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In gambling as in capitalism PROFITS MATTER MOST

Anna Pha

As more and more people are struggling with the cost of living crisis, the number of people turning to 'risky' gambling – at risk of financial and social harm – is on the rise. Easy accessibility of online betting is contributing to the present surge in gambling and roping in more younger people.

Australians lose more than \$25 billion a year on legal forms of gambling, representing the largest per capita losses in the world. \$11.7 billion of that is on pokies. Australia accounts for 0.3 per cent of the world's population but has 20 per cent of the world's poker machines.

NSW, the pokie capital of Australia, has 87,298 poker machines – or one per 95 people. Queensland has 50,000 (or one for every 109 people). The \$95 billion turned over in poker machines in NSW pubs and clubs each year is almost three times the NSW Health budget.

The number of people participating in risky gambling increased from 11.6 per cent last year to 13.6 per cent in 2024. 33.4 per cent of respondents placed bets on online platforms in the past 12 months.

As an addiction, gambling can be as hard to shake-off as smoking, alcohol, or illicit drugs. Compulsive gambling can lead to a host of health and social problems such as relationship breakdowns, mental health issues including suicide, crime to fund the habit, job loss, and financial problems including bankruptcy. It is a serious condition that can destroy the lives of those afflicted and others around them.

The recent Bergin, Finkelstein and Bell inquiries into casinos have made findings of money laundering, partnering with foreign organised crime figures, failing on duty of care to patrons, fraud, non-compliance with government legislation, secret gambling rooms, and 'source of wealth' checks not performed as stated.

The use of cash facilitates money laundering, as "dirty" money – mafia blood money – is converted into physical casino chips, which are then played with before winnings are cashed out as "clean" money.

Bell also found a culture where "profits matter most."



Photo: Jan Smith – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

Free or discounted alcohol, subsidised meals, entertainment, and a psychologically designed atmosphere are all used to draw in and hold onto patrons.

Casinos, pubs and clubs – and increasingly online gaming – are penetrating deeper than ever into the people's lives.

Despite Crown and Star being found unsuitable to hold a casino licenses, they have been allowed to continue operating. In the case of Star, it was found by the Bell review to have failed to honour commitments that were a condition for retaining its licence following a previous review and findings of unsuitability.

TEFLON CRIMINALS

Tim Costello is head of the Alliance for Gambling Reform: "What criminal activity needs to happen under the noses of regulators before they lose their licence to operate?"

"Casino operators are obviously a protected species like no other in Australia's corporate landscape. What other company

could be found guilty of such egregious failure and not have their licence to operate taken from them?"

Costello spelled out the obvious: those who are responsible for the crimes should be charged. Facilitating money laundering is a crime, punishable by imprisonment of up to 25 years and substantial fines.

"The casinos' business models are based on the exploitation of the vulnerable and, up until now, the facilitation of money laundering, organised crime and fraud," Costello said.

Changing a few board members has not changed anything, nor will it.

GOVERNMENT ADDICTION

State governments are hooked on tax revenue from the sector. Politicians have their snouts in the trough. Liberal and Labor alike are being fed millions of dollars in open and secret donations from the gaming industry.

Former PM Julia Gillard tried to introduce \$1 bet limits on pokies and mandatory pre-commitment, which would have meant

that players had to set binding limits on losses, before using a poker machine. Labor backed down after Clubs Australia and Clubs NSW decided to target Labor MPs in marginal seats over the policy.

The Albanese government is sitting on a report by a parliamentary committee chaired by the late Labor MP Peta Murphy. The Murphy report recommended a phased-in, comprehensive ban on online gambling advertising within three years.

Since 1998, the Coalition has disclosed receiving \$5,867,807 from the gambling lobby, the Labor Party \$6,814,431 and the Greens \$0. That does not include the dark money from undisclosed sources.

Between them, 32 parliamentarians have received 60 gifts in this session of parliament, including tickets to shows, races, dinners, and sporting events. This is likely just the tip of the iceberg, as only gifts worth over \$300 must be declared.

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Australia: 0.3 per cent of the world's population, 20 per cent of its pokie machines

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Guardian

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Your risky business

Are you feeling safe? Is your workplace safe? How about the workplaces of people in your family? For a lot of readers, the answer will be “yes.” People in offices, by and large, don’t worry about safety much, apart from the odd fire drill and some boring training exercises about First Aid and trip hazards.

If you’re working in construction, the answer may well be a firm ‘no.’ Construction is a notoriously unsafe profession. Things fall on workers. People get hurt by carrying heavy loads. There are all sorts of machines and vehicles that can maim or kill a worker.

Of course, construction isn’t the only place where there are risks. A lot of workplaces that *feel* safe, are kept that way by rules and procedures that can seem over the top until you remember that the alternative to ‘feels too safe’ is not ‘just safe enough,’ it’s unsafe.

What stands against the dangers in any workplace – most dramatically in construction – is an effective union. What stands against safety is employers. This isn’t because employers like to hurt people. It’s because under capitalism, an employer’s duty is to maximise profits. Costs stand in the way of maximising profits. Safety is a cost. Employers don’t make money from workers being properly trained in using machinery. They don’t make more profit from a workplace being properly checked out for hazards. Those things cost money, so employers are motivated to skimp on them.

A lot of people reading this editorial aren’t in construction. Many will be in offices. Some will be in classrooms, shops, or hospitals. While safety is a factor in every job, the dangers construction workers face may not seem real to people working elsewhere. Even if you’re not going to be on any building site any time soon, construction workers are facing a danger right now. It’s a danger that will affect you, no matter where you work.

An effective union stands against danger for workers. The CFMEU has been placed under an undemocratic and unaccountable administration that will make the union far less effective. If you don’t believe us, just check out the business pages, or newspapers like the *Australian Financial Review*. The big building employers are absolutely licking their lips at the prospect of a weakened CFMEU. They’re already trying it on when it comes to wages and agreements. They’ll get around to attacking safety – except they’ll call it “cutting red tape” or “less union obstructionism.”

The administration is much more serious than just making it harder for workers to enter a site (something which also affects safety). It makes the world less safe for any union trying to help any worker. It sets up the precedent that the government can put any union under an unelected all-powerful administrator on the basis of untested allegations – which amounts to ‘if the government feels like it.’ There’s no reason why this can’t be done to unions that cover office workers, childcare workers, or nurses.

Employer groups know about this precedent, and they’ll be watching for chances to pressure future governments to do it to other unions that stand in the way of profits. If there’s a Coalition government, they might not even have to ask.

If you don’t want less safety in your job, join us in fighting the administration. Read the Guardian’s work on this topic, and if you like it, donate to the Press Fund. Contact a politician and let them know you support democratic and effective unions.

Teacher, doctor, tradie, supermarket staff – whoever you are, your safety is on the line.

In gambling as in capitalism PROFITS MATTER MOST

Continued from page 1

“The gifting of tickets, hospitality and other benefits often leads to increased access for lobbyists and industry representatives to politicians. This results in legislative priorities being pushed forward or diluted. Politicians may be less inclined to introduce or support stringent regulations on gambling if they have received benefits from industries such as big gambling,” Costello said.

No minor political parties or independents – all of whom have been vocal in support of a gambling advertising ban – received anything.

Star is presently in deep financial strife, due to overreaching on a new precinct in Brisbane, and is seeking investors to bail it out.

Queensland Premier Steven Miles, who seems unlikely to be re-elected next month, did say he was willing to help but now seems to be pulling back.

The Minns NSW Labor government has already given Star a major tax reprieve and delayed the introduction of tougher cash limits on gambling.

Instead, Minns opted for a very limited cashless gaming trial in a few clubs and pubs that was

conducted between March and September 2024. It was overseen by the Independent Panel on Gaming Reform which is due to report back in November 2024 along.

The introduction of mandatory carded play on 19 August with \$5,000 cash limits per card saw Star Sydney’s revenue fall by 10.7 per cent. The impact on Crown’s casino in Melbourne was similar when compulsory carded play was introduced last year. The rules only apply to pokies.

The limit will fall to \$1,000 in August 2025 at Star Sydney and spread to all NSW gaming floors in October.

SPORT ADS

“Not only do Australians lose more to gambling than any other country in the world per capita, it is no coincidence that our screens are swamped by gambling advertising – more than a million every year,” Reverend Costello said.

Free-to-air commercial television ads for online gambling cleverly link gambling to sport. The ads start before 6 pm when young children are still up. Commercial TV, hit hard by competition from online and social media advertising, is not shy about running these ads.

POLICY

At the forthcoming federal elections, support a party such as the Greens or independents that are prepared to stand up to the parasitic and blood-sucking gambling industry.

The federal government should introduce national legislation that will:

- Establish national measures to address online gambling harm
- Introduce cashless gambling
- Ban the broadcasting of all gambling advertisements including external gaming-related signage at venues and on sporting clothing and equipment
- Restrict online exposure to gambling for children and young people
- Ban all forms of online promotion, advertising, and inducements
- Regulate technologies in gaming
- Increase enforcement actions against companies breaching these restrictions
- Take a public health approach to address gambling-related harm
- Increase enforcement actions against companies breaching these restrictions
- Establish an independent, adequately funded national gambling regulator and online gambling ombudsman
- Implement a mandatory pre-commitment scheme for online gambling services
- Provide increased education and training on gambling harm
- Develop and implement a nationally consistent, evidence based, education curriculum for both primary and secondary schools about gambling and its potential harms.

In addition, governments should support a ‘pokies-free’ venues focus on live entertainment and socialising.

Capitalism is a parasitic system and gaming sits at its pinnacle as millions of vulnerable people become addicted.

Unions NSW have called on the NSW Labor government to cut the number of pokies by at least 25,000 over the next five years and impose a moratorium on granting new poker machine licences in pubs and clubs. When venues close or relocate, licences should be cancelled and the machines removed from circulation.

If you or someone you know needs help, call Gambling Help on 1800 858 858 or the National Debt Helpline on 1800 007 007. ★

Perth

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Australian National University staff protest against cuts

On 16 October hundreds of ANU staff, NTEU members, ANU students and members of the community, including members of the Canberra Branch rallied against the staff cuts and pay cuts in Vice-Chancellor Genevieve Bell's austerity plan.

In response to a 202 million dollar operating deficit created by colossal mismanagement, Vice-Chancellor Bell has proposed to abolish the ANU College of Health and Medicine (CHM) and merge its Schools with other Colleges. She has also proposed to abolish the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) which provides support and development for teaching staff, as well as a reduction of staff working for ANU's libraries. She has asked staff to take a 2.5 per cent pay cut. Professional staff have been identified as "surplus" and further changes and job losses are expected, with the NTEU calculating 638 Full Time Equivalent jobs on the line, and with the Vice-Chancellor describing the changes to ANU as a "18-month journey."

Vice-Chancellor Bell's proposal to cut jobs and pay comes on the back of a string of grossly unpopular policies, including a draconian policy to control posters on university campus, attempts to abolish not-for-profit childcare on campus, hiking parking fees, and using police on students protesting in support of Palestine. New procedures to reduce expenditure have led to ballooning workloads and are already affecting the basic functioning of the university.

What is happening at ANU will set a precedent for other Australian universities. The Vice-Chancellor is citing external factors for the cuts, namely the federal government's caps on international students. Australian universities have used international student fees to generate revenue to make up for a shortfall in government funding since the 1990s. While movements towards making universities less dependent on milking international students like cash cows are welcome, this policy has come without other sources of funding to make up the shortfall, leaving Australia's universities in a difficult position.

At the same time, university governance in Australia has become increasingly corporatised, and undemocratic. The CEOs and ex politicians that sit on university boards will take any excuse to attack workers and keep their enormous salaries, rather than to prioritise the teaching and research that the university is supposed to be all about. ANU is using international student caps to wage class war, and workers and students will pay the price if they don't put up a fight.

The ANU spends over 80 million dollars on a small group of senior executives and high paid staff. The Vice Chancellor sits on a salary of over a million dollars, and she is seeking to divide workers by telling them that a 2.5 per cent pay cut will save jobs. The university has been here before. In 2020, a proposal for staff to take a pay cut to save jobs was passed narrowly in a vote (by a margin of



ANU staff rally on campus against the proposed pay sacrifice. Photo: NTEU.

less than 1 per cent). Yet only months later, ANU made 465 roles redundant as well as job losses for untold numbers of fixed-term and casual staff.

There are no guarantees that giving up pay saves jobs. It is a transparent attempt to try to cause division, attack the union, and attack gains that were won through strike action. This is a management that cannot

be trusted, that is out of touch. This is what the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie looks like. It's the millionaire management that have to go. There are too many managers. It's top heavy. They have even introduced new high-paid manager positions in the midst of this crisis of their own making.

Their jobs ought to be on the line, not those who keep the university running. ✖

Australia and Norway marching as one to a martial drum

William Briggs

Australia and Norway have a lot in common. At least that's the claim being made by the defence ministers of the two countries. Norwegian Defence Minister Bjorn Gram has been in Australia. He and Richard Marles have been talking up the 'strategic' importance of a close relationship. The actual reason for the visit was to do with arms manufacturing, and joint deals between the two states.

Gram was in Australia for the opening of the Norwegian arms manufacturer Kongsberg's new facility in Adelaide. Australia has

announced that it will be acquiring missiles for its F-35 jets.

Richard Marles was full of praise for the close relationship that is developing between the two countries. He was particularly excited about the deal "in terms of the development of our own Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance Enterprise." Marles was proud to announce that "Australia has decided to manufacture missiles in Australia, using Kongsberg as a strategic partner."

The Australian defence minister enthusiastically spoke of the 'strategic dimension' to the evolving Australian-Norwegian relationship he says is "really opening the door."

This opening of doors is not

about cultural exchanges, trade, or tourism or anything that has any social value or merit. It is about the armaments industry and it is about fanning the flames of threat and coercion in this region and globally.

Both countries are spending huge amounts on military capabilities. Both are doubling their military budgets. Norway is being welcomed into the region as a naval presence.

There was an ominous focus on China and 'freedom of navigation' exercises that are used to ceaselessly provoke the Chinese.

What Norway and Australia share – and this was made clear by Marles – was their subservience to the dictates of the USA. Marles

spoke of their common "relationships with the United States," adding that "there's a lot to share in relation to that."

The UK's carrier strike group will be coming through the Indo-Pacific next year, Norway will join in. Gram sought to link China and Russia into a NATO threat perception. This sat nicely with Marles' thinking.

The Norwegian defence minister managed to make climate change a military threat, rather than an existential threat to the planet. He warned that as ice recedes, "Chinese and Russian fleets could start moving more easily between the Pacific and Atlantic." Gram expressed "concern" that China

might gain military technologies that Moscow has thus far 'withheld.'

Marles' enthusiastic beating of war drums never wanes: "I was at NATO in Washington ... and one of the real themes of the meeting was that there is such an interconnectedness between the Indo-Pacific on the one hand and the North Atlantic on the other."

If they are becoming interconnected it is because the US, NATO, and its Australian ally in the Pacific choose to make it so. Australia's decision to open up joint ventures to make new and more lethal weapons on Australian soil, in partnership with Norway, shows this to be the case. ✖

Protest crack-down latest

Peter Farmer

Disturbing news from a recent Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), meeting in South Australia recently. There are rumours that South Australia is working on even stricter laws around protesters and protests. In Adelaide the steps of Parliament house were available to protesters with permission but that is allegedly being banned. South Australia already has the strictest protest laws in the country, with fines of up to \$50,000 for obstructing a public place (what constitutes 'obstructing' has been left conveniently vague).

According to the Human Rights Law Centre, 49 laws affecting protest have been introduced in federal, state, and territory parliaments over the last two decades. New South Wales has introduced the most anti-protest laws, while South Australia has the toughest financial penalties.

An Aboriginal Man, Wayne "Coco" Wharton was arrested near the Sydney Opera House after protesting against Charles and Camilla Windsor's visit to Australia.

There's no suggestion in the media that Wharton was any kind of danger to the Windsors, he seems to have been arrested for refusing to move on. ✖

Hands off our Union!

Labor and the Coalition have teamed up to pass the most draconian, anti-union laws in Australia's history.

The laws:

- deny rank-and-file CFMEU members the right to run and control their own union.
- violate international law.
- violate the rule of law and basic fundamental rights.

The CFMEU is a strong and effective union that belongs to its members - not politicians.

This is an attack on all unions and workers and we must fight back!

Stand up for your union and help us take this fight to the High Court!



Donate: <https://your-union-your-choice.raisesite.com/>

Something to say? Write to the Editor!

Statement from the National Building Industry Group

17 October 2024

This meeting of the National Building Industry Group Unions and others, comprising twenty-three union leaders representing over a quarter of million Australian workers, continues to share our outrage and condemnation for the forced administration of the Construction and General Division of the CFMEU by the Albanese Government.

The CFMEU has been denied basic natural justice. Trial by Parliament and media is not how we do things in Australia.

This meeting further condemns the CFMEU Administrator for attempting to bar CFMEU officials from attending today's meeting. It is in the best interests of members that officials be allowed to participate in debate.

The administration sets a worrying precedent for all unions. If a government can legislate outcomes for one union, then all unions are at risk.

A union belongs to its members. Union members and their democratically elected leaders decide the future of their union, not knee-jerk legislation.

Since the administration,

conservative oppositions have already started to attack other militant unions supporting the CFMEU. The Liberal/National Opposition of NSW called out the ETU as "being next" – purely because ETU members had been taking lawful protected action.

This will only worsen as the administration continues, and anti-union forces look to use this legislation as a "how to" guide to destroy the union movement. Peter Dutton has already moved a bill to bring back the ABCC.

Against this backdrop of anti-union attitudes, this meeting resolves to collectively fight against these underhanded attacks and to work to protect our union democracy.

The forced administration, driven by Albanese, Murray Watt, and Tony Burke, and supported by the ACTU, has opened the door for a sustained attack on construction workers, such as the proposal by the MBA and others to drive down wages in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis.

This meeting resolves to run political, social, and industrial campaigns to fight these attacks.

In light of the broad groundswell of support, on the 9th of December the Building Industry

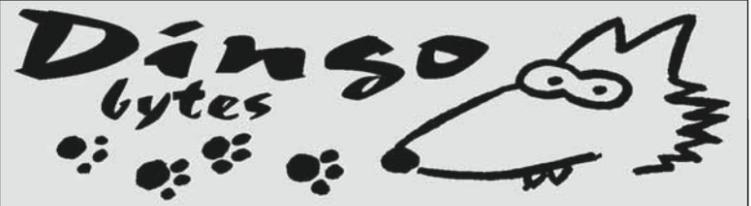
Group Unions will hold a Trade Unions for Democracy Summit. This has evolved to be a meeting that will bring together unionists from across multiple industries and across the country.

The key purposes for this Summit are to protect union democracy and to discuss the future of militant trade unionism in Australia. It will consider proposals for:

- the creation of an alternate democratic union body to advocate on behalf of all workers
- political, industry and social campaigns to support union democracy
- future political funding, including supporting union political candidates, and
- a campaign to restore union democracy.

This morning's meeting also welcomes the unprecedented international support from Building and Woodworkers International, the International Dockers Council, the Global Power Trade Union Congress, and individual unions from around the globe.

On behalf of the Building Industry Group Unions and others, we look forward to restoring union democracy. ✚



A UN target to protect and restore 30 per cent of nature by 2030 will not be achieved in ocean environments until 2107 on current trends, an analysis by Greenpeace has found. The international campaign group warned about the slow rate of progress in the report, published ahead of the opening of the UN Biodiversity Cop16 in Cali, Colombia.

Nations agreed on the target to protect nature across land and seas at the last biodiversity Cop in Montreal in 2022. The Global Ocean Treaty was then agreed in 2023 to enable nations to take action towards meeting commitments to protect marine environments within the wider nature target.

Greenpeace found that less than 3 per cent of the world's ocean has been fully protected from human activities. This includes less than 1 per cent of the high seas – vast areas of the ocean beyond national jurisdictions.

Greenpeace's Elena Polisano said: "The parlous state of nature, at home and internationally, has never been more obvious. And yet far too often we're stalling or moving backwards on the vital measures and targets we need to be hitting to turn the tide."

On 8 October, environmentalist Greta Thunberg was set to speak in the West German city of Dortmund, where since May activists and students had maintained a pro-Palestinian encampment near the university. However, giving very short notice, the Dortmund police banned the Swedish climate activist from taking part in a pro-Palestinian event.

The authorities explained that they had drawn up a "danger forecast" after "intensive examination" and come up with the assessment that, "the most recent events in connection with Thunberg led to the assessment that she is a participant who is prepared to use violence."

Thunberg stated: "After almost 4 months of encampment, the student Palestine encampment in Dortmund were forced by German police to take down the camp and leave, and police said they would arrest me if I went there. All this just because the students had invited me to speak at their event, and I had been to a pro-Palestine protest in Berlin the day before that police had stormed."

PARASITE OF THE WEEK: is the King of England. Independent senator Lidia Thorpe was last week escorted out of a royal reception at Parliament House.

She called for a treaty, saying "you are not our king" before she was forced to leave. The monarch had recently finished addressing the reception when Senator Thorpe, who was wearing a traditional cloak, stepped out into the aisle and began her statement against the dead hand of colonialism.

"You committed genocide against our people. Give us our land back. Give us what you stole from us – our bones, our skulls, our babies, our people," she demanded towards the stage, where the king and queen sat next to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

"Give us a treaty, we want treaty," said Senator Thorpe, who is Gunnai, Gunditjmarra and Djab Wurrung. In a statement after the protest, she said she was attempting to hand the king a "notice of complicity in Aboriginal Genocide" in accordance with the Statute of the International Criminal Court 1998.

Said opposition leader Peter Dutton to the royal duo, who appear to be already in a state of decomposition, "Your presence here happily reminds Australians of all of the things that we love about Britain: Austen and Shakespeare, Churchill and Darwin, Queen and Dr Who, cricket and rugby, and of course, tea and pints."

Calls for Julie Bishop to be sacked from ANU role over victim-blaming

The National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) has called for Australian National University Chancellor Julie Bishop to be sacked after she appeared to blame staff for the organisation's financial woes.

ANU management has announced a restructure which risks more than 600 job losses, while also asking staff to forgo an already agreed pay rise of 2.5 per cent in December.

Asked whether it was fair to ask ANU staff to forgo their December pay increase, Bishop told the *Canberra Times*:

"It depends to whom you refer, because many members of staff have been part of the inefficiencies that the university is now seeking to address."

Bishop also rejected suggestions of financial mismanagement, despite the ANU's budgeted \$60 million deficit ballooning to a forecast deficit of more than \$200 million for 2024.

NTEU National President Dr Alison Barnes, called the comments "disgraceful," and "staggering," amounting to blaming staff for managerial incompetence. She added that "bashing workers might have helped Bishop climb through ranks of the Liberal Party but an attack like this makes her role as chancellor completely untenable."

NTEU ACT Division Secretary Dr Lachlan Clohesy condemned the Chancellor's "callous lack of contrition, empathy, and accountability."

NTEU ✚

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"which country that allows US foreign troops to be stationed on its territory as an obligation is an independent country?"

(It's a good question, asked by none other than new Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, before he became PM. Good question, Mr Ishiba, we hope you ask Penny Wong or Anthony Albanese next time you catch up with them.)

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Queensland Youth Crime: Election mythology and 'copaganda'

C Bartholomew

Youth crime 'crisis' stories have dominated headlines and debates ahead of the Queensland state election. Liberal National Party (LNP) leader Crisafulli has pushed the slogan "adult time for adult crime," while Miles' Labor have celebrated their own youth crime policies as the "toughest in the nation." Both ignore an inconvenient fact: the youth crime crisis does not exist.

Data from the Queensland Police Service shows youth crime rates in Queensland are at near-record lows. Youth crime has dropped consistently over the last 20 years. Rates reached their lowest in 2021-2022 during the COVID pandemic, according to Queensland government figures. A minor increase of 2.7 per cent in 2022-2023 caused a lot of media fearmongering. Since then rates have dropped by 2 per cent, with much less fanfare. Youth crime has dropped 18 per cent since 2012-2013.

Even if crime *was* a worsening issue, the current youth crime frenzy would be misplaced. The vast majority of crimes in all categories are committed by adults, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Despite this, Crisafulli has promised to establish "reset camps" for young offenders and ditch existing "detention as a last resort" protections.

Labor has already suspended the Human Rights Act several times, weakened last resort protections, imposed stricter youth bail laws, and promised to fund more youth detention centres. Despite common claims that the law has become too lenient, the country's imprisonment rate is at record highs, especially for those yet to receive a sentence. The number of unsentenced prisoners denied bail

has also doubled in ten years to an all-time high of 15,973 in 2023.

The idea of a state-wide or nation-wide youth crime surge is simply not true. Despite this, the media is awash with sensationalised stories of high-profile home invasions, alleged murders, and car thefts.

A key component of Crisafulli's election campaign has been ads and photo ops of him standing next to various victims of youth crime. This shameless political opportunism from the media and politicians is grossly immoral and has real consequences for Queensland children and communities.

US civil rights lawyer and activist Alec Karakatanis defines 'copaganda' as a kind of propaganda which promotes "a grossly distorted version of crime, punishment, and safety." Copaganda creates and feeds upon fear of crime, especially crime committed by the marginalised, then "falsely suggests that the best way to respond to our fear is to increase government repression through police, prosecution, and prisons."

What we are seeing now, a phenomenon criminologist Ross Homel calls "the big lie" of tough-on-crime politics, is copaganda in action.

Youth crime is not just a slogan for the LNP to use against Labor, it is also an attempt to normalise tougher policing as the go-to response for community safety.

Even though, as Homel has stressed, "Criminal justice processing of juveniles is itself a cause of future offending," detaining children is still a political goldmine. The Northern Territory's Country Liberal Party have ridden the wave of youth crime hysteria to successfully revive the Territory's practice of throwing 10-year-olds, almost all Aboriginal, in prison. In Queensland, the practice never stopped.

Politicians and media ghouls claim the real Queensland youth crime crisis is a growing number



Photo: stockvault (CC0)

the idea of a state-wide or nation-wide youth crime surge is simply not true

of serious repeat offenders, yet all available research concludes that early contact with the justice system only increases rates of recidivism.

In other words, Crisafulli's "adult time for adult crime" policy will subject more children to brutality and only have more serious repeat offenders to show for it.

The failure of tough-on-crime policing in the USA since the early 1970s Nixon administration, or the countless examples of systemic abuse and torture of children in Australia's own youth detention

systems are lessons we still haven't learned. Voters are being asked to choose between children's rights and community safety. Tough-on-crime policies will deprive them of both.

Policing should not be the only tool the government is willing to use to keep communities safe. Rather than using children as an excuse to propel the policing arms race (in both legal power and firepower), governments ought to be held to account for issues such as poverty, housing inequality, and education

disparity which create youth crime in the first place.

Tough-on-crime narratives just perpetuate these systems of inequality.

Stories of youth crime crises have been popular in Queensland since the 1800s, yet no amount of tough-on-crime policy has been enough to fix the alleged problem. It is time Queenslanders, and other Australians demand better from their governments. ✚

The role of the 'Think Tank' in the battle of ideas

William Briggs

'Think tanks.' Why have we got them? What are they for? They're supposed to be groups that work on research and ideas. Precious few serve any progressive purpose but, most exist to support the work of the ruling class. Some do genuine research, some are just lobby groups trying to look dignified. Some are funded or partly funded by government, some by business groups, some by the arms industry, some by political parties. Most describe themselves as 'independent' but none of them are.

So, which of these think tanks are the worst and which have the most clout?

Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI). This is very much the 'gold standard' of right-wing research units. It claims to "produce high quality analysis and in-depth research reports." Its purpose is to give 'advice' to government, primarily on military and 'strategic' issues. It receives

funding from government, the Department of Defence and the arms industry. The government and arms industry fund ASPI to advise it on security matters. It almost invariably gets the advice it wants; more defence spending. ASPI is vigorously anti-China, pro-war, and very successful in its work. Media outlets like the ABC treat it as an objective source of information.

The Lowy Institute. Repeatedly labelled reactionary, right of centre and conservative, Lowy is funded by government, and the departments of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Home Affairs as well as getting money from Rio Tinto, Rothschild, BHP, and others. Among other things it conducts annual 'polls' on international relations issues which tend to show an increased public distrust of China. Some of its leading analysts produce papers that are used by the media and read widely by government to promote an anti-China sentiment, thereby making its polling eternally 'accurate.'

Institute of Public Affairs (IPA).

Founded by Rupert Murdoch's father, the IPA slogan is "the voice of freedom." Freedom for whom? The IPA's chair is the virulently right-wing columnist and journalist Janet Albrechtsen. Gina Rinehart was recently made a life member. Need we say more? Areas of interest are climate change denial, attacks on workers, support for Israel and the tobacco industry. All this is dressed up with right-libertarianism, and pseudo-academic titles, like 'adjunct fellow.' Many of the more vicious editorials in *The Australian* newspaper and in its op-ed columns are effectively IPA press releases.

Centre for Independent Studies (CIS). CIS portrays itself as an advocate of "classical liberalism." It works closely with the IPA and with a range of similar groups around the world. It put a lot of energy into the 'No' case in the Voice referendum, and heavily promoted 'Advance.' Advance is the outfit that sought to counteract the progressive Get Up electoral agitation group and raised a lot of money to do just that. Warren

Mundine remains a leading figure, while its main ideological voice is Tom Switzer, the conservative writer, journalist, broadcaster and failed Liberal candidate.

The Australia Institute. This is as near to progressive a think tank that you will find in Australia. Its funding is not from the usual vested interests and is not linked to any special political formations. It works on climate, tax reform, and economic issues. Like the rest it claims to be independent. Unlike the rest it is criticised for being 'left-leaning' and 'progressive.'

There are many more; United States Studies Centre, the Liberal Party leaning Menzies Research Centre, the ALP-run Chifley Research Centre, the Grattan Institute, and the formerly socialist Fabian Society (derived from the British Fabians, who have been called the first think tank). All have a degree of bias, all claim 'independence.' All have influence, few, with the possible exception of the Australia Institute, promote the best interests of Australia, peace or progress. ✚

Your super: corporate cash cow

Anna Pha and Marcus Browning

In 1992, the Keating Labor government legislated for compulsory superannuation. It had a number of aims, including winding back the publicly-funded aged pension, shifting responsibility onto the individual for self-provision during retirement, privatising the provision of retirement income, and providing the private sector with a large source of investment capital.

While it is still far from providing workers with enough income for retirement, from the finance sector's perspective the growth of superannuation funds has been very successful and lucrative. It provides investment houses and other financial institutions with a guaranteed continuous stream of investment capital, set to rise incrementally. For example, by the end of 2013, the estimated value of this pool of capital was \$1.62 trillion, almost as large as Australia's Gross Domestic Product.

Apart from being a rich source of profits (management, investment, commission, advisory fees, etc), these funds give financial institutions the power to protect their own interests by such means as manipulating stock markets and financial markets.

Superannuation savings have an

additional attraction to the private investment houses in that the workers take all the risk. Investment losses, such as during the global financial crisis were carried by workers. The financial institutions continued to profit from their fees, commissions, and charges.

There are very different types of funds. Industry funds, which are not-for-profit, have equal trade union and employer representation on their boards. They consistently outperform the for-profit funds, known as retail funds. Industry funds do not charge the hefty fees and other charges that the private funds impose (The rich have their own "do-it-yourself" funds which provide an excellent vehicle to rot the tax system).

But there is no end to the greed of the private sector. They are constantly pushing to take over workers' funds and make even larger profits.

This is behind the drive to force union representatives off the boards of industry funds, as we are witnessing as part of the current attack on the CFMEU.

The private fund managers help themselves to outrageous entry fees on deposits, exit fees on withdrawals, performance bonuses, fees for financial planners and charges for other "services." Many of them are subsidiaries of major banks and

insurance companies and invest savings in products often being managed by related companies.

Not surprisingly, the private funds have provided lower returns to members than the industry funds.

INDEPENDENT

The Coalition is planning to force all industry funds to appoint a majority of "independent," "more professional directors" with experience in the finance sector to their boards, to "protect the integrity" of such a large source of funds. The question is; "independent" of what?

What is really meant is independent of unions and hence members' wishes. This would reduce the trade union representation to the level of token representation and place total control in the hands of people with links to the private financial institutions – the aim of the exercise.

It would mean an end to any union say in the type of investments made – such as infrastructure in Australia, or ethical decisions such as not investing in tobacco, fossil fuel, or uranium mining companies. It is bad enough that the boards have employer reps on them, it's workers' money that is being invested. It would be the kiss of death for industry funds.

Board membership does not overcome other shortcomings, such as the risks and uncertainties involved in the present superannuation system which provides workers with a lump sum on retirement. The Communist Party of Australia is calling for the establishment of a national superannuation scheme, one which offers those who join it a guaranteed income on retirement – a certain amount on a fortnightly basis – what is known as a defined benefit scheme.

Workers and retirees should be able to roll some or all of their super savings over into the national scheme on a voluntary basis. The national scheme would offer security of income, and its funds could be used to benefit society, by providing badly needed infrastructure and services, and for job creation.

For example, investment in public housing would result in homes for thousands of homeless people, create jobs and stimulate the economy. Likewise, the building of schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure would be of benefit to people and the economy.

Super could work for the working people who make the money in the first place. The finance industry wants it to work for them. ✪

Friends of Palestine Snap action, Borloo/Perth

Richard Titelius

A snap action was called by Friends of Palestine WA on Friday 18 October 2024 to voice condemnation of Israel following the attack by IDF forces on al Mufti School in Central Gaza killing 22 people 15 of whom children. The rally was also condemned the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Simwar by Israel in their pursuit of eliminating the leadership and resistance of the Palestinian people.

There were speakers from health services sector who spoke in solidarity with the many health workers who have been killed or injured. Gaza's health system has collapsed. Prior to 7 October 2023 there were 136 functioning hospitals. Now there are only 6 health centres which offer basic treatments. Speakers expressed grief and anger over the ongoing Israeli slaughter of Palestinians while the leaders of the US and Australia only pretend concern, or give ineffective deadlines.

Tu from Teachers for Palestine spoke of her empathy for the suffering and hardships of the teachers and students in Gaza whose many schools have been bombed, either deliberately targeted or targeted on the pretext they were being used to hide Hamas fighters and their arms.

Over 150 turned up to support the rally and afterwards marched to the cultural centre with their many banners and placards to take their message about the situation in Palestine and Lebanon to the bars and cafés that fringed the Perth Cultural Centre.

The Communist Party of Australia condemns the ongoing genocide and destruction in Gaza, and the complicity of Australia and the US whose failure to impose a ban on arms sales to Israel has extended the destruction of Palestine and the genocide of its people. This destruction has now extended to Syria and Lebanon as the push by Israel to expand its borders to create a Greater Israel from Iraq and part of Turkey to Egypt becomes more obvious. ✪



Israel's \$5.5 billion stake in Australia

Graham Holton

Australia's relationship with Israel dates back to 1949. Australia continually supports Israel, despite countless United Nations resolutions. Less well known is the trade relationship, especially Israeli's \$5.5 billion investment in Australia. Australia's bilateral economic relationship with Israel continues to grow, explaining in part why Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Opposition leader Peter Dutton maintain their support of Israel in its war on Gaza.

Eighteen Israeli companies are listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, making Israel the third largest foreign listing. These companies specialise in pharmaceuticals, medicinal cannabis, medical

devices, sound visualisation technologies, automotive, aerospace, and defence, agricultural industries, and online retailers.

Several bilateral agreements have been signed, including a Working Holiday Agreement in 2016 and the Double Taxation Agreement in 2019. By then goods and services had reached \$1.3 billion. Australian exports to Israel were worth \$345 million and imports from Israel to Australia were \$1 billion. In 2019, Australian investment in Israel totalled \$1.2 billion and Israeli investment in Australia was \$342 million, mostly in the innovation sector. Then Trade Minister Dan Tehan announced in 2021, that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade would undertake a feasibility study on how to increase trade and investment with Israel, and a possible Free Trade Agreement.

In 2023 Israel was Australia's 49th largest two-way trading partner and 56th largest export market. Two-way trade amounted to \$1.4 billion, of which Australian exports \$419 million and imports \$983 million from Israel. Last year Australian investment in Israel increased to \$1.7 billion, while Israeli investment in Australia was over \$5.5 billion, mostly in the innovation sector.

Last year Israel trade commissioner to Australia, Ohad Blumberg spoke at the *Australia and Israel: Space and Technology Opportunities* webinar presented by the Space and the Israel Trade and Economic Commission in Sydney. He told the audience that Israel "has emerged as a global leader in space technology and innovation." He reminded the audience that Israel and Australia had collaborated in

the Israeli-led Beresheet 2 lunar expedition.

In 2017 a Memorandum of Understanding on defence industry cooperation and the Air Services Agreement were signed. Since then, Australia and Israel have expanded cooperation on national security, defence and cyber security, when defence officials began annual strategic talks. In 2019, Australia appointed a Defence Attaché to the Embassy in Tel Aviv. That year the Australian Trade and Defence Office in Jerusalem was opened to facilitate trade, investment and defence industry partnerships.

In February this year Israeli company Elbit Systems was awarded a defence contract worth \$917 million. Elbit Systems will provide "advanced protection, fighting capabilities and sensors" for the new Korean-designed Infantry

Fighting Vehicles (IFVs), which are being constructed in the Victorian electorate of Defence Minister Richard Marles; something not missed by the public.

The Office of the UN Human Rights Commissioner (OHCHR) reported in 2020 a list of 94 Israeli companies operating in illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. A number of these are operating within Australia. The full list is available at the Boycott, Divestments, and Sanctions Australia website.

More must be done to support the boycotts of Israeli companies investing and operating in Australia. We cannot stand idle while Israel attacks Gaza, the West Bank, and now Lebanon. ✪

Politics in the Pub

Defend our Unions

Hosted by Workers' Solidarity WA

Boorloo-Perth WA

Richard Titelius

On 23 August 2024, the Federal ALP Attorney General Mark Dreyfus announced that the CFMEU would be put into administration and the CFMEU members would no longer control the union, its funds and assets. The cost of the administration would be born by the unions themselves. This caused many within the CFMEU to question their loyalty to the ALP despite their affiliation. Other unions also questioned why they should be affiliated to a political party which was attacking a democratically elected and run union.

To help promote discussion and find some answers, Worker's Solidarity WA held a Politics in the Pub in Perth and invited Red Kelly Cast podcasters Colton and Emily as well as a labour activist Lexi to give their takes on the dispute and its consequences. The MC for the event was Elly Hulm of the Communist Party of Australia.

Colton said that though the ALP had been formed 1890's on the back of the Shearers' strike, it did not take long after Federation for the Labor Party became a parliamentary party managing the state, and used to pacify workers. As Vladimir Lenin, observed, the ALP became the party that wants to manage capitalism.

The industrial relations apparatus of conciliation and arbitration was used to control demands by workers for better wages and conditions. In 1949 ALP Prime Minister Ben Chifley took two days to introduce legislation prohibiting a strike by coal workers and use soldiers as strike-breakers. Chifley also worried that the Communist Party of Australia could replace the ALP as the party of the working class. The General Secretary of the CPA at the time was Lance Sharkey who wielded considerable influence among certain sections of the labour movement. The ALP – especially its right faction in NSW, sought to rid Australia of the influence of the Communist Party. However, this backfired electorally, as the ALP was rejected by voters until 1972, when Gough Whitlam became Prime Minister. The resurgence of the ALP however was short-lived when in 1975, Whitlam was sacked by the Governor General Kerr.

In 1983, Bob Hawke, former ACTU secretary became Prime Minister. Hawke introduced the Wages and Prices Accord, a compact between the unions, and government, which in the medium term suppressed wage demands and in the long term substantially weakened union power and influence. Union density started to fall from this time and has not recovered since. It's currently sitting at around 12 per cent.

Industrial relations 'reforms' introduced by the next Prime Minister Paul Keating, further weakened union power. In 1998 the unity and solidarity of the

union movement built some of their power back up through the Patricks dispute, involving the Maritime Union of Australia.

The next speaker, Emily said the development of labour laws had been geared towards the interests of the ruling class. We can see this in 19th Century laws which gave employers the right to hunt down renegade employees who went Absent Without Leave. More recently members of the CFMEU have been fined \$10,000 for calling a strike breaker a scab. Emily said unions need solidarity and unity to fight these attacks.

Lexi said the rank and file union members should control their unions – and this is certainly true of those unions which are politically engaged such as the CFMEU, ETU, CEPU, and AMWU. However, this objective becomes a little more problematic in those unions where the majority of members are not as politically engaged. Many unions have historically been linked to the ALP although it is often not in either the workers' or unions' interest. Unions become the dance partner to the government said Lexi, when the ALP gets into government.

An option could be for unions to disaffiliate from the ALP which should not be seen as disengaging politically but as reclaiming their power and acting in the interests of their members. Lexi said there was a huge apathy by many workers towards unions who see them as another cog in the machinery. However, there are also those workers who have no consciousness of themselves as a class but feel like disparate individuals. In UK, rail workers are removing themselves from the shadow of social democratic parties.

In 2008, the United Auto Workers in the US saw they were losing their power, cut their ties with the Democratic Party, and went on strike. After they went on strike and achieved their industrial goals they started once again to be noticed by politicians who sought to be associated with union successes in lifting workers' living standards. This is why concluded Lexi, "Unions have more agency when they are not part of a social democratic party."

A lively Q & A followed. One activist said that since the Administration of the union began in August, rank and file members have become more active, thereby maintaining its democratic character.

The Communist Party of Australia supports the objective of unions to be democratically run and encourages the involvement of members and elected delegates to build the union in workplaces for workers to feel empowered.

The CPA stands in strong opposition to the undemocratic administration imposed on the CFMEU. 19 October 2024 ✪

GREEN NOTES

Recycling plastics

The way plastic is produced, used, and discarded results in pollution, litter, and harm to the environment, particularly to marine life, but also to other animals and to humans. The ongoing recycling of plastics is a fabrication of multinationals.

Plastic can only be recycled once or twice, it's one of those materials that cannot be recycled over and over again because it loses too much of its quality through recycling. Despite government policies aimed at creating a 'circular economy,' just 14 per cent of plastic waste is kept out of landfill. Recycling of plastic is inefficient, expensive and hazardous with little demand for recycled plastic.

Plastics contain a range of different chemicals. These chemicals are added to change and improve the performance of the plastic. Some chemicals make plastic more flexible, others more resilient to heat and in sunlight, and others add colouring. Some of these chemicals are of concern having high aquatic toxicity and endocrine-changing qualities. They are endocrine disruptors. The human body depends on hormones for a healthy endocrine system, which controls many biological processes like normal growth, fertility, and reproduction. Minor disruptions may cause significant developmental and biological effects.

Compared to other recyclables:

Glass – every tonne of cullet (crushed used glass) recycled saves 1.1 tonnes of raw materials. Making glass from recycled materials requires only 40 per cent of the energy necessary to make glass from sand. This is because recycled glass melts at a lower temperature. Every year Australia recycles 360,000 tonnes of glass, which means around 1.2 billion bottles diverted away from landfill.

Aluminium – is almost infinitely recyclable, approximately 75 per cent of the aluminium ever produced is still in use today as it can be recycled again and again, without compromising any of its unique properties or qualities, making it an incredible sustainable material.

Steel – Australia is a major producer of steel and the iron ore it's made from. Iron ore mining generates greenhouse gas emissions and damages natural environments. Every tonne of steel recycled saves 1.13 tonnes of iron ore, 633kg of coal and 54kg of limestone. In Australia, 97 per cent of end of life structural steel and 83 per cent of all scrap steel is recycled.

The South Australian government has realised the public want less plastic in their lives.

From 1 September 2024, plastic carrier bags were being phased out, enabling the market to switch to compostable alternatives certified to Australian Standards.

Thick supermarket or boutique-style plastic bags will be phased out. There are alternatives for these, and the timing of this ban allows retailers to source alternatives and inform customers.

Single-use plastic beverage containers (including coffee cups) and their attachments (such as lids and beverage plugs) have limited recovery and recycling pathways. Fibre and other compostable or non-plastic recyclable or reusable alternatives can replace single-use plastic food containers. Alternatives are already in use.

Expanded polystyrene cups, bowls, plates, and clamshell containers were prohibited from sale, supply and distribution in South Australia in 2022. Other expanded polystyrene (EPS) consumer food and beverage containers in the market (e.g. gelato tubs) will also be banned. EPS trays used for meat, fruit and other food items for resale will be phased out.

Upcoming bans – 1 September 2025

Plastic fruit stickers, plastic soy sauce, fish, and pre-packed and attached products (i.e. products that contain plastic straws or cutlery) are to be phased out. For these products, industry needs time to design new more sustainable product formats and implement alternative solutions.

The rest of Australia must follow the example of South Australia. (with thanks to Len Lean's *Fightback*)

Canberra

VIJAY PRASHAD

PUBLIC LECTURE

CUBA AND IMPERIALISM: PAST AND PRESENT

Vijay Prashad takes contemporary Cuba as a focus to analyse the dynamics of today's imperialism. If it is true that world capitalism has entered a new stage of hyperimperialism, what are the consequences of this for all revolutionary movements across the Global South?

6pm, Thursday 31st October
Choroba Lecture Theatre (Building 5A)
Australian National University

Check out more events from the Vijay Prashad Australia Speaking Tour.

www.red-usb.org/events

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Lessons include:

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Celebrating the 2024

The 2024 Peace Prize has been awarded to Nihon Hidankyo. The Hibakusha (survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki) group received the Nobel Peace Prize for “demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again”



Hiroshima commercial building



Wednesday, June 26, 1963



A 1963 report on Hiroshima Day across the country, from the Party's then paper 'Tribune'. There are earlier reports of the Party organising rallies and exhibitions about Hiroshima Day.

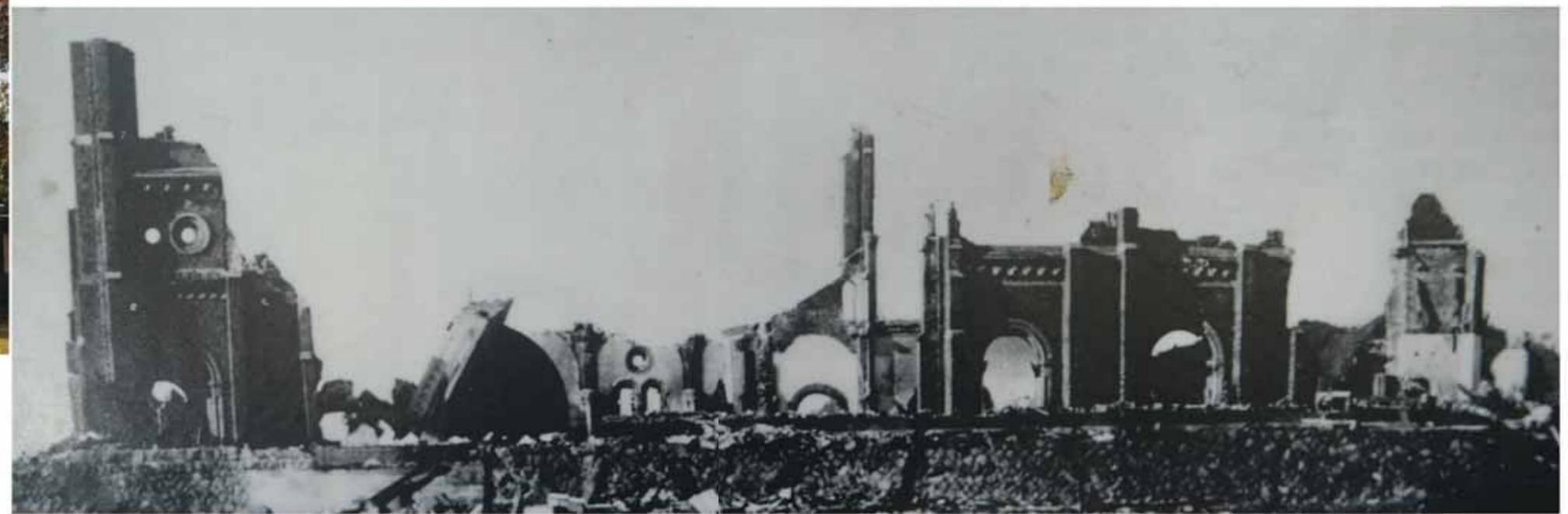


Hiroshima Rally coming up Pitt St, Sydney towards the Defence Department 2023

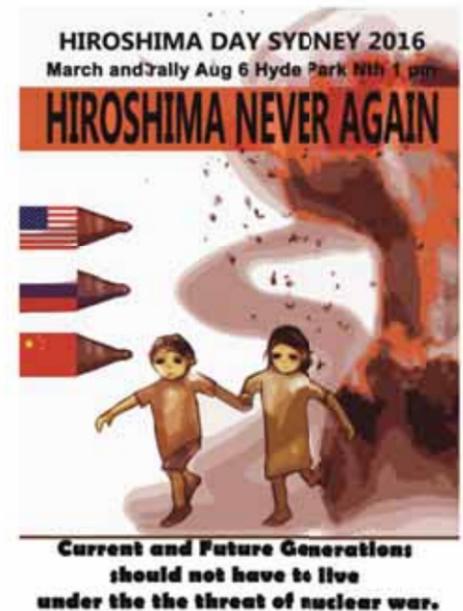


1 Nobel Peace Prize

The Communist Party of Australia congratulates Nihon Hidankyo, a grassroots movement of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki who have won the Nobel Peace Prize for 2024. The CPA welcomes and encourages all grassroots progressive action for positive change and feels all members and supporters should be encouraged by the success and recognition of Nihon Hidankyo for its persistent and incremental actions to eliminate nuclear weapons over the last 75 years ..



Nagasaki Cathedral after the bombing



The Communist Party of Australia has been consistently involved in commemorating Hiroshima Day on or about August 6 for over 60 years along with many other groups and individuals in Australia. Here are some images of the Australian grassroots organisations campaigning for 'Hiroshima/Nagasaki never again' .

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

email: editor@cpa.org.au



Missed opportunity

Dear Editor,
Some may remember that Malcolm Turnbull when he was Prime Minister said that Queen Elizabeth II was “too popular” in Australia for our country to push for a republic. QE2 died 5 months after Albanese became Prime Minister. Albanese said it was too much for the Australian people to vote for the Voice and for the republic. The truth is probably that Albanese was keen to bow and scrape to a monarch and thus keep his ‘small target’ profile. Contrast that with the self confidence of Barbados who took the opportunity to sever ties with the British Monarchy.

The President of Barbados said “the Republic of Barbados has set sail on its maiden voyage” to face “complex, the fractured and turbulent world” meanwhile Albanese stands shivering behind doors unwilling to make a move to an independent Australia. Barbados, a tiny island state in the Caribbean knowing the risks of going it alone and knowing how the British Monarchy robbed them just like it robbed Australia, said “enough is enough” while our excuses for politicians continue to bow and scrape.

The ‘popularity’ of QE2 was hammered out by the media with puff pieces, sycophantic reports of the ‘Royal Family’ all orchestrated by the wealthy and privileged to protect the privileged. All this palaver is starting again, I even heard a breathless documentary wondering what type of a King little George may be! He is currently Charlie’s grandson, decades away! The King has arrived in Australia and the propaganda machines are cranking up the simpering reports, the smiling couple, the delivery of a small joke said in a very posh accent, the angle of Camilla’s hat and so on.

The British Monarch represents all the things that the British stole from us. He may be a good person at home but he has no place here and no place to be gushed over. He is a symbol of Australia’s unwillingness to a grow up and be an adult country. While Charles himself should be the last monarch

that is head of state for Australia, I fear that our country will not have the bravery to say goodbye to monarchy and its thieving ways.
Yours sincerely

Denis Doherty

Meeting Peter Costello – Arrogant and Boring

Dear Comrade Editor,
In 1984 I was invited by friends in the Young Liberals to meet Peter Costello and his wife at a Liberal Party luncheon. Peter was its rising star, connected with the quarterly magazine *IPA Review*, published by the Institute of Public Affairs, established in 1943. The writer Roger Neave said it was “the conscience of the Liberal Party, not its propaganda arm.” This changed in the 1970s. The IPA turned further right wing, attacking protectionism, Keynesian economics and Labor.

Costello had been in the Social Democratic Students Association of Victoria, the Balaclava Branch of Australian Young Labor. In 1977, he was beaten up by a left-wing student, which received much media attention. Costello became conservative, joined the Liberals, and quickly became identified as part of the New Right movement in Australia. In 1984, as a barrister Costello

represented the National Farmers Federation’s legal action against the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union (AMIEU).

Australia’s version of neoliberal economics was Economic Rationalism, and it led to the same destruction of society. Costello was a founding member of the H. R. Nicholls Society, set up in 1984 as a think tank to dismantle Australia’s industrial relations system, abolishing awards and minimum wages, and the signing of the Accord. Prime Minister Bob Hawke, called the H. R. Nicholls group “political troglodytes and economic lunatics.” One of these “economic lunatics” became treasurer of Australia, Peter Costello, under Prime Minister John Howard. Costello was to be the longest-serving treasurer of Australia, from 1996 to 2007.

I was introduced to Peter and his wife Tanya as a geologist from BHP. I expected someone with his background and position in the New Right to be entertaining and cordial. He wasn’t. He never asked what I did or anything about me. Instead, he went straight into a hard sell on the *IPA Review*, why Economic Rationalism was necessary, and why the Liberals were the way of the future. For two hours I sat through this diatribe, enduring the most boring dinner of my life. I left thinking he was arrogant and self-centred, and thankful I am a Communist!

Graham Holton

Book Review: Karl Marx invites job reps and community activists to share insights from Capital into how we are exploited, how nature is plundered and how to put an end to both by Humphrey McQueen

A Carruthers

The written works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, have extraordinary breadth. Not only are they the makers of the great theoretical treatises, the epic works of scientific analysis, they were also great journalists, able to sweep up the immediate news as it came through and integrate it into their class view of history. Moreover they were also great proposers and critics of programs, in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, but also their discussions and criticisms of other programs, notably the Erfurt and Gotha Programs, the Social Democrat programs. Lenin thought through the revolutionary practice of socialist governance both before and after 1921 and the transformation away from War Communism; Lenin took what Marx and Engels first saw and applied it to his age. The Leninist Communist Party is the bedrock of socialist countries today, who

more and more show the success of this mode of governance, how it opens the path to communism. Marx, Engels, and Lenin were theoretical scientists, lively journalists, and programmatic, industrial communists. They were at one with all these roles.

Recent writing from Humphrey McQueen bears no similarity to the above. There’s a lot of confusing cultural speculation, and aimless bewilderment. This is what happens when somebody loses the dynamism of Marxism-Leninism and falls into the nihilism of the age; with no socialist mode of production ahead, no horizon of workers’ power, and no instruments of analysis to see it with.

McQueen’s latest blunders also show what happens when you repudiate the living idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the embodiment of class struggle. When you turn your back on the idea and the reality of the internationalist mass Party, the peoples’ democratic dictatorship, you head for the woods and don’t come back.

Let us put aside the “analytic” sections on *Capital* itself, in which McQueen quotes mainly from Volume 1 of *Capital*, only once from Volume 3, and typically of Western Marxists not at all from Volume 2. Let’s focus on McQueen’s “program” for the future, the “Seven Pillars of wellbeing.” We have no disagreement with the pressing issues in these, for instance housing and education. One of these is work, and linking workplaces to communities, which he claims requires “learning through doing.” McQueen doesn’t link this “doing” to unions, to guilds, to workers’ industrial power. “Community activists” as he calls them have to “join in activities which show how changes in our everyday doings can lead to ways of living which enrich our individuality as part of our shared humanity.”

It’s a typical New Left fantasy: to imagine you can change the world entirely on the side of social relations, without changing production. How anyone can make this error if they claim to be a reader of Marx and Engels is anyone’s guess. Section III of the *Manifesto of the*

Communist Party, the section that critiques the socialists of their day, deals precisely with these errors. Like the “reactionary socialists,” McQueen shows a “total incapacity to comprehend the march of modern history.” Like the petty-bourgeois socialists, he points to the “misery of the proletariat, the anarchy in production,” but has no ideas as to how to replace the old property relations, the old society, the old means of production. Like the “Critical-Utopian communists,” he resorts to individualistic notions of wellbeing, communitarianism and self-emancipation, but is unable to analyse the material conditions for the organisational and political advance of the proletariat, the conditions under which it becomes a revolutionary class. He remains a reformist.

Workers cannot stand in the midst of the productive forces of the day without a dictatorship of the proletariat, a workers’ power. Without unions, without workers’ state power in real, material, industrial terms, without a horizon of proletarian socialist governance, the establishment of workers’ power

in the state as of the *Manifesto*, and the bending of the state towards the society, in preparation for the withering of its old bourgeois function, these kinds of participatory changes, the creation of the *new social relations of socialist society*, are impossible.

Reading Marx is one thing, applying it in practice, in reality, requires action: participation in unions, a Workers or Communist Party, and Proletarian internationalism. It also takes applying the quest for workers power to our current material conditions.

McQueen’s pamphlet is a mish-mash of New Left revisionism and poor readings of original texts. McQueen’s work has mainly been on Australian cultural history, but his contribution to Marxist theory is slight. It is better that he confines his intellectual focus to cultural history, goes back to *all* the original texts of Marx, Engels, and Lenin (not just some, but all of them), while concentrating his political efforts to building industrial workers’ power in Australia. ✪

Chinese Revolution crossword (7 October)

Across:

3. Land Reform – Redistribution of estates from the landlords
5. Peasant – The primary working class in China during the revolution
7. Manchuria – Region of Chinese territory invaded by Japan, liberated by the USSR, Returned to China
9. Long March – Famous military retreat

Down:

1. United States – Country that provided financial and military aid to fascists during the conflict
2. Red Book – Collection of quotations
4. Mao – Revolutionary, Writer, Chairman
5. Puyi – Last emperor of China, Fascist Collaborator, remodeled into a communist after the revolution
6. Yanan – City in Shaanxi province that served as a base and birthplace of the revolution
8. CPC – Official acronym for Communist Party of China

Colesworth crossword (21 October)

Across

3. Cartel – When business “rivals” to collude together to artificially set a price
4. Self Serve – Making millions of people across the globe face redundancy for no other reason but corporate greed
6. Phantom – To describe a store-brand item that on its packaging makes no reference to that fact
7. Shrinkflation – Shady practice of making consumers pay more for less
9. Duopoly – Status of the Australian Supermarket’s position
10. ACCC – Abbreviation of regulator taking ColesWorths to court

Down

1. Underpaid – What ColesWorths employees often are
2. Farmers – People who are paid too little, but consumers are forced to pay too much for there products
5. LandBanking – Act of buying out land to sit upon, so no other competitors can enter the market
8. Butchers – Food department and trade removed from ColesWorths stores, due to refusal to enact proper working conditions

Statement from the DPRK Foreign Ministry

The Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 11 October issued the following crucial statement "The trigger for defending sovereignty and security will be pulled up without hesitation":

The ROK (South Korea) is crossing the red line in its provocation against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The ROK, the most hostile and malicious rogue state, committed a grave political and military provocation by infiltrating drones into Pyongyang, the capital city of the DPRK.

Drone infiltrations were conducted by the ROK on 3 and 9 October. They were followed by perpetration of such a hideous crime as scattering a huge number of anti-DPRK smear leaflets over the central part of Pyongyang through a midnight drone infiltration on 10 October.

The leaflets, run through with evil rumours and abuses tarnishing the national sovereignty and dignity of the DPRK and malignantly hurting its socialist system, were scattered in the central part of the capital city.

Not content with scattering leaflets along the border by balloons, the ROK infiltrated even into the sky over the DPRK's capital such drones which can be regarded as military attack means. The incident is a serious provocation that can neither be overlooked nor be pardoned.

This provocation constitutes an open infringement on the sacred national sovereignty and security of the DPRK and a wanton violation of the international law and a grave military attack, for which the ROK must pay a dear price.

The ROK should neither justify the recent incident in a trite way nor think of shirking its responsibility by making far-fetched assertions again.

The incident is a typical instance that vividly betrays the national position of the ROK belonging to the most shameless, childish and vulgar category in the world and meanness of its clans.

It also evidently shows how the danger of armed conflict is created on the Korean Peninsula due to the reckless and adventurous acts of the ROK.

The international community should strongly denounce the bravado of the ROK, which is steadily escalating the danger of military conflict in the region while unhesitatingly committing provocations hard to sustain their aftermath, and unanimously call for thoroughly deterring it.

International law does not allow free



there is no country which will not react to the violation of its airspace, and the drones of a hostile country

flight, as well as "harmless flight," of foreign aircraft or flying objects in the territorial airspace of a country.

The recent intrusion into the airspace is a grave crime encroaching upon the sovereignty of the DPRK and a clear target of the exercise of the right to self-defence.

The ROK chose self-destruction and is hastening its doom.

In the world, there is no country which will not react to the violation of its airspace and the drones of a hostile country flying over its capital.

We regard the recent provocation of the ROK as a serious political and military provocation that deserves retaliation according to the right to self-defence, without any need for further explanation.

The recent adventurous provocation of the enemies urgently requires our army to promptly judge what kind of action measure should be taken to discharge its sovereignty-defending mission granted by the DPRK

Constitution and make a decision on launching the relevant retaliatory action.

The Ministry of National Defence, the General Staff and the army at all levels of the DPRK set about the preparations to cope with different occasions of the developing situation.

First, all the offensive means of the DPRK, to be involved in destroying the military structures near the southern border and in the ROK, will get ready to carry out their activities promptly at any moment.

The standpoint expressed by our head of state some days ago that the DPRK has no intention to attack the ROK, does not mean that we are not ready to attack it.

With all means of attack put on standby, we seriously warn the ROK as an ultimatum again for the last time.

The ROK should immediately stop such irresponsible and dangerous provocation that may cause an armed conflict and lead to a war between the two sides.

If the ROK commits such a provocation as infiltrating a drone into the airspace of the DPRK once again, the DPRK will launch an action immediately without any warning.

Taking this opportunity, we make it clear once again that the source and cause of all these disasters making the world's people uneasy are in the ROK which has scattered political agitation trash into our inviolable territory despite our repeated warnings.

The ROK, which wantonly violated the inviolable sovereignty of the DPRK, will face a horrible situation if it continues provocations, not bearing in mind this last warning of the DPRK.

The trigger safety device is now off. The time for our attack is not decided by us.

We will watch everything in full preparedness.

Criminals should no longer take a risky gamble on the lives of their people.

KCNA

Report: US cyber weapon can 'frame other countries'

China's National Computer Virus Emergency Response Center released its latest report on Volt Typhoon, once again exposing cyber espionage and disinformation operations conducted by US government agencies, including a US cyber weapon that can mislead investigation and frame other countries for its own cyber espionage activities.

On 24 May 2023, the cybersecurity authorities from The Five Eyes countries, the US, the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, issued a joint cybersecurity advisory, claiming that they had discovered cluster of activity of interest associated with a "China state-sponsored cyber actor," known as Volt Typhoon, and these activities "affected networks across US critical infrastructure sectors."

However the National Computer Virus Emergency Response Center, National Engineering Laboratory for Computer Virus Prevention Technology and 360 Digital Security Group have released two reports rebutting the US government narrative as "a fabrication." The two reports also describe how US government agencies conduct indiscriminate monitoring of global telecommunications and internet users.

Previously, the National Computer Virus Emergency Response Center publicly disclosed multiple types of cyber weapons developed by the National Security Agency (NSA) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). According to one of the reports, US agencies have developed a customized stealth "toolkit" codenamed "Marble" that the US agencies have developed to

cover up their Computer Network Exploitation (CNE) operations, mislead attribution analysis and shift the blame to other countries.

The toolkit is a framework that can be integrated with other cyber weapon development projects, assisting developers to obfuscate various identifiable strings in program code, effectively "erasing" the "fingerprints" of cyber weapon developers, according to the report.

According to one of the researchers, Marble also has a "dirty" feature, which is the ability to insert strings in other languages at will, such as Chinese, Russian, Korean, Persian, and Arabic. This is intended to mislead investigators and defame China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, and Arab countries.

FALSE FLAGS

A "False Flag" is a deceptive act

or operation carried out to make it seem to have been conducted by another party. According to the report, the "Marble" framework fully exposes the indiscriminate use of cyber espionage activities around the world carried out by US intelligence agencies, and their conspiracy to mislead investigators and researchers through "false flag" operations, in order to frame "adversary countries."

SPYING ON 'ALLIES'

The report also cites instances of the US conducting surveillance on countries such as France, Germany, and Japan.

One researcher said US intelligence agencies have established a large-scale global Internet surveillance network, providing a large amount of high-value intelligence to the US government agencies,

which offers the US government great advantage in the diplomatic, military, economic, scientific, and technological fields. The US government and its intelligence agencies could put anyone on the list for monitoring.

For example, from 2004 to 2012, the US carried out a long-term espionage operation against France, monitoring the movements of the French government on policy, diplomacy, finance, international exchanges, infrastructure construction, business and trade. Some important intelligence was authorised by the US to be shared with the other "Five Eyes" countries. This shows that the countries of the "Five Eyes" alliance are also beneficiaries of US espionage operations. *Global Times* (edited for reasons of space) ✦

End the criminal US blockade on Cuba!

Due to the current difficulty in sourcing energy, the Cuban government has been forced to temporarily shut down much of its industry and its services to its people.

Let us be clear, it is not Cuba's socialist economy that is the cause of the power outage and energy crisis. The power disruption is the inevitable result of successive US governments' imperialist policy to blockade Cuba, in an attempt to destroy its socialist economy. The revolutionary and resilient Cuban people are being punished by US imperialism because they dared to choose their own political and economic path free from all outside interference. In the immortal words of Charles Stewart Parnell, "No man has the right to fix the boundary to the march of a nation."

Regarding Cuban solidarity, there is no neutrality – you either support the right of the Cuban people to freely chart their own destiny, OR you support the "right" of the US to determine the future of all other peoples and states around the world.

Cuba has been an inspiration to oppressed people everywhere. In the true spirit of internationalism, its medical teams have assisted the medical services in scores of countries. Its military defeated the forces of Apartheid South Africa in Angola, securing its independence and hastening the collapse of apartheid.

Cuba will once again move a motion to end the criminal US blockade at the UN General Assembly on 30 October. The entire world stands against the criminal blockade, except for the US and Israel.

The time has come for all progressive forces and states to support Cuba and break the illegal US blockade.

The Communist Party of Australia stands in solidarity with Cuba. We urge all readers to contact their politicians to urge that the government do what it can to end the blockade. Australia's leaders frequently refer to the USA as an "ally," or a "partner." Now is the time to show that the partner listens.

Long live the Cuban Revolution!
Long live Socialist Cuba! ✘



Action against the US blockade on Cuba in Boorloo/Perth.

Hezbollah's tunnels in Lebanon – never secret

Graham Holton

In August the Agence France-Presse (AFP) showed a video titled "Our mountains are our storehouses," which purported to show Hezbollah fighters in secret tunnels near Beirut, Lebanon. It was a warning to Israel that the theatre of war would soon widen. Israel is now attacking the tunnels near its border.

The video revealed underground tunnels large enough for a convoy of trucks to pass along. Some trucks transport missiles and launchers.

Retired Lebanese brigadier-general Mounir Shehadeh, said it showed "how deep, how large and how complex they are, and how difficult or even impossible it would be for Israel to reach them." An Iranian

spokesman in Lebanon warned that from these tunnels they can "strike the enemy from anywhere." The Mehr news agency of Iran said Hezbollah's top secret "missile city" had tunnels cut out of solid rock to protect Hezbollah's fighters and rockets from Israeli aerial assaults. The ground entrances of the tunnels are barely wide enough for a person. Those dug across into Israel have no surface exits to ensure the IDF do not find them.

These tunnels are well known to Israeli and US forces.

According to the Modern War Institute at West Point, Hezbollah started digging the tunnels in the early 1980s. During Operation Northern Shield in 2018, Israel destroyed six tunnels to stop fighters entering Israel. The Institute concluded that a coming war, "might not be won exclusively in the

tunnels, but cannot be won without accounting for them."

Hezbollah, the "party of God," is a Shia resistance movement, intent on expelling Western Imperialism from the Middle East. It was founded in 1982 after Israel invaded Lebanon. Hezbollah is supported by Iran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, and has an estimated 30,000 fighters and 20,000 reservists. It has been called "the most militarily capable violent nonstate actor in the world."

A RAND report says Hezbollah's bunkers were "40 metres underground" and were used as "firing positions, operations centres, connecting tunnels, medical facilities, weapons and ammunition stockpiles, ventilation and air conditioning, bathrooms with hot and cold running water, and

dormitories, all with a roof built of slabs of reinforced concrete almost three feet thick."

Western media continually attacks Hezbollah, Iran, and the DPRK for assisting them, with no mention of why they fight the Zionist state. It has been claimed that since the 2006 Second Lebanon War, which cost the lives of 158 Israelis and over 1,200 Lebanese, the DPRK has been a key supplier to Hezbollah's "capabilities and logistics."

The Alma Research Center (AMC), an Israeli think tank, claimed that Hezbollah had built a 45 km tunnel system in a US \$13 million deal with KOMID (a DPRK company) and Iran, to connect key sites in Lebanon. The report said the total length of these tunnels extends for hundreds of kilometres, allowing Hezbollah combatants

to pass rapidly underground. The DPRK had supplied Hamas with F-7 RPG's 122 mm rockets, launchers and small arms.

Recently Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told *Le Figaro* that Israeli forces had found "state-of-the-art" Russian weapons in captured Hezbollah bases. Ivan Khomenko writes in *United24* that the bases contained weapons from around the world.

The Russian equipment included 9M133 Kornet anti-tank missiles, Igla-S surface-to-air missile systems, components of rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs).

They also included Iranian Tharallah launch systems for Kornet missiles, Spanish 106 mm artillery shells, and American Mk-19 grenade launchers and M-40 recoilless rifles. ✘

Swedish communists reclaim the hammer and sickle

Statement from the Communist Party of Sweden

Since the communist party in Sweden was reestablished in 1977, our party has used a logo consisting of a gear, wheat and our initials. The colours have consisted of the red colour of socialism, and the blue and yellow colours of Sweden.

This logo is from another time, when our movement was heading straight into eurocommunism, when the party adapted to a place within Swedish capitalism. When the party continued down this route, the revolutionaries that were still left in the party managed to reestablish our party. In this process, the logo followed.

Today, we can observe how the communist movement is weaker than it has been in a long time. Our international movement is characterised by ideological ambiguity, and many parties have continued their adaptation, while others have been made into willing tools in the struggle between the imperialists by constantly taking the side of the "lesser evil".

Reality has put a great task upon the shoulders of communists and we see it as our duty to carry this task with dignity and hope for the future.

We have now decided to do this without our old logo, and instead we have decided to continue the struggle with the clearest of communist symbols: the hammer and sickle.

United under this symbol, millions of workers have fought and we are proud to be able to continue our struggle under the same symbol as those who have forced the wheels of history forward and made the future much more tangible.

The Communist Party of Sweden has therefore, in an extraordinary congress on the 19th of October, decided to change our old logo, under which the communist party in Sweden was reestablished, for a new one, with the hammer and sickle.

In the coming days, the work of replacing our old logo will commence. ✘

Niger changes French street, monument names

The leaders of Niger have begun to rename streets and monuments bearing French names.

A spokesperson for the West African nation's military government, Major Colonel Abdramane, said: "Most of our avenues, boulevards and streets bear names that are simply reminders of the suffering and bullying our people endured during the ordeal of colonisation."

The changes by Niger to move on from the dominance of its former French colonial ruler saw Avenue Charles de Gaulle in the capital, Niamey, renamed Avenue Djibo Bakary, in honour of a top Nigerien independence leader.

Another name change in Niamey came where an engraving of French colonial officer

Parfait-Louis Monteil was replaced with a plaque and portrait of Burkina Faso's iconic revolutionary leader and pan-Africanist Thomas Sankara, who was assassinated in 1987.

Niger's relationship with France came under sharper focus after President Mohamed Bazoum was removed from power last year by a group of young army officers.

Similar regime changes have occurred in Mali and Burkina Faso – all with the intention of redefining the relationship with France and the West.

The three nations have formed what they call the Alliance of Sahel States to carry forward the agenda and to provide mutual security support.

Morning Star ✘

Write a letter to the Editor

email: editor@cpa.org.au

Assange recognised as 'political prisoner'

Peter Farmer

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), comprising members from 46 national parliaments across Europe, has passed a resolution recognising Julian Assange as a political prisoner.

PACE has expressed deep concern at "the disproportionately harsh treatment" faced by Julian Assange, and said this has had a "dangerous chilling effect" which undermines the protection of journalists and whistleblowers around the world.

Approving a resolution based on a report by Thórhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC), the Assembly said Assange's treatment warranted his designation as a "political prisoner" citing the severe charges brought against him by the

United States of America, exposing him to possible life imprisonment, combined with his conviction under the US Espionage Act "for what was – in essence – newsgathering and publishing."

The Assembly also called on the US to investigate the alleged war crimes and human rights violations disclosed by him and Wikileaks. Its failure to do so, combined with the harsh treatment of Assange and Chelsea Manning, creates a perception that the US government's purpose in prosecuting Assange was "to hide the wrongdoing of state agents rather than to protect national security."

The Assembly called on the US, a Council of Europe observer state, to "urgently reform" the 1917 Espionage Act to exclude its application to publishers, journalists, and whistleblowers who disclose

classified information with the intent of raising public awareness of serious crimes.

The day before PACE's vote Assange spoke publicly for the first time since his release in June from the UK's Belmarsh prison.

"I am free today after years of incarceration because I pled guilty to journalism."

"I eventually chose freedom over unrealisable justice. Justice for me is now precluded, as the US government insisted in writing into its plea agreement that I cannot file a case at the European Court of Human Rights or even a Freedom of Information Act request over what it did to me as a result of its extradition request," Julian said, sharing his testimony to PACE. ✨



Global Briefs

EGYPT: Egypt has been certified as malaria free by the World Health Organisation (WHO). "Malaria is as old as Egyptian civilization itself, but the disease that plagued pharaohs now belongs to its history and not its future," the WHO chief said. "This certification of Egypt as malaria-free is truly historic, and a testament to the commitment of the people and the government of Egypt to rid themselves of this ancient scourge," he added. So far forty-four countries have been declared malaria-free, but it remains a serious health problem with 249 million cases in 2022.

IRAN: Iran and Oman conducted joint military exercises as the two Persian Gulf states work to strengthen cooperation. The first-ever joint anti-terrorism exercise was organised at the request of the Omani army. The exercise focused on urban warfare, combatting regional terrorism, ensuring sustainable security and facilitating the exchange of experiences between the two countries. The ground exercise took place in Oman, and a joint maritime rescue operation was executed in the Indian Ocean and the Strait of Hormuz, featuring combat vessels from the naval forces of Iran's Army of Islamic Revolution Corps (IRGC), as well as the Royal Navy of Oman.

MARTINIQUE: Authorities have extended a curfew until the end of October in an attempt to put an end to public unrest linked to the rise in the cost of living. Protests have been going on since September, and have often turned violent. French authorities deployed a special unit, the CBS, for the first time in 65 years to suppress demonstrations. The "Movement for the Protection of Afro-Caribbean Peoples and Resources," which initiated the protests, held several meetings with local authorities and business representatives but so far there has not been any solution to the problem. Food prices are the main concern – they are 40 per cent higher on the island than in France, due to the so-called "sea tax" – customs duties on imported goods to French overseas territories like Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, Mayotte, and Reunion. The tax, one of the oldest in the French system, was introduced in 1670 in Martinique as a temporary measure, but still applies to a wide range of goods imported from France.

GERMANY: US President Joe Biden made a 19-hour visit to Germany. In the dying days of his presidency, Biden wants to make sure that his European allies will continue with their war effort in Ukraine. He pointed out that it was important for Ukraine's Western allies to "sustain our resolve" in supporting the country. The US president met Chancellor Scholtz, Ukraine's second-biggest military supplier after the US. They were joined by French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer for discussions which also addressed Israel-Palestine.

INDONESIA: Prabowo Subianto was inaugurated as the country's president. The former defence minister, accused of human rights abuses, took his oath on the Koran in front of legislators and foreign dignitaries and was cheered through the streets by thousands of supporters afterwards.

CHINA: The government of China reached an agreement with Vietnam on cross-border railway development and took steps to expand agricultural imports from its neighbour. Prime Minister Li Qiang, on an official visit to Vietnam, pledged that his country would further open its market to high-quality fruits, seafood, and other Vietnamese products. China is Vietnam's largest trading partner and second-largest export market after the United States.

ITALY: Speaking after the G7 defence ministers' meeting in Naples, the Italian Defence Minister Guido Crosetto warned that "In the coming years, we will face wars aimed at rare earth metal deposits and lithium." Crosetto added that military conflicts waged over water, energy production, and AI will play a major role in determining who wants to control the world.

Israel kills Hamas leader

A top political leader of Hamas, Khalil al-Hayya, has confirmed that the group's leader, Yahya Sinwar had been "martyred" after being killed by the Israelis.

Sinwar, top of Israel's most wanted list, became Hamas's political chief on 31 July when he succeeded Ismail Haniyeh who was assassinated in an Israeli attack in Tehran on 31 July.

In a televised statement Hayya spoke of Sinwar as "the fallen martyr," who "met his end standing brave, with his head held high, holding his firearm, firing until the last breath, until the last moment of his life."

Hayya said Hamas would not release any of the hostages taken on 7 October until there was "a complete withdrawal from Gaza, and our prisoners are released from the prisons."

"Hamas will continue until the establishment of the Palestinian state on all Palestinian soil with Jerusalem as its capital."

Israel has pledged to destroy Hamas politically in Gaza, and killing Sinwar, who was considered the chief architect of the 7 October attack, was a top military priority.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a speech announcing the killing that "our war is not yet ended."

In Israel, families of hostages still held in Gaza demanded the Israeli government use Sinwar's killing as a way to restart negotiations to bring home their loved ones.

Ronen Neutra, father of one of the hostages, said: "Sinwar, who was described as a major obstacle to a deal, is no longer alive."

Iran's mission to the United Nations issued a statement honouring Sinwar, saying: "When United States forces dragged a dishevelled Saddam Hussein out of an underground hole, he begged them not to kill him despite being armed."

"However when Muslims look up to martyr Sinwar standing on the battlefield in combat attire and out in the open, not in a hideout, facing the enemy, the spirit of resistance will be strengthened."

Meanwhile in the al-Fakhoura area in Jabalia, at least three Palestinians have been killed during fresh Israeli air raids.

Casualties have also been reported in an Israeli attack on a house near Nassar roundabout in the Jabalia refugee camp.

In Lebanon, Hezbollah issued a statement today saying its fighters have used new types of precision-guided missiles and explosive drones against Israel for the first time in recent days.

Hezbollah said its fighters were working according to "plans prepared in advance" against the invading Israeli troops.

It also announced several missile and artillery attacks on Israeli forces operating in villages in southern Lebanon's border area.

Morning Star ✨

Melbourne

LATIN FIESTA FOR CUBA

Fundraising to support food security in Cuba

AGRO VIVO Agricultural Project
To help

Ciénaga de Zapata and Playa Girón
Agriculture

Date: Saturday 9 November
Time: 6 PM
Place: M.U.A. 54 Ireland St. West Melbourne
Entry: \$15.00 Concession: \$10.00

Donations
Commonwealth Bank of Australia
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For information contact 0401508148

Organised by the Collective for Cuba
Supported by: ACTS, Soc. Alliance, Greek Democratic League, Lebanese Communist Party, Pablo Neruda Cultural Centre (Chile), C.I.C.D. Unitarian church, F.M.L.S. (El Salvador)

Sydney Vigil

STOP USA BLOCKADE ON CUBA

12:30 pm Sunday November 17
Sydney Town Hall

OP-ED

DPR Korea: advancing production, advancing people's lives

A Carruthers

The DPRK, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, is one of the most misunderstood and maligned countries in the world. In the right-wing media, the DPRK's proper name is all but prohibited, North Korea is never mentioned without the word 'authoritarian' added.

On the left-wing, the DPRK doesn't fare any better. For liberals and far-leftists alike, the DPRK is "no longer an example of socialism." No less pious, they too repeat the right-wing accusation that it is "authoritarian." In some Western Marxist coteries, mention of the DPRK is prohibited. It doesn't fit their universal, dogmatic and fixed idea of what socialism must be.

DPRK IS COMMUNIST, MARXIST-LENINIST

The right-wing accusations are not worth responding to, so I'll confine myself to the far-left/liberal accusation that the DPRK is no longer socialist, no longer on the road to communism.

Looking into the literature, what you will find contradicts the standard narrative that the DPRK has "given up" on communism and socialist principles, abandoned Marxism-Leninism, and ceased using these terms and phrases, let alone real-world policies, actions and struggles to these ends.

Kim Il-Sung, the founder of the nation, and key theorist of Korean Communism, of course grapples with all of these things.

But this doesn't stop with Kim Jong-Il, as is sometimes claimed. In his article 'Respecting the Forerunners of the Revolution is a Noble Moral Obligation of Revolutionaries,' published in *Rodong Sinmun* in 1995, Kim Jong-Il writes:

"Our Party and people respect Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as the leaders of the working class and speak highly of their distinguished services. Reflecting the demands and aspirations of the working class, Marx and Engels, the first leaders of the working class, developed socialism from a utopian concept to a science and

started the socialist and communist movement."

Thus their conception of Marxism is the orthodox conception, which holds that socialism is not a utopian concept, but rather a science. He expands this to Marxism-Leninism as method:

"Our Party has always assessed the ideological and theoretical achievements of the working-class leaders in an impartial way. It has defended the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism from all manner of opportunistic distortions and inherited and developed them to meet the interests of the revolution and requirements of reality."

There are innumerable other references of this kind, including significant theoretical arguments and dissertations on communism, Marxist-Leninism, communist revolution and communist ethics across Kim Jong-Il's body of work.

KIM JONG-UN: MARXIST THINKER

Kim Jong-Un is no different to Kim the elder. In a 2021 speech to the Sixth Conference of Cell Secretaries of the Korean Workers' Party, he says:

"Our Party never expects there will be any fortuitous opportunity for us in paving the road for our people and in realising their great aim and ideals to build socialism and communism. ... When the hundreds of thousands of cell secretaries and officials across the Party unite its members firmly under the leadership of the Party Central Committee and give full play to their loyalty, patriotism and creative wisdom, our revolution will always emerge victorious in high spirits and the ideal of communism will surely come true."

In a letter to the Eighth Congress of the General Federation of Trade Unions in 2021, he calls on the working class to "advance faster towards socialism and communism," and for the trade unions to undergo "revolutionary and communist transformation" and "firmly prepare the working class and all other trade union members as possessors of the communist faith."

There can be no doubt that all three Kims have never departed from the idea of communism or



Photo of DPRK artwork: Mark Fahey – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

'Our Party ... has defended the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism'

Marxism-Leninism, and that this trend will continue.

SOBER ANALYSIS NEEDED

There ought to be a mainstream, broad understanding of Korea's system of socialist democracy, their advances in placing production at the centre of people's lives, as well as, of course, *Juche*, *Songun*, the pillars of their Marxist-Leninist philosophy of governance in times of War Communism and socialist defence work. DPRK domestic policy arrangements need to be understood not in the hysterical manner of Western media, but in greater detail. Analysis is needed as to how they develop light industry in the current era, as opposed

simply to the development of heavy industry. Analysis is needed of how they are treating the housing question, and policies of even development and rural reconstruction in the countryside. Analysis is needed also of their society; DPRK social progressivism and development of socialist civilisation, is another area that needs more work if we are to have an all-round, serious engagement with their attempt to build socialism, as Keith Bennett and Australian Marxist philosopher Roland Boer have done (see the latter's *Socialism in Power*). Engagement should be normalised.

Discussion of the DPRK should be sober. It should be soberly placed beside Laos, Cuba, Vietnam and China in analyses of attempts to build real and concrete socialism

under unique and difficult national conditions. Recognition should be made as to the relationship between Korea and these counterparts; for instance Laos-Korea, Vietnam-Korea, Cuba-Korea and China-Korea economic and fraternal exchange, as well as its engagement with the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties (IMCWP).

The DPRK should not be isolated on the international socialist side, as it is isolated by the Western Alliance.

Our drive to unity ought to be stronger than the West's attempt to divide. North Korea's bold and noble attempt to build socialism here on earth must be examined and respected. ✪

Italian car workers first national strike in 20 years

Italian car workers went on strike 18 October demanding an end to job cuts and a relaunch of the Italian car industry.

It was the first national strike by car workers in 20 years.

Thousands also took part in a demonstration through the centre of Rome in support of the strike.

The strike was organised by three Italian auto unions, Fim-Cisl, Fiom-Cgil, and Uilm-Uil.

At the centre of the dispute is the world's fourth largest automaker Stellantis, which manufactures brands such as Alfa Romeo, Chrysler, Citroen, Fiat, Peugeot, and Vauxhall.

Over the past 17 years Stellantis has axed 70 per cent of its workforce, and in the first

half of 2024 the company recorded a steep drop in output at most of its Italian plants.

Stellantis chief executive Carlos Tavares blames European Union carbon emission rules for raising production costs, and has said the company may be forced to close assembly plants in the face of stiff competition from China.

Tavares said he "could not rule out" more job cuts, and said the industry was in need of additional state incentives to increase the demand for electric vehicles.

The strike comes amid rising tensions between Stellantis and the Italian government and unions which accuse the car-maker of relocating assembly plants to low-cost countries.

Morning Star ✪

Which world leaders will attend BRICS summit in Russia?

Founded in 2006, BRICS has since doubled in size and now includes Russia, Brazil, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates.

Russia assumed the annual presidency of the association on 1 January. Key priorities within the Russian chairmanship cover cooperation in security efforts, economy and finance, as well as humanitarian and cultural spheres.

Russia is hosting this year's BRICS Summit 22-24 October in Kazan. The event is focusing on strengthening multilateralism in order to achieve equitable global development and security. Russian President

Vladimir Putin has said that the combined GDP of the BRICS exceeds \$60 trillion US, and described the BRICS countries as "the engines of global economic growth."

High-level guests include: Xi Jinping (China), Recep Tayyip Erdogan (Türkiye), Narendra Modi (India), Alexander Lukashenko (Belarus), Lula da Silva (Brazil), Nicol Pashinyan (Armenia), Cyril Rampho (South Africa), Kassaym Jomart Tokayev (Kazakhstan), Masoud Pezeshkian (Iran), Luis Arce (Bolivia), Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (UAE), Dinis Sassou Nguesso (Congo), Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (Egypt), Thongtoun Sisoulith (Laos), and Abiy Ahmed Ali (Ethiopia).

Sputnik ✪

1.84 million Palestinians at risk of famine

The risk of famine persists across the whole Gaza Strip. That's the verdict of the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) after the latest Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) report. The IPC is a tool for improving food security analysis and decision-making in crises. It was developed for use in Somalia by UN aid agencies.

"Given the recent surge in hostilities, there are growing concerns that this worst-case scenario may materialise," Stephane Dujarric, spokesperson for UN Secretary-General, said at a daily briefing.

Between September and October 2024, the whole territory is classified in IPC Phase 4 – Emergency. About 1.84 million people across the Gaza Strip are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity, classified in IPC Phase 3 – Crisis – or above, including nearly 133,000 people facing catastrophic food insecurity, which is IPC Phase 5. Acute malnutrition is 10 times higher than before the escalation of hostilities.

The report said that nearly the entire population in Gaza has been displaced multiple times, risking injuries or death from shelling and aerial bombardments, while many vulnerable groups are unable to relocate or find safe shelter.

UN Secretary-General Guterres said that he is alarmed by the IPC report findings that high displacement and restrictions on humanitarian aid flows mean that the people of Gaza are facing catastrophic

levels of hunger," Dujarric said. "One year into the conflict, famine looms. This is intolerable," he quoted Guterres as saying.

Dujarric added that the UN chief urged for the immediate reopening of crossing points, removal of bureaucratic impediments, and restoration of law and order so that UN agencies can deliver lifesaving humanitarian assistance.

Meanwhile, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned that ongoing Israeli military operations in northern Gaza are putting tens of thousands of civilians in grave danger. Intense hostilities, evacuation orders and loss of access to numerous water, sanitation and hygiene facilities have rendered a number of systems for water production and wastewater collection inoperable.

In central Gaza, the United Nations and humanitarian partners working to support water, sanitation and hygiene services are preparing for winter and taking urgent steps to mitigate the risk of flooding.

The World Health Organization reported that the second round of the polio vaccination campaign in central Gaza concluded on 16 October, with more than 181,000 children receiving the vaccine and over 148,000 children getting vitamin A supplements, adding that the second round of the polio vaccination campaign is expected to start in southern Gaza on Friday.

Telesur 

Hibakusha win 2024 Nobel Peace Prize

The Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo) was named the winner of the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced on 11 October.

The Nobel Committee explaining the reason for its decision said, "This grassroots movement of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, also known as 'hibakusha,' is receiving the Peace Prize for its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again."

Hidankyo Representative Director Tanaka Terumi said that he felt very happy to hear the Nobel Committee's decision.

Tanaka pointed out that Hibakusha have worked to increase

public awareness inside and outside Japan of the death, destruction, and suffering in the aftermath of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He also pointed out that Hibakusha's joint efforts with concerned citizens have contributed to the adoption of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). He stressed the need to strengthen the treaty aimed at abolishing nuclear weapons.

In this regard, Tanaka expressed his hope that the Japanese government will not only ratify the TPNW but also become the world's leader in a movement for the abolition of nuclear arms. He also expressed his hope that together with Hibakusha, many people will raise their voices and take action in order to have Japan sign and ratify the TPNW and to have the world finally abolish nuclear weapons.

Japanese Communist Party Executive Committee Chair Tamura Tomoko issued a comment extending her heartiest congratulations to Hidankyo.

In her comment, Tamura expressed her deep respect to Hibakusha who have continued to give their testimonies which reveal the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, and who helped to create a great international movement calling for a total ban on nuclear weapons. Stating that it is particularly significant that Hidankyo won the peace prize amid growing nuclear threats, Tamura said that now is the time for the Japanese government to ratify the TPNW, and called on the world's governments to work for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Japan Press Weekly 

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WEASEL WORDS

Constructive

Penny Wong, addressing the United Nations, has said that Australia seeks to be "a constructive voice for peace and the upholding of international law including the protection of civilians."

Australia lets US bombers use this country for trips to bomb Yemen, gives huge contracts to an Israeli military company involved in the ongoing genocide, and has always allowed the US to use Pine Gap as a resource in Israel's favour.

On the other hand, there's the occasional slap with a wet lettuce leaf through speeches like this. Let's just say the 'constructive' bit needs work.

(Rightly) Proud

Weasellish, not to mention false, when someone is "rightly proud" of a non-achievement. Professional cornball Aussie, Peter Fitzsimmons says Australians are "rightly proud of having freed ourselves from the 'traditional class system England specialises in.'" While it's good that this country doesn't have a House of Lords, dukes, duchesses, earls or fox hunting, if Fitzsimmons really thinks there's no class system here, we have a bridge in Sydney harbour to sell him. It's been in the family for a long time, but the kids have grown up and moved out, so we hardly use it. We think it'd be perfect for Peter.

Renaissance

Literally meaning 'rebirth,' and first used to describe the flourishing of culture and learning in Europe between (roughly) 1400-1650, 'renaissance' is often used just to describe people doing things – as when a musician releases yet another album but hopes it's a comeback..

More dangerously, Japan's remilitarisation has been described by one journalist as a "strategic renaissance." Japan's right wingers are simultaneously denying the inhumanity of the country's wartime fascist government and moving towards aggressive remilitarising. Calling it a 'renaissance' is another act of denial.

Illegal

Former US President Donald Trump has called Haitian migrants "illegal immigrants" when they aren't illegal at all. It's very Australian of him, maybe he got the idea from Scott Morrison.

Safeguard

A safeguard is a nice and useful thing. It's weaselly when used to mask something that makes us less safe.

Tanya Plibersek our Minister for the Environment and Water, was asked about the 1.3 billion tons of carbon emissions that will come from her approval of three coalmine expansions. Pausing only to take a selfie with a nearby bilby, Plibersek replied that "all of these projects fit within our safeguard mechanism".

"Our"? The safeguard mechanism was first developed by Tony Abbott. Long story short, it allows companies to buy other companies' emissions reductions rather than reduce their own emissions. What the safeguard does is make our lives more dangerous, but Labor think it's a winner for them electorally.

'Forcing'

This word is a leading member of the large club of weasel words whose purpose is to shift blame. According to *politico.eu*, "an informal alliance of China, Russia, Iran and North Korea is forcing NATO to tighten links with Indo-Pacific countries." Poor NATO. All it wants to do is carry on protecting Western Europe from a Soviet Union that no longer exists, but this "informal" alliance is twisting its arm, and what else can a US-led inter-governmental military alliance do but give in?

Informal (alliance)

See above. Non-weasel sense: casual dress or language. Weasel sense: *politico.au* wants to pretend there's an alliance, but have no evidence.

Israel and the USA: an axis of terror

William Briggs

An 'axis of terror' is operating in Gaza, in Lebanon, in the West Bank, in Syria. It's the Israeli military, backed by the USA.

Israel is seeking to break the Palestinian people's will by brutality and terror. Terrorism, as a weapon is nothing new but its perpetrators rarely learn from the past. Israel, a terror state, is proving this on a daily basis.

Israel bombs a hospital tent camp in Deir al-Balah in Gaza. People are burned alive. The Palestinian people do not surrender. Images of Israeli soldiers are shown celebrating the destruction of the Lebanese village of Mhaibib. The Lebanese are not cowed. These are just two of the many acts of mass terror perpetrated by Israel.

Every atrocity committed by Israel simply stiffens the resolve to resist aggression and occupation. The people of Lebanon are not about to succumb to state terror.

There are acts of mass terrorism and there are acts of individual terrorism. An attack on an individual, an assassination, a targeted killing, is always a sign of political weakness. Israel has chosen to murder individual leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah as if that will somehow destroy an organisation that is deeply connected to and exists among the people.

The most recent assassination is that of Hamas leader, Yahya Sinwar. The killing was praised by Western leaders and Israel. News reports showed Israeli beach-goers cheering loudly. Graphic footage of his death has been posted. The imagery was designed, as is any other video posted by any other terrorist group, to instil fear. It has already had the opposite reaction from the opponents of Israeli occupation, even as the leaders of the world's 'democracies' gloat.

A few years ago, when the legitimate leader of Libya was brutally murdered, then US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton laughed, saying "We came. We saw. He died." In 2024, Biden has called Sinwar's death a "moment of justice."

Biden publicly urged his Israeli

ally to "make this moment an opportunity" – to end the attacks in Gaza and to find a way to a ceasefire. It is highly unlikely that anyone hearing those words would believe them. The US leader has made the same speech time and time again.

Just as convincing, Biden has "threatened" that he might order a cut to the arms shipments that allow the attacks to go ahead if Israel denies access to more humanitarian aid. He gave Israel 30 days to do something in response to some of the worst excesses thus far seen in the last 12 months. Northern Gaza has been blockaded and life has become impossible.

Israel has effectively blocked the entry of food and water into the area. September and October have seen the lowest volume of humanitarian aid entering Gaza since March.

If there was even a glimmer of reality behind Biden's words, there might be room for optimism.

The blockade and Israel's refusal to allow sufficient aid to enter Gaza is a violation of US law. This should make Israel ineligible to receive armaments or other security assistance. Matt Duss, from the US Centre for International Policy has remarked that "if [Biden] was serious he would've already done it, as required by law ... After 30 days they'll thank Israel for easing some restrictions (which still won't meet the legal requirement) and keep the ammunition flowing."

The fact that the US chose to take this moment to send advanced anti-missile systems and troops to Israel makes an absolute mockery of any talk of restraining Netanyahu.

The talk of using the murder of Yahya Sinwar as an 'opportunity' to press forward and end the conflict has similarly been proven to be a sham.

The Israeli prime minister has made his strategy clear. In a media conference that celebrated the Hamas leader's assassination, Netanyahu said that the "task before us is not yet complete."

After calling Israel "the forces of good," the Israeli PM said that the war "is still ongoing." It was a chilling speech. The terror that Israel will continue.



Rally in support of Palestine, Perth/Boorloo.

While raining death and destruction upon the heads of Palestinians and now the Lebanese, he portrayed his regime as fighting for safety, security, and Israel's very existence. Then, just on the off-chance that anyone was unsure of his intent, he added that "we will not stop the war. We will go into Rafah."

None of this could be said, considered, let alone carried out without the assurance of support from Washington. Netanyahu's words are not the words of a madman. His every move is calculated to achieve political success and longevity for himself. That is certain. It also plays to a constituency that is calling for a 'greater Israel.' That too is clear. There is another dark note to his words and deeds. Israel does not act alone. It works in tandem with the US for control of the region. This must mean the stifling of Palestinian aspirations to statehood and the subjugation of any state in the region that opposes US domination.

An axis of terror is enveloping the Middle East. ☹️

YEMEN: US ATTACKS, AUSTRALIA HELPS

William Briggs

US president, Joe Biden called for de-escalation of tensions in the Middle East. He then sent missile systems and troops to Israel. Biden also ordered airstrikes on Yemen. Australia, as loyal ally to the US, played its part in that bombing run.

The Department of Defence immediately issued a statement acknowledging Australia's role. The B-2 Stealth Bombers were able to go about their lethal business "through access and overflight for US aircraft in northern Australia."

The statement confirmed that Australia provided support for US strikes on 17 October. A defence spokesperson stated that "Australia is committed to supporting the US, and key partners, in disrupting Houthi capabilities." Defence said this was "consistent with our long-standing alliance commitment and close cooperation, demonstrating the interoperability of our militaries."

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) said "the Force Posture Agreement has given the US unimpeded access and control at gazetted sites. The US can take actions that implicate Australia in global conflict, regardless of the will of the Australian people – or even the Australian Parliament."

So much for sovereignty. So much for Australian government ministers' calls for a ceasefire and for 'restraint.' When the Peace Movement in Australia protested and warned against such an abject handing over of territory and sovereign rights, it was just such a scenario that they warned against.

Justin Tutty from IPAN, pointed out that "Australia is now directly implicated in the growing warzone."

When peace protesters make their voices heard, they are sidelined. Penny Wong makes statements that Australia is working tirelessly, alongside our allies to bring peace to the region, to sign a ceasefire and to stabilise a volatile situation. Everyone working for peace and a genuinely independent foreign policy knows Wong's words are empty.

Her own parliamentary colleagues speak openly about their desire to draw Australia ever closer into the war plans of Washington. They are not breaking ranks with Albanese or Marles or Wong. They are just telling it like it is.

Today, Yemen. Tomorrow ...?

Every atrocity committed by Israel stiffens the resolve to resist aggression



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