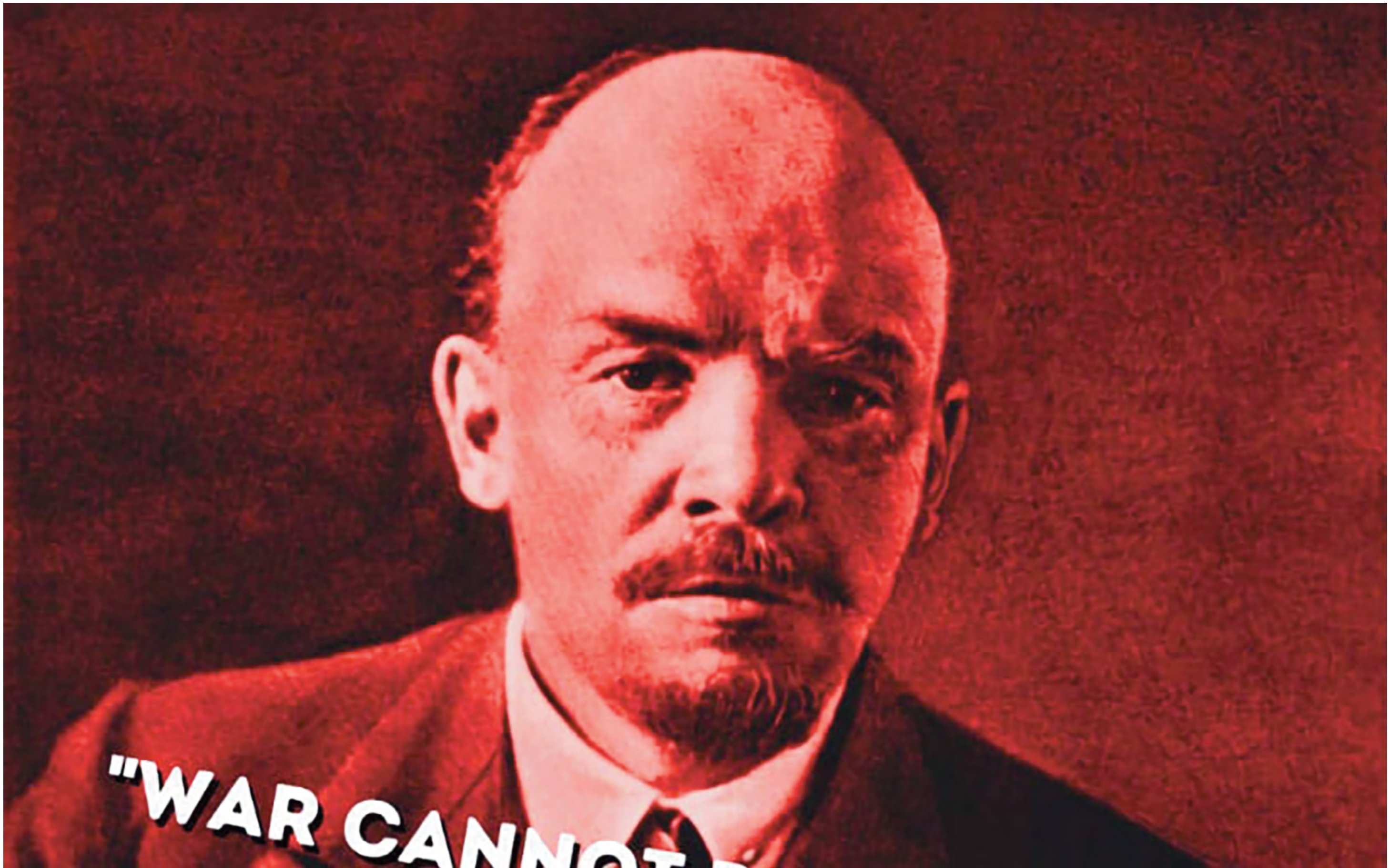
As well as 'we are a long way away and can't do anything,' Australian media likes to pretend that this country punches above its weight on the international stage. That's why the thoughts of Albanese and Wong on international crises are reported as though no other international leaders are speaking on the same topic, and as though the participants are listening.

To an extend, they *are* listening. Australia is part of the UN. More importantly, to the US, geography means that Australia is a really good location for the Pine Gap facility, so that the US can listen in on signals and flight movements as far away as the Middle East. The signals from that base go where the US wants them to, and by leaving the place there, Australia is committed.

This country is involved in world affairs and that means we're involved in war, no matter what our US-pleasing politicians say. It's a bit scary, but it's also a good thing because that means we can also be involved in peace.

So join in the protests, and get into any petitions or direct action that puts pressure on Albanese and Wong to use our involvement for peace. This country can be a force for good, making the world a more peaceful place and making Australia safer while we're at it.

Action for peace is a daunting prospect, and there's no guarantee of success, but it's better than pretending we're not a part of what's going on.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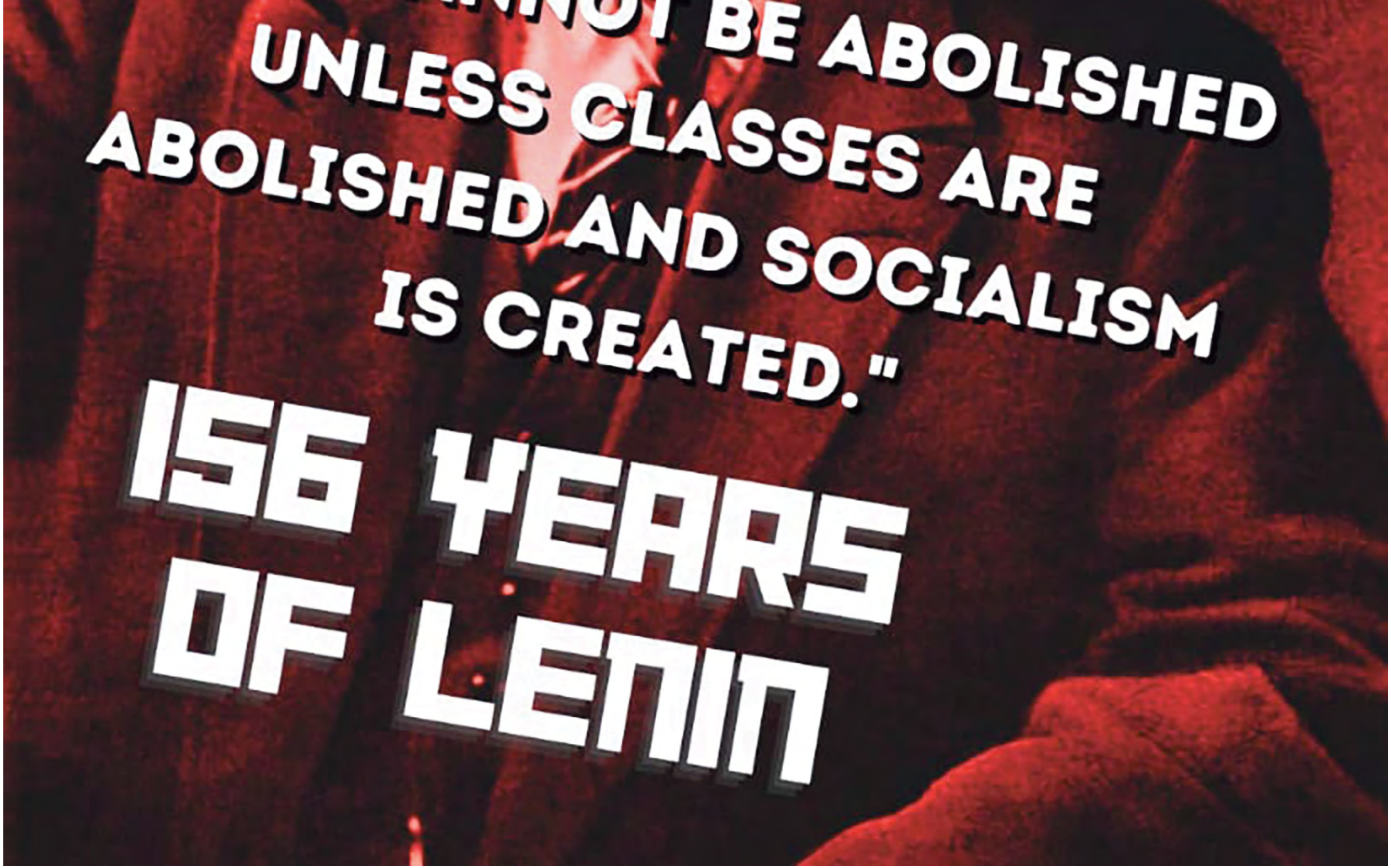
CANNOT BE ABOLISHED
UNLESS CLASSES ARE
ABOLISHED AND SOCIALISM
IS CREATED."
156 YEARS
OF LENIN

Letters to the Editor
The Guardian
74 Buckingham Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010
email: editor@cpa.org.au

The $53 Billion defence boost

The Minister for Defence Richard Marles, in announcing this increase, said "a significant increase is needed for an era in which countries are increasingly using force rather than diplomacy." This statement does not sufficiently explain the reason why our resources are being so exorbitantly thrown away.

The countries who use force are the US and Israel which causes the responses we have seen from Iran and the various groups around the Middle East. The US and Israel attacked Iran while it was in diplomatic negotiations and there were threats that the negotiating Iranian team recently in Pakistan would be assassinated.

It is our so-called allies who are causing the tensions. It's long past time to unshackle ourselves from the US alliance which skews our military spending towards helping the US for global warfare.

A Defence department tasked with just defending Australia would be a lot cheaper. As well, we should follow the lead of our Pacific neighbours whose foreign policy is 'Friend to all and enemy to none.'

Our policy is 'all the way with the USA,' this is the reason for our exorbitant spending on military and the undue influence of arms corporations.

Denis Doherty

Something to say?
Write to the Editor!
editor@cpa.org.au

Film Review: *The Blue Trail*

Reviewer: Andy Hedgecock

Threatened with exile to a senior citizen colony, 77-year-old Tereza responds to Dylan Thomas's demand that "old age should burn and rave." Arrested for undocumented overage travelling, she escapes and experiences a series of strange encounters.

Gabriel Mascaro's fifth feature, set in near-future Brazil, focuses on the resilience of older people in transcending the indignities imposed by capitalism.

Unfortunately, its impact is diluted by an overelaborate backstory and multiple shifts of style and genre. There are echoes of *Logan's Run*, *The African Queen*, *Thelma and Louise*, and *Apocalypse Now*, as well as hints of magical realism.

There is much to admire: dazzling and imaginative photography of the Amazon; Denise Weinberg's commanding portrayal of Tereza; and a thrillingly ambiguous casino sequence that might be reality or dream.

It begins as gritty dystopian satire: Tereza's gruelling work at an alligator meat processing plant ends when the ageist, authoritarian government declares her an example of "national living heritage." Policies are communicated through vacuous slogans while police in "wrinkle wagons" apprehend citizens with grey hair. This segment is beautifully shot, but heavy handed in guiding emotional response.

The film comes to life when Tereza encounters two forms of blue trail – the Amazon and the hallucinogenic emissions of the rare blue drool snail, which seems to enable visions of the future. She hits the river with dodgy but charming captain Cadu; and later finds sanctuary – and perhaps love – with an elderly rebel known as The Nun, an atheist touting digital bibles from a double-deck riverboat.

Morning Star

Denise Weinberg in *The Blue Trail*. Credit: Guillermo Garza Desvia

A GOOD PLACE TO START

Reading for the beginning communist/ the communism-curious

Can we move the Labor Party to the left by joining it? by Warren Smith

Reviewer: FK

I'm a massive evangelist for this short book, and there's an element of guilt involved. For the longest time, I looked at the cover and thought something like this: 'No we can't, what a silly question.' So for the longest time, I didn't read it. I literally judged a book by its cover.

Then one day, someone who'd actually read *Can we move the Labor Party to the left by joining it?* gave me the good oil.

This book was awesome, they explained, because it doesn't just rubbish people who join the Australian Labor Party in the hope of somehow making that party more left wing and progressive. It goes into what they achieved while trying, and how they went about it.

So I gave it a chance. It's even better than they said. The book starts off with a succinct and informative history of the Labor Party and its involvement with workers movements. After all, the ALP was formed by workers' who saw that the power in the country was in the parliament, and decided that they'd better have some of their own in there.

There's more than that. There are the causes that people joined the ALP for and spent lifetimes trying to achieve progress in. There's industrial relations, and the attempt to get worker control over the large capital enterprises that dominated Australia. Since progress isn't just an on-off proposition, the efforts of people who tried to move the ALP leftwards paid off in many instances. No, it wasn't a total victory. If progress were that simple, we'd have an ALP worth joining now.

This book is also a potted history of the early Communist Party of Australia.

So my friend was right about this deceptively small book. You should read *Can we move the Labor Party to the left by joining it?* Read it if you want an introduction to communism as practiced in Australia and an insight into the struggles that formed both the CPA and the ALP.

The answer to the cover question is still 'no,' but reading about the people who joined will be a spur to political action.

It's a good place to start.

Available for free download in the Resource section of the cpa.org.au

Solutions to Crossword

Guardian 20 April 2026, #2186

Across

1 What the A in 'AI' can also stand for **AFRICAN**

4 Accused Chilean torturer has been extradited from **GOLD COAST**

6 Place Netanyahu is going back to if the war ever ends **PRISON**

8 Platforms genocide-loving presidents, not genocide-criticising journalists, our national **PRESS CLUB**

10 Doesn't include Lebanon, but should **CEASEFIRE**

11 People wonder if Trump has lost his **MARBLES**

13 Still in jail while war crime perpetrators aren't **WHISTLEBLOWERS**

16 Albo won't do this to gambling ads **BAN**

Down

2 Something the US, Israel and Australian Special Forces have been accused of **WAR CRIMES**

3 Queensland can lock you up for saying these **SLOGANS**

5 China and Vietnam have signed one **SECURITY PACT**

7 Sydney's trams won't have sensors because this is more important than human lives **COSTS**

9 Trump threatened to end one of these **CIVILISATION**

12 Harming South Australian health, climate change-related **ALGALBLOOM**

14 KMT leader has called for peaceful **COEXISTENCE**

15 Lives in Rome, insulted by Trump **POPE**

ATHLETICS

The Australia Athletics world is excited about a crop of young athletes who are setting records that haven't been seen for generations. The general understanding and history of sprinting in the Olympics is that the events are dominated by US, Caribbean and lately Botswana in both men's and women's events. In middle and longer distance running such as 800m, 1,500m, and the 5,000m events the winners tend to be North Africans.

Gout Gout

Gout Gout is only 18 and he is running faster than Ussain Bolt at the same age. He just won the 200 metre sprint at the national championships held in Sydney over the period 9 April to 12 April. He ran an amazing 19.67 seconds for the 200m, Usain Bolt's time at the same age was 19.93 seconds. He ran a great time at the age championship at Brisbane for 100m under 20's at 10.19 seconds and he won the final at 10.21 secs. Gout Gout and his advisors are saying he can run faster as he becomes more mature. He appears to have a good team around him, and we hope that his development continues in maturing to a stand out athlete.

We know that Gout Gout's background is African and this must be a great annoyance to the 'March for Australia' people.

Lachlan Kennedy

Lachlan Kennedy has been something of a nemesis for Gout Gout and has beaten him on some occasions and recently at the Australian Championships Lachlan won the 100m final at a time of 9.96 secs won the men's 100m title. He became the first person to break the 10-second barrier on Australian soil. Gout Gout did not run the 100m and Lachlan did not run the 200m but the conclusion we can draw is that Australia has some very credible sprinters for the upcoming Olympics.

MIDDLE- AND LONG-DISTANCE RUNNING

Jess Hull

A name that we should all remember is the diminutive Jess Hull in women's middle- and long-distance events. Jess has had significant results in overseas events being either second or third in finals against significant opponents. She announced that she would attempt the task of winning the 800m, 1,500m and 5,000m titles in the Australian titles. Jess started her quest in 1,500m race and in the last lap moved to the front of the pack as the finishing line loomed. However the fairy tale ended as she was accidentally tripped from behind just metres from the finish. Jess however competed again in the 5,000m and won that event.

Cameron Myers

19-year old Cameron won the two national championships over the 1,500 and 5,000m events. In the 1,500 event 'One analyst assessed it as the fastest 1,500 run outside a major championship, without pacers this century anywhere. In the 5,000m event he shaved 20 seconds off his personal best.

FOOTBALL AFL AND ARL

Last year saw the winners in both AFL and ARL being Brisbane teams, while the season is only a few weeks old the leaders in both codes are Sydney based. In the ARL the Panthers are leading however the often 'wooden spooners' of the competition the Wests Tigers were leading until their first loss of the season by one point to the Broncos. In other football news, the Sydney Swans are leading after a poor season last year.

GAMBLING REFORMS

After many years of campaigning and even the advocacy of Peta Murphy the much loved and now deceased former ALP Federal MP, the Albanese government has made some changes to gambling laws regarding sport. Several ARL Clubs will have to take the names of gambling companies off their jerseys and gambling ads will not be banned as Peta Murphy wanted, but 'capped.' Our children will still be conditioned to see sports gambling as natural, but not as intensely. Radio broadcasts promoting a punt will be banned during school pick-up and drop-off after a scathing review into gambling harm in Australia. The curse of gambling in sport is still with us and these reforms are just window dressing.

LIV GOLF – SPORTS WASHING

An unintended consequence of the Israel/US war on Iran is it has greatly impacted Saudi Arabia's and other Gulf States' ability to fund sporting competitions and practice 'sports washing,' which happens when countries with a poor human rights record seek to gain attention for sport rather than their lack of justice or fairness. The most prominent of these is the LIV Golf Competition funded by Saudi Arabia which appears to be on its last legs. Star players were attracted to this competition by huge salaries. Australian golfer Cam Smith was paid $140 million to switch to LIV. Cam Smith's rating has gone from world no 2 to beyond world no 100. Another Australian who put his name to this competition was Greg Norman as the front man. There is little sympathy for the demise of this competition or for the players who accepted 'blood money.'

Denis Doherty

Brazil, Mexico, and Spain speak up for Cuba

The leaders of Brazil, Mexico, and Spain have called for the sovereignty of Cuba to be respected as they pledged to provide more aid to the Caribbean island.

The joint statement by Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum, and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, meeting in the Spanish city of Barcelona, followed threats by US President Donald Trump that his military may "stop off" in Cuba after the war with Iran is ended.

The US has imposed an illegal blockade against Cuba for more than six decades. The Trump administration has ramped up pressure on Havana in an attempt to force regime change on the Caribbean island.

After launching an illegal and unprovoked attack on Venezuela on 3 January, during which 100 were killed including 30 Cubans, and the kidnapping of President Nicolas Maduro and First Lady Cilia Flores, President Trump has blocked the import of oil from Venezuela to Cuba.

President Trump has also threatened other countries with heavy sanctions if they deliver oil to Cuba, leading to fuel shortages and energy blackouts.

In the Barcelona statement, the three leaders said: "We are committed to co-ordinating an increase in our humanitarian response aimed at alleviating the suffering of the Cuban people."

The statement also called for respect for "territorial integrity, sovereign equality and the peaceful settlement of disputes," as outlined in the United Nations Charter.

Sanchez hit out at President Trump, without directly naming him, during his speech in Barcelona.

He said: "They know their vision of how the world should be ordered is falling apart due to the tariffs and wars.

"Their embrace of climate change denial, xenophobia and sexism is their greatest error."

Sanchez said of the US administration, "They have tried again and again to make us embarrassed of our beliefs. That ends now. From now on, they can be the ones who feel ashamed."

Morning Star

Australia Cuba Friendship Society action outside US consulate, 17 March, Boorloo/Perth.

Iran's Lego meme war

Graham Holton

***Explosive News* has released more than fifty AI-generated, Lego-inspired President Donald Trump videos, with millions of views across *X*, *TikTok*, *Instagram* and other social media platforms. These short, hilarious videos are professional, sophisticated, well-scripted and sung to English-language rap music. The group producing the videos has 2.5 million followers on different 'Iranian messaging channels.' The videos are banned on *YouTube* and *Instagram*, but *Explosive News* still has its own *Spotify* page. LEGO has made no official comment on the videos.**

An *Explosive News* member told *WIRED*, that to ensure the videos are up to date and culturally significant: "Americans themselves have been helping us – and that support and guidance continues. They share impactful tips and ideas with us."

The political messages are clear, direct and hard striking. In one video the Trump Lego mini-figure sits sobbing at his failed ceasefire while holding a white flag and eating a taco – a reference to the acronym 'Trump Always Chickens Out.' In another video, Trump orders strikes on Iran after reviewing an 'Epstein File,' while standing alongside Satan and Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

One video shows Iranian missiles bearing the names of everyone from Malcolm X to the victims of Jeffrey Epstein are shown being fired at the US. In another, a British voice raps: "America is a 250-year civilisation of war, greed and profit. A nation birthed in war will die by war. Iran is a 7,000-year civilisation." When Trump posted an image on *X* portraying himself as Jesus, a video mocked Trump for attacking the pope and posting himself as Jesus. It went viral. US Secretary of Defense, Pete Hegseth responded, calling the Trump/Jesus "disgusting and detached from reality" (which is how a lot of US citizens view Hegseth).

In others Lego Iranians celebrate missiles flying toward Tel Aviv to AI-generated rap soundtracks of 'L.O.S.E.R' and 'Taste the ash of defeat.' A Lego grave reads 'R.I.P. Donald John Trump.' A missile-struck White House lights up in flames. Lego missiles bear messages in English commemorating everyone from Native Americans to Vietnamese villagers, and 'stolen blacks.' A Lego figure wearing a king's crown, unmistakably Trump, stands in the middle of a chessboard surrounded by soldiers, to the rap lyrics, 'Send them to the slaughter, you're the only one to blame.'

The *Jerusalem Post* has noted that certain clips were labelled with an 'apparent watermark' for Revayat-e Fath, the Iranian state-run media foundation. An *Explosive News* representative has told US media that the organisation is a "student-led media team with a background in social activism." The individuals behind the videos wished to remain anonymous out of fear that their viral success might make them targets in the war campaign.

Often described as 'Slopaganda,' a term for any propaganda produced using AI, the videos show how easily US technology and popular culture can be weaponised against the US government. This youth-led production draws on the US' deepest fears, such as coffins draped in the Stars and Stripes, and examines its deepest internal divisions, the Epstein Files. The propaganda war of 2026 is about messaging, and the US is losing it.

Earth Day – Our Power, Our Planet

Graham Holton

The official theme for Earth Day 2026 (22 April) was 'Our Power, Our Planet,' to highlight that every person's actions matter, not just on Earth Day, but every day. It is a celebration of global environmental efforts and a reminder that meaningful change starts with everyday people doing collective action. Individuals, communities, organisations and leaders will use their collective influence to protect and restore the environment.

Earth Day is a call to recognise the power we each hold, through our voices, choices, voting, daily habits and activism. It empowers people to protect and improve natural ecosystems around the world. Together these actions shape a healthier and more sustainable future for our planet.

Earth Day was first celebrated on 22 April 1970 in the United States. It was founded by a US Senator, who was inspired by the growing environmental concerns of the 1960s, such as air pollution, water contamination, and the aftermath of the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill. Nelson proposed a nationwide 'teach-in' on the environment, to raise public awareness and push for political action.

The first Earth Day brought together people across universities, schools, and communities. More than 20 million people in the US participated in rallies, cleanups, and educational events. This grassroots movement helped make environmental protection a major public concern.

This led to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1970, and helped to pass major environmental laws in the US. In 1990 Earth Day became international, and today than 200 million people in 141 countries participate globally. The movement went on to create worldwide initiatives on issues such as climate change, deforestation, and pollution. EarthDay.org coordinates global efforts, making it the largest secular civic observance in the world. It inspires activism, legislation, and individual action toward sustainability. In Australia Earth Day helped raise public pressure for the protection of the Great Barrier Reef receiving its World Heritage listing in 1981.

Many environmental organisations like WWF Australia, local Landcare networks, and school programmes have offering resources, workshops, fundraising, and community challenges. These focus on biodiversity protection, waste reduction, climate action and renewable energy awareness.

Earth Day is not the novelty it once was, but it's a collective activity well worth supporting.

Elon Musk undoing Tesla benefits with AI power plants

Peter Farmer

If you're still using the social media platform formerly known as Twitter, now called X, you probably know that there's an AI service attached, called 'Grok.' Grok is named for a popular hippy term for deep understanding.

Users can use it for all the usual things people can use AI for. They can simply ask it a question. They can use it to produce a sexualised or even pornographic image of someone (that has been done a lot). They can ask it to manipulate video and so on.

Generative AI software is powered by large-scale data centres which use colossal amounts of electricity and water. There's also a 'Grokipedia' which reports suggest mainly plagiarises from Wikipedia, but also makes mistakes, the 'hallucinations' that plague AI when it's used for information gathering.

According to climate change writer and activist Ketan Joshi, communities around Elon Musk's data centres have been fighting to get air quality regulations enforced in the face of pollution produced in the process of powering the data centres. He describes the volume of greenhouse gas emissions attributable to Musk's data centres as "eye-watering," running so high that they are undoing the climate benefits from people using Tesla's cars and batteries.

6.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent was produced annually from a proposed fleet of 51 gas turbines to power Musk's data centres. Once the centres are finished, they are estimated to undo the climate benefits for 35% of Tesla's entire global fleet.

Since the growth in Tesla's products has halted while the data centres are expanding at a rapid rate, the ratio between emissions avoided by people using Tesla products and emissions produced by powering Grok is expected to get far worse.

UK nationalists vow visa curbs over reparations demands

JV

The March 2026 UN resolution declaring the Atlantic slave trade a "gravest crime against humanity" has triggered a defensive shift in United Kingdom diplomacy. The rise of nationalist rhetoric, led by the far-right Reform UK party, has introduced a "visa brake" policy, threatening to block travel and professional routes from nations seeking reparative justice. This manoeuvre weaponises border control to bypass the structural theft that financed the modern West.

Broad optimism regarding the capacity of financial reparations to improve living conditions must be reconciled with the material realities of the global capitalist framework. As Walter Rodney argued in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, genuine development is only possible through a "radical break" from the very system that engineered African underdevelopment. Historical attempts at such self-determination, most notably Thomas Sankara's socialist project in Burkina Faso, were systematically strangled by imperialist intervention.

The crushing of these indigenous paths by Western imperialist powers has made a true uplift in working-class conditions unlikely under the status quo. Modern African political structures remain largely legacies of this exploitative framework, overseen by comprador administrations that prioritise wealth extraction for external markets over internal citizen welfare.

Despite these structural barriers, the African Union's Agenda 2063 offers a blueprint for self-financed transformation through industrialisation. If directed toward such strategic frameworks, reparative funds could facilitate the partial economic sovereignty required to address the humanitarian crisis currently affecting over 460 million people in extreme poverty.

The exploitation of African resources continues unabated. Wealth exits the continent via shipping containers and private jets. While Africa holds 30% of the world's mineral reserves, a lot of the continent remains trapped in debt cycles. The West extracts value through asymmetric trade and $89 billion in annual illicit financial flows, while poaching African specialists to bolster its own sectors. This "brain drain" sees thousands of African medical professionals subsidising the UK healthcare system, even as their home systems suffer from historical neglect.

Conversely, partnerships with socialist states offer a proven alternative. During the 20th century, while Western powers backed apartheid regimes to protect corporate interests, the USSR provided critical military and diplomatic support to liberation movements in Angola, Mozambique, and South Africa. Beyond aid, the Soviets trained tens of thousands of African doctors and engineers, building human capital entirely outside the Western sphere of influence. Today, that legacy continues. While London uses visa bans to blackmail dissenters, Beijing is constructing the railways and industrial corridors that centuries of British "oversight" failed to produce.

For Australia, the UK's "visa brake" is a mirror of a shared colonial strategy regarding the handling of Indigenous peoples. Both nations have institutionalised a narrative where the Indigenous question, whether regarding land rights, stolen wages, or systemic dispossession, is treated as a historical artifact rather than a contemporary debt.

Under the pretence of progressivism and "moving forward," the state actively relegates Black history to a safely distant "then," conveniently ignoring the aftermath bleeding into our "now." This policy signalling confirms that mobility and recognition are used as tools to punish truth-telling. By leveraging visas, the UK ensures the cost of seeking justice exceeds the cost of silence, maintaining an empire that has never ceased its extraction.

Sydney Vigil

STOP USA BLOCKADE ON CUBA

12:30 pm till 1:00 pm Sunday 17 May
Sydney Town Hall
Call 0418 270 885

3CR RADICAL RADIO

The *Guardian* encourages readers to donate to the 3CR Radiothon.

3CR is a Melbourne Community Radio station, but anyone can hear its programs via podcast. If you donate, please nominate 'Alternative News' as the show you support.

Global Briefs

BRAZIL: Brazilian union headquarters called on citizens to take part in the Workers' March in the capital Brasilia. The mobilisation followed the Workers' Conference which approved the priorities of the labour demands agenda for the next five years. Among the demands are: reducing the workweek without cutting pay; regulating app-based work; fighting subcontracting; rejecting violence against women; regulating collective bargaining for public employees. "This agenda shows what we consider strategic from the point of view of labour participation in the country's development. It addresses wage increases, improving living conditions, labour protection and social security", said Clemente Ganz, coordinator of the union Federations Forum. Brazilians are also calling for reducing the workweek from 44 to 40 hours, which would allow for a 5x2 schedule, meaning five days of work with eight-hour days and two mandatory days of rest.

INDONESIA: Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto visited Moscow recently where he met with the Russian president and signed a major energy deal. Indonesia, a BRICS member, will purchase crude oil and LPG from Russia amid global energy supply shock. Russian crude could be shipped from its Pacific ports in the Far East, with tankers transiting the South China Sea and the Strait of Malacca. This route is already used to supply China and other Asian buyers.

UKRAINE: Ukraine has set up a new military expert council known as ARES – Allied Reform and Expert Support. "The council task is to share best practices and help implement institutional changes in the command system of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. It will support the army's transformation and improve its overall effectiveness," the statement said. The ARES council includes several prominent figures, among them former CIA Director David Petraeus and former chiefs of the armed forces of the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, and Germany.

RUSSIA: The Kalashnikov Concern has begun testing of an air defense system designed to destroy drones. The Krona system includes detection and control assets, as well as mobile combat vehicles or stationary combat modules integrated into a unified network. The system is intended to protect various facilities from aerial attacks with unmanned aerial vehicles identified as its primary targets.

IRAN: Russia has reiterated its willingness to accept enriched uranium from Iran as a part of efforts to address tensions around the Iranian nuclear issue. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stated that while Russia remains open to the idea, it is not currently under discussion in ongoing negotiations. "At the moment, this proposal is not on the negotiating table, as far as we understand. Russia is open to it – this has been repeatedly stated by president Vladimir Putin. Yet, it is not much in demand for the United States right now," he said.

USA: The US plans to deploy small nuclear reactors at its military bases in Guam and other areas of the Indo-Pacific region to "ensure power supply," Army secretary Daniel Driscoll said. "Small nuclear reactors is something the army's been tasked with on behalf of the federal government and the Pentagon, to get on an army base by 2028 and what we're cautiously optimistic is the learnings from that will be able to be pushed forward to the Indo-Pacific and to places like Guam that just have inconsistent power supplies," he said at a hearing in the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives.

More than 38,000 women and girls killed in Gaza war

The war in Gaza has inflicted a far higher toll on women and girls than in previous conflicts in the Palestinian enclave, with more than 38,000 killed by Israeli air bombardment and land military operations since Hamas-led terror attacks in Israel sparked the war in October 2023, UN Women said.

The overall total includes at least 22,000 women and 16,000 girls and amounts to an average of at least 47 women and girls killed every day, the agency's Sofia Calltorp, Chief of Humanitarian Action, told journalists in Geneva.

"Those killed were mothers, they were daughters, sisters, and friends, deeply loved by those around them," she noted, adding that the killings have continued in recent months, despite a ceasefire between Hamas fighters and the Israeli military.

Data also indicates that nearly 11,000 women and girls have been injured and that many have life-changing disabilities. The true toll is likely higher because many bodies are still trapped under rubble, UN Women said.

According to the Gazan health authorities, more than 72,315 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip and another 172,137 injured since October 2023.

This has created a chronic humanitarian emergency in Gaza where many households are now headed by women facing increased economic hardship and protection risks.

FAMILIES CLINGING TOGETHER

Six months since the ceasefire began in Gaza last October, women and girls continue to face severe and persistent risks, as humanitarian needs remain critical and recovery conditions remain fragile.

"This war has reshaped families. Tens of thousands of households are now headed by women," UN Women's Calltorp insisted. "Having lost their husbands, they are sustaining their families without income, without support or access to essential services."

In addition, "there is a complete lack of most services", Calltorp continued, highlighting an urgent need for "the basics," including sexual and reproductive health and access to sanitary pads. She recalled visiting Gaza in November and meeting two women who had to deliver their babies in the street, "because there were no transportations to bring them to any functional hospitals."

UN Women is calling for full respect of the ceasefire, adherence to international law, and scaled-up humanitarian assistance, stressing that women and girls must be at the centre of recovery and peacebuilding efforts.

The agency remains on the ground in Gaza partnering women-led and women's rights organisations.

Together with the UN system, aid partners and women's organisations, UN Women works to reach all women and girls with lifesaving assistance and to ensure that women's organisations are funded and represented in decision-making and reconstruction.

UN

at least 47 women and girls killed every day

Xi and Sanchez vow to safeguard multilateralism

The leaders of China and Spain pledged today to strengthen relations between their countries and to work to safeguard multilateralism at a time of rising instability across the globe.

Speaking in Beijing's Great Hall of the People , Chinese President Xi Jinping told a reception for Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez: "We should strengthen communication, consolidate mutual trust, co-operate closely, oppose the world's retrogression to the law of the jungle and jointly safeguard genuine multilateralism."

Sanchez agreed and said both countries "can contribute to finding solutions to the various trade tensions that exist, to the geopolitical difficulties and complexities of today's world, to the wars, to the environmental and social challenges that afflict the world."

Spain is looking to strengthen its political and commercial ties with Beijing. Sanchez has been forthright in his opposition to the illegal and unprovoked war on Iran unleashed by the US and Israel in late February.

The meeting, held during a two-day visit, comes as Spain pushes for diplomatic solutions to the conflict in Iran.

Sanchez is also scheduled to meet Chinese Premier Li Qiang and top legislator Zhao Leji before leaving today, underlining the importance of the trip for Spain's foreign policy.

His fourth visit to China since 2023 came as Spain has taken a more independent stance in the geopolitical arena, including restricting US military access to certain bases during the Iran conflict.

Sanchez addressed Tsinghua University, calling on China to take on a greater role in a multilateral world and urging closer EU-China co-operation on peacekeeping and conflict mediation.

Experts say the visit reflects Madrid's intention to strengthen economic ties with China, particularly in trade, technology, and infrastructure.

Morning Star

United States deepens attacks on trans people

Maximus M

According to a recent article by the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and Human Security, experts are warning that the United States is in the early stages of committing genocide on the American Trans Community.

Under international law, defined by the United Nations in 1948, "genocide means any of the following acts, committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethical, racial, or religious group(s)..." But some experts are concerned that this definition has become too narrow for modern interpretation.

For a number of years, the increasing size of the political right has been growing, increasing eliminationist rhetoric towards Trans Americans. During the 2024 US election, the Republican Party spent $222 million US on anti-trans attacks ads. In its year, the second Trump Administration has made it priority to reduce and roll back Transgender Rights, a number of executive orders targeting nondiscrimination protections and access to healthcare, and in 2025, the National Institutes of Health defunded LGBTQIA+ related research.

Republican lawmakers have been on a crusade, with more than half of all US states restricting youth access to gender-affirming care. Even thought the existence of Trans people and the effectiveness of hormone replacement therapy is understood and considered by every single major medical institute in the country, the US government is systematically trying to eradicate transgender people from simply existing. Experts are warning that increasing rhetoric used by the Republican Party, "using trans people to generate fear – particularly surrounding children, family, and their ideal concept of masculinity – which is priming their base for genocide."

The used of this vulgar rhetoric by the far right is the same conspiratorial language used by Nazi Germany. US President Trump has repeated this conspiratorial language to attack Trans Rights calling it "cultural Marxism," that is here to destroy western civilisation, the same language used by Nazis and their antisemitic clams of "Judeo-Bolshevism."

According to the Rights for Peace, steps towards genocide are as follows: Polarisation, Stereotyping, Scapegoating, Loss of Active Bystanders, Dehumanisation, Discrimination & Demonetisation, Repression, Persecution, Organised violence and killings, and finally Denial. At least 7 to 8 of these steps towards genocide has taken place in the United States against the Trans population.

This warning by genocide scholars should be taken seriously. This should be a warning call for all people to stand and defend people's rights to express themselves and oppose hate speech.

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World failing Sudan as war enters a fourth year

Sudan remains the world' s largest humanitarian and displacement crisis say UN agencies calling for an end to the war between rival militaries on the eve of the three-year mark.

"This grim and chastening anniversary marks another year when the world has failed to meet the test of Sudan," UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher said in a statement from Berlin, where the international community has met amid continuing efforts to end the war.

The deadly fighting that erupted in 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and former allies the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has left nearly 34 million people – a staggering 65 per cent of the population – in urgent need of humanitarian support.

Some 14 million have been displaced, with nine million seeking safety elsewhere in the country and 4.4 million crossing the border to countries such as Chad, Egypt, and South Sudan.

Nations like these are now "at breaking point," according to the UN refugee agency, UNHCR.

Even though nearly four million people have begun returning to their communities, "they find broken water systems, destruction, and a lack of basic shelter and healthcare," said Zoe Brennan of UN migration agency IOM.

"We are two years into a famine in parts of the country, and this is simply unacceptable in this day and age," said Ross Smith, WFP Director of Emergency Preparedness and Response.

"Millions of Sudanese are trapped in a daily struggle to secure food safety, basic dignity. Families have exhausted every coping mechanism. Parents are skipping meals so the children can eat – and children are going hungry."

Famine has been confirmed in Darfur and the Kordofans, where fighting is heaviest, but the overall crisis in Sudan "is being dangerously compounded by the wider global instability and the recent escalation of conflict in the Middle East," Smith said.

The Iran war has disrupted shipping routes, driving up the costs of food, fuel and fertilizer – core commodities that Sudan imports and heavily relies on.

"Fuel prices have already increased by over 24 per cent on average. In some remote areas, much more than that. This will have a knock-on effect on all the prices of all staple goods and food commodities, pushing more people into hunger," he warned.

Another battle is raging within the armed conflict according to the UN's gender equality agency, UN Women.

"As we enter a fourth year of war in Sudan, it is important that we be clear about what this means for women and girls, because ultimately, this is a war on them," said Anna Mutavati, Regional Director for East and Southern Africa, speaking from Berlin.

UN Women estimate that 12.7 million people – mainly women and girls – require support related to sexual and gender-based violence, up from 3.1 million in 2023.

United Nations

Sudanese refugees near the border in Adre, Chad. Photo: UNHCR/Ying Hu

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Half the Sky

You Don't Own Me – still worth singing

GH

In 1963 Lesley Gore's *You Don't Own Me* reached No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100 in the United States, with similar success in the UK and Australia. It was sung from the heart with such honesty that young women reacted to its message. The song strongly contrasted with other songs of the time: pleading, heartbreak, and the promise of marriage. Little Peggy March's *I Will Follow Him* was all devotion to her man, while The Chiffons' hit *He's So Fine* had been infatuation. In 1965, Patty Duke's *Don't Just Stand There*, had a similar message to Gore's song, peaking at No. 8 on the Billboard.

There were earlier women's-rights songs, telling of women's collective protest on labour rights, suffrage and autonomy. Bessie Smith's *Poor Man's Blues* (1928) and *Young Woman's Blues* (1926) were about sexual autonomy and economic independence. Ma Rainey's *Prove It On Me Blues* (1928) was about defiance of gender and sexual norms.

These songs had nothing like the simplicity of Gore's song. It was acceptable to radio and strict parents, yet unmistakably defiant against patriarchy of the time. By denying emotional, sexual, and social ownership the song anticipated second-wave feminism, and gave language to consent. The song symbolised women's empowerment, showing the strength of a woman standing up for herself against the dominance of a man, who saw her as his property. Gore was 17 and she began a life of feminist activism.

The year 1963 was the time of Civil Rights activism which normalised public dissent. The contraceptive pill in 1960 began sexual autonomy, and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) was highly influential. Within a few years women's-rights music emerged inside civil-rights and anti-war movements. Early feminist consciousness came through folk and protest traditions, rather than explicitly "women's liberation" language.

Major themes included legal inequality, sexual double standards, women's civil-rights struggles and women's anti-war moral authority. Joan Baez's *We Shall Overcome* (1963) was about the voices of women as a movement, not as background singers. Aretha Franklin's 1967 *Respect* made feminism vivid and political. Women stopped singing about sadness and began singing as political actors.

The 1970s was the era of explicit feminist anthems. Music was a conscious tool mirroring second-wave feminism. Themes included autonomy, workplace equality, reproductive freedom and attacks on patriarchy. Joni Mitchell sang of feminist pacifism in *The Fiddle and the Drum* while Helen Reddy's *I am Woman* (1972) was a defining feminist anthem.

In the 1980s, women's-rights songs fracture into race, class, sexuality, and state violence, reflecting the backlash against feminism and neoliberal politics. Its key themes were domestic violence, racism and sexism, poverty and police power. Tracy Chapman's sang of domestic violence as political failure in *Behind the Wall* and her *Talkin' 'bout a Revolution* was about women, class struggle, and systemic inequality. Neneh Cherry's *Buffalo Stance sang* about female autonomy in commodified culture, and people are still now bopping to the Annie Lennox and Aretha Franklin anthem *Sisters Are Doing It For Themselves*.

By the 1990s songs exploded with anger, sexuality, and refusal, with feminism becoming loud, queer, and youth-driven. The key themes included sexual violence, reproductive rights, media misogyny, and female rage. PJ Harvey's *Me-Jane* (1993) was patriarchal language turned inside out. Bikini Kill's *Rebel Girl* (1993) was feminist solidarity as power. Ani DiFranco's *Not a Pretty Girl* rejected male validation. Hole's *Violet* was rage against objectification.

In the 2000s women's protest shifted toward systems: war, religion, corporate power, and state control of women's bodies. Ani DiFranco's *Subdivision* took on surveillance, conformity, and gender. M.I.A.'s *Paper Planes* made vivid migration, empire, and racialised femininity.

Today's women's-rights songs are more testimonial, global, and survivor-centred, with themes such as consent and accountability, climate justice, indigenous sovereignty and emotional truth as politics. Noname's *Rainforest* is all about capitalism and feminist refusal. The struggle continues.

US covertly propagandising Australia

Paul Gregoire

This March, the Trump administration sent a cable ordering its embassies and consulates to launch local campaigns to proactively combat propaganda targeting the US. This initiative, of course, includes the US embassy and its consulates in Australia, where Washington is already monitoring the criminal activity of local migrants and taking a keen interest in other aspects of our domestic sphere.

US secretary of state Mark Rubio signed the 30 March 2026 cable, an initiative that involves the US Department of War's Military Information Support Operations (MISO), formerly the Pentagon's Psyops unit. The cable also advocates for the use of social media platform X in combating anti-US propaganda, despite that platform's reputation for sharing bigotry and generating deepfake child porn.

The mission has five goals, according to the cable, countering hostile messaging, expanding access to information, exposing adversarial behaviour, elevating the voice of local US supporters and the telling of US stories. To this end, local influencers, academics and community leaders should be utilised to dispel anti-US ideas, so that local pro-US narratives appear to have sprung up organically.

These inroads into the domestic affairs of this country have been ongoing since the second coming of US president Donald Trump in early 2025. Initial forms involved pressure to follow the US on issues like ending diversity in hiring, only recognising two sexes and upping our military spend. But this has shifted to the monitoring of migrant crimes and querying why members of the public aren't armed.

Ongoing reports about US embassy interference in our domestic sphere have not been addressed by the Albanese government, and have not had much attention from other politicians. Australia has increasingly become hardwired into the US imperial system, so that any foreign military intervention that it makes necessarily includes Australia, which then makes it difficult to prevent domestic subterfuge.

COMBATING ANTI-US SENTIMENT

"These campaigns seek to shift blame to the United States, sow division among allies, promote alternative worldviews antithetical to America's interests, and even undermine American economic interests and political freedoms," the *Guardian* reports the cable as saying. Digital platform use, state-controlled media and specific influence operations are all cited as key forms of disinformation.

Disbanded just prior to Trump's re-election to president, the US Global Engagement Centre had coordinated these types of activities for global reach in the past. The new initiative appears to now be outsourcing this task to embassies and consulates across the planet. The incorporation of local influencers has long been used by the US in foreign nations.

This March, Sarah B Rogers was appointed US undersecretary for public diplomacy. She has cited countering anti-US 'propaganda' domestically as a "top priority." Rogers had already singled out antiwar organisation CODEPINK in February 2026, claiming that it and other US leftwing organisations are mouthpieces for the Chinese government.

The chief culprits listed by the cable as producing and spreading disinformation about the US around the world are China, Iran and Russia. The highly unpopular US-Israeli war of aggression on Iran, which was launched illegally with no clear objectives, is an obvious reason why the White House is now scrambling to outsource its combating propaganda mission to its embassies.

The White House further appears to now comprehend that when billionaire Elon Musk, as head of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), disbanded USAID, the nation lost much of the soft power the development agency produced for the US. This included distributing US flag branded aid and producing media for foreign nations. Rubio has now directed embassies to commence this work.

MONITORING 'MIGRANT CRIME'

The US State Department already informed its western allies that it would be monitoring their domestic populations for criminal activity that is being perpetrated by migrants. This was announced to the press of the affected nations on 24 November 2025, a week after the department sent a cable to embassies in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and across Europe to inform them of this.

The cable stated it would be collecting data and reporting on "migrant-related crimes and human rights abuse." These policies are being actioned by a Trump White House that actively promotes white supremacy and has been carrying out a mass deportation drive targeting undocumented migrants, which involves agents often using skin colour as a means of identifying potential migrants.

A US official told the press that "mass migration is an existential threat to western civilisation and the safety of both the West and the world", whilst the White House also wants local politicians to know that the US "stands ready, willing and able to support them in handling what we see as an existential crisis."

The White House in Washington DC from the side facing Lafayette Square.
Photo: Cezary Piwowarczyk – wikimedia.org (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Australian Greens Senator David Shoebridge told Sydney Criminal Lawyers that "this is an attempt at direct political interference from the Trump administration to try to impose Donald Trump's offensive and racist migration and domestic policies on Australia and the rest of the United States."

"It is extraordinary that the US issued this statement," the senator added, "and the Albanese Labor government has said absolutely nothing in response."

No other local politicians other than Shoebridge have spoken out about this development. It is just one step away from Washington insisting that if it is concerned about certain activities of non-white peoples on this continent. The focus on "migrant crime" certainly runs counter to the Albanese government's much-trumpeted concern about "social cohesion."

FOREIGN INTERFERENCE US-STYLE

The onset of the US-Israeli war on Iran has shown that our government really has no choice but to follow Washington into yet another war. No resistance was forthcoming from Australian PM Anthony Albanese, as he immediately championed the illegal US and Israeli assaults on Iran, which has followed 30 months of perpetrating the ongoing genocide against the Palestinians of Gaza.

Albanese tried to distance himself from the illegal war in Iran, stating that Australia is not involved. On Good Friday, it came to light that our government had secretly sent a further 90 special forces troops to the region a fortnight prior, just in case the war on Iran escalates. While the PM said this was for defensive reasons, these are not defensive troops.

The initial reason why Australia is so shackled to the US is that since the 1960s, the joint surveillance facility Pine Gap has been operating in the middle of this continent, while so has the US naval communications facility at North West Cape. And both these facilities are likely to have been used by the US in its current warring against Iran.

But since 2011 and the Obama administration's "pivot to Asia," US presence in this country has risen further and is continuing to spike. There are US troops in the top end, it has unrestricted access to dozens of military bases, our airforce is increasingly interoperable with theirs, US B-52 bombers are being stationed in the north and US submarine bases are being established in the west and the east.

The move towards the US embassy in Canberra, and the US consulates in Sydney, Melbourne, and Perth becoming actively engaged in attempting to thwart unwelcome ideas about the United States circulating in Australia, will also see them liaising with local influencers and other figures that might assist in spouting pro-American rhetoric in our public sphere. That's not the end of it.

Executive Council of Australian Jewry co-chief executive Alex Ryvchin met with Trump administration officials in the US on 2 March, to discuss the state of the Australian Jewish community post-the 14 December 2025 Bondi Beach massacre. A chief concern coming from US officials was why Australian Jews aren't arming themselves, which, of course, bucks against Australian gun laws.

This again hints at the increasing US foreign interference in Australian domestic affairs. The US is a pro-gun society, and the Trump administration is particularly pro-gun. Assertions about Jewish people in Australia arming themselves further translate as why aren't citizens allowed to. "Concerns' about "migrant crimes" could easily shift to whether our country might need assistance in combating this.

Senator Shoebridge said in December that the discussion of monitoring the crime of migrants reads like the United States wanting to export its internal conflict around undocumented migrants to Australia and other allied nations. The Greens senator also warned that this nation should rather be distancing itself from the Trump White House. Meanwhile, Richard Marles, our Defence Minister, has called the US "fundamental."

Sydney Criminal Lawyers (edited for space)

direct political interference from the Trump administration

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